

**The Poetic *Dhamma* of Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and
The Place of Traditional Literature in Shan Theravada Buddhism**

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DECLARATION

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Srijuti', is written above a solid horizontal line. The signature is enclosed within a faint, dotted rectangular border.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role of traditional poetic writings, *lik long*, in the practices and teachings of Theravada Buddhism among the Shan people of northern Thailand and the Union of Burma using archival work, fieldwork and textual criticism. It focuses on a Shan version of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* written by one of the ‘classical’ composers of Shan literature, the 19th-century scholar Zao Amat Long. The thesis also analyses how the *lik long* draws on and enfolds other literature from the Theravada tradition, including the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* Pali canon, the *locus classicus* of instruction for mindfulness and insight meditation in Theravada, the 5th-century commentary by Buddhaghosa and Cakkinda’s 19th-century Burmese commentary, *nissaya*, on the same text as well as other ‘orthodox’ Theravada sources. The close adherence to these texts in terms of content allows us to question commonly held assumptions that Shan Buddhism is ‘heretical.’ Cataloguing Shan temple collections confirms this picture, especially the fondness of the Shan for *Abhidhamma* works, while Shan do preserve many narrative texts such as ‘apocryphal’ *jātaka* alongside versions of the Pali ‘canonical’ *jātaka*. Closely examining the unique literary qualities of Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, on the other hand, and the religious context in which such texts are read to an audience, allows me to identify the uniqueness of such literature and the way it is adapted to hold the attention of the laypeople who listen to it as the core practice of ‘temple sleeping’ on holy days. It also problematises the assumption that vernacular literature is easily accessible. I explore the full religious context of the production of such texts, from the merit-making sponsorship of their production to the occasions for their use, and the skills needed by traditional scholars, *zare*, to perform them. I discuss how political suppression, economic issues and modernity threaten this tradition.

DEDICATION

To Mae-zang Noan, my mother,
Who is an illiterate Buddhist practitioner,
But learned Buddhism through the traditional
Shan Buddhist ritual of listening to *lik long* poetic literature
A way of learning to be a good Buddhist and meditator.

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ABBREVIATIONS

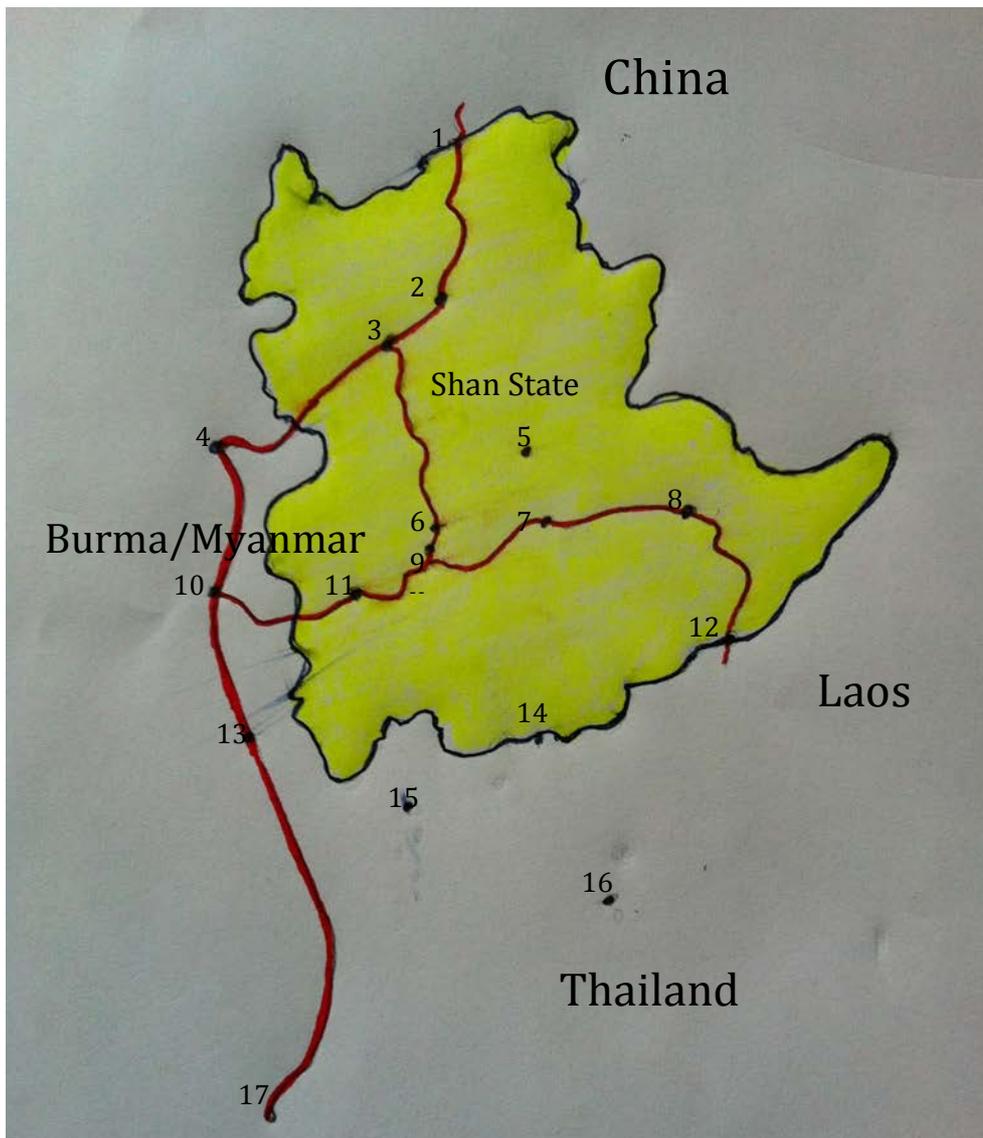
<i>CB</i>	<i>Contemporary Buddhism</i> , an interdisciplinary journal
<i>DN</i>	<i>Digha Nikaya</i> , the long length sayings
<i>GPC</i>	<i>Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma</i> (English version)
<i>HM</i>	<i>Hmannan Mahayazawin-daw-gyi</i> (original version of GPC)
<i>JBRS</i>	<i>Journal of the Burma Research Society</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JSAS</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i> (Cambridge University Press)
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of the Siam Society</i>
<i>MMG</i>	Mingun Meditation Group
<i>MN</i>	<i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> , the middle length sayings
<i>MSS</i>	<i>Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i>
<i>MSV</i>	<i>Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā</i>
<i>MSN</i>	<i>Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya</i> , written by U Cakkinda (1873)
<i>MSP</i>	<i>Mahāsatipaṭṭhān</i> , written by Zao Amat Long (1875, printed by Shan Piṭaka Press, Taunggyi, 1968)
<i>MSP-AT</i>	The Annotated Translation of the <i>Mahāsatipaṭṭhān</i> of Zao Amat Long, translation with notes by Jotika Khur-Yearn, 2011. (The translation is based on the printed version of <i>MSP</i> edited by Zao Sophana (1968).
<i>NLD</i>	National League for Democracy
<i>PED</i>	<i>Pali-English Dictionary</i> , edited by Rhys Davids T.W. and Williams Stede, 1998, PTS, Oxford. (First printed by PTS 1921).
<i>SBBP</i>	Shan Buddhism at the Boderlines Project

<i>SED</i>	<i>Shan-English Dictionary</i> , by Cushing J. N., 1881 and updated by Sao Tern Moeng, 1995.
<i>SN</i>	Samyutta Nikāya
<i>SNLD</i>	Shan Nationalities League for Democracy
<i>SSA</i>	Shan State Army
<i>SSSO</i>	Shan State Saṅgha Organisation
<i>SPTC</i>	Shan Piṭaka Translation Committee
<i>SV</i>	<i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī</i>
<i>VM</i>	<i>Visuddhimagga</i> , The Path of Purification, translated by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli 1956 (Reprinted by BPS 1991)
<i>VMA</i>	<i>Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā</i>

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A Map of Shan State, Burma and Northern Thailand



Important Places Discussed in this Thesis

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Muse (China-Burma Border) | 10. Meikthila |
| 2. Lashio | 11. Taunggyi |
| 3. Sipaw | 12. Tachileik (Thailand-Burma Border) |
| 4. Mandalay | 13. Naypyitaw |
| 5. Mueang Naung | 14. Piang Luang |
| 6. Lai Kha | 15. Maehongsorn |
| 7. Kun Hing | 16. Chiang Mai |
| 8. Kengtung | 17. Yangon (Rangoon) |
| 9. Loilem | |

* The red lines are indication of motorways across Shan State, Burma and bordering countries

INTRODUCTION

A Background of this Study and Overview of the Chapters

This thesis examines the place of traditional poetic writings, *lik long*, in the practices, beliefs and teachings of the Theravada Buddhism of the Shan ethnic group whose homeland mainly straddles the modern nation states of Thailand and the Union of Burma. I examine the copying and sponsorship of such texts, the occasions for their use, the threats to the continuity of this tradition and attempts to ensure its continuation. Most of my evidence for this comes from uncovering and cataloguing manuscript collections, mainly in northern Thailand, and from fieldwork interviewing traditional poetry performers, *zare*, and practitioners, as well as through participant observation of the main temple practice at which they are used, the lay practice of ‘temple-sleeping’ on holy days in both Thailand and Burma. Recording the way *lik long* poetic texts are used for the teaching of even very advanced doctrine and practice captures the distinctive, now at risk, ways of transmitting the *dhamma* among the Shan. I note the potential of such literature to tell us much about 19th century merit-making and sponsorship practices because of the lengthy introductions recording the occasion of sponsorship, introductions that neither I nor colleagues working in the textual study of Theravada have so far found elsewhere in its manuscript traditions. I then take the investigation of the place of *lik long* in Shan Buddhist practice further by providing an annotated translation of a *lik long* used for teaching meditation, a subject of training that we have come to associate with teacher-pupil lineages or meditation centres, yet which in Shan contexts is taught through listening to poetry. The text in question is Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* written in the 19th century. I use this text to explore the way in which Shan *lik long* literature draws on but differs from Pali and Burmese literature, as well as to look at the use of Pali and Burmese, including Burmese loanwords, in Shan. Taking this particular text, a Shan version of the *locus classicus* for Theravada meditation in the canon as the focus of study, allows us to investigate the relationship between Shan Buddhism and Pali and Burmese forms particularly well because of the text’s Pali and Burmese precursors and parallels. The thesis explores the genre and distinctive characteristics of *lik long* poetic literature through a close reading of this text and attempts to explain how it captures the imagination of the specifically Shan audience. Examining this text also allows us to challenge two other popular views in academic writings. One is the assumption that writing in the

vernacular is automatically accessible. The other is that Shan Buddhism is somehow ‘heretical.’

1. The Shan People

The Shan are ethnically and linguistically members of the Tai ethnic group to which the Thai and the Laotian also belong. This association is reflected in the various names for this ethnic group when we look at the terms ‘Shan’ and ‘Siam’, and ‘Tai’ and ‘Thai’. There are suggestions that the term ‘Shan’ came from the same root of ‘Siam’ and ‘Syam’. Of them, ‘Syam’ seems to be the older term in that it is found in early Southeast Asian inscriptions. Saimong Mangrai, with reference to G.H. Luce’s work, points out some traces of the word ‘Syam’ found in some early Southeast Asian inscriptions, such as the Cham inscriptions of 11th CE, the bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat of 12th CE and the Pagan inscriptions of 1120 CE. Some, however, claim that the word ‘syam’ originated in Mon language, meaning ‘stranger’ or ‘foreigner’ by tracing the etymology back to the Mon word “rhamanna” (“rham” in Burmese). Still others are of the opinion that ‘Shan’, ‘Siam’ or ‘Syam’ is derived from the Pali or Sanskrit word ‘syama’, which literally means ‘golden’ or ‘dark’ colour and that is how the Tai people, who have such skin colour, were called by their neighbours.¹ In Burmese, they write ‘syam’ or ‘rham’ and pronounce ‘shan’, and the British followed them, adopting this name for the group, when they ruled over Burma in 19th CE. Thus, it is likely that through the British, and on the basis of Burmese pronunciation, the Tai people in Burma became known to the world as ‘Shan.’ From the Thai perspective the Shan are identified as a sub-group of the Tai ethnic groups by the name Tai Yai, which means ‘great Tai’ or, in other words, ‘original Tai.’ In this thesis, even though Shan refer to themselves as Tai, I shall – for the sake of clarity at the international level – use the term ‘Tai’ to refer to the broader group of Tai peoples and ‘Shan’ to refer to the specific group.

Today, most of the Shan inhabit the ‘Shan State’, the North-East of the Union of Burma/Myanmar (henceforth Burma).² Over 60,000 sq miles in size, compared to England

¹ For more opinion and discussion on the terms Tai, Thai, Siam and Shan, see Luce 1969, vol 1, p. 27; Saimong Mangrai 1965, pp. 16, 44; Sāsananda 1986, pp. 16-19; Terwiel 2003, *Shan Manuscripts*, pp. 9-15; and Sukhaminda 2008, pp.1-18.

² Many important names and official places had been changed under the rule of the military junta who took over power in 1988. In 1989, the formal name Burma was changed into Myanmar. However, political parties and democracy campaigners both within and outside Burma refuse to use the new name as the changes were made without consultation with the people. I shall use the term ‘Burma’ throughout this thesis.

and Wales combined, the current Shan State is the biggest state in the Union of Burma. It is about a quarter of the whole country of the Union, which comprises 261,218 sq miles (676,552 sq km), although its population is only about eight million, less than 20 % of the total population of Burma, which is 54.3 millions and the majority of which are the Burmans.³ Outside the Shan State, there are some groups of Shan speaking inhabitants scattered throughout other parts of Burma and neighbouring countries, such as Tai Khamti or Khamti Shan in the Sagaing division, Tai Ahom in the northeast of India, Dai people in the Yunnan province of southern China, and the Tai Yai people in northern Thailand. Note that they are known in different names due to their different regions.

2. The Study of Shan Buddhism

Over ninety per cent of the Shan people share a belief in Buddhism in common with their neighbours of Southeast Asia, such as the Burman, the Chinese, the Thai, the Laotian, the Mon and the Khmer. Although it is not known when the Shan had their first contact with Buddhism, their legendary accounts and early historical sketches hint at the arrival of Buddhism in the Shan regions before the earliest date of Shan written records still extant. They also indicate that the Shan – in parallel to other Buddhists throughout the region – believe their Buddhism to date back to the time of the historical Buddha. Some date the reception of Theravada Buddhism to the region to the 16th century under Burmese influence and like to see Shan as retaining something essentially un-Theravada or ‘heretical’. However, there is no evidence of the former beyond Burmese chronicle claims,⁴ nor have we in the work for this thesis found any evidence of the latter. Rather we have found complex texts reflecting an in-depth knowledge of advance *Abhidhamma* such as that found in the Pali commentarial traditions that we associate most with notions of orthodoxy, with a holding to the distinctively Theravada interpretation of the make up of the universe and the path to *nibbāna*, and we have found many people, lay and monk, who dedicate large amounts of their time, especially as they become senior members of the community, to acquiring an understanding of such texts and doctrine.

³ The term ‘Burman’ is used here to refer to the ethnic ‘Burmans’ who comprise about 68% of the population of Burma. The term ‘Burmese’ is used in a more general and broader sense when referring to the Burmese language, history, state, culture, etc. For details of the country’s ethnic population, see <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrls/ldc/MTR/Myanmar.pdf> (2004/05) and <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bm.html>.

⁴ Scott 2009, p. 156.

To state that I have yet to find evidence for this ‘heretical’ Buddhism is not, however, to say that Shan Buddhism is identical to that found among the majority ethnic groups in either Burma or Thailand. The uniqueness of Shan Buddhism can be seen in the form of its ritual practices and the richness and complexity of its Buddhist literature, and the manuscript culture through which it is mostly preserved. The alluring theory that Shan Buddhism is ‘heretical’ has remained untested till now, however, as their religious practices most related to doctrine and, especially, their literature have been far less studied compared with that of their neighbours, especially that of the Thai and Burmese. This has remained the case for over a century, despite the fact that there were a few Western scholars who showed great interest in Shan in the early 19th century CE and made observations that I still find useful in undertaking research on the Shan today. Exceptions to such silence have come not from Buddhologists or textual scholars, but from anthropologists. Nicola Tannenbaum and Nancy Eberhardt, especially, have documented with great sensitivity the rituals, everyday beliefs and rites of passage of Shan Buddhism in northern Thailand.⁵ Examining the more complex doctrines and literature of Shan Buddhism, however, is a subject which falls between textual scholarship and anthropology, since it requires an examination of texts barely catalogued (see Chapter One on cataloguing projects), let alone studied, and of which virtually no examples have been translated into a European language before now. Not being in Pali or one of the better known Southeast Asian languages, they have remained a mystery to scholars even of Theravada, and as such this thesis is a further extension of a recent move in Theravada studies towards the consideration of regional vernacular materials in their social and religious context such as that by Justin McDaniel and Daniel Veidlinger.⁶ In contrast to those works, however, I include an in-depth study of the literary qualities and content of a complex and previously untranslated work. As an aside, I would like to point out that the absence of in-depth study of Shan literature other than by Shan themselves in conjunction with the recent blossoming of cataloguing projects (see Chapter One and Appendix One) has meant that an attempt to create a standardised transcription of Shan into Roman script is only a recent and ongoing discussion. I offer a transcription system, which I use in this thesis, and give an update of the current situation in Appendix One. Meanwhile from an ethnographic perspective, to look in any detail at the significance and use of *lik long* beyond a basic description of their presence on ritual and festival occasions requires more immersion in

⁵ Tannenbaum and Eberhardt, both speak and write Shan and work on research in Maehongson since late 1970s and early 1980s respectively, see more details of their works in the bibliography of this thesis.

⁶ McDaniel 2008 and Veidlinger 2006.

texts, monasticism and long-term participation in a narrow range of activities than such fieldwork either allows for or encourages. My study, therefore, specifically focuses on this gap between the textualist's and anthropologist's purview. My own training from a young age in Shan, Burmese and Sri Lankan monastic and university education as well as the kind of instruction of and close listening to traditional *zare*, in conjunction with my exposure to modern Theravada studies at SOAS, have placed me in a unique position to attempt this. At the same time my findings challenge so many assumptions and raise so many further questions that it has been hard to know at times which aspects are most deserving of representation.

In the past ten years Shan Buddhism has begun to receive greater representation, with scholars in Australia, Europe, Japan, Thailand and the USA paying greater attention, albeit still in small numbers. Recently collaborations by Shan interested in the preservation, definition and revival of Shan culture with such scholars have led to a greater awareness of the subject internationally. Such collaboration ranges from the participation of *zare* in academic research projects, as shall be described further in Chapter One and the "First International Conference on Shan Buddhism and Culture held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (SOAS) in December 2007, a joint venture between SOAS, the Shan Cultural Association UK and well-wishers. It attracted over 20 speakers and led to a dedicated volume of essays bringing together scholars from disparate fields and methodological approaches, an audience of c.150 to its papers, and over 800 people to the two evenings of cultural events that framed it.⁷ I like to reflect that both events, in which I was involved, have led to more attention being given to the subject of the Shan, including with further international conferences, such as the one held in October 2009 at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand and forty-one research papers were presented at the conference, and projects such as the Bodleian Library's *Revealing Hidden Collections*, mentioned further below.⁸

⁷ Selected papers of the conference were published as a special issue of the journal of *Contemporary Buddhism* vol. 10, no. 1 (summer 2009).

⁸ Selected papers of the conference were published as a special issue of the *Journal of Asian Review*, vol. 22 (2010) and also as a book entitled *Shan and Beyond: Essays on Shan Archeology, Anthropology, History, Politics, Religion and Human Rights*, Proceedings of Conference on Shan Studies, 15-17 October 2009, Chulalongkorn University, published by the Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 2011.

3. The Place of Shan Literature within the Study of the Shan

A number of scholars who have done relatively extensive research on the history of the Tai race also provide general accounts of Tai language, culture and customs. Nevertheless, from the historical perspective also, compared with other subjects about Shan people, very little work has been done on Shan literature, particularly the early Shan poetic Buddhist literature. I will now – having identified the gap between anthropology and Buddhology above - provide some more detail on why the literature of the Shan might be challenging even for those who are otherwise using historical sources in Shan language, by pointing out the challenging complexity of Shan literature.

Ornamented in a poetic style, which poses a great challenge even for the composer and reader who recites to an audience aloud, Shan poetic literature is an even more demanding form of writing for its audience, let alone outside researchers.⁹ The compiler faces the sophistication, for instance, of the rhyming across lines and the reciter with the skills acquired only through highly specialized training. The metrical forms of Shan poetry can be perplexing in their variety with different types of metre, each with different names corresponding to the rhymes and tones, the keys for the making of Shan poetry. A text can be composed in a way that the reader must develop a keen sense of anticipation about the metres and rhymes that lie immediately ahead. In my interviews with Shan ‘temple-sleepers’ (See Chapter Two), they revealed that they could not initially understand the poetry that they listened to during their extended stays in the temple, only acquiring the ability over the years of their increased participation of such study. In my interviews with highly regarded poet-readers (see Chapter One), they revealed that they had started their intensive study to become *zare* mainly when they were very young, from the age of seven to thirteen, even though they often were only regarded as experienced *zare* after the age of 40 or so, once they had also reached the status as being ‘seniors.’¹⁰

The most complex and sophisticated form of Shan poetic literature is called *lik long*, which is composed by a learned man (or in rare, but famous cases, a woman) to be recited aloud to both literate and illiterate listeners. While a written form, its main method of preservation depends much on the oral transmission that occasions is copying. For that reason, *lik long* may even be considered as oral literature in a broader definition, which

⁹ Also see in Crosby and Khur-Yearn (2010), pp. 1-27 and more discussion in Chapter One.

¹⁰ Tannenbaum 1995, pp. 161-162.

includes recitation of epic poems.¹¹ It is the place specifically of *lik long* literature, i.e. the practices that revolve around its production and performance, which is the focus of this thesis.

4. Research Approach and Fieldwork

I have pursued the research that informs this thesis first as a monk, a Shan monk hailing from Burma and then – after studies in Burma and Sri Lanka – coming to England to do my doctorate; and then as a librarian specialising in Southeast Asia at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. As such the period over which I conducted my research is quite extensive. My first fieldwork research was conducted in 2004-05.¹² I spent about a month in Shan State visiting at nine important places for my research. Five of them were meditation centres while others were Buddhist temples where I observed Shan religious rituals and came to know of collections of Shan manuscripts, some of which were hundred years old. I also met some scholar monks and meditation masters and had discussions with them about my thesis interests. There were many other places I intended to visit but I could not do so for the transportation system and the roads were in poor condition and the political and military situation was also dangerous.

At this time I also spent about two months in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand, visiting two Shan temples. One is Wat Papao in the Chiang Mai city where I met a young Shan poet, Zare Ka Kham, who was teaching the art of reading Shan poetry to students there. The other temple is Wat Tiyasathan in Mae Taeng district where about two hundred Shan manuscripts are preserved. As the manuscripts were uncatalogued, I went through them one by one and noted down the titles and dates. This initial work revealed an extraordinary range of texts, some unknown elsewhere and containing almost no duplicates, and so became the focus of the cataloguing project in 2009 that I describe more fully in Chapter One. In 2005, I also visited the centre of EFEO (l'École française d'Extrême-Orient) in Chiang Mai and the library of Chiang Mai University where I acquired useful access to western works on Shan including some rare works essential for my thesis. I also visited the library of the FPLF (Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation) in Bangkok, where – thanks to Peter Skilling – I was able

¹¹ For more information on oral literature, see www.oralliterature.org/about/oralliterature.

¹² My fieldwork research in 2004-05 was jointly funded by the University of London's Research Fund and the SOAS Additional Fieldwork Award.

to examine the collection of over three hundred Shan manuscripts kept there. My main aim of visiting the FPLF was to find a Shan version of the *Satipaṭṭhāna* texts found in the Pali canon and an ongoing source of inspiration for commentaries and practice, especially among the different Buddhist groups of Burma, for by this time I had the idea to examine how meditation prior to the setting up of specialised centres had been transmitted. However, as the manuscripts were not yet catalogued, I went through them one by one, noting down the title of each manuscript, which I hoped would also make a small contribution towards the cataloguing of the collection. I returned to London on 21st March 2005.

In 2006, with the support from a Jordan's travel grant, I was able to make my second research trip to Southeast Asia. During this trip, my interest having focused on the use of poetry in Shan Buddhist meditation practice, I presented a paper on the 'Temple Sleepers and Poetic Literature, a Shan Worldview' at Burma Studies Conference held at the National University of Singapore, and recommenced my earlier fieldwork in Northern Thailand. Especially, I dedicated time to listing the manuscripts at Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng and observing the ritual practices of temple sleeping at Wat Piang Luang and Wat Pang Mu.¹³

In 2007, I took up my post as subject librarian for South-East Asia and Pacific Islands in SOAS library, but continued to work on this subject, including by giving papers at two conferences: one at the South-East Asian Librarian Group's annual meeting in Marseille in 2008 and another at the EUROSEAS Conference in Gothenburg in 2010.

In 2009, I made two research trips to Thailand, in connection with the group project described a little more in Chapter One, which was funded by the British Academy Committee ASEASUK in July-August, and partly the International Conference on Shan Studies held at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, mentioned above.¹⁴ In 2010, I led a project of work on the collection of manuscripts at Wat Papao. I was told by Phra Inta, the abbot of Wat Papao, that the collection was catalogued in Thai by Chiang Mai University's Thai-German Project, some 20 years ago. A copy of the catalogue was kept at the temple and another was kept at Chiang Mai University but the copy that was kept at Wat Papao has been missing. Fortunately, each of the manuscripts has a label containing the code numbers, titles of the texts and the year of composing or copying. Therefore, I decided to create a list of the

¹³ The fieldwork result was presented at SSEASR Conference, held at Mahidol, Bangkok, 2007.

¹⁴ This resulted in two papers: Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2009 and 2010.

manuscripts by typing those data of information into the computer. There are 471 manuscript texts; most of them are on Buddhism, such as *Jātaka*, folk tale, Buddhist doctrine, *Abhidhamma*, ethics, life of the Buddha, chanting and Pali grammatical works. They were written in old Shan scripts, also mixed with some Burmese and Pali in Burmese scripts. The list of the manuscripts is included in the appendices/Appendix Two, since it allows one to see the range of themes to which Shan Buddhists have given their attention in their sponsorship and composition of *lik long*.

As a part of this project, we also digitized seven *lik long* manuscripts. The seven *lik long* texts are: 1. *Satipaṭṭhān* (s.e.1260), 2. *Satipaṭṭhān* (s.e. 1291), 3. *Maeng Si Hu Ha Ta*, 4. *Brahmavihāra* (s.e. 1239), 5. *Nang Kin Pu*, 6. *Ma Hok To* [‘the six horses’], and 7. *Sutta Ho Tham (Ho Tham Zu)*.

Throughout all this work I continued to observe the use of these texts especially in the temple-sleeping practice described later in this thesis. In 2009 I was able to conduct extensive interviews with temple-sleepers and the poet-readers (see Chapter One) who compose, copy and perform these texts. Several more interviews were conducted on my behalf by Zaokhu Devinda Yeehsai in Shan State, allowing me to see detailed differences between audience expectations across the two regions, with a continued greater interest in the more complex topics of *Abhidhamma*, doctrine and meditation in Shan State, in comparison with Thailand.

Alongside this archival and fieldwork research I steadily translated Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* into English, annotating features of the writing style as well as aspects of doctrine, etc. I then conducted both style and source criticism, comparing Amat Long’s text with the Pali canonical version of the text, the commentary by Buddhaghosa which is partially embedded in Amat Long’s version, as well as with Cakkinda’s Burmese *nissaya* which Amat Long also used and cited, being a great admirer of Cakkinda’s work.

I have therefore combined archival research, fieldwork, and lower and higher textual criticism in this work. I hope that it will become clear that through this combination of approaches I have established the nature of this type of text and its use, and identified that it represents a unique method for transmitting meditation teaching. I do, however, have one regret, particularly given the importance at this time both of meditation and of preserving Shan culture, and that is that I was unable, on the basis of this work, to also give time to identifying whether – though based on the same Pali canonical text – there is any significant difference in the actual method of practising *satipaṭṭhāna* between the new meditation centres

and the temple-sleepers, or if the difference is in the method of delivering the instruction only.¹⁵ My hope is that this work highlights the place of Shan classical poetic literature, and an appreciation of the rich history and great endeavour that has supported its production, as contemporary Shan communities and practice continue to face an uncertain future negotiating their current socio-economic position particularly in the sociopolitical climate of Burma.

5. An Overview of the Chapters of this Thesis

In the Chapter One, I discuss *lik long*, meaning ‘great text’, as a unique feature of Shan Buddhism. I explore the religious activities that occasion the sponsoring and reading of *lik long*, such as a funeral, the inauguration of a new house, and the practice of temple sleeping on holy days. I observe the specific choices of genre for specific occasions, and the stories known by Shan that encourage these choices and the activity of donating manuscripts. I look at the recitation specialists for these texts, called *zare*, their training in the specific ways of reciting this poetry, and the complexity of the rhyming systems and writing systems. I explain the materials such as ink and paper used for the physical creation of *lik long*. I also observe that, although this tradition of poetic performance is still preserved in many parts of Shan/Tai communities today, there has been extensive loss of textual collections and there are signs that this tradition is under the threat of dying out for a range of reasons.

In Chapter Two, I discuss the presence of two types of access to meditation in Shan Buddhism. One form takes place at the local Buddhist monastery during the ritual of ‘temple sleeping’ and the ritual of listening to poetic literature on Buddhist holy days, the focus of this thesis. The other form usually takes place at the intensive meditation retreats provided by meditation centres introduced from the 1930s onwards. The types of meditation are in a sense similar, being ultimately based on the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the Pali canon and its commentarial traditions. However, there is a connection between them both and considerations of Shan identity, and we find that while one might see the modern intensive practice as a threat to traditional poetic literature, the advocates of one are often also the advocates of the other. I then go on to explain how temple-sleeping is undertaken by members of the Shan community and how the recitation of poetic texts on meditation fits into that practice. The chapter then goes on to identify Shan poetic texts on the subject of

¹⁵ Throughout this thesis I have assumed a general familiarity with term such as Buddha, Dhamma, Nibbāna, *satipaṭṭhāna*, *karma*, mindfulness, insight meditation, *etc.* as these term circulated in the Anglophone word and appear in English dictionaries. I therefore only explain terms that are less familiar.

meditation before identifying those that specifically deal with mindfulness practice, *satipaṭṭhāna*, providing Shan versions of the canonical texts embedding various forms of commentary. I then identify the focus of the next two chapters of the thesis, the 19th-century classical Shan poet Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, one of the eleven such texts identified.

Chapter Three is the longest chapter in the thesis, containing what – to my knowledge – is the first complete translation of a *lik long* into English. The translation is that of the 19th-century classical Shan poet Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* with extensive annotations. Given the great length of the text I have had to move a section to Appendix Three so that there is room enough within the word limit of the thesis for the discursive and analytical material found in the other chapters.

In Chapter Four I conduct a comparative textual analysis of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*. Discussion includes the use of beautiful words and phrases in *lik long* literature. The terms used to achieve this rich style are not only Shan but also loanwords adopted from the Burmese as well as Pali. I assess their use in terms of Burmese-Shan political history but also in terms of the desirability of these loanwords for both essential terms and decorative features. I point out the difficulty that this poses to the listeners, and even to some readers. I note also recent attempts to create Burmese-free Shan writings in recent years, due to the political and military pressures experienced by the Shan since the breaking of the Panglong agreement.

In the Conclusion, I bring together my findings in order to characterise Shan *lik long*. In particular, I assess the significance for our understanding of Theravada and of Shan religion of this first in-depth study of a Shan *lik long* in the context of studying the religious practices that revolve around their copying and reading, especially practice of temple sleeping.

The thesis has a number of appendices.

In Appendix One I provide a transcription table and not the ongoing, current development of a standardised transcription for the Library of Congress.

In Appendix Two I provide the list of works from the library of Wat Papao mentioned above, so that readers may see the range of texts included in a typical Shan temple library, with its minority of Pali texts in Burmese scripts and its majority of Shan texts which are also almost all likewise on Theravada Buddhist themes, just as the monks of the temples are in

Theravada Buddhist traditions. Although this information is in an appendix I use the evidence to support my questioning of notions of Shan Theravada as heretical (See Conclusion).

In Appendix Three I place a section of the translation of Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. I wanted to ensure that this thesis for the first time made such a text available in translation in full. The size and the nature of the repetition to be found in such texts is an important feature as it testifies to the degree of work involved for the author in making the material available at several levels to a Shan audience. It also testifies to the endurance needed by practitioners to listen to the entire text, let alone take it up as practice, two issues addressed by the author throughout his text with his admonitions to the audience to listen and his concern that they might not be able to continue and even a rather unusual, sudden appearance of a break for this reason (See chapter Three). Yet the entire text is so long that had I retained all of it within the word limit for the thesis I would have had no room for any of the contextualisation and analysis. I mark where the extraction is taken from in Chapter Three.

In Appendix Four I have provided in Shan script the formulae used by temple sleepers transcribed and translated in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER ONE

Shan *Lik Long* Poetic Literature: Tradition, Transmission and Threats to Survival

1.1. *Lik long*: Shan Poetic Dhamma

Shan Buddhists use a form of poetic literature to convey Buddhist teachings in an interesting, or special, way. These poetic texts are read in the context of religious or social activity on variety of occasions. The texts are called in Shan *lik long*, ‘great writing/text’. *Lik long* is also known as ‘*lik langka long*’, ‘the text of great poetry’, on account of its illustriousness and complexity.

The term ‘*langka*’ for Shan poetic works is probably derived from the Sanskrit or Pali word ‘*alāṅkāra*’, literally meaning ‘decoration’ or ‘ornamentation.’ It also means ‘poetics’ as found for example in the title of the 12th-century work the *Subodhālaṅkāra* by Sāriputta, which is a book of rules for poetic writing, written under the influence of Sanskrit *alāṅkāraśāstra*. Hence, *langka* indicates ‘decorated/ornamented writing’ or ‘writing that is decorated in a poetic style.’ The composer or reciter of poetic texts is usually called *zare*, which literally means ‘clerk,’ but refers to a poet or poetry reader in this context.¹⁶ The type of *lik long* poetic literature used in Shan ritual performance covers a variety of subjects, from the secular to the religious (see Fig. 1.1.), histories, folk tales, and manuals for particular events such as the ceremony of ordination, the anniversary of a temple, honorary ceremonies, etc. (see Fig. 1. 2.)

¹⁶ While the term *zare* has several meanings it usually refers to an educated person, such as poet, writer, secretary and ex-monk. Although the term was widely used in the 19th and 20th centuries, today it is rarely used in either spoken or written Shan language for poets themselves. Instead, a new term, *Zao Khu Maw* [‘Intellectual’] was introduced in the late 20th century. However, since this latter term often refers specifically to poets the term *zare* does continue to be in use for the poetry reader and the copyist of the poetic literature, some of whom do in fact also compose. The term often appears in the title of such people, as part of their name, e.g. Zare Saw, Zare La Tun, Zare Auto, whom are also mentioned in my discussion in this thesis and in the articles I co-authored with Kate Crosby in 2009 and 2010.



**Fig. 1. 1. Poetic Recitation at the Religious Practice of Temple Sleeping
(Photo: Jotika Khur-Yearn, taken at Wat Huoi Pha, Maehongson, Thailand, 2009)**



**Fig. 1. 2. A Shan monk reading his poetry especially composed for the ceremony
in honour of monks who passed higher examination in Buddhist studies
(Photo: Jotika Khur-Yearn, taken at Panglong, Shan State, 2004.)**

There is a great variety of Shan *lik long* poetic literature, as I have experienced during my early education at Shan monasteries and also discovered at Shan (Tai Yai) temple collections during my fieldwork research in Northern Thailand.¹⁷ This richness and variety can also be seen through examining Lung Khun Mahā's *Puen Khu Maw Tai Hok Zao* and Barend J. Terwiel and Chaichuen Kamdaengyodtai's *The Shan Manuscripts*, Part I. The former is the most important history of Shan literature and means, 'History of the six Tai/Shan intellectuals']. The latter is a catalogue of Shan manuscripts in German library collections.¹⁸ I shall refer to both these works in this thesis. I have also included as Appendix Three a list of the works held at Wat (temple) Papao in Chiang Mai to give an illustration of their range and the extent to which the choice of texts copied covers typical Theravada Buddhist themes from popular narrative to demanding doctrinal and *Abhidhamma* treatises, even though all are composed for public performance (see below).

Despite the fact that the tradition of poetic literature and its ritual of recitation has been practised in Shan Buddhist communities for centuries, in recent decades the tradition has been under threat for a number of reasons, a topic to which we shall return in the section on 'the Physical Preservation *Lik Long* Literature' later in this chapter. One aspect influencing the care needed to preserve this tradition, however, is its unique characteristics and complexity. Therefore in this chapter, I shall discuss the tradition, significance and characteristics of Shan literature with a primary focus on Shan poetic *lik long* literature in which unique forms of Shan Buddhism and tradition are preserved.

My discussion will be based mostly on fieldwork research conducted between 2004 and 2010 (detailed above in the Introduction) among the Shan communities of northern Thailand, although the practice is also familiar to me from my own background in the Southern areas of Shan State, on the Burma Union side of the border, where I also conducted a limited amount of fieldwork. In addition to fieldwork on my own, I also participated in a SOAS-based group project on Shan Buddhism during which we conducted cataloguing of *lik long* temple collections and conducted fieldwork to assess the changing tradition of Shan Buddhism in an area either side of the Burma-Thailand border. This project took place in the summer of

¹⁷ For more information on Shan temple collections in Northern Thailand, see the sections on the 'Commissioning of *Lik Long* Manuscripts' and the 'Physical Preservation of *Lik Long* later in this chapter.

¹⁸ Khun Mahā 1970, *Puen Khu Maw Tai Hok Zao* (reprinted 1996) and Terwiel 2003, *The Shan Manuscripts*, Part I.

2009.¹⁹ The group fieldwork that summer took place mainly at six Shan temples in northern Thailand. Part of the group's aim was to examine how the Shan have (or have not) managed to preserve both the performance and the traditional manuscripts of Shan poetic literature, particularly in Chiang Mai and Maehongson provinces of Thailand and over the border in the Mueang Ton area of Burma. The area in Thailand is an area that has established Shan communities but has also over recent decades received new Shan immigrants from neighbouring areas across the border in the Shan State, Burma, where the turmoil of the recent decades is a continuation of the insecurity over the past few centuries, with almost continuous wars and insurgency. We were interested in how *lik long* material has been preserved and whether the education of the recitation specialists, the *zare*, is continuing. The oral histories we recorded included discussion of the impact of a whole series of wars and movements of peoples in the area, and made the continued preservation of this complex literature, particularly in an area where Shan is not a language of administration or government education, seem particularly impressive. I shall draw on some of my group's findings in the final part of this chapter, particularly on the tradition of *lik long* literature and the ritual of listening to poetic texts.²⁰

1.2. The Tradition and Context of *Lik Long* poetic Literature

There are debates among scholars about the date of the earliest Shan literature, including *lik long* poetic works. Lung Khun Mahā, whose history, *Puen khu maw lik Tai hok zao* published in 1970, I mentioned above, based his research in part on interviews with local people. In addition he gathered from manuscripts information such as the bibliographical details of authors, which commonly appear in the introductions to or, sometimes in the conclusion of Shan poetic works. Through this work he provided a clearer picture of the dates and lineages of some key poetic authors, taking us back nearly five centuries. For the dates of

¹⁹ The SOAS-based research project was funded by the British Academy committee for ASEASUK, and the group fieldwork was led by Dr Kate Crosby. Other participants included including Dr Sai Pe, Ven. Nandavamsa of Kesi, Ven. Indācāra of Panglong, and a number of *zare* in northern Thailand, particularly a group in Maehongson which is led by Zare Saw, who was originally from Kun Hing, Shan State. The main *zare* to work on the project were Zare Saw himself and Pa Mule. In Maehongson we were also joined temporarily by Prof. Nicola Tannenbaum and Dr Nancy Eberhardt who co-interviewed with us and with whom we jointly observed a *poi haw lik*. Also as part of the project, Ven. Devinda Yehsai (Nam Kham) has conducted interview with 14 well-known *zare* in different areas of Shan State in 2010.

²⁰ Crosby, Kate and Khur-Yearn, Jotika (2010) 'Poetic Dhamma and the Zare: Traditional Styles of Teaching Theravada Amongst The Shan Of Northern Thailand', in *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 7-10.

the classical authors of *lik long* provided in the first edition of Lung Khun Mahā in 1970, see Fig. 1. 3. below.²¹

	Names	Year of birth	Year of death	Age
1	Zao Thammatinna (လတ်;ထမ်း,မတီခင်,ခေ)	1541	1640	99
2	Zao Kang Suea (လတ်;ကင်း,သို့ဝိ)	1787	1881	94
3	Zao Kawli (လတ်;ကျေး,လီ.)	1847	1910	63
4	Nang Kham Ku (လတ်;ခေါင်း,ခမ်း,ရှ.)	1853	1918	64
5	Zao Amat Long (လတ်;ကမာဝမ်း,လှိုင်)	1854	1905	51
6	Zao Naw Kham (လတ်;ခေါင်း,ခမ်း)	1856	1895	39

Fig. 1. 3. Six Shan Classical Authors recorded by Lung Khun Mahā (1970)

It is worth noting that one of the 6 poets, Nang Kham Ku (1853-1918), is a female *zare*, a rare woman scholar of her time, who learned from her father Zao Kang Suea (1787-1881) to become a poet. During our fieldworks in Maehongson in 2009, we met another female *zare*, Pa Mule, as we have discussed in detail in our article (co-authored with Kate Crosby): *Poetic Dhamma and the Zare: Traditional Styles of Teaching Theravada amongst the Shan of Northern Thailand*.²²

While the origin of Shan *lik long* poetic literature remains a subject for further study, and may indeed be difficult to pursue due to the way texts are replaced with new versions, we can at least confirm that the Shan tradition of poetic works was already flourishing in the 16th century CE. One of the six famous, classical authors of *lik long*, Zao Dhammadinna, who remains popular to this day, was born in 1541 CE and died in 1640 CE.²³ One of the most well known poetic works written by Dhammadinna is *Sutta Nibbāna* [‘The Discourse on Nibbāna’], also called *Sutta maun tham* [‘The Essence of the Discourses’], *Sutta Nibbāna* or *Sutta Maun Tham* continues to be regarded as the best gift for relatives to offer to the temple

²¹ In his second edition published in 1985, Lung Khun Mahā added three scholars, namely, Zao Worakhae and Zao Paññābhoga and Zare Kham Pang and become nine scholars. It is worth noting that of the latter three scholars, Zao Paññābhoga is traditional poet, but he is added to the list because of his leadership for the Project of translating the Burmese Nissaya version of Tipataka texts into Shan version and his reform of Shan monastic education in the 1950s, which has so much impacts on the modern Shan monastic education system.

²² Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010, in *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 8-10.

²³ Khun Mahā, 1970, *Puen Khu Maw Tai Hok Zao*, pp. 23-33.

as part of the memorial services for their departed relative and hence one of the favourite texts for recitation. I have discussed more on offering texts as gift for memorial services in the section of the commissioning of *lik long* manuscripts, further below.

The date of *lik long* literature clearly goes back even further than the time of Dhammadinna, since he represents an established tradition. Moreover, in an introduction to one of his texts, Dhammadinna aspired to be ‘as intelligent as his teacher’, who was the abbot of Wan Khang temple of Ze Hak, Mueang Ting district.²⁴ This description suggests that Dhammadinna’s teacher also was an established poet, within an existing tradition, yet we do not know of his work. With this last point, we can assume that the Shan poetic literature may have existed long before the time of Dhammadinna, yet for how long is for now a matter of conjecture. Such mention of teachers is in fact a common feature of Shan poetic works, which, as already mentioned, often contain information on the biographies of the authors in the introduction or – less commonly – in the conclusion of the text. Thus, while we are not in a position to project the history of *lik long* further back at present, there is a possibility of tracing the lineage of early Shan *lik long* poets by coordinated reading of different texts of *lik long* texts, a task which may become more feasible with the on-going cataloguing projects that I describe above and also later in this chapter.

1.3. The Commissioning of *Lik Long* Manuscripts: Production and Collection

The commissioning of Shan *lik long* texts and manuscripts grew out of a traditional Shan emphasis on Buddhist merit-making. This centuries old tradition has resulted in collections of *lik long* manuscripts, which can be found everywhere all over Shan State, in temples as well as in peoples’ houses. There are very few Shan homes where you do not find manuscripts. Nowadays, Shan manuscripts can also be found in the special collections of research libraries around the world, such as those in the German holdings catalogued by Terwiel and Khamdaengyodtai (2003) mentioned above. In Bangkok, there is a special collection of Shan manuscripts in the collection of the Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation’s Library, still waiting for cataloguing, although I had made note for the title for most of the manuscripts during my fieldwork in 2005. In terms of holdings in the UK, I shall mention some of these when talking about the manuscripts I used for this thesis. An unpublished

²⁴ Wan Khang village, Zehak sub-district, Mueang Ting (Mengding) district is now in Gengma County, Yunnan Province, Southern China. Khun Mahā, 1970, pp. 23-25.

catalogue of the Cambridge University Library's holdings was compiled by Sao Saimong Mangrai, a Shan scholar who worked on the Scott Collections at Cambridge in the early 1980s,²⁵ and both the Oxford and Cambridge holdings are to be catalogued by a UK-based research project funded by one of the biggest sponsors of Buddhist studies in the world today, the Dhammakaya Foundation.²⁶

A common way in which the Shan promote the tradition of *lik long* literature is the ritual of memorial service for a dead person.²⁷ Part of the memorial service is associated with text donation and recitation. For example, when a member of a family has died, the remaining members of the family request a *zare* to produce a new copy of their favourite text or a particularly auspicious text for such an occasion and donate it to the temple at the memorial service. It is a tradition in Shan Buddhism that a manuscript is produced in commemoration of a family member who died in the past year. However, sponsors may also want to have a new text available, in which case they also ask the *zare* to compose and have a special first-reading of that new copy. Even these new texts are mostly connected with commemorating the dead. They are not copied for the funeral itself, where an existing copy of a different text may be recited, but commissioned even at a later date. The traditional memorial service in which a ceremony of reading and listening to these new texts usually takes place in the last fifteen days of the annual monastic rains retreat. It is the time of the year when the new texts are donated to the temple, in order to commemorate relatives who have died in the past year.²⁸ This tradition of donating a Buddhist text at a memorial service is alive and continued today in many parts of the Shan communities of Shan State, Burma, particularly in the countryside, although it is extinct in some other areas where Shan

²⁵ For more information on Sao Saimong Mangrai, see <http://mangraisofkengtung.blogspot.com/2007/04/sao-saimong-mangrai.html>; Andrew Skilton gave a paper on this collection highlighting the work of Sao Saimong Mangrai on it at the Shan New Year one-day conference on 27 November 2011, held at SOAS.

²⁶ Key members of this project include Dr Gillian Evison (Director), Dr Andrew Skilton (Manager), and myself (Shan specialist and Shan liaison). Other large sponsors of Buddhist studies internationally in recent years have been the Numata Foundation and the Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation.

²⁷ I had an opportunity to present my paper, 'A Book for the Dead: a Shan tradition of preserving manuscripts,' at the Burmese Studies Conference at the Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois, 2008. I would like to thank the organisers, particularly Professor Dr Catherine Raymon, Professor Dr John Hartman, Ven. Sudhamma (Du Sai Noi) and Ven. Dr Milinda for their sponsorship of my travel and accommodation.

²⁸ Existing copies of manuscripts on Buddhist sermons or meditation are used for poetic performance on holy days where the *zare* recites to the 'temple sleepers'. I discuss 'temple sleepers' in Chapter Two.

populations are mixed with other cultures or have more contact with modernity.²⁹

As I mentioned above, the *lik long* text *Sutta Nibbāna* has had a great influence on Shan tradition of donating a text for the dead. According to tradition, and as recorded in the text itself, by donating this treatise, *Sutta Nibbāna*, the dead person will receive the benefit of this merit and be reborn in a better world.³⁰ The story in the *Sutta Nibbāna* is that during the time of Buddha Vipassī – one of the former Buddha’s of this universe³¹ - there was a rich couple who had two daughters. After they died they became black hungry ghosts. So one night they appeared to their beloved daughters in a dream, asking them to go to the Buddha Vipassī and ask whether anything could be done for them to get them out of their terrible lives. The Buddha Vipassī then told the dutiful daughters to donate the *Sutta Nibbāna*, the scripture so precious that even the Buddha bows down before it in worship. The two daughters, having heard this, called a writer skilled in copying the scriptures to write for them a copy of the *Sutta Nibbāna*, which they then donated to a temple. Their parents, the ghosts, gained the benefit instantly, changing their bodies into those of a good spirit-prince and -princess. Thus, this story – a version of which was composed by the earliest Shan scholar for whom we have detailed biographical information - authorises the Shan tradition of donating Buddhist texts for a dead person. The practice is not confined to donations of this text, although it is particularly popular, but includes other texts on religious themes. It is in particular an outcome of this practice that copies of *lik long* manuscripts are found everywhere in Shan communities, even though they are also copied for other occasions and reasons.

Copies of Shan *lik long* manuscripts are traditionally kept in three places: in the temple, in private houses and in the personal collection of the *zare*. In the temple, *lik long* are usually kept in chests near the Buddha shrine. It is common in Shan Buddhism that the older the temples are the more manuscripts have been collected. There are a few old temples in Northern Thailand where such collections of manuscripts are found. In Maehongson, Wat Pang Mu, which is believed to be the oldest temple in the area, has collected around 1,000 manuscripts. In Chiang Mai city, Wat Papao is probably the oldest Shan temple and has

²⁹ Nicola Tannenbaum did not see such tradition practised in Thongmakhsan or that area where she has conducted fieldwork research since the 1970s. Note from personal correspondence with Prof. Tannenbaum on this in 2012.

³⁰ Wilbur W. Cochrane observed the tradition of donating this text while doing research for his book *The Shans* in the early 20th century. Cochrane 1915, *The Shans*, pp. 158-161.

³¹ For a list of former Buddhas, see in the introduction of the Jātaka, Online: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/bits/bits002.htm>

collected around 500 manuscripts. Wat Tiyasathan, 40 kilometres to the north of Chiang Mai, was built in 1909 and has collected around 300 manuscripts (Fig. 1. 4).³² However, in the case of Wat Tiyasathan the collection itself is not old, even though the manuscripts it contains are. Rather, this collection was formed relatively recently (from 1970s onwards) by efforts to save Shan manuscript in other temples and houses in the region from neglect or mistreatment.³³



Fig. 1. 4. A collection of *lik long* manuscripts at Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng, Chiang Mai (Photo: Jotika Khur-Yearn, 2004)

As for collections of manuscripts at private houses, the tradition is that sometimes after manuscripts were donated to the temple, with the permission of the head monk, the donors would be allowed to take the texts back and keep them at their own house, usually on Buddha alters or in cabinets under or near the Buddha alters. Some big families have collected as many as 20 texts. During my fieldwork in Panglong, Shan State, in 2004, I had chance to look at a family collection of *lik long* texts at Lung Zang Zingta's house. There are around 30 *lik long* texts in the collection and one among them is the printed version of Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipatṭhān*, published in 1968, the text that is the focus of the textual section of this

³² The survey of these temple collections was made during my fieldwork trips to the areas between 2004 and 2009. On the subsequent follow-up catalogue and fieldwork from the summer of 2009 onwards, see in the section of physical preservation of Shan manuscripts in the later part of this Chapter, and Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010a and 2010b.

³³ Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010, 'Poetic Dhamma and the Zare: Traditional Styles of Teaching Theravada Amongst The Shan Of Northern Thailand', in *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 7-10.

thesis.³⁴ Collections of manuscripts are also found at *zares*' houses and the same pattern applies to *zares* in that the more senior *zare* the more manuscripts usually possesses. It is worth noting that *zare* may also keep duplicate copies of popular texts available for new donors/sponsors, who wish to have a text for certain occasion, with a few blank pages at the front, so that they can add details of the donor/sponsor when one requests that text.³⁵

Since the production of *lik long* manuscripts in any given year bears a relationship to the number of Shan Buddhists who died that year, we can imagine that there is a consistent production of relatively large numbers and from that perspective we must imagine that those we have observed in our fieldwork and cataloguing form but a fraction, although, as I shall discuss later in this chapter, they also are lost to the tourist and art trade, wilful destruction, or reused. This reason for their production and the different places for storing them makes it difficult, if not impossible, to record all of them properly. This situation was nicely observed by W.W. Cochrane in the early 20th century: "When asked about the number of Shan [*lik long*] manuscripts, the answer was 'millions of millions'; they are innumerable."³⁶ Given Cochrane's position as a Christian missionary, we can imagine that the following comment reflects his frustration when – in seeking an equivalent to the Christian bible – he found Shan religious writings to be so extensive: "The Shan writers have been numerous and prolific; they have also been Oriental in the exuberance of imagination, unbridled fancy running riot in a wilderness of words."³⁷

While Cochrane's statement gives some indication of the fame and popularity of *lik long* literature as seen by a western researcher on Shan in the early 20th century, in it we can also see the racism of the time and his personal ignorance of the discipline required to write *lik long* and the tight parameters of the rules for composition. Zare Nanda Pa-Kang, one of the *zares* in Shan State that we interviewed as part of the 2009 project, comments that it is important that a *zare* follows the rules and systems of *lik long*, such as the long and short rhythm, in order to attract a good audience and keep the tradition alive. He emphasises that one cannot follow one's whim. Zare Pa-Kang is one of the most active *zares* for the

³⁴ Even this print version of *Mahāsatipattḥān* becomes a rare material, as when I asked my friends to look for it in the early 2003 (before I registered for PhD research at SOAS), the copy was found only in this private collection.

³⁵ This information was confirmed by Zare Saw (Maehongson) when we had an interview with him during the SOAS-based group research fieldwork in 2009.

³⁶ Cochrane 1910, 'Shan Literature' in Milne 1910, *Shans at Home*, p. 214.

³⁷ Cochrane 1915, *The Shans*, p. 157.

promotion and commissioning of Shan *lik long* literature. He participated in three *lik long* conferences held in 1990, 1993 and 2001 in Panglong, Taunggyi and Kengtung respectively. He also taught the techniques of reading and writing *lik long* literature to over 160 students at 6 classes run between 2001 and 2009.³⁸ With this information, we can assume that like Zare Nanda Pa-Kang, there have been such traditional Shan scholars who have played a part in actively promoting *lik long* literature ensuring the preservation and continuity of *lik long* manuscripts, following the training and discipline described by Zare Pa-Kang, which I shall now describe in more detail.

1.4. The Characteristics of *Lik Long* Poetic Literature

As Zare Nanda Pa-Kang mentioned, the rules, which guide composers of *lik long*, are quite strict. There are several forms of rhyming systems, which the composer must employ and the reader must also recognize in anticipation to be able to recite appropriately.³⁹ The compositions are not free or the production of ‘unbridled fancy running riot in a wilderness of words.’ There are constraints of topic, influenced by religious tradition and sponsorship. We shall see when looking more specifically at Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* how *lik long* texts follow precursors and contain within them pre-existing canonical, commentarial and hermeneutical texts. One of the most complex aspects of *lik long* composition is the rhyming system. J.N. Cushing, one of a few early westerners who showed great interest in Shan in the 19th century CE, made this remark on Shan literature. Referring to *lik long* poetic literature, he writes:

“The Shan language favours poetical composition, by the modulation of its tones, and the abundance of its synonyms. Almost all religious books are written in a metrical style.”⁴⁰

³⁸ Zare Pa-Kang, aged 72 at the time of interview, was originally from Kio Yoi village, Mueang Luean track, Mueang Naung Township, central Shan State. He currently lives in Kun Hing, southern Shan State. The interview of Zare Nanda Pa-Kang was conducted by Zao Devinda Yee-hsai in the summer 2010 as an extension of the 2009 Shan Buddhism at the Borderlands Project described above.

³⁹ The SOAS Research Group found it very demanding to work on cataloguing of temple collections in Northern Thailand in 2009 because of the complexity of the material. Even members of our team who were highly educated in Pali, Burmese and Shan literature (all mother-tongue Shan) struggled with the rhyming systems. Even those familiar with some of the rhyming systems could not follow or identify those they had not come across before. Had we not been able to recruit highly qualified *zare*, we would not have been able to complete our descriptive catalogue. (Crosby, Khur-yearn, Saw, forthcoming).

⁴⁰ J. N. Cushing was a late 19th century Christian missionary worker. In 1865 he offered himself to the American Baptist Missionary Union as a candidate for service in foreign fields, and in 1866 he sailed for Burma, being assigned to the Shan tribes. To fulfill the aims of his mission of spreading the words of Christ among the Shan, he first wrote his *Shan-English Dictionary* (1881) and then books on Shan grammar for

A great challenge to the *lik long* or, more fully expressed, *lik langka long* poetic literature, even for those literate in Shan language and script, is the variety of complexity of the poetic style in which *lik long* is written. Techniques include rhyming across lines, not necessarily at the end but in the midst of phrases, and different rhymes reaching across one another. In order to recite this kind of *lik long* poetic literature to an audience, special training is required. The art of reading such type of poetry is, perhaps, almost as hard as the art of composing it. For a person who wishes to become a professional poetic reader needs not only to be gifted with an articulate and mellifluous voice but also to receive special training and practice. Specialist training is necessary for the performer to apply the rules and system of poetic language specific to this genre of literature. The metrical forms of Shan poetry are bewildering in their variety. There are verses in short lines, and very long lines, in couplets and quatrains, regular and irregular. There are different types of metre and each metre has a different name according to the rhymes and tones of the poetry. The rhyming or linking words can be anywhere — at the end of lines, at the beginning, or anywhere between. As mentioned already, it is not necessary for the rhymes or linking words to be at the end of the line as in much English rhyming poetry. The rhymes can also be found in different paragraphs crossing over verses or units of meaning.

There are different types of poetry that can be used for writing *lik long*, with names such as: *kwam paut* [‘short rhymed poetry’], *saung kio* [‘two strands’], *sam kio* [‘three strands’], *ngu luean* [‘snake-crawling’] and *khet kyauk* [‘frog-jumping’].⁴¹ Here, I shall focus on the poetic style *langka sam kio* [‘the poetry of three strands’] in order to explain a poetic system. The reason I choose this as an example is that *langka sam kio* style is found in a number of works by celebrated authors such as Zao Amat Long, to whom we will pay more attention later in the thesis, and Zao Naw Kham in the late 19th century CE.

The poetic style *langka sam kio* is composed with the system of three strands of rhyming – 1) *kio tang* [‘the set up’], 2) *kio hop* [‘the rhyme’], and 3) *kio lop* [‘the end’].⁴² The first strand is called the setting up of the rhyme, the second is the rhyme and the third is the end of the rhyme. A new rhyme for the setting up begins immediately after the *kio lop* or the

English speakers. Within a decade, he successfully translated the entire New Testament into the Shan language. Cushing 1907, *Christ and Buddha*, p. 25.

⁴¹ For more details of the types of *lik long* poetry, see Terwiel 2003, *Shan Manuscripts*, pp. 35-44 and Nandiya 2003, *Khulai taem / lu langka long tai* [‘The technique of writing / reading Shan *langka long*’], pp. 7-37.

⁴² Nandavama 2002, p. 186.

third strand. So, the composition will carry on and on by the cycle of the three strands from the beginning to the end of the text. It is these three strands of rhyming that make this type of poetry *langka sam kio* [‘the poetry of three strands’].

Tones are used as the keys for the making of Shan poetry. There are five standard tones in Shan language – 1) rising tone, 2) low level tone, 3) mid level tone, 4) high level tone, and 5) falling tone.⁴³ Of these, only the first tone, the second tone, the third tone and the fourth tone are used for the poetry of three strands (*langka sam kio*).⁴⁴ Usually, the first and second tones are used for the setting up, i.e. the first strand. If the first tone is used for the setting up, it will also be used the same for the rhyme and the closing. In the same way, if the second tone is used for the setting up, the rhyme and the closing will also be used by the second tone. The third and the fourth tones are used for ‘leaving words’ (*kwam paet*). Leaving words here means the tones are not used for rhyming of the three strands but for separate rhyming of the phrases being composed after the second strand of the three strands, i.e. they create further rhyming within the phrasing created by the three strands. Usually there are two or three phrases of words there by using the third or fourth tones for the rhyming. If the first tone is used for the three strands, then the third tone is used for the rhyme of the leaving words. If the second tone used for the three strands, then the fourth tone is used for the rhyme of the leaving words. The fifth tone is never used for the rhyme of *lik long* poetry, possibly because of its short and fast sound while the long and slow sound is needed for *lik long* poetry.⁴⁵ Below is an example of *lik long* in the rhyming style of *langka long*. The underlined words indicate the rhyming and linking words, such as the set up, the rhyme and the closing:

Okasa okasa okasa zang-nai panca-patitthita kaya vazi manaw zaw-zai-nalung-sung-myo shi-kho-nga-ba tak-ma-u-khya phava-lya-lya katta-khup-to-tha twa-tai-kung-taw, (set up) wantana-mana puzasakkara-phazana pahulla wutthita tak-lai-khup-wai-tai-zak taya-shit-kwak-yoshe-kheyya sakkari-tung sung-sae-ta-phung purisa khaung-thaut khun-yaukkya-kyaw, (rhyme) mo-takho-up-sam-tueang samsip-et-mueang kha-aw.

Nauk-nai wimuttirasa ekapintana thamma-winaya-pitakat kyam-myat thammakkhantha le-zwa-karu pahu-wittan mak-le-tan pho-le-tan nibban-shwe-kyuk

⁴³ Tern Moeng 1995, *Shan English Dictionary*, pp. viii-ix.

⁴⁴ Nandiya 2003, p. 16.

⁴⁵ For more details on Shan *langka long* poetry, see Nandiya 2003, *Khulai Taem / Lu Langka Long Tai* [‘The art of writing and reading Shan *langka long*’].

*mukkha-pat zao-lat zao-phyat pitakat-sung-**phaw**, (end) a-sam-**taw**, sop-kha-dwang-**haum** (set up) nan, nai-kaw te-thamma yazita pahulla-wut tvi-ta-thuk zatuk-sampatan satthi-kan sip-nio-kha-ta-pe-taw tak-lai-ao-muean nua-phuean-taung-lan pan-pwang a-swang-mo-naung-nut-heo tang-tan-**zaum**, (rhyme) tum-**kao** tak-kan-taw-tra-**zao** gaun-yao.*

*Nua-nai mak-ariya pho-ariya sangkahanam sam-sattuk uzuk-patik nik-saep taep-sat tat-put khut-ao-phao-tai heng-pai-pan-phyang kwang-waeng ka-saeng-phyan-phat-**phaum** (end) zaum-wa-zi-**phaw** (set up) ton-sangkha-**taw** nan, nai-kaw wantana-mana puza-sakkara zitta-puppaka-sampatan tutiyakam-sakat wiphat-pathama-ling sung-king-sam-pauk kha-tak-karawa-mop-wai-tho-sikho-kom-kaw-**lyaw**, (rhyme) yaw-yuk-mue-ta-teng-**thung** utik-yam-**phung** zao-kaun.⁴⁶*

The above extracts are the first three sets of the ‘three strands rhyming system’ of the 19th century Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, the work translated later in this thesis. The main rhyming and linking words are shown in bold and underlined, showing the exact rhymes for this type of poetry, which is called *langka-sam-kio*, the poetry of three strands. The word ‘**taw**’ in the first paragraph is called *to-tang* or ‘the set up’. It rhymes with ‘**kyaw**’ in the same paragraph and with ‘**phaw**’ in the second paragraph. The first rhyme is called *to-sap* or ‘the rhyme’ and the second rhyme is called *to-hap* or ‘the closing.’ Again, ‘**haum**’ in the second paragraph is *to-tang*, ‘**zaum**’ in the same paragraph is *to-sap* and the closing or *to-hap* in ‘**paum**’ in the third paragraph. It will go on like this, *i.e. the set up, the rhyme and the closing*, till the end of the treatise. So, this type of poetry is called *langka sam kio* or ‘the poetry of three strands’. The two linking words in bold but without the underline near the end of each paragraph also show some types of rhyming, for examples, *tueang* and *mueang* in the last line of the first paragraph; *kao* and *zao* in the last two lines of the second paragraph; and *thung* and *phung* in the end of the third paragraph. This kind of linking words is called leaving words (*kwam paet*) as discussed above. So while the three strands create the overall structure, more rhyming within each set of three is to be expected.

⁴⁶ Amat Long 1968, p. 1.

1.5. The Significant Features of *Lik Long* Literature

The majority of Shan *lik long* poetic literature contains non-canonical texts, i.e. texts not included in the ‘*Pali*’ as established at the 5th and 6th Burmese Buddhist councils.⁴⁷ Although some of these texts are based on or encompass commentaries to the canon (and so also encompass the corresponding passages of the canon, mostly in Shan with Pali key words), some of them do not seem to be found in or be based on the corpus of texts included in the “Mahāvihāra”-dominated Theravada Buddhist canon.⁴⁸ Some may even be unique to Shan Buddhism, although with relatively little work done on so-called apocryphal and vernacular literature, it is hard to be sure at this juncture. While the majority of *lik long* literature is non-canonical, there are, as I mentioned, works that are based on Pali canonical works and commentaries including those on meditation.

The types of popular folk literature transmitted through *lik long* include *bodhisatta* and *Jātaka* stories. The terms used for Shan folk literature are: *apum*, *alaung* and *watthu* (also pronounce as *wutthu*). *Apum* refers to folk tales and *alaung* the stories of the Buddha-to-be (*bodhisatta*). Neither are necessarily derived from early Buddhist texts, or from known early precursors, so are what elsewhere, when put into Pali, have been termed ‘apocryphal’ literature.⁴⁹ Some notable titles of works that belong to the *alaung* genre are: *Alaung Khun Haung* [‘The *bodhisatta* Khun Hong’], *Alaung Yue Lao* [‘The *bodhisatta* shooting the star’], *Alaung Ma Kao Hang* [‘The *bodhisatta*-dog with nine tails’]. *Watthu* or *wutthu* texts are stories based on Buddhist canonical literature, such as stories from the *Jātaka* and *Dhammapada*.

The questionnaires to 63 *zares* in Maehongson in 2009 indicate that in their experience young people who are under 40 prefer listening to folk and *Jātaka* literature.⁵⁰ One of the most popular *Jātaka* stories is – as elsewhere in the Theravada world, the *Vessantara Jātaka*, the story of Gotama Buddha-to-be’s penultimate lifetime in which he fulfills the moral perfection whereby one gives away not only one’s outside material belongings including

⁴⁷ For more information on the Burmese Buddhist councils, see Thakur 1996, *Buddha and Buddhist synods in India and abroad*, pp. 254-263 and Prebish 2005, “Councils: Buddhist Councils” in Jones ed. 2005, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 3. 2nd ed.

⁴⁸ For more discussion on the “Mahāvihāra” Theravada Buddhist canon, see Collins, 2005, ‘On the very idea of the Pali Canon’ (first published in 1990) in Williams, Paul, ed. *Buddhism: critical concepts in religious studies*, vol.1, *Buddhist origins and the early history of Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia*, pp. 72-82.

⁴⁹ On apocryphal *jātaka* in S.E. Asia, see P. Skilling, ‘*Jātaka* and Paññāsa-jātaka in South-East Asia’ in *The Journal of The Pali Text Society*, Vol. xxviii, 2006.

⁵⁰ Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010: pp. 6 and 8. On this project, see above in this chapter.

one's own wife and children but also one's own life.⁵¹ Other popular stories include *Temiya Jātaka* (the story of fulfilling the perfection of tolerance), *Mahosathā Jātaka*, (the story of fulfilling the perfection of wisdom), *Janaka Jātaka* (the story of fulfilling the perfection of endeavour) and *Suvaṇṇa-syāma Jātaka*, (the story about helping one's parents because of great gratitude towards them).⁵² These are *jātaka* number 52, 539, 540, and 547 in the canonical collection,⁵³ and are also found as a collection of ten in their own right.⁵⁴ Zare La Tun, also known as Zare Hai Pa, has recently composed all these Ten Jātaka stories into his own poetic version. I shall refer again to his project, which was undertaken at the request of Venerable Khammai Dhammasāmi, Abbot the Oxford Buddha Vihara, Oxford, for the commemoration of his 40th birthday, later when discussing the use of Burmese loan words.⁵⁵ Besides these, there are many other stories in the corpus of *lik long* literature, which have not come from the main source of the Theravada Buddhist canon. These include *Lik namo long* ['The great text of worship'], *Lik phra lin neo* ['The Buddha image made of sticky soil'], *Loka-samutti* ['The conventional world'], *Jampupati mang kyam* ['The treatise of King Jambupati'], *Sutta Nibbāna* ['The discourse on Nibbāna'], *Lik zao upakut* ['The story of Upagutta Thera'], to name a few. In fact, in our cataloguing and interviews in the 2009 project mentioned above, we came across duplicates relatively rarely. These stories were written by different writers with various styles of poetic writing, so that the readers or listeners can develop and indulge wide-ranging tastes in poetic styles and topics. While the variety enriches the style and taste of Shan poetic literature, yet there are some that are much more popular, because of their association with particular occasions, merit-making, entertainment value or a specific power.

Some *lik long* texts are regarded as sacred or especially powerful. One example is the text *Cintāmani*. The text contains the story of a fox, which has found the stanza of *Cintāmani*, and as a result, all animals have to bow down before the fox. When a strange bird, such as a

⁵¹ Regarding the tradition of *Vessantara Jātaka* in the Kengtung area of eastern Shan State, see Pannyawamsa 2007.

⁵² For three relatively recent studies of the Pali canonical *jātaka*, see Appleton 2010, Kapur-Fic 2010 and Meiland 2003, and for a recent translation of selected portions, see Sarah Shaw 2006.

⁵³ Cowell ed. 1895-1913, *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, 6 Vols plus an index volume.

⁵⁴ For other Ten Jātaka Collection, see Horner 1957, *Ten Jātaka stories: each illustrating one of the ten Pāramitā with Pali text*. Also see Ginsburg 2000, *Thai Art and Culture: Historic Manuscripts from Western Collections*, pp. 54-64 for examples of the productions manuscripts on the ten Jātaka stories which continues to this day.

⁵⁵ La Tun's poetic versions of the ten Jātaka are kept at the Library of the Oxford Buddha Vihara, Oxford – www.oxfordbuddhavihara.org.uk. For more discussion on Burmese loanwords, see Chapter Four.

vulture, owl or *mangalo* (a type of bird) enters the house, or when forest animals, such as bears, barking deer, or tigers enter the village or the house garden, it is a bad omen. When such circumstances occur, a ritual of reading and listening to the text of *Cintāmani* is held in order to avoid any bad affect to the family or village. Alternatively, when one member of a family is not well or has had a bad dream, they hold a ceremony of listening to *Cintāmani*. For the Shans believe that holding a ceremony of reading and listening to *Cintāmani* will ensure they lead a healthy, happy and prosperous life. The performance of this text may also be held at the inauguration of a new house. For the performance of a text, a special enclosure is often made for the reader. For the *zare*'s performance of the *Cintāmani*, the special place must prepared in a specific way with banana trees and sugarcane, and with paper flags erected at the four corners of the place that is then surrounded with the lattice fence called a *rājamat* that is typically used for enclosing or marking of a special area.⁵⁶ Before performing the text, all the audience, including the poetic reciter, the *zare*, have to pay homage to the three gems and observe the five precepts. Otherwise, the ritual of poetic recitation will be less effective. The value placed on this text may be the reason why there are a number of different versions of *Cintāmani* written by different poets.⁵⁷ Its popularity also means that it is one of the texts available in modern printed book form. When we observed a *haw lik* of the *Cintāmani* by Zare Saw for temple sleepers at the temple at Huoi Suea Thao village, Southwest of Maehongson, in July 2009, Zare Saw read from a printed version, even though in his interview he explained that the hand-copied versions with the large format and characters are in fact easier to read, even if less convenient for transporting given their large format.

Another significant feature of Shan *lik long* literature is that Shan authors usually transform the Buddha's teaching from Pali into Shan poetic texts in a way that would suit the Shan audience. At such, the style of *lik long* literature often features humorous expression, a way of entertaining the audience and to keep the audience awake during the long hours of recitation ritual. For instance, the *lik long* texts were composed in a way that the audience

⁵⁶ *Rajamat*: lattice fence, usually of bamboo constructed with rhombic interstices, and erected by the side of a road passed by great personages, or places where ceremonies are held. Tern Moeng, 1995, *Shan English Dictionary*, p. 278. Tannenbaum 1995, pp. 163-164, has recorded the term as *phaa ratsamat* to the local Shan accent and usage for this ritual practice in Maehongson Shan communities.

⁵⁷ There seems to be different versions of *Cintāmani* written by different poets. The version kept at the Shan Literary and Cultural Office in Lashio was originally composed by Zare Nakio in 1254 SE (1892) and sponsored by Chaofalong (chief ruling prince) of Mueang Tung. This version was copied in 1976 and sponsored by Nailoiya Zaseng in commemoration of her late husband Puloi Zaseng. As it is a popular text, it is also available in modern printed book form.

would be amused while listening to them. This characteristic of *lik long* applies even to serious subjects, such as sermons and meditation texts. For instance, Zare Sucinta of Loikham's *Kat ha luk*, 'The five markets', demonstrates this distinctive entertaining characteristic of Shan literature.⁵⁸ Despite it being a work on meditation focusing on the hindrances to Nibbāna, the author gives it the title 'the five markets', a worldly and familiar place to everyone in the community. The purpose of using the phrase 'the five markets' seems to be that he would like to attract his readers or audience to pay more attention to his text – in other words, he would like to make his text sound interesting, drawing his readers to a common place, which is familiar with their daily life cycle, and to grasp a picture in their heads. However, he uses the five markets only as an analogy for the 'five senses,' which are, according to Buddhism, the hindrances to Nibbāna. This type of *lik long* text perhaps falls into the category of entertaining literature because it makes the audience smile and amused as they read it or listening it during the recitation ritual. It is worth noting that the content of the poetic literature performed during the rains retreat is more solemn than that of literature performed at other religious ceremonies or cultural events. I shall discuss more on the contents of poetic texts on meditation, which is considered 'more solemn and serious', in the next chapter.

1.6. The Ritual of Listening to *Lik Long* Poetry: What, When and Where?

As discussed earlier in this this thesis, *lik long* poetic texts are specially composed for reading out loud to the audience. The reading of such poetic texts is called *haw lik* ['reading out of texts'].⁵⁹ The ritual of poetic recitation or listening to poetic texts is known as *poi haw lik* ['ceremony of reading out of texts'] or *poi thaum lik* ['ceremony of listening to the text'] (see Fig 1.5).⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Kat ha luk* was originally written in 1301 SE (1939) and the copy now kept at the Lum Kaw Lik Lai (Literature Group's office), Lashio, was written in 1313 (1951).

⁵⁹ Tannenbaum 1995, pp. 161-162.

⁶⁰ The terms *poi haw lik* and *poi thaum lik* are equally important. *Thaum* = to listen, *haw* = to read out loud, *lik* = text, *poi* = ceremony/fetival. Hence whichever term is used, Shan people will understand it. Sometimes, the word *pang* = ceremony or festival is used instead of *poi*. So, both *pang thaum lik* or *poi thaum lik* refer to the occasion of having poetic performance.



**Fig. 1. 5. A wall painting scene of Shan poetic performance, *poi haw lik* or *poi thaum lik*
Source: Wall Painting from Wat Naung Kauk Kham, Wiang Haeng, Chiang Mai.**

The position of the performance of Shan poetic literature is described by Leslie Milne, who spent most of the period between 1906 and 1909 during her observation of social conditions and customs among Shan communities in Northern Shan State. She writes:

“Many Shans read their scriptures with manifest sincerity and delight. In their homes, in rest-houses, in monasteries, or gathered around an open fire, Shans may be seen listening with reverence to the rising and falling cadence, as their reader chants a birth story of their Lord Gautama, or of the beauty and bliss of Nirvana, pictured as the ‘Home of Happiness’, the ‘city of Gems and Gold’, or smiling over semi-religious love songs, when the lovers meet in the sky – when their star places come in conjunction – to renew their love in perpetual youth.”⁶¹

What is interesting here is that so much has been changed to the face of Shan communities since the time of Leslie Milne. Some of those traditions as described by Milne, such as the tradition of reading scriptures around an open fire (in a family home) have disappeared in living memory. My contention here, however, is that some of that tradition, for example, the ritual of listening to poetic texts at wider social or religious contacts, such as a funeral or the inauguration of a new house or temple sleeping, still exists today among Shan communities and reflects a broader use of poetry in Shan culture.

⁶¹ Milne 1910, *Shans at Home*, p. 214

The ritual of listening to poetic texts is performed at several places for several occasions. Usually it takes place at monasteries on *wan sin*, the precept days or Buddhist holy days during the rains retreat. In Shan Buddhism, as in other Theravada Buddhist countries, there are four holy days in each lunar month, namely, the 8th of waxing moon, the full moon, the 8th of waning moon, and the last day of the month. Of them, the full moon day and the last day the month are considered as more auspicious or bigger *wan sin*. So, on those *wan sin*, especially during the rains retreat, the Shans go to their local temples to make merit including the performance of reading and listening to poetic literature. The audience for the ritual of listening to poetic texts at the temple are usually the temple sleepers, who stay overnight in the temple and practise the ritual of temple sleeping. More of the tradition of temple sleeping shall be discussed in the Chapter Two.

Moreover, the ritual of listening to poetic texts also continues to take place at people's homes on particular occasions, such as funerals, memorial services, the inauguration of a new house, or household blessing for good health and prosperity. There are specific texts for specific occasions. During our fieldwork in Maehongson, Zare Saw told us from his experience that at the inauguration of a new house, people prefer to listen to the texts like *Mangala sam sip paet* and *Cintāmaṇi*, while *Sang khaeng ko pa* ['The nine cemeteries'] and *Lik loka phe wot* ['The world of repaying for one's own sin'] are usually recited at funerals and memorial services, as already discussed above (previous section).

Although there are specific occasions when listening to the reading of such texts is expected, a special ceremony of listening to poetic texts can also be held at any time of the year. The term for such special occasions of listening to the texts is *poi tham* or 'dhamma festival', usually sponsored by generous people. To host such a ceremony is regarded as a great honour and high privilege. For such a special occasion, sponsors may also want to have a new text available, in which case they also ask the *zare* to make a new copy of an existing text, and then have a special first-reading of that new copy. For the special *dhamma* ceremony, the living room of the host's house is decorated with colorful curtains and banners, and a special place is prepared near the shrine for the recitation of the poetic text by the specialist poet-reader, the *zare*. This special place is small rectangular enclosure prepared with banana trees and sugarcane, and paper flags erected at the four corners. It is marked out by a low lattice fence called *rajamat* of the type that Tannenbaum has observed are generally use in Shan Buddhism to mark off special spaces, already discussed above. Tannenbaum also observed that the hosts serve a sweet and/or a drink at a break and that most people leave

after the break; only the hosts (and the temple sleepers in the event of temple sleeping) remain.

Another interesting aspect of the ritual of listening to the texts is the *zare*'s physical position. In some areas, such as northern Shan State and Mong Yang of Kachin State, the *zare* often faces the audience, whereas in southern Shan State and Thailand he faces the altar of the Buddha shrine. While the former position of the *zare* is an obvious and normal style of teaching or preaching seen in other communities, the latter looks unusual in that the performer has his back facing to the audience. The reason for the *zare* facing the shrine seems to be a way of showing respect to the Buddha, for giving one's back to the Buddha, or even to a senior person, is considered disrespectful in Shan communities.⁶² Another reason for this could be that this kind of poetic literature is more on meditation, so the practising of meditation is possibly going on among the audience at the moments of listening to the *dhamma* in poetry, and hence the poet-reader turns his back to the audience in order to avoid any disturbance, such as eye contact, to his concentration on reading. This style of recitation and practice, i.e. with the poet-reader facing the Buddha shrine and giving his back to the audience, is perhaps a unique Shan tradition and not familiar to other Buddhist communities.

1.7. The Physical Preservation of *Lik Long* Poetic Literature

Until as late as the 1980s, most Shan poetic literature was written on native hand-made mulberry paper or *zesa* as it is known in Shan.⁶³ Thus, most works of Shan poetic literature are preserved in the form of traditional handwriting, even long after the arrival printing press. Manuscripts continue to be made although printing is now used, especially for particularly popular texts.

⁶² The tradition was recently explored at the Shan New Year event at SOAS in 2009 where a short poetic performance was taken place as a part of Dr Kate Crosby's presentation on the *zare* culture basing on a SOAS group research fieldwork in the Maehongson area of Northern Thailand during the summer 2009. The effort was made to demonstrate this tradition by having the reader facing himself to the wall of the stage, where normally the shrine is located in a Shan house, and showing his back to the audience, asking members of the Shan Cultural Association UK (SCA-UK) to sit behind him on the stage as the audience. Many SCA-UK members would not agree to it, saying it would confuse some in the audience who are not familiar with this style and tradition. So, in compromising, we had a new style of performance instead — they sat behind the reader facing the audience with their hands worshipping to the text in a lovely and respectful manner, while the poetic reader was sitting between them and the audience, facing neither but to the side where the master of the ceremony stood.

⁶³ The term *ze sa* is defined as 'a kind of mulberry paper made of the bark of the *sa* trees'. Tern Moeng 1995, *Shan-English Dictionary*, p. 108.

Before dealing with the issue on the preservation of *lik long* literature, I shall first address the variety of Shan scripts, in which Shan *dhamma* texts were written. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Shan is a broad term referring to a number of closely related ethnicities. On the margins, as it were, of Shan identity, are the Tai Mao, Tai Khamti, Tai Ahom, Tai Khuen, Tai Lue, and Tai Nuea. Shans of different regions use different scripts, and these relate to the other scripts in use both by dominant neighbours, such as the Burmans in the South, and by near neighbours and relatives, such as other members of the Tai family of ethnicities. The Thai and the Laotians, two of the groups belonging to the Tai family have their own scripts and writing systems. The Tai Lue of Sipsongpanna use the scripts and writing system similar to the Lanna or Tham script, which is in use in Eastern Shan State of the Union of Burma and northern part of Thailand, the area of which formerly known as the Kingdom of Lanna.⁶⁴ Tai Mao, who inhabit parts of northern Shan State and southern China employ their own scripts called *Lik Tai Mao* officially recognized by the Chinese government.⁶⁵ The Tai Ahom and Tai Khamti also have their own scripts. While these groups all have their own scripts, most other Shan share a script. This script is known as *Lik Tai Long* (great Shan or central Shan script). It is in this script that all the manuscripts and texts that we have catalogued in Lashio, Maehongson and Chiang Mai are written. *Lik Tai Long*, great Shan script, which I shall henceforth refer to simple as ‘Shan script’, is closely related to Burmese or Mon scripts, yet distinctive. It is not known exactly if/when the *Lik Tai Long* script was adopted from Burmese/Mon script. See Fig. 1.6., for variety of Shan scripts in comparison with Thai, Mon and Khmer scripts.

Although Shan script is similar to Burmese script, until recently (see Chapter Four), it – unlike Burmese - had insufficient consonants for writing Pali or Burmese loanwords, even though many are found in the text. To accommodate this, and under Burmese influence, Burmese script is used for these loanwords and thus one spots phrases in Burmese scripts amidst the Shan script as seen in Fig. 1. 7. The underlined texts are Pali in Burmese scripts.

⁶⁴ The Lanna script is also known Tai Tham script. For more information on Lanna scripts see, Udom Rungrū'angsi, 1981, *Rabop kānkhān akson Lānnā*, [‘The System of Writing Lanna Scripts’], and Thangpijaigul 1995, *The Lanna language: Background, dialogs, readings, and glossary*.

⁶⁵ An alternative spelling for Tai Mao is ‘Tai Mau’. Also see Young 1985, *Shan Chrestomathy: An Introduction to Tai Mau Language and Literature*.

อักษรไทยปัจจุบัน	ก	ข	ฃ	ค	ฅ	ฉ	ช	ฌ	ฎ	ฏ	ฐ	ฑ	ฒ
อักษรพจนานุกรม (1835)	ก	ข	ฃ	ค	ฅ		ช	ฉ	ฌ	ฎ	ฏ		ฒ
สมัยพระที่นั่งแก้ว เชียงใหม่ (2043)	ก	ข		ค	ฅ		ช	ฉ	ฌ				ฒ
อักษรบ็ลจวะ	ก	ข		ค		ฌ	ฉ	ฌ	ฎ		ฏ		ฒ
อักษรขอมโบราณ	ក	ខ		គ		ឌ	ឍ	ណ			ឝ		ឞ
อักษรขอมโบราณ	ក	ខ		ក		ឌ	ឍ	ណ		ឝ			ឞ
อักษรลานนา	က	ခ		ဂ	ဃ	င	စ	ဆ	ဇ	ဈ	ည		ဋ
อักษรไทยลือ	ก	ข		ค		ฌ	ฉ	ฌ					ฒ
อักษรธรรมของอีสาน	ก	ข		ค	ฌ	ฉ	ฌ	ฎ		ฏ		ฒ	
อักษรขอมปัจจุบัน	ក	ខ		គ		ឌ	ឍ	ណ	ឝ				ឞ
อักษรพม่า	က	ခ		ဂ		ဃ	င	စ	ဆ	ဇ		ည	
อักษรไทยใหญ่	ဂ	ခ		ဂ		ဃ	င	စ	ဆ	ဇ		ည	

Fig. 1. 6. A Comparative Tai and other scripts of Mainland Southeast Asia
(Source of image: Udom Rungrū'angsi, 1981, *Rabop kānkhīan akson Lānnā*, p. 3.)

84. အဋ္ဌာရသဝိဇ္ဇိဋ္ဌိနိ၊ စတုရိသတိ ဖါသုကာ။ စဒ္ဒသုရာ
 ဟဒယေကံ၊ ဒွေက္ခကကောဋ္ဌဗဟုကံ။ ထင်လတ်ထင်ထွတ် မုန်မ
 ပတ်သိင်ထေ၊ ဂျေမးအနံ။— အဋ္ဌာရသဝိဇ္ဇိဋ္ဌိနိ-လုပ်လင်
 ခွဲးခွဲး သိမ်းပံပိတ်သိင် ခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲးခွဲး
 ထွတ်ထေ့ယပ်။ စတုရိသတိဖါသုကာ-နံရိုးနှစ်ဆဲ လေးချောင်း
 အပွင်းအပွင်းပိုင်းချိုး၊ ထွတ်ထေ့ယပ်။— ဝါတီဂင်ငင် လုပ်ခင်သွင်ထွင်
 ထေ့ထေ့သိမ်းပံသွင်ထွင် ခပ်ထိရ်သိင် သင်းသီ၊ တီလေး မီးခိတ်

Fig. 1. 7. An example of using Burmese scripts for Pali texts in Shan Buddhist literature.
Source: Amat Long's *MSP*, 1968, p. 49.

Additional features of Shan script are old and new systems of the Tai Long script. The period of the old system is counted from around the 13th century up to the mid 20th century, when the new system was invented during WWII by a Shan monk, Vijayananda (died: 1946).

The current system of modern Shan script was created by modifying the old Shan scripts.⁶⁶ It has been in use from the 1940s up to the present. Again, the old system could be divided into several phases of development and minor changes in style occurred over the preceding centuries, which is beyond the scope of our discussion here.⁶⁷ The old scripts have 16 characters and only three tonal marks to indicate the five or six tones, and thus require enormous skill of the reader who has to work out the exact tone. The new system of Shan scripts adds a couple of characters and has five or six tonal marks for the five/six tones to accommodate in principal all the tones of different dialect groups of the Shan.⁶⁸ Although Vijayananda adapted the new system of Shan script from the old, it only gained widespread in the 1980s. Hence Shan texts before 1980 were written in the old system of Shan scripts. Although a tiny portion of those texts have been printed in modern book form, most traditional manuscripts, so *lik long*, are preserved in the old Shan script. The disadvantage of these *lik long* manuscripts, however, is that most of them were written before the continuous reforms of Shan scripts that took place over a period of 30 years from the 1940s to the 1970s. This causes a disjunction between the script for reading *lik long* and that used in printed texts and taught in schools. This means that a young person taking up the reading of *lik long* will need extra training to read the old script. It also means dealing with the unfamiliar lack of tone markers. Only a few *lik long* texts were re-transcribed in modern Shan script and published in book form. The majority of Shan poetic literature remains in the form of manuscripts. This disjunction between the way in which manuscripts were and continue to be written and the form of Shan used in modern books and what school education there is in Shan effectively threatens the survival of this literature, as it becomes harder for younger people to take up the practice.

Another threat to the Shan literature is that many old manuscripts were lost or destroyed during the endless civil war that has been going on in Shan State, Burma for the last fifty years and more. Although the Shan people do love and care about their tradition of producing manuscripts and performing poetic literature, oppression by the Burmese regime has also had an impact on the preservation of the literary tradition. For instance, under the Burmese military government's policy of relocating Shan villages, particularly after 1996,

⁶⁶ Kam Mong 2004, *History and Development of Shan Scripts*, pp. 289-308.

⁶⁷ A reform of Shan scripts took place in 1416 at Senwi during the reign of Zaolong Kham Kaifa. The shape of Shan scripts have become round since then. Khur Sen 1995, *Puen Khuea Tai lae Puen Mueang Tai*, p. 168.

⁶⁸ The third and the six tones are mostly identical but differentiated by regional dialects.

hundreds of thousands of Shan villagers were made homeless and many of them fled to Thailand.⁶⁹ The villagers were forced not only to abandon their houses but also their temples, which are the heart of Shan communities and cultural heritage. Many manuscripts were left behind and lost, as many of those temples and villages were burned down by the Burmese soldiers. Some Shan refugees prioritized bringing manuscripts with them when they fled to Thailand. Some of these were donated to local temples but, in desperation, some were sold to antique shops, as were other traditional artefacts that have a value in the tourist trade.⁷⁰

On the other hand, the traditional manual production of manuscripts has been in decline. The main reasons for this could be the arrival of modern book printing technology, particularly in the computer age, on the one hand, and the threat to the tradition by the endless civil war forcing the traditional manuscript product producers to relocate their villages, preventing them from continuing their work, on the other. There are some attempts to resist the decline. During my fieldwork in northern Thailand, I had the opportunity to interview some individuals and groups of people who are working on the preservation of traditional Shan manuscript production in Piang Luang district near the Thai-Burma border. One of them is Pawthao Aw, a producer of traditional Shan mulberry paper, *zesa*, the main material source for Shan manuscripts.⁷¹ In 2004, Aw has set up a group called *klum kradat sa* the main aim of which to preserve traditional *sa* paper production. Aw is a Shan native of Keng Lom, a village in Nam Zang district, southern Shan State. When I was interviewing Aw, he tried to recall his early years growing up among the *sa* paper producers in Keng Lom. Due to political conflicts and consequent endless war between the Shan and Burmese armies in the area, Aw moved to Thailand in the 1970s and lived in Mauk Zam village,⁷² Fang district, for six years before he moved to Lak Taeng, a village on the Thai-Burma border. He said the Keng Lom area, such a centre for traditional paper production, is now in ruins, mainly because of the forced relocation of villages by the Burmese army between 1996 and

⁶⁹ For more information on the relocation of Shan villagers, see in SHRF 1998, *Dispossessed: Forced Relocation and Extrajudicial Killings in Shan State*.

⁷⁰ For more details of trading on Shan traditional artifacts, see Raymond 2009, 'Shan Buddhist art on the market: what, where and why?' in the journal *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 141-157.

⁷¹ Part of my fieldwork was also to observe the tradition of temple sleeping at Shan monasteries in the area, particularly at Wat Piang Luang, as I discuss in Chapter Two.

⁷² Also spelled as Ban Mai Hmok Cham, a village set up by a Tai (Shan) community around 1960. In 1963 the village became a base for a Tai guerrilla group of 200 people, as the area was not reached by Thai authorities until 1970. Shalardchai Ramintanondh has done a wide range of research on the village, but did not mention the Shan traditional *sa* paper production. Ramintanondh 1998, pp. 195-221.

1998.⁷³ After a few years of having moved to Thailand, Aw started making *sa* paper as part of his family business. It is in 2004 that Aw and some *zares* in Piang Luang district made some efforts towards establishing a group project for the preservation of Shan traditional *sa* paper products. When asked about the progress and effect of the group, Aw replied, “It has been very successful. The group has produced around six thousand sheets of *sa* paper each year.” But Aw also mentions some setbacks in regard to the *sa* paper production, such as difficulty in obtaining the bark of the *sa* tree, due to the Thai government’s strict law to protect the forest on the one hand, and being unable to import bark from Shan State due to the closure since 2002 of the border checkpoint, on the other.⁷⁴

While discussing the overall group project of preserving the traditional Shan *sa* paper production, I also learned from Pawthao Aw about the different sizes of *lik long* texts. Usually, three sizes of folded manuscripts were made for the texts of *lik long* poetic literature, namely, small, medium and large.⁷⁵ The Shan term for the size of *lik long* is *angka*, i.e. six *angka* for the small size, eight *angka* for the medium and twelve *angka* for the large size, but if a text is very long, it is usually divided into two volumes, for example, in two manuscripts of the six *angka* size. Hence, the cost of a *lik long* differs according to the size of the texts. Only relatively rich people can afford to sponsor a long *lik long* text, which is made in twelve *angka* size or in two volumes.

The cost of a traditional Shan manuscript text is not cheap. The *zares* in Piang Luang district told me that the price of a blank folded manuscript of ‘six *angka*,’ the small size, is about 500 *baht* and the fees for the *zare* writing the text is from 1200 *baht*, the amount of which is equivalent to c.24 UK sterling pounds.⁷⁶ This means a traditional Shan manuscript text would cost around 2000 *bath* or more. In contrast to the traditional manuscript text, some of the Shan poetic texts, which were published in modern book form, are available in the markets at a cheaper price, and this explains the replacement of the manuscript by printed texts, even where manuscripts are preferred. Since they were imported from the Shan State, such a book costs only around 500 *baht*, much cheaper than the traditional manuscript text.

⁷³ Before the relocation of the villages 1996, there were 220 households in Keng Lom, one of the largest villages in the area. SHRF 1999, pp. 12-15, 55

⁷⁴ Interview with Pawthao Aw in October 2009.

⁷⁵ The small size is approximately 8x32 inches and about 3 inches thick.

⁷⁶ The exchange rate at that time (summer 2009) is around 52 *baht* to one British pound sterling. The value of the British pound was notably down due to the economic crisis and the credit crunch that affected the UK from early 2009. Before that a British pound would get not less than seventy Thai *baht*.

Even so, only a few of those popular poetic texts have been published in modern book form, while the majority of them remain in the form of manuscripts. There is then the risk that the prohibitive cost might eventually reduce the variety of texts available, since most only continue if copied in manuscript form. With such a difficult situation, we can see how the attempt to preserve traditional manuscript making has been struggling and the knock-on effect this may have on the preservation of Shan's rich literary heritage.

Zare Saw of Wan Jong (Wiang Haeng) is one of a few people in the Piang Luang area (Wiang Haeng District) whose work is mainly copying texts in manuscript. He also produces the traditional *sa* paper and traditional ink (See Fig. 1.8). Saw, aged 67, was originally from Keng Kham, a village in Nam Zang, Shan State but moved to Thailand in 1990 following his relatives who were already in Thailand. He has been working as producer of *sa* paper as well as being a *zare* since he was in Keng Kham. He trained himself to become a *zare* partly under the influence of his teacher who encouraged him to practise reading *lik long* poetry when he was a novice at the monastery. However, when he was at Keng Kham he produced *sa* paper only and did not bind them for the text of *lik long* as the tradition of making *lik long* was flourishing in the Keng Kham area and there were other experts in binding *lik long* texts there. Only when living on the Thai side of the border did he realize that there were very few producers of *lik long*. Thus, he began producing *sa* papers and then binding them for *lik long* manuscripts. Since then he has been working more on copying of *lik long* texts rather than performing them because there were other *zares* already in the area before he arrived. On the other hand, he has better skills in writing than recitation, which is also a reason for him to become a *sa* paper producer and copyist of manuscript texts.⁷⁷

Zare Saw explained to me the method he uses for making a *sa* paper. He acquires the *sa* tree bark from along the Mae Taeng river although sometimes he can also buy the bark from Lisaw people from nearby villages. Zare Saw also uses traditional ink made by himself with a mixture of fire soot and animal bile, particularly fish bile, which has better characteristics for making ink. Dried fish bile can be mixed with soot and oil to produce waterproof ink. Thus, Saw's work in the production of *sa* paper and manuscript texts reflect the traditional domestic skills of making paper, pen and ink that have been handed down through generations.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Interview with Zare Saw of Wang Jong in October 2009.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*



Fig. 1. 8. Zare Saw of Wan Jong, copyist of *lik long*, demonstrating how his traditional ink is waterproof. (Photo: On Khur-Yearn, 2009)

Part of my trip to Piang Luang area was also to observe the Shan Buddhist traditional practices including the revival of Shan Buddhism and the preservation of Shan traditional Buddhist ritual practices, such as temple sleeping and listening to the text of *lik long* poetry. Piang Luang is not only the area where the majority of people are Shan but is also well known for being the border area that was once a stronghold of the Shan resistance army, SURA (Shan United Revolution Army) during the second half the 20th century. Its founding leader, Korn Zerng, also known as Moherng and often pronounced by Burmese Mohin, was a pious Buddhist.⁷⁹ Hence, under the leadership of a Shan nationalist and Buddhist, it is not surprising to see both Shan traditional Buddhist practices and the revival of Shan Buddhism thriving in the area. One of the most remarkable works under the patronage or leadership of Korn Zerng is that, during the period when he was rising to power in the 1980s, he managed to have the main temple building and the *chedi* of Wat Fa Wiang Inn built right on the borderline of Burma and Thailand. His long hard fighting for the independent Shan State for

⁷⁹ Korn Zerng, also spelled as Kon Zoeng. Yawnghwe 1987, *The Shan of Burma*, p. 209. He died of cancer in 1991. SURA, which was founded in 1964, was merged with Khun Sa's SUA (Shan United Army) in c.1985. His deputy, Gen. Ganzate, also known as Sang Maat, who is still alive but retired from army insurgency, is also a strong believer in Buddhism and practitioner. Yawnghwe 1987, p. 172.

over three decades may be forgotten yet, but his religious works at Piang Luang and Wat Fa Wiang Inn may remain and prosper for years to come.⁸⁰

Despite political deadlock and the closure of the border checkpoint, other social activities, such as seasonal festivals, traditional Shan Buddhist ritual practices and cultural events have been functioning and continuing in the area. Not surprisingly, most of the social activities including some religious and cultural events taking place in the area are often overshadowed or overwhelmed by the other issues mentioned above, leading one anthropologist to call those social activities an ‘ethnography of religious practices.’ Ferguson has described how “the ritual of *poy sang long* creates a frame, or a down-beat for the events of the six days, but it is also the outside moments, these gestures toward the Thai State, the Burmese soldiers, the hope not just for *kuso* [merit making/ religious ritual] but also potentially a Shan nation.”⁸¹ My interest here, however, is the tradition of religious rituals. I am interested in how the production of traditional *lik long* texts is preserved and performance of poetic literature is continuing as I have discussed above.

Despite the fact that Piang Luang area was filled by recent refugees and migrants from Shan State, there are some early settlements of Shan communities in the area. Wat Piang Luang itself was built over 300 years ago,⁸² but soon after the arrival of Korn Zerng, the old building of Wat Piang Luang was knocked down and replaced with a new and bigger temple in 1979.⁸³ The current temple buildings can accommodate over 300 people for the practice of temple sleeping, where the performance of poetic literature usually takes place. At one of the temple sleeping rituals in 2008, there were 262 temple sleepers, an encouraging factor for the preservation of the Shan tradition of temple sleeping and the revival Shan poetic literature.⁸⁴

Moreover, there are other areas of Shan communities in northern Thailand, where collections of *lik long* manuscripts are kept, and attempts have been made for the preservation of poetic literature and its ritual practices. For example, in 2009 project mentioned above, we

⁸⁰ Information acquired from discussion with Phramahā Kraisorn Klyānadhāro, the abbot of Wat Piang Luang, and local people during my several fieldwork trips to the Piang Luang area between 2006 and 2010.

⁸¹ Ferguson 2009, pp. 65-73.

⁸² A record of temple histories in Thailand mentions the date of the foundation of Wat Piang Luang as 2230 of the Buddhist era, which is equal to the 1687 CE. *Prawat Wat Thua Ratchaanachak* [‘History of the temples in the whole kingdom’].

⁸³ From a leaflet of Wat Piang Luang dated 2008, acquired from Phramaha Kraisorn Klyānadhāro, current abbot of Wat Piang Luang, during fieldwork 2009.

⁸⁴ Information acquired from Phramahā Kraisorn Klyānadhāro, the abbot of Wat Piang Luang, during my fieldwork 2009.

were working on *lik long* manuscript collections at Wat Tiyasathan, which is near Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. While I had done an initial survey in 2004-5, we created a fuller list of characteristics to record for each manuscript, basing our catalogue design on a combination of that produced by Terwiel and Chaichuen of Shan texts in Germany and that being used by the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts project in Vientiane (see Fig. 1. 9).⁸⁵ We also extended our cataloguing to include old and fragmentary manuscripts that had been ‘retired’ into crevices in the structure of the shrine room, separate from the main collection.



Fig. 1. 9. Team Work on Cataloguing of *lik long* Collections at Wat Tiyasathan
From left: Dr Sai Pe, Dr Kate Crosby, Mr Jotika Khur-Yearn, Ven. Indacara (standing), and Ven. Nandavamsa (Photo: On Khur-Yearn, 2009)

Wat Tiyasathan was established by Shan traders 100 years ago in the village of Mae Taeng. The abbot of Wat Tiyasathan, whose name is Ven. Phra Sriwan Warinda, after leaving Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge crisis,⁸⁶ stayed at and visited a number of temples in the Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai areas. In several temples there had clearly once been a thriving Shan community who had donated Shan *lik long* to the temple. However, if there were no Shan monks at the temple, and in particular if there was a Burmese or Pa-o abbot,

⁸⁵ Terwiel 2003, *Shan Manuscripts, part I* and www.laomanuscripts.net.

⁸⁶ He had been a monk for the Shan mining community of Pailin.

the Shan manuscripts were not treated with the same care as Burmese or Thai manuscripts. Ven. Warinda asked permission from the abbots to take Shan manuscripts and store them in his own temple. Local Shan people also then moved their own manuscripts into Wat Tiyasathan. As a result of Ven. Warinda's efforts over the past thirty-five years, Wat Tiyasathan has around three hundred *lik long*. However, there is no current *zare* activity in the Mae Taeng area and the library is not used as the source of new *lik long* copies. A *zare* in Chiang Mai described the interest in the Chiang Mai area as poor, mainly because there are few Shan, and those who are present are scattered widely, meaning that there is an insufficient concentration of the potential audience and no means for the older generation of Shan, the traditional audience, to come together. There is a floating population of immigrant Shan who come through Wat Tiyasathan from Burma seeking work in the local area, but they tend to be poor and also scatter to different locations for work.⁸⁷

In the next chapter I shall in addition consider a further threat to the preservation of *lik long* that comes from a well-meaning source, Shan revivalists, because of the emphasis on the modern type of meditation centre. Since that affects the use of *lik long* for meditation rather than more broadly, I shall deal with it there, where I am talking specifically about *satipaṭṭhāna* texts.

1.8. Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at some of the features of Shan *lik long* in general, including the beliefs behind the copying of them, the way they are made, written and recited, how collections develop, the poetic systems and scripts used, the difficulties confronting the tradition and attempts to preserve them. In the next chapter we shall look at a specific aspect of the use of *lik long*, namely their place in temple-sleeping and the teaching of meditation practice, and I provide some information about the focus of the textual work of this thesis Zao Amat Long, namely his *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, which I then translate to give the first full length version of a *lik long* in a European language (in Chapter Three).

⁸⁷ I have reported these aspects of the development of the collection at Wat Tiyasathan more fully in Crosby and Khur-yearn 2010.

CHAPTER TWO

The Place of *Lik Long* in Temple Sleeping and Meditation Practice

2.1. Varieties of Shan Meditation Methods and Practices

There is a variety of methods and traditions of meditation practice in Shan Buddhist communities. When studying these traditions, one can see that there are two contemporary traditions of practice existing side by side, led by religious leaders, usually monks from different sects. My discussions in this chapter on these traditions include the ritual of temple sleeping, the Zawti Shan Buddhists, and local traditions of practices, such as the recitation of meditative words in bed before falling asleep. The major difference between the two traditions can be highlighted by reference to the general way in which they are practised, i.e. while one is more informal and flexible, the other is more strict and systematic. In other words, one is a more traditional way of practice which is commonly followed and practised by large number of people, and the other is quite unusual and hence often known as reformed or modern way of practice. While this thesis focuses on the first of these two, the Shan Buddhist tradition of temple sleeping, which falls into the category of a more traditional and flexible way of practising meditation, I shall also pay some attention in this chapter to the Mingun Meditation Group (MMG), which falls into the category of a reformed or modern way of practising meditation. I shall first explore Shan practice including aspects of meditation more broadly before turning my focus to the two specific topics, i.e. the tradition of temple sleeping and the MMG.

A common tradition of Buddhist practice in Shan communities is that both monks and laypeople pay their homage to the Triple Gems in front of the Buddha shrine twice a day, i.e. once in the morning and another in the evening. The contents of this ritual practice include: the chanting of *Okāsa* in Shan poetry, also known as *kwam kan taw ratana sam zao* in Shan, which is a formula of request for pardon in case one has committed wrong doing toward the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha; of Pali words on the qualities of the Triple Gems; of *Paritta* or texts of protection; and of mental development on loving-kindness toward all living beings (*metta bhāvanā*). From these contents we can see that several parts of this ritual

practice are related to the practice of meditation, namely the *buddhānussati* and other *anussati* practices, and *mettā bhāvanā*.

Another common tradition of practice in Shan communities is that the Shan Buddhists learn to memorise the Pali formula of the three characteristics “*anicca, dukkha, anattā*” [‘impermanence, suffering, not-self’] from their parents or senior members of the family from an early age. This is part of the words that they say it every night, as they lie down in bed, before falling asleep.⁸⁸ Nicola Tannenbaum observed in Maehongson that the words *Kung Phra, Kung Tara, Kung Sang Kha* [Noble qualities of the Buddha, of the Dhamma and of the Saṅgha] are also parts of the formula for chanting in bed, which is also in fact true of the Shan communities in the Panglong area where I was grown up. Perhaps, we can consider it as a daily meditation practice among the Shan Buddhists. In other words, we may call this type of practice as ‘meditation in bed.’ Alternatively, one could see it also as a kind of protection, yet the level of the meditation involved will progress from this ritual as the individual grows up? Usually in their forties and beyond, Shan people will stay overnight in the temple on precept days (Buddhist holy days) to spend more time on practising meditation. From this time then, they are better known as temple sleepers, as shall be discussed more below and in the next section. Here, the point is that the Shan Buddhists learn the Buddha’s teaching on the Three Characteristics of the Word since their early days. For example, when a boy or a girl sneezes or stumbles while walking, sometimes his or her parents would say ‘*anicca*’ for him/her or ask him/her to say it.⁸⁹ Although the children learn to memorise and say the word, they would not take its meaning seriously nor make any attempt to understand it. However, as the perception is there throughout their life, they would catch the sense of it at some points and learn more and practise more as they grow and get old. They would not say only the Pali formula of “*anicca, dukkha, anattā*” but also the meaning in Shan next to each word in poetic style: “*anicca am-man-am-mye, dukkha khan-zai-sang-re, anattā to-ha-am-lai-wa.*” [‘*anicca* not steadfast, *dukkha* being distress and suffering, and *anattā* not my body’]. This tradition of practice may have initially been passed down orally in one-to-one interactions, i.e. the more experienced people taught the less experienced ones, rather than through listening to *haw lik*, which is widely discussed throughout this thesis. Tannenbaum observed the custom of taking education or learning the words of recitation through oral

⁸⁸ Personal contact with Tannenbaum, 2012.

⁸⁹ From my own experience. This is perhaps similar to what the English people say ‘bless you’ to someone when he/she sneezes.

tradition in Thongmaksan area of Maehongson when a friend was going to take up temple sleeping – she talked to more experienced temple sleepers who taught her the words, how to finger beads, what to say, etc.⁹⁰

Next and perhaps the most popular traditional way of practising meditation in Shan Buddhist communities is the tradition of ‘temple sleeping’ (*naun kyaung*), mentioned above. It is also the focus of this thesis. The tradition of temple sleeping refers to those that follow the method of transmitting meditation using *haw lik* (the reading of *lik long*) in the context of temple sleeping, as had been done by Shan Buddhists for centuries. The British missionary Leslie Milne conducted research into Shan ritual practices in the early 20th century Shan States, in the context of which she also observed the traditional meditation practices and the associated ritual of listening to poetic texts that she observed.⁹¹ It is interesting that even Shan Buddhist literature 19th and early 20th centuries that relates to meditation also comes to us in the form of poetry, *lik long*, discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter I shall look more at the importance of poetic recitation, both as a form of meditation in itself and as a method of communication, and how these roles are exemplified in the unique Shan tradition of ‘temple sleeping.’ On temple sleeping occasions, laypeople stay overnight at their local temple and perform the ritual of reading and listening to poetic literature on a variety of advanced religious topics including the subject of meditation. One can say that the practice of temple sleeping is a traditional and flexible Shan way of meditation practice as we shall see more discussion in the next section of this chapter. By flexible, I mean that practitioners do not need to spend certain amounts of time or specific times doing specific practice of following a strict routine, unlike modern intensive *vipassanā* method. Rather practitioners, after listening to the poetic teaching, have time in which they choose how to take their practice further.

In contrast to the more common or traditional way of practices followed by the majority of Shan Buddhists, there are groups and sects of reformed Buddhists. One of the early Shan Buddhist reforms is known as Zawti sect, named after the sect’s founder Varajoti (*joti* and *zawti* are the same word, alternative spelling reflecting the Pali and Burmese/Shan pronunciation respectively), who lived and taught in the 16th and 17th centuries CE.⁹² Varajoti

⁹⁰ Personal communication with Tannenbaum, 2012.

⁹¹ Milne 1910, *Shans at Home*, p.106.

⁹² The name Zawti seems to have originated from the Pali word ‘jot’ [light or radiance]. It was recorded by Sangermano (1893: 111) as ‘Zodi’ and most Burman and Shan pronounce it as ‘zawti’ although some would

was a son of Shan ruler of Mueang Mao or the Mao Shan Kingdom, now the area along Mao river valley of the present Burma-China borders.⁹³ With its headquarters in Mueang Yang, now in Kachin State but still near Mueang Mao, the Zawti Shans were spread all over the Shan State and other parts of Burma. One of the well known Zawti villages in the present day is the Ninth Mile Shan Village of Mayangon Township in Rangoon. The village temple there, Aung Mye Bon Tha Shan Kyaung, also known among Shan as Wat Tai Kao Lak, has 10 acres of land containing old Buddhist buildings built by the Zawti Shans when they immigrated from their headquarters, Mueang Yang, to the area over a century ago. Up to the 1930s, when a history of the Zawti sect was written by its committee for a special religious occasion, the temple had a lineage of 21 head-abbots. The history was added, with an introduction by U Htay Hlaing, to his work *Dhammadūta*, volume 3.⁹⁴ One of early, if not the earliest, Westerners, to have written about Zawti Shan is Vincenzo Sangermano (1758–1819), a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Barnabite religious order, who served as a missionary in Burma from 1783 to 1806, as described in his *The Burmese Empire a Hundred Years Ago*, which was first published in 1833.⁹⁵

Although the Zawti sect still exists it is not as powerful as it was and the numbers of adherents have declined significantly. I therefore refer to them in the past tense, as observations about their practice are mainly historical, including from my early life. Among the many significant factors of the Zawti sect, i.e. a separate monastic lineage and attendant lay followers, which is associated with meditation practice. The Zawti monks as well as their lay followers are regarded by many Shan people as ‘extremists’ in that they are over strict in their rejection of traditional ritual and their rigorous practice of meditation. One of their meditation focuses is to control the 6 *indriya* (faculties): eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind.⁹⁶ The monks get up at 4am in the morning to start their daily routines including the chanting of prayers and practising meditation.⁹⁷ Other significant practices of the Zawti include praying to the Nyan-daw, the godlike wisdom, which abides like a mountain of fire in the heavens, invisible to mortal eyes; they also do not follow traditional indications of respect towards

pronounce it ‘zodi’. For more information on the Zawti sect, see Htay Hlaing 1991, pp. 367-386 and Mendelson 1975, pp. 73-77, 231-234.

⁹³ Htay Hlaing 1991, *Dhammadūta*, vol. 3, p. 370.

⁹⁴ Htay Hlaing 1991, pp. 371-372.

⁹⁵ Sangermano 1893, pp. 111-112. The 1993 edition is the 3rd edition of this work.

⁹⁶ Mendelson 1975, pp. 231.

⁹⁷ For details, see Htay Hlaing 1991, pp. 373-385.

Pagodas, monks and Buddha statues. These kinds of practices were also found among another range of groups, referred to as the Paramats. This term is derived from the Pali word *paramattha*, literally meaning the highest or ultimate truth. On a philosophical level, the term is connected with understanding reality through the concept of emptiness or non-self. The use of the term here refers to the certain Buddhist sectarian groups regarded by mainstream Burmese and some Shan as being on the fringe of orthodoxy, in fact refers to their emphasis of *Abhidhamma* (so their heightened interest in orthodoxy, from their own perspective). Their emphasis was upon intentional action, rather than ritual, which they saw as empty, and their tendency was to de-emphasize the ritual and priestly roles of monks.⁹⁸ In fact, there are many Paramat groups among the Burman Buddhists and this has led some researchers, such as Mendelson (1975: 75), to confuse the Shan Zawti sect with other Paramat groups, when he is referring to Scott's works (1909: 147149) on the Burman Paramat.

Moreover, the Zawti monks and their followers were strict with rules of moral conduct and practices. The Zawti monks do not have face-to-face contact with women. They strictly follow the ten *kusalakammapatha*, or good course of conduct, which cover the acts of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*) and meditation (*bhāvanā*).

Another interesting point of the Zawti sect is that the Zawti monks and their lay practitioners were believed to 'use the canonical Tipitaka texts in Shan.'⁹⁹ It is very likely that the Shan Tipitaka texts here may be referred to the Shan *lik long* poetic literature, which is extensively discussed in the previous chapter and other parts of this thesis. I know, from growing up in the Shan State, that they had a reputation for using poetry in their practice and many well-known *zare* were connected with the Zawti sect. Mong Yang village temple, now in Kachin State, is in fact the Headquarters of the Zawti Shan Buddhists. It also is well known place for teaching and learning *lik long* poetry as well as producing *lik long* texts. However, it is beyond the fieldwork research for this thesis.

Beside the Zawti, there are other Shan Buddhist reforming groups, such as the Yuan sect, which was imported from Lanna (now northern Thailand) in the 14th-15th century CE and Mingun Meditation tradition, which was originated in Thaton, Mon State (now lower Burma). I shall discuss the Mingun Meditation more in a later part of this chapter. In addition to the reforming groups or sects, there are also individual monks, who are well known for

⁹⁸ Mendelson 1975, p. 373.

⁹⁹ Mendelson 1975, p. 231.

their exemplary religious way of life and meditation practices. Among them are Udaung Taung Sayadaw, who lived and practised meditation in a cave at the south-west of Inle Lake before he became known as a ‘holy’ monk and Zaokhuwa Bunchum, who has lived his life as a forest monk since his novice-hood and he is highly respected by the Shan, Thai and Lao Buddhists, as shall be discussed more later in this chapter. To sum up, this is my attempt to cover variations in practice in Shan Buddhist communities as far as I am able, but mainly this is about lineage since I am unable to find details of the actual practices due to the lacking resources and difficulties of access to the areas in the Shan State for my fieldwork research. I shall now discuss a more full account of temple sleeping, which is a traditional and flexible way of practising meditation.

2.2. Sleeping Overnight in the Monastery: A Traditional Shan Way of Studying Buddhism and Practising Meditation

The Buddhist practice of sleeping overnight in the temple both preserves and promulgates the traditional practice of meditation in Shan communities. During the period of such practice, although it is not always the case it is very usual that a poetry-reciter reads out passages of poetic literature in a pleasant voice while the audience sits and listens quietly in an appreciative manner. This Shan tradition of religious practice is called *Naun Kyaung*, meaning ‘temple sleeping.’

The tradition of temple sleeping usually takes place on the ‘precept day’ (*wan sin*)¹⁰⁰ during the three months that make up the period of the “rains retreat” (*wā* or *wāsa*).¹⁰¹ According to Buddhist calendar, there are four precept or Sabbath days a month, i.e. the 8th of waxing moon, the full moon, the 8th of waning moon, and the dark moon or the last day of the month. It is common in the Theravada Buddhist tradition that the three months period of the rainy season is the time of the rains retreat. The rains retreat period according to the Shan Buddhist calendar is from the first waning moon of the 8th lunar month to the full moon of the 11th lunar month, usually from July to October. During this period, monks do not travel far for overnight stay but live in the same place to observe the rains retreat, and laypeople take

¹⁰⁰ For more information on Buddhist precept days, see Gombrich 1991, *Buddhist Precept and Practice: traditional Buddhism in the rural highlands of Ceylon*, pp. 77-79, and Tannenbaum 2001, *Who can compete against the world?: Power protection and Buddhism in Shan worldview*, p. 21.

¹⁰¹ The Shan term *wā* or *wāsa* is derived from Pali ‘*vassa*’ or Sanskrit ‘*varsa*’ literally meaning ‘rain.’ The Thai follows the Sanskrit term ‘*varsa*’ and pronounces it in Thai accent ‘phan-sā.’ For more information on the Buddhist rains retreat, see Gombrich 1991, pp. 326-7.

more seriously the practice of temple sleeping. In our interviews of *zare* in 2009 we also found that this was a time, before modern education but in living memory, when other types of teachers would come to temples to teach novices, monks and laypeople a whole variety of skills, including secular skills such as martial art and mathematics.

The tradition of temple sleeping offers an opportunity for Shan Buddhist people to stay overnight away from home and daily routines. Temple sleepers take on the Eight Precepts¹⁰² and follow the restrictive eating practices of monks. The place where the temple sleepers stay is called *sālā*, also called *zayat* or *salaup*, and usually there are several *sālā* buildings, which are located in the compound of a monastery or near to it. Sometimes, when there are more temple sleepers than usual and all the *sālās* are full, some male temple sleepers stay in the main hall of the temple. While staying in the *sāla* or in the temple observing the Eight Precepts, they listen to poetic literature and practise meditation.¹⁰³ Referring to the Shan tradition of observing the Eight Precepts, Leslie Milne wrote:

Shans do not sleep with their wives during the nights of the fast days of each month; they carry their beds and mosquito curtains to the *zayats* near the monastery. There they spend the night in reading aloud or listening while others read portions of their holy books. The reading continues the whole night, as they feel inclined. During these nights of fasting, women sometimes sleep in other *zayats* set apart for women.¹⁰⁴

The tradition thus observed in the northern Shan State over a hundred years ago is still preserved and practised among the Shan communities of present Shan State/Burma and northern Thailand. Milne does not describe in detail whether the *lik long* recitation she was observing is the texts on meditation. Nevertheless, we can say that listening to the *lik long* itself is very much a type of meditation, especially during the practice of temple sleeping. This type of meditation would fall into the category of meditation with ‘reflection’ (*anussati*), and in this case, the listeners are meditating on the *dhamma*, reflecting on the noble qualities of the *dhamma* (*buddhānussati kammaṭṭhāna*) rather than the contents of the *dhamma*.

¹⁰² The Eight Precepts are: 1) refraining from killing, 2) refraining from stealing, 3) refraining from sexual misconduct, 4) refraining from telling a lie, 5) refraining from taking alcohol, 6) refraining from eating solid food at the wrong time (after mid-day until the sunrise), 7) refraining from singing or listening to music and dancing as well as using make-up and perfume, and 8) refraining from using higher seat or bed. Also see, Gombrich 1991, pp. 77-79.

¹⁰³ For more information on the Eight Precepts, see Hare 1935, *The book of gradual sayings*, vol. 4, pp. 170-171. AN 8.41, and Gombrich 1991, p. 78.

¹⁰⁴ ‘*Zayat*’, a Burmese term equal to Shan word ‘*salaup*’ or Pali word ‘*sāla*’, was also used by Shan of that time as recorded by Leslie Milne. Milne 1910, p. 106.

Since I have grown up with the tradition of temple sleeping, I have seen the temple sleeping often goes the recitation of *lik long* literature. While I have grown up with such tradition at Wat Panghoo in Panglong in the 1980s and 1990s, recently I also observed it at during my fieldwork research in Northern Thailand, Wat Piang Luang (a border village temple in Chiang Mai, and Wat Pang Mu (a village temple, near Maehongson town, 2006), and more recently we, members of the SBB group research (see Introduction and Chapter One), observed the tradition at Wat Huoi Suea Thao village temple and Wat Huoi Pha village temple, both in Maehongson in 2009. Whilst living in a monastery as a novice, I have had close observation and witness on the tradition of temple sleeping for many years at Wat Panghoo and that area of Panglong, Shan State, where I started learning to read and Shan, and then as a novice taking primary monastic education. I observed that the recitation of *lik long* poetic literature had taken place at almost every occasion of temple sleeping. Usually there were two events of poetry recitation taken place at such an event of temple sleeping: one for male temple sleepers and another for female temple sleepers.¹⁰⁵ This was done so because male and female temple sleepers were staying at different *sāla* (*salaup*), as mentioned by Milne above. At Wat Panghoo and also the surrounding temples in the area of Panglong, Shan State, temple sleepers did not sleep in the main temple building, although this is not the case in Northern Thailand, where Nicola Tannenbaum observed in Maehongson: men ‘always’ sleep in the main temple building, women in the *sāla*,¹⁰⁶ and I myself also noticed at Wat Piang Luang, Wiang Haeng in 2006, more of this shall be discussed below, that men were sleeping in the main temple building, although there was also a *sāla*, which was full of male temple sleepers. It is a common system of Shan monastic architecture and temple layouts that one of the main purposes of having *sāla* or *saloup* buildings is for temple sleepers during the rains retreat and hence it is more traditional and appropriate that all temple sleepers, men and women, sleep in the *sāla* but not in the main temple building. For there will be no body but temple sleepers in the *sāla* on the temple sleeping day, hence it is a quiet and suitable place required for certain type of meditation practised during the time of temple sleeping in this instance, where else the main temple building is a communal place; usually the main temple building consist of the Buddha’s shrine, the abbot’s room and his office (usually outside his room) and rooms for monks and novices; hence although it may not be very noisy but it may not be quiet either. Therefore, it is very likely that having or

¹⁰⁵ When needed, young monks and novices who would have done some training and practices of reading *lik long* were invited to read out *lik long* texts for temple sleepers.

¹⁰⁶ In personal corespondance with Prof. Tannenbaum (2012).

allowing temple sleepers to sleep in the main temple building is a recent change or reform of Shan Buddhism.

In addition to the ritual of listening to poetic literature, some laypeople memorise Pali or Shan poetic formulas for recitation. For instance, they learn to memorise the formulas they should recite during the practice of temple sleeping. As in other Theravada Buddhist communities, the Shan use Pali formulas for the recitation of the Triple Gems and Precepts. However, formulas used for other purposes, such as ‘the words of prayer’ (*kwam wai phra*) for paying homage at morning and evening chanting or at any religious ceremonies, and ‘the words for sharing merit’ (*kwam yat nam*) at the end of merit-making ceremonies, are usually composed in Shan poetry. In poetic form, the formulas are easily memorised that help the reciters or listeners to gain more devotion or faith in the Buddha and his teachings. Such faith is an important factor for the Buddhist practice and meditation. The following is an example of a Shan poetic formula called *kwam long kyaung* [‘words of leaving temple’] that a temple sleeper should recite before leaving the temple to return home.

Kwam Long Kyaung

*Muea wa kha ma kham sin paet, kha te sim maet wai nai zai,
Zao akha kang nai, mon kham phra tra sum mung mai hom kan,
Sin paet kaw am pha, sin ha kaw am wang,
Sin saeng saung mang aun kwa na, na mueang zao pai la, kha te kham ao pin
sin ha khuen muea kha aw.*¹⁰⁷

Below is my translation.

The Formula for Leaving the Temple

Yesterday, I came to observe the Eight Precepts; I will keep them in my mind.
At dawn, the blessings of the Buddha and the Dhamma are my shelter.
They are in fact like the leaves [of a tree] covering the branches.
I neither give up the Eight Precepts nor abandon the Five Precepts.
The light of the Jewel-Precepts leads me forward.
Now, this morning, I will re-observe the Five Precepts, as I have to return home.

As previously stated, the tradition of temple sleeping is practised on a ‘precept day’ (*wan sin*) during the rains-retreat. Below is an account of my observation of the religious

¹⁰⁷ For the formula in Shan scripts, see the Appendix Four. I have obtained this formula from a temple sleeper at a Thai-Burma border village, where the Shan tradition of temple sleeping is maintained to this day.

rituals performed during the rains retreat at a Shan village monastery in Wiang Haeng district, Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand. Early in the morning of the precept day of July 25th 2006, Shan laypeople from the village carried offerings in their hands and made their way to the local temple, Wat Piang Luang. Soon after arriving in the preaching hall (the main temple building), each of them offered popped rice and flowers on three trays - one for the Buddha, one for his teachings and one for the monks. Individual prayer then preceded the start of a formal program for the collective performance of religious rituals. The program of the day was divided into two sections. The first was for all people attending the ceremony and the second was for the temple sleepers only, as preparation for their subsequent observation of the Eight Precepts and overnight stay. When everyone had arrived, at around 9am, the formal program started with a request for silence. This was made by a lay leader known as the *pu mauk* [‘flower man’], also called *pan taka*, a Burmese and Pali loanword that has the same meaning as *pu mauk* or flower man.¹⁰⁸ He then led the assembly to pay homage to the Triple Gems, observe the Five Precepts and listen to the chanting of the *Paritta* (a chanting text for blessing and protection) and sermons by the monks. After that, the laypeople made formal offerings of specific items such as food and other requisites to the monks. Finally, the laypeople shared merit with all creatures – each of them chants his/her own words of transferring merit, usually with pouring water and all chant together the formula of sharing merit without pouring water¹⁰⁹— and this signified the end of the first section. Many young people left the temple, and only those who were going to observe the Eight Precepts, mostly older people, remained in the preaching hall. After a short break of 15 minutes the second part of the ceremony commenced. This entailed the temple sleepers undertaking the Eight Precepts under the instruction of a senior monk (Fig. 2.1.). On such occasion, the temple sleepers also listen to sermons on meditation from monk either immediately after the ritual of observing the Eight Precepts or after lunch in the afternoon.¹¹⁰ On that particular precept day, the 25th July 2006, there were 202 temple sleepers and most of them (about two third) are

¹⁰⁸ *Pu mauk* or *pan taka* always holds a bunch or tray of flowers in his hands while leading the performance of religious rituals; hence he is known as “flower man.” Tannenbaum 2001 (pp. 31, 76) describes the ‘flower man’ as the lay-leader.

¹⁰⁹ There are variety of formula for sharing merit, most of which are in Shan poetry although some are also mixed with Pali in *nissaya* style. Recently, Khuwa Bunchum’s formula of sharing merit has been widely used in Shan communities diaspora, and most notably the Pali term *bhāvanā*, which refers to meditation in this case, is also used in the formula. For the full text of Khuwa Bunchum’s formula for transferring merit in Shan script, see the Appendix Five.

¹¹⁰ For Shan sermons delivered at other events including the subject relevant to meditation, see Tannenbaum 1995, pp. 101-122.

women. Venerable Phra Mahā Kraison, the head monk of Wat Piang Luang, reported that this number was slightly less than that of the previous full moon day, which had been the first day of the rains retreat. Generally, more people are expected to attend religious ceremonies on the more highly regarded *wan sin*, such as full moon days.¹¹¹



Fig. 2. 1. Practice of Temple sleeping at Wat Piang Luang at Thailand-Burma border, Chiang Mai; the temple sleepers undertaking the Eight Precepts from the monk. (Photo: Jotika Khur-Yearn, 2006)

One traditional method of meditation usually practised by the temple sleepers is ‘recollection of [the qualities of] the Buddha’ (*Buddhānussati*) or ‘reflection on the three characteristics of true nature of the world’ (*Tilakkhaṇa*), subjects familiar to other forms of Theravada.¹¹² This type of meditation practice for Shan temple sleepers is usually accompanied by the practice of counting a rosary or ‘prayer strand’ called *mak nap*,

¹¹¹ Of the four *wan sin* or Buddhist holy days, the full moon and the dark moon days are considered as bigger *wan sin*. Again, there is also different status of their importance among the bigger *wan sin*. For instance, during the three months’ rains retreat, the first day and the last day of the rains retreat, both of which are full moon, are considered as more important than other *wan sin*.

¹¹² For details on the recollection of the Buddha, see Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification), translated by Ñanamoli 1956, pp. 206-230. The three nature of the world are impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and selflessness (*anattā*). For details, see *Anattalakkhaṇā sutta* [‘Not-Self Characteristic Discourse’]. Thanissāro Bhikkhu (tr.) 1993, *Anattalakkhaṇā Sutta: The Discourse on the Not-self Characteristic*. SN 22.59.

traditionally containing 108 beads.¹¹³ During retreat periods, a Shan might sit quietly in front of the Buddha shrine and reflect on the qualities of the Buddha with his or her hands counting the rosary. One of the most well known qualities of the Buddha that is used as a meditation object is ‘*arahaṃ*’ which literally means ‘worthy one.’¹¹⁴ A meditator recites *arahaṃ* in his/her mind repeatedly using the rosary to count the number of repetitions until the final bead is reached. Each cycle of the repetitions is then called *nueng haup* in Shan. By completing one cycle of the rosary with the recitation of *arahaṃ*, one has then reflected on the quality of the Buddha 108 times.¹¹⁵ In this way, a meditator usually determines to recollect the qualities of the Buddha for over a thousand times by completing ten cycles of the rosary in one sitting meditation alone. The Shan also believe that this type of meditation practice helps to accumulate merit, which brings good results to him or her later on in this life or subsequent lives. As with other forms of merit making, the ritual of sharing merit follows at the end of meditation practice.

Moreover, for the laity, whether they partake in the temple sleeping or not, the temple is not only a place for religious activities but also for social gathering. For the temple sleepers, staying overnight in the temple is not only a great chance to temporarily stay away from their home, which is considered worldly, but it also offers a chance for having peace of mind and relaxation, with the *dhamma* in heart, under the shade of the monastery. My observation of the tradition of temple sleeping at Wat Piang Luang during the rains retreat of 2006 reveals this socio-religious phenomenon. After having their lunch, most of the temple sleepers were seen having a rest lying on their bedding,¹¹⁶ while some were seen sitting round a tea tray and discussing various subjects. On the basis of my observation at other temples, it seems that conversations often involve the interpretation of matters concerning the *dhamma* and meditation. On the 9th August 2006, as I proceeded on my fieldwork trip from Piang

¹¹³ There are numerous interpretations on the 108 beads. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japa_mala. Here, in doing a practice of counting the number of repetitions of the mala, 100 are counted as completed. The remaining are said to cover errors or omissions.

¹¹⁴ Although now less common – rosaries not being commonly found in Sri Lankan Buddhism - the practice of counting rosaries with the word ‘*arahaṃ*’ was also found among Sinhalese Buddhists in the 19th century as observed by L. A. Waddell, ‘Rosaries in Ceylonese Buddhism’ in *JRAS* (Jul., 1896), pp. 575-577.

¹¹⁵ In her article *Tantric Theravada: A bibliographic essay on the writings of Francois Bizot and others on the Yogavacara*, Kate Crosby has discussed the use of the word *arahaṃ* in other forms of Buddhist meditation and ritual practice. Crosby 2000, *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 1. no. 2, p. 147.

¹¹⁶ All temple sleepers have to bring their own bedding, which consists of a mat, a pillow and a blanket (also a mosquito net in some areas, where there are mosquitoes). Also see Tannenbaum 2001, pp. 139-143. Tannenbaum also learned from temple sleepers during his fieldwork that people do not take naps until after lunch, because if they sleep before lunch, the *phi li* (*devatā*), who writes down the names of the temple sleepers, will miss them. Note from personal correspondence with Tannenbaum in 2012.

Luang to Maehongson, I had an opportunity to observe the practice of temple sleeping at Wat Pang Mu,¹¹⁷ a village which is about 5 miles away to the north of Maehongson town. That day is the 9th full moon day, one of the biggest precept days according to Shan Buddhist calendar, and there were 120 temple sleepers. A remarkable thing I observed here is that a small group of temple sleepers spent their afternoon with having an informal reading out and listening to *lik long* poetic literature on the veranda/terrace of the main building of the temple. The *lik long* text they were reciting that day was *Zao Maho (Mahosathā Jātaka)*; it was recited in turn by two Zares, namely, Zare Oo and Zare Sang Ken. As it is an informal recitation event, the reciters and the audience were just sitting round of a tea tray as they enjoy listening to the tale of Mahosathā. I also noted that they stopped the recitation at the end of almost every paragraph to further discuss the content of the texts, see Fig. 2.2 below. Note that all temple sleepers in Fig 2.2 are male, evidence that male and female stay separately at different buildings during the ritual of temple sleeping. Even when they gather for the recitation of and listening to *lik long*, they still sit apart in group/section of male and female as can be seen in Fig. 2.1 above.



Fig. 2. 2. A group of temple sleepers (left), led by Zare Oo (right), having an informal reading out and listening to *lik long* poetic text on the terrace of Wat Pang Mu on the 9th August 2006. (Photo: On Khur-Yearn)

¹¹⁷ Wat Pang Mu also has a big collection of *lik long* manuscripts, and was a part of the SOAS-based group research project on Shan Buddhism at the borderlines in 2009 mentioned in Chapter One.

In general, temple sleepers spend their afternoon doing various things – it is a ‘free’, or rather, flexible time that they can spend according to their own choice, within the expectations of conduct for temple sleepers. While some were talking, others may also be seen practising meditation or counting their rosaries. Others might listen to recorded sermons from a tape or CD player. However, there are certain times when they are required to perform collective religious activities, which usually take place in the main temple building. Such collective religious activities usually take place late in the afternoon and in the evening and the activities include the repetition or reaffirmation of observing the Eight Precepts or listening to the sermon on meditation given by a monk or the recitation of poetic literature by a *zare*, as I shall now discuss.

2.3. The Recitation of *Lik Long* Poetic Literature on the Subject of Meditation

The recitation of poetic literature, *haw lik*, which addresses the topic of meditation practices, usually takes place at the monastery during the period of temple sleeping. Hence, the audience is mainly made up of temple sleepers. My main interest in describing the way that Shan keep the tradition of temple sleeping during the rains retreat is to explain the context in which this kind of Shan poetry is most often recited and heard. The poetic recitation is usually performed by a *zare*, who also participates in the practice of temple sleeping. At such, Buddhist meditation is the subject of a significant body of Shan poetic works, the performance of which plays a crucial role in religious ceremonies attended by large numbers of the Shan lay community.

The significance of the recitation of these poetic meditation texts is that all the audience are doing sitting meditation while listening to the poetry. The following description is based on my observation of the poetic performance at Wat Piang Luang on the 25th July 2006. When evening arrived, at around 7pm, all the temple-sleepers, men and women, gathered in the preaching hall for the ritual of listening to poetic texts on meditation. Most members of the audience could be seen in meditation postures, sitting still, with their eyes closed and listening to the poetry. If there is any question or topic to be discussed, there is a conversation between the poetic reader and the audience at the interval or tea break, which is equivalent to the question time at lectures or meditation courses that we know nowadays. The text that was recited to the temple sleepers on that day (25th July) was Zao Worakhae’s *Kyam Ne Tang Nibbān* [‘A Guide to Nibbāna’]. There are other popular texts for recitation at the practice of

temple sleeping. These include *Uk puk khan ya* [‘The dialogue on Uposatha’], *Mu suea khuen sin* [‘The hunter observing precepts’], and *Kaya sungma* [‘A sermon on the body’].¹¹⁸ It is worth noting that none of the *zare* we interviewed in Maehongson ever mentioned Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, the meditation text for recitation at temple sleeping that is the focus of the latter part of this thesis. Perhaps this indicates that the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* is for higher level of meditation practice while the traditional Shan meditation practice in general is for all levels of meditators, or it may simply be that this text is no longer popular or not popular in the region such as Maehongson where our group fieldwork and *zare* survey took place. In fact, a copy of Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* is found at the MMG Centre, Panglong, Shan State, and perhaps this is evidence that *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* is for higher level of meditation practice as it is in-cooperated with modern intensive meditation practice of MMG, which shall be discussed further below.¹¹⁹

The temple sleepers conducting meditation at Wat Piang Luang, having learned the meditation techniques from the ritual of listening to poetic texts, continued to sit quietly either alone or with other meditators, practising meditation in front of the Buddha’s shrine. So, at the ritual of listening to poetic texts, the meditators learn and practise meditation while listening to a poetic text, which relates to the techniques of practising meditation. This is slightly different from present day ‘modern intensive meditation’ courses where a teacher gives the instruction first and then the meditators practise meditation afterward.

2.4. The Introduction of ‘Modern Intensive Meditation Practice’ into Shan Communities

Having explored the way in which reading of poetry forms a crucial component of the teaching of traditional methods of meditation in Shan communities, I want to now explain the presence in Shan communities of the modern intensive meditation practice. I want to show how, although we might see intensive methods as a threat to the preservation of Shan Buddhism and culture, they were in fact introduced by reformists seeking to protect Shan communities and certainly not in hostility to traditional practice. This is particularly true of

¹¹⁸ Information acquired from SOAS research group’s *zare* survey as part of Shan Buddhism at the Borderlands Project in Maehongson, 2009.

¹¹⁹ I have mentioned above that there is a great variety of Shan poetic literature. Interviews conducted among *zares* in Burma in 2010, mentioned above, showed a great difference in repertoire between those reported in our 2009 Maehongson survey. It may therefore be that further such fieldwork would reveal regional variation of meditation texts used, including Amat Long.

the Mingun (MMG) centres (see below), where we now sometimes see the two methods of meditation practice – both traditional and modern intensive – integrated with each other.

Modern intensive meditation instruction is available from specialised centres that run ‘intensive’ meditation courses and operate independently of traditional monasteries. The actual meditation techniques that are practised and taught in these centres derive from the same ultimate source, the teachings of meditation in the Pali canon, especially the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, but they will vary in the detailed manner of their delivery and focus in accordance with the lineage or tradition, the expertise and the experience of the teachers.¹²⁰ Teachers may belong to different meditation traditions including Mingun, Mahāsī, Mogok, and Sunlun. Gustaaf Houtman discusses these traditions and the lineage of meditation masters including Mingun Zeidawun (Jetawun) Sayadaw, whose methods of intensive meditation practice has been recognized as the root of the Shan modern intensive meditation practice.¹²¹ Houtman also mentions Sao Shwe Thaik (also spelled as ‘Thaïke’),¹²² who was a pious Shan Buddhist ruler and the then first president of the Union of Burma and also involved Buddhist movements including the involvement of meditation practices¹²³ and Shan Tipiṭaka Translation Project in the 1950s,¹²⁴ as shall be discussed further below. In fact, amongst these traditions, the tradition of Mingun meditation has reached furthest and penetrated most deeply into Shan communities. For this reason, the Mingun tradition will be explored in most depth here. The tradition takes its name from its founder, Mingun Zetawun Sayadaw U Nārada (1869-1954, see Fig. 2. 1.),¹²⁵ who lived and taught meditation in the early 20th century, with his base in Thaton,¹²⁶ a town in lower Burma. Although the official

¹²⁰ A desirable direction of future research would be a detailed examination of the actual variety within these practices, which may vary in terms of such things as whether movement or study is involved, or the precise way of dealing with distractions, for example.

¹²¹ Houtman 1990, pp. 289, 308. The term ‘Zetawun’ has its Pali origin ‘Jetavana’, a famous name of a monastery during the Buddha’s time. Other western spelling of the term closed to Burmese accent is ‘Zeidawun’ as also used by Gustaaf Houtman.

¹²² Sao Shwe Thaik was the ruling prince of Yawngwe state and became the first president of the Union of Burma after its independence 1948. He also played an important role in the Sixth Buddhist Council. For more information on the biography of Sao Shwe Thaik (or Chao Shwe Thaïke), see in his children’s autobiographies, such as Yawngwe 1987, *The Shan of Burma: Memoirs of a Shan Exile*, and Simms 2008, *The Moon Princess: Memories of the Shan States*.

¹²³ Houtman 1990, pp. 275, 297-298.

¹²⁴ Yawngwe 1987, p. 7.

¹²⁵ Houtman 1990, p. 289.

¹²⁶ Thaton, called by Shan as Sathung, is located in modern Mon State, between the cities of Pegu (Bago) and Molemine, of Burma. It is a historical town within the area that has been identified by some scholars as Suvāṇṇabhūmi, to which Emperor Asoka of the 3rd century BC is said to have sent two senior monks, Soṇa

name of the tradition is known as “Sathung Mūla Mingun Zetawun Sāsana Man Aung” [‘The Origin of Sathung Mingun Zetawun’s Teaching for the Defeat of Evil One’],¹²⁷ it will here be referred to as “Mingun Meditation Group” (henceforth MMG).

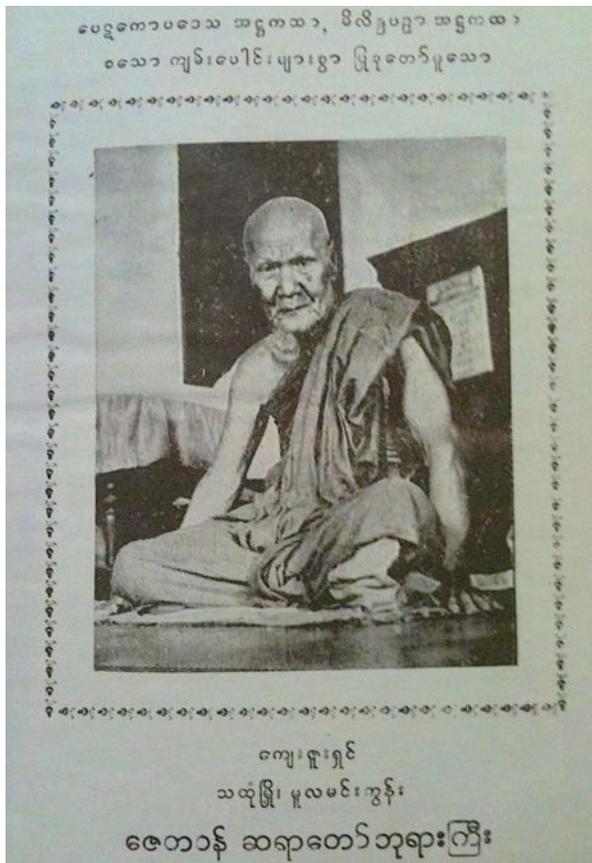


Fig. 2.3. Mula Mingun Jetawun Sayadaw (1868-1955)
Photo: Inside cover of *Mingun Vipassanā Sudanī Baung-kyok hne Taw Lei-shie Ahpwin* [‘A Collection of Mingun Vipassanā Meditation Technique and the Commentary of the Forty Forest-Practices’], published 1960.

Despite the fact that MMG is Burmese/Mon in origin, as being traced to the tradition or source of knowledge from a Burmese meditation master, U Nārada, and his works on

and Uttara, for Buddhist missionary work in the region. See, for example, Donald K. Swearer’s discussion of such legendary accounts of the arrival of Buddhism in mainland South East Asia in “Thailand” in Buswell 2003, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol. 2, pp. 830-836.

¹²⁷ The Sāsānānuggaha Organisation, which is the root of Mahāsi Meditation centres, was founded by Sir U Thwin and Prime Minister U Nu in November 1947, about 3 months after the establishment Mingun Kammathan centre in Lang Khur, Shan State. See www.mahasi.org.mm, and MMG 1967, *Pap phuen lik mai mi upate pannyat khyak muk zum (mula) mingun thammazariya tara pya sara zueng tai* [The Book of Rules and Regulations for Meditation Masters of Mūla Mingun, Shan State], and MMG 1998, *Pap mai taung pi kaun kham sathung mula minkun zetawun sasana man aung* [‘The Recording Book of the Golden Jubilee of Sathung Mūla Mingun Zetawun Sāsana Man Aung’].

meditation, it (MMG) has played an important role in the revival of Shan Buddhism and the maintenance of Shan Buddhist identity. MMG is associated to some extent with Burmese language and nationalism and was introduced into Shan Buddhism from the Mon/Burmese part of the Union of Burma. Note that the terming of Mon/Burmese or Burmese/Mon is problematic here because of the nature of the complexity of Mingun Sayadaw's biography. Despite the fact that he is ethnically a Burman and most (if not all) of his early education was taken in Burmese at several monasteries in Mandalay and other parts of Burma, his establishment of and reputation for his method and practice of meditation began in Thaton, a small town in the Mon State.¹²⁸

The Mingun tradition of meditation practice was first introduced to Shan Buddhist communities in 1936. It was brought by U Myat Kyaw,¹²⁹ a pupil of Mingun Zetawun Sayadaw U Nārada. U Myat Kyaw, who also taught meditation courses in Yangon (Rangoon), which seems to have been his main base, travelled to Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State, where he gave a talk on the meditation method that he had learned from U Nārada. After the talk, at the request of some of the audience, including two local Shan leaders, Lung Heing Yan-pe and Khun Htun,¹³⁰ a seven-day intensive meditation course in this practice was conducted at the Yawngwe Palace under the instruction of U Myat Kyaw. It is interesting that the Yawngwe Palace, 20 miles away to the south of Taunggyi, was used as a room for the first modern meditation course, indicating royal patronage in meditation from one of the most well-known Shan royal families at that time. Today, there are over 30 MMG centres, operating under the same tradition and a single administration. Teachers at these centres include monks, novices and laypeople.

Teachers, meditators and supporters of MMG have been mostly Shan, who are familiar with the tradition of poetic literature. However, the method of meditation instruction given at MMG centres is mainly based on the works of U Nārada and his pupils U Myat Kyaw, U Khun Htun and U Sucintā, and most of these works particularly those by U Nārada and U

¹²⁸ For more details of Mingun Sayadaw's biography, see Houtman 1990, p. 289.

¹²⁹ MMG 1998, pp. 17-18. U Myat Kyaw was formerly known as U Pandidama when he was a monk, see Houtman 1990, p. 44. Another well-known pupil of U Nārada is Mahāsi Sayadaw, whose meditation centres exist all over the country and outside Burma, such as Thailand, Sri Lanka and India. Kornfield 1996, *Living Dharma: Teachings of Twelve Buddhist Masters*, p. 51.

¹³⁰ Khun Htun later became one of U Myat Kyaw's successors for teaching meditation generally among Shan. MMG 1998, pp. 19-20.

Myat Kyaw are in Burmese.¹³¹ All teachers employed at MMG centres have been advised to read those works and understand them clearly. One problem here is that most teachers and practitioners at MMG centres are Shan although there are a few MMG centres in the Pa-Oh and Dhanu areas in the far south and southwest regions of Shan State. Thus, the recommendation of the reading list to MMG teachers seems to be MMG's advice rather than a strict rule. The reason for this is that most of the recommended books were written in Burmese while many MMG Shan and Pa-Oh teachers cannot read or understand Burmese language. Another reason could be the indication of authority of source and privileging of Burmese over Shan and other minority languages (as will be discussed in Chapter Four). Most Shan poetic literature is not mentioned in the MMG's recommended reading list, despite the fact that the performance Shan poetic meditation literature takes place at MMG centres. Only one recommended book on the list for MMG teachers is written in Shan. It is U Sucintā's *Satipaṭṭhanadīpanī : a thik pae lae khaw sap laeng man*. Neither Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* (1875) nor Zao Wora Khae's *Kyam nae tang nibbān* (c.1930s), both written in Shan and actually performed at MMG centres, are mentioned in the MMG's recommended reading list and yet they are available at such centres. In fact, the audio recording of Zao Wora Khae's *Kyam nae tang nibbān* was sponsored by a meditation centre.¹³² It is apparent that the recitation of poetic literature performed at MMG centres was influenced by the Shan traditional method of meditation practice, yet it remains to be seen to what extent the emergence of MMG will eventually influence or undermine the practice of meditation through temple sleeping. Certainly I think it has affected the presentation of Shan meditation practices, as for the outsider the intensive meditation centres are a more visible, obvious and

¹³¹ There are 24 books written by U Nārada, namely 1. *Peṭakopadesa-aṭṭhakathā* ['The Commentary of the Principle of Pitaka'], 2. The *Peṭakopadesaṭṭhakathā nissaya* translation (in Burmese), 3 volumes, 3. *Sajjētāvidhi-visajjanā* (in Pali), 4. *Ārambhā-vidhi-visajjanā* (Pali), 5. *Visuddhi-magga-aṭṭhakathā nissaya* (new edition), 6. *Taw lay saeh aphwin* ['the commentary of 40 kinds of forests'], 7. *Milinda-pañha-aṭṭhakathā* (in Pali), 8. *Nibbāna-kathā*, 9. *Nibbān lan nyun desanā*, 10. *Nibbān Sa Tan*, 11. *Satipaṭṭhān Sa Tan*, 12. *Satipaccaye – vinicchaya-muha*, 13. *Kathina-vinicchaya*, 14. *Kathin-nissaya* 15. *Phala-samapat*, 16. *Mahā-salā-yatana-sutta-nissaya*, 17. *Mūla-pariyāya-sutta-nissaya*, 18. *Pādāpādaraha-vinicchaya*, 19. *Paḍiññāta-karana-vinicchaya*, 20. *Thein Khan* ['the role of ordination hall'], 21. *Vipassanā-nyān-zin-gyam-gyi*, 22. *Anussaya-saing-yā*, 23. *Atirit-pyu-bon*, and 24. *Vipassanā-nyān-man-ya-ye*. U Myat Kyaw's works are: 1. *Gambhīrattha-pakasanī-gyam*, 2. *Vipassanā-dīpanī-gyam*, 3. *Nibbāna-magga-dīpanī-gyam*, 4. *Vipassanā-let-zwe-gyam*, 5. *Vipassanā-dīkā-gyam* (2 volumes), 6. *Ariyā-magga-dīpanī-gyam*, 7. *Gambhīra-dhamma-desanā-gyam* (3 volumes), 8. *Dhamma-kathika-let-zwe-gyam* (2 volumes), 9. *Abhidhamma-desanā-gyam* (2 volumes), and *Wut-yut-zin* ['Texts of Chanting']. U Sucintā's work, written under the guidance of U *Khun Htun*, is *Satipaṭṭhān-dīpanī* (in Shan). For the list in Burmese and Shan scripts, see MMG 1967, pp. 78-80, 106-107.

¹³² I have obtained a copy of this recording in CD Rom from Zao-sra Nandiya of Wat Muoi Taw, Panglong during my fieldwork in 2004. I am grateful to Zao-sra Nandiya for his generosity, giving me a copy of each of his CD collections on the recitation of *lik long* texts and other Shan Buddhist sermons.

accessible resource for finding out about meditation practices among the Shan. Moreover, while temple sleeping is aimed at older members of the community, i.e. forty and over years of age, the meditation centres were also aimed at younger people due to the new approach to the role of meditation in modern societies promulgated by such centres.

2.5. The Influence of Modern Intensive Meditation on Shan Buddhism and Literature

As the traditions of modern intensive meditation, particularly the MMG, grew rapidly among the Shan, their impact was increasingly felt outside the immediate community of meditators. Shan people from different backgrounds, including those with political motivations and a nationalist agenda, came to recognise the social power of these traditions. This growth in interest and awareness, particularly in the Mingun meditation tradition, resulted in a number of consequences, more complex than my question over its relationship with Shan temple sleeping suggests. One of the most significant consequences may have been that it forced issues of nationalism and cultural identity into a much more public sphere. On the one hand, those who were involved in the MMG movement had a view that MMG had been a key to the revolution and reformation of Buddhist meditation practice as well as a way for the revival of Shan Buddhist identity. On the other hand, those who worked promoting Shan culture or the nationalist movement saw MMG as another era of Burmese influence on Shan culture, or in other words, they saw MMG as a threat to Shan nationalism and cultural identity. For instance, many Shan nationalists, especially those involved in the resistance movement, criticised MMG practitioners as ‘selfish’ people because of the emphasis on self-transformation and personal liberation rather than communal and national transformation and liberation. Among the Shan nationalists, perhaps Zai Long (a pseudonym) is a good example for his criticism of Shan monks for leading Shan people in the wrong direction for the revival and development of Shan communities.¹³³ The Shan nationalists saw MMG as a threat to Shan nationalism and the freedom movement. They argued that meditators, *kon kammaṭṭhān*, were only practising for themselves i.e. to attain Nibbāna and ignored all other things, such as politics, culture and other social welfare issues.¹³⁴

¹³³ The real person whom I call Zai Long here is in fact a very influential figure in the Shan literacy movement and after 1988 he was an active member of a Shan political party.

¹³⁴ Such claims were common and spread wide in Shan communities of Shan State in the 1970s and 1980s.

In response to this criticism, some prominent meditation teachers proved their worth by engaging in social welfare activities, showing that those who criticized MMG were wrong. These meditation teachers have played important roles in the struggle for the revival of Shan Buddhist identity. Among these meditation teachers, there are four monks of particular significance, who have made a particularly important contribution to the development of monastic affairs, such as leadership in Buddhist organisations, reformation of monastic education, building of Buddhist monuments and places of worship, and teaching meditation. The four monks are Zao-sra Paṇḍita (also known as Zao-sra Mueang Naung), Zao Khuwa Bunchum Ñānasangvaro, Zaokhu Khammai Dhammasāmi, and Zaokhu Sukhaminda.¹³⁵ The inclusion of these four masters here is intended to show that they are not only respected as meditation teachers but also as spiritual and social leaders of Shan communities of their times. From my point of view, they can be even considered as ‘modern Shan Buddhist reformists.’ Of them, only Zao-sra Paṇḍita of Mueang Naung has passed away and the other three are still alive and active, continuing their labour on religious activities, such as leading their devotees to work on the propagation of Buddhism, the practice of meditation and other social welfare matters, see Fig. 2.4.

An interesting aspect of these three meditation teachers in relation to Shan literature is that, despite their limited knowledge of poetic *dharmā*, they often show their appreciation of it. While Khruwa Bunchum was often involved in rituals of poetic performance, Dhammasami and Sukhaminda encourage and support the efforts to retain and revive poetic literature. For instance, Dhammasami helped in the design of the 2009 SOAS group project in Maehongson mentioned in Chapter One. He also asked La Tun, a modern poet, to compose the ten *jātaka* stories in Shan poetry to commemorate his 40th birthday and Sukhaminda, as the secretary general of the Shan State Saṅgha Organisation, conferred honorary degrees and awards to poet-readers and composers. These three teachers are often referred to as the ‘three lotuses’ (*mo sam long*), which indicates their important roles in the current affairs of Shan Buddhist communities. One can say that they are the real engines or dynamic power for the reformation and development of Shan Buddhism. However, all their religious and social

¹³⁵ Note that Zao-sra, Zaokhu and Zao Khuwa are Shan terms for the titles used in front of monks’ names for the indication of their ranks and respect. Seeing their titles, one can understand their positions or ranks. ‘Zao-sra’ usually refers to the abbot of a temple, but sometimes it also refers to a senior monk who has been a monk at least for 20 years. However, the monk who has been appointed an abbot of a temple is called Sao-sra even though he may be less than 20 years in monk-hood. ‘Zaokhu’ refers to a teacher or scholar monk, while ‘KhuWa’ (also pronounced as ‘KruBa’ in Thai communities) specifically refers to ascetic monks, who follow the ‘Yuan Buddhist’ tradition in the eastern Shan State and northern Thailand.

activities are beyond the scope of this research. Nevertheless, I would like to give a brief record on the life and practices of these monks here that their efforts and activities have significantly influenced on the development of many aspects of Shan Buddhism starting from monastic education to reviving tradition of practice and teaching meditation.

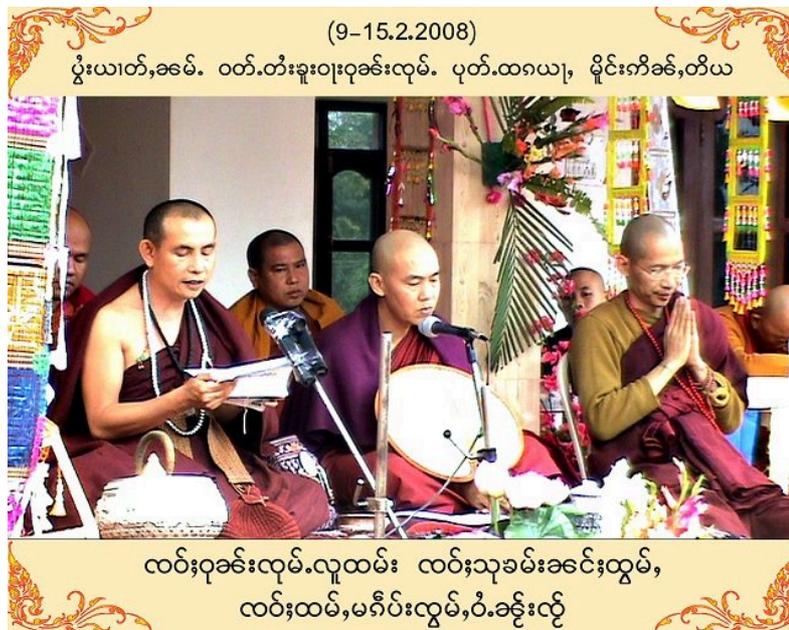


Fig. 2. 4. Front Line from Left to Right: Zao Khruwa Bunchum (reciting a Shan poetic text), Zaokhu Sukhaminda and Zaokhu Dhammasami at the opening ceremony of Wat Tai Khuwa Bunchum Buddhagāyā in India, 2008. (Photo Source: Facebook’s Sao Su Kham page.)

2.6. Richness of *Lik Long* Texts on the Subject of Meditation

The popularity of meditation practices in the 19th and 20th centuries Shan Buddhist communities has been highlighted by various titles of *lik long* texts on the subject of meditation. While some of these texts are on different techniques of meditation practices, some of them are versions of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the well-known discourse on ‘mindfulness’ meditation from the Pali canon. An interesting aspect of these *lik long* texts is that many of them bear the same titles but written by different authors. For example, there are different versions of *lik long* texts under the same title *Buddhānussati* found at different collections, and yet these texts were composed by different authors and hence are written in different styles and with different forms of rhyming poetry.

The *lik long* texts on meditation mainly fall into two categories: 1) those on various topics of meditation and 2) those on the *Satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness). The *lik long* by Amat Long examined later in this thesis clearly falls into the latter group and hence I shall investigate them in more detail below. I shall first, however, discuss those texts on meditation in general and their preliminary findings. The details of these texts were recorded during my fieldwork trips between 2004 and 2010 as well as a group fieldwork in 2009.

2.7. A Select List of *Lik Long* Texts on the Topic of Meditation

I believe that exploring *lik long* poetic works on the subject of meditation here will give us a comprehensive view of the literature that supports the traditional manner of practising meditation in Shan Buddhist communities. Here, I would like to provide a select list of *lik long* texts on the topics of meditation. The list is arranged in alphabetical order. However, where there are multiple of copies of texts with the same title, they are arranged by date of the existing copy, starting from the oldest copy first. For example, see *Buddhānussati* (in the list below).

No.	Titles	Translation of the title in English	Location (Temples / Zare's houses)	Date of this copy	Authors / earlier or original date
1.	<i>Amatatvāra-pakāsānī shu phoi</i>	Commentary on the Way to immortality	Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng [TS50] ¹³⁶	1925	1880
2.	<i>Amatatvāra shu-phoi</i>	Contemplation of the Way to Immortality	Zare Mu Aung, Lashio (LS)	1939	Zare Zam
3.	<i>Ānāpāna-shu-phoi</i>	Contemplation of In and Out Breathing	Wat Pang Mu, Maehongson (MHS)	1881	-
4.	<i>Anik za sa phaw</i> (Anicca-sabhāva)	The nature of impermanence	Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng (MT)	1864	Zao Kaw Li
5.	<i>Anik za sa phaw</i> (Anicca-sabhāva)	The nature of impermanence	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS68]	-	-

¹³⁶ This is the unique number of each *lik long* texts at Wat Tiyasathan; the numbers are written on the outer side of the manuscripts (see photo of the *lik long* collection of Wat Tiyasathan).

6.	<i>Anik za sa phaw</i> (Anicca-sabhāva)	The nature of impermanence	Wat Tapung, LS	1873	Zao Kaw Li
7.	<i>Bhāvanāyana Asubha vatthu</i>	The story of practising mental development on corpse	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS49]	1918	Zao Puññasāra Wan York / 1909
8.	<i>Buddhānussati</i>	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1866	Zare Kyauk Saung
9.	<i>Buddhānussati</i>	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Jong Klang, MHS	1875	Mun Zao Kyaung Taw
10.	<i>Buddhānussati</i>	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1887	-
11.	<i>Buddhānussati</i> ¹³⁷	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS72]	-	-
12.	<i>Buddhānussati</i> ¹³⁸	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS117]	1931	-
13.	<i>Buddhānussati</i>	Reflection on the Buddha	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS29]	1911	1904
14.	<i>Buddhānussati</i>	Reflection on the Buddha	British Library, UK	-	-
15.	<i>Kāya sung ma sutta saṅgaha</i>	Teaching on the body	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1878	Zare Kham Aw
16.	<i>Kāya sung ma</i>	Teaching on the body	Wat Jong Klang	1892	Zare Sang Aw / 1871
17.	<i>Kammaṭṭhān dīpanī</i> ¹³⁹	Commentary on meditation	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1879	-
18.	<i>Kammaṭṭhān zari</i> ¹⁴⁰	Habits and Meditation		1925	Zao Kaw Li

¹³⁷ This text was donated by Paw Sang Nang Pao of Mae Taeng village, Chiang Mai.

¹³⁸ This copy was donated by Pi Kham Oo of Mae Taeng village, Chiang Mai.

¹³⁹ Donated by Lung Sra Zing of Chang Phuek Village, Chiang Mai. The date of this copy is older than the date of founding Wat Tiyasathan, suggesting that the text was donated to another temple but brought to Wat Tiyasathan at a latter date.

¹⁴⁰ As the date of this copy is 1925, we can assume that it is not the original version because its author, Zao Kaw Li, died in 1895. Khun Maha 1970, *Puen Khu Maw Tai Hok Zao* [‘Biographies of Six Shan Scholars’], p.88.

19.	<i>Khandha dīpanī mae daw chut khan</i>	Commentary on aggregates, section of sermon to (the Buddha's) mother	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1928	Zare Kham Saii (Tang Yan), lived in Mae Ai / 1878
20.	<i>Khandhāpūra</i>	The city of aggregates	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	-	-
21.	<i>Khandhāpūra myo pye</i>	The city and sate of aggregates	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS33]	1918	-
22.	<i>Khandhāpūra</i>	The city of aggregates	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1919	Zare Mueang Na / 1883
23.	<i>Khandhāpūra</i>	The city of aggregates	Zare Mu Aung, LS	1906	Zao Wan York
24.	<i>Khandhā phoi</i> ¹⁴¹	Composition on the aggregates	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS25]	1898	1864
25.	<i>Khandhā phoi</i>	Composition on the aggregates	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1904	-
26.	<i>Khandhā phoi</i>	Composition on the aggregates	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1923	-
27.	<i>Kikza māsā shu phoi</i>	Matter of contemplating the funeral / corpse	Zare Kaun, LS	1899	Zare Na Kio
28.	<i>Marāṇa-yakkha</i>	The demon of death	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1970	-
29.	<i>Paṭiccasamuppat (Paṭiccasamuppāda)</i>	Dependent Origination	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1864	-
30.	<i>Paṭiccasamuppat (Paṭiccasamuppāda)</i>	Dependent Origination	Wat Ta Pung, LS	1884	Zare Na Kio
31.	<i>Paṭiccasamuppat (Paṭiccasamuppāda)</i>	Dependent Origination	Zare Mu Aung, LS	1968	Zare Aye Kyaw

¹⁴¹ The date of this text is earlier than the date of the foundation of Wat Tiyasathan (1909). However, the donor of the text was from Wan Kat (market village) of Mae Taeng. Perhaps this suggests that the text was donated to other temple in the first place and later it was brought to Wat Tiyasathan.

32.	<i>Paramat zu</i> ¹⁴²	A Collection of Profound Teachings	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1949	Zare Mueang Naung / 1882
33.	<i>Paramat zu a-mye a-phye</i> ¹⁴³	A Collection of Profound Teaching: Questions and Answers	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1862	Zao Kang Suea
34.	<i>Patipatti-pakāsanī</i> ¹⁴⁴	The commentary on (meditation) practice	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1866	Zare Saya Kyauk Myaung
35.	<i>Patipatti-pakāsanī</i>	A commentary on (meditation) practice	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1866	Sra Subhinna Maung Lao, Keng Taung
36.	<i>Patipatti-pakāsanī</i>	A commentary on (meditation) practice	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS1]	1911	Kyaung Taka Pannya / 1866
37.	<i>Patipatā-pakāsanī</i> ¹⁴⁵	A commentary on (meditation) Practice	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS18]	1931	Zare Subhinna / 1905
38.	<i>Patipatā-pakāsanī dīpanī</i>	Subcommentary on the comprehension of (meditation) Practice	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS61], donated by Kyaung Pannya & Nang Mai, MT	1931	-

¹⁴² The contents of this text include four kinds of death, discussing the signs of a dying person's life after death. According to the text, if the skin of the womb of a dying person is red, he/she would be reborn as a human being; if he/she sees tree or forest, he/she would be reborn in the animal world; if he/she dreams of worm or insect, he/she would be reborn in the world of hungry ghosts (*peta*). (Zare Saw has provided this information for the Shan Buddhism at the Borderlands project, 2009).

¹⁴³ The terminology of the title of this text itself is worthy of noting. While the term *paramat* has Pali origin, the terms *zu* ['collection'] and *a-mye a-phye* ['question and answer'] are obviously Burmese terms. Thus, we can assume that this text was influenced by Burmese Buddhist literature.

¹⁴⁴ The content of this text includes matter and mind (*rup-nam*), the aggregate (*khandha*), the spheres (*āyatana*), element (*that*), the dependent origination (*paticca-samuppada*), the truth (*sacca*), the faculties (*indriya*) and concentration (*samādhi*).

¹⁴⁵ The text was dated donated by (Mr) Paw Kyaung Pannya and (Mrs) Mae Kyaung Mai of Mae Taeng. The author of this text, as mentioned in the copy at Wat Tiyasathan, is Zare Subhina (Zao Amat Long) and was originally composed in 1905 (1267 SE). This text also states the original sponsor, namely: Sra Sang Aw of Chiang Mai. It is worth noting that Zao Amat Long's name when he was young, and *Ñanavajirāvutha* is the honorary title of Zao Amat Long. These suggest that Zao Amat Long had travelled as far as Chiang Mai for his poetic works and he was requested to write the text on his visit to Chiang Mai in early 1905. However, it is also possible that Sra Sang Aw went to the place where Zao Amat Long lived and worked requesting him to write the text. We learned that Zao Amat Long spent mostly in the Senwi and other parts of Northern Shan State as he died later that year. Further research is needed to clarify this.

39.	<i>Patipatā-pakāsanī vatthu</i>	The story of commentary on (meditation) Practice	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS122], donated Pi Kyaung Sunanta & Mae Kyaung Ne, MT	1932	Zare Subhinna / 1905
40.	<i>Sang khaeng ko pa</i> ¹⁴⁶	The Nine Cemeteries	Wat Ta Pung, LS	1908	-
41.	<i>Sang khaeng ko pa</i>	The Nine Cemeteries	Zare Mu Aung, LS	1963	-
42.	<i>Saṅgvega vatthu</i>	The story of religious emotional shock	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	1904	-
43.	<i>Saṅgvega vatthu</i>	The story of religious emotional shock	Wat Pang Mu, MHS	1917	-
44.	<i>Sung ma Saṅgvega</i>	The teaching on religious emotional shock	Wat Tiyasathan, MT	-	-
45.	<i>Vipassanā Kammatṭhān</i>	Insight meditation	FPLF, BKK	1899	-
46.	<i>Visuddhi mak kyam</i>	The treatise on the path of purification	Wat Tiyasathan, MT (TS101)	1928	-
47.	<i>Vipassanā Ovāda shu- phoi</i>	The teaching on insight meditation	Zare Mu Aung, LS	1944	-
48.	<i>Vipassanā nyan sip pa a nak</i>	The <i>nissaya</i> commentary on the insight meditation of the ten stages of knowledge	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS105]	1899	-
49.	<i>Vipassanā Phoi</i>	A glimpse of insight meditation	Zare Mu Aung, LS	1875	-
50.	<i>Jātidukkha saṅgvega khān</i>	The section of the spiritual shock on the suffering of birth		-	-

¹⁴⁶ Zare Saw (Kun Hing) said he has often been requested to read this text to temple sleepers. Interview by Crosby and Khur-yearn, July/August 2009.

51.	<i>Jātidukkha saṅgvega, tutiya toi</i>	The spiritual shock on the suffering of birth, volume two	Wat Tiyasathan, MT [TS62]	1896	Zao Mueang Naung (Zao Amat Long) / 1877
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Having listed my initial findings of *lik long* texts on meditation in general, to give an idea of the variety as well as the quite conventional nature of their topics, I shall now investigate *lik long* texts with a specific focus on the *Satipaṭṭhāna* or mindfulness meditation by way of background to the text translated in Chapter Three.

2.8. A List of *Lik Long* Texts on the *Satipaṭṭhāna* (Mindfulness Meditation)

Eleven different Shan versions of the *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation have been identified during the fieldwork for this thesis.¹⁴⁷ Here, I shall discuss my primarily summaries of information relating to these texts. The list of these texts is arranged by the date of composing or, in some cases, my conjecture of the dating order of texts for which the date of composition is not found.

1. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta nissaya*, now housed at the Bodleian Library of the Oxford University. The date and author of this text are still not known. However, it is my conjecture that, of the 11 Shan versions of *MSS*, this version is the earliest one, possibly as early as the 18th century. The manuscript has 49 paper sheets excluding the front and back covers. It is noteworthy that the style of pagination is different from that of today. The page numbers in this manuscript are written on the second page of each sheet, i.e. there is only one page number per folio, while today page numbers are put on both sides of each sheet. The practice of paginating both sides of a folio probably dates back to European influence.
2. Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, 1875 (1236 SE). I have chosen this text as the main source for my thesis, as shall be discussed more details later in this section. Manuscript copies of this text are found at Wat Kammathan Mingun in Panglong, which is evidence for the connection between MMG and the use of this text, and

¹⁴⁷ There is a Tai-Khuen (eastern Shan) version of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, housed at the Cambridge University Library. In this thesis, I am limiting myself to 'Tai Long' Shan texts, and hence the Tai Khuen (Khoeun) texts are beyond the scope of this study. For more information on Tai Khuen manuscripts, see Peltier 1985, *Tai Khoeun literature*, pp. 62-63. The work was published in three languages – Thai, French and English – while the titles of the texts also contain the original Tai Khoeun scripts.

Lashio. This text was also printed as modern book form by the Shan Piṭaka Press in Taunggyi, 1968.

3. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān Vatthu* [‘a Story of Mindfulness Meditation’], written by Venerable Puññasāra of Wan Yok in 1906.¹⁴⁸ The significance of this text is that it is not a *nissaya* or commentary. Instead, it was composed in plain Shan poetry concerning the stories about mindfulness meditation in conjunction with the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. For example, he relates the stories that explain the events in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of why the Buddha delivered it in the country of Kuru and why the village where it was delivered was called ‘Kammasadhamma’, and so on, drawing on elements of Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the canonical *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*. Another significance of this version is the style of the poetry: it is one of the finest examples of Shan poetic literature.
4. *Satipaṭṭhān vatthu tutiya toi* [‘The Story of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, volume 2’], kept at Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng, Chiang Mai, Thailand. The date of this copy is 1900 (1262 SE, 2444 BE), and has 271 pages, with gold gilded covers. It was mentioned in the body texts that it was originally composed in 1883 (1245 SE, 2427 BE).¹⁴⁹
5. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, copying date 1262 SE (1900 CE), kept at Houi Pha village temple, Maehongson, donated by the father and mother of Nang Woh, Thung Mak San Village (a village nearby Houi Pha village).¹⁵⁰
6. *Satipaṭṭhān vatthu tutiya toi* [‘The Story of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, volume 2’], copying date 1265 SE (1903 CE), 280 folds (pages), with gold-gilded cover, housed at Wat Papao, Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand.
7. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān vatthu tutiya toi* [‘The Story of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, volume 2’], kept at

¹⁴⁸ I am grateful to Zao-sra Nandavaṃsa, who has given me a digitized version of this text. For a biography of Zao Puññasāra of Wan Yok, see in Zao Nandavaṃsa (ed.) 2002, *Jambūpati mang kyam*, which was composed by Puññasāra in 1915.

¹⁴⁹ I am deeply grateful to Phra-ajahn Siwan Warinda, the abbot of Wat Tiyasathan, for allowing me to work on the *lik long* collections of the temple for this thesis. [In fact, Phra-ajahn Siwan Warinda also sponsored for my further studies on Buddhism in Sri Lanka and India before I joined SOAS for PhD studies. For more information Phra-ajahn Siwan Warinda’s missionary works, see *Khao tang 100 pi Wat Tiyasathan* = The 100 years anniversary of Wat Tiyasathan, published in commemoration of the foundation temple in 2009.]

¹⁵⁰ I visited Houi Pha temple three times during my fieldwork between 2006 and 2009. The temple’s collection of manuscripts was discovered in 2009 when the SOAS-based group research’s fieldwork was conducted. I am grateful to Dr Nancy Eberhardt, who has been doing research at Houi Pha over the past thirty years, for kindly sending me a list of the manuscripts at Wat Houi Pha temple’s collection, which was compiled by the current abbot of the temple.

Wat Houi Pha, a Shan village temple in Maehongson province. The copying date of this text is 1906 (1268 SE) but the original date is unknown. It was donated by Nang Phu's mother and family of Thung Mak San village.

8. *Satipaṭṭhān ṭīkā*, kept at Wat Tapung in Lashio, dated 1925 (1278 SE), author and sponsor/ donor of the text are unknown.¹⁵¹
9. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta nissaya*, kept at the Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation (FPLF), Bangkok, Thailand.¹⁵² This text was written in 1937 CE and donated by Phra Taka Tang Ke, Ho Yan village. The poetic style of this text is similar to the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta nissaya* kept at the Bodleian Library of the Oxford University. There are 232 pages, with gold gilded covers in floral design.
10. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān a-me a-phe* ['The *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*: Questions and answers'], kept at Wat Tiyasathan, Mae Taeng. This copy was donated by (Mr) Sang Pe and (Mrs) Nang Ong Myint in 1957 (1319 SE). The earlier/ original date, also mentioned in the text, is 1919 (1281 SE). The covers of the text were painted in red colour.
11. *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna sutta nissaya*, by the Shan Tipitaka Translation Committee (SPTC) in 1957 (published in 1958). Unlike other versions, this was written in Shan prose, translating word for word, from Pali to Shan, which is more systematic than the aforementioned Shan versions of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. As the translation in prose does not need to care much the rules of poetic language, it has the advantage that it can follow the proper order of a *nissaya* sticking closely to the order and grammar of the Pali original and so revealing the literal meaning of the Pali words. It is thus very similar to the Burmese *nissaya* style of *nissaya* in accordance with Pali grammar to get the meaning of original messages of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. The problem, however, is that this type of translation is not accessible or reachable for general readers, because it follows strict rules concerning Pali grammar, using unnecessary case endings (*vibhatti*), causing general readers to be confused. This is because the translation committee (SPTC) adopted some new prepositions or modified some verbs as new prepositions in order to fit with the seven pair of fourteen case endings of Pali grammar, with the help of Burmese *nissaya* as guidelines. Therefore, it has been

¹⁵¹ This information is acquired by Dr Sai Pe, who worked for the Shan Buddhism at the Borderlands project on Shan *lik long* manuscripts in 2009.

¹⁵² I am grateful to Dr Peter Skilling (Head of FPLF) for kindly allowing me to look at Shan manuscripts in the collection of the FPLF in Bangkok in 2005.

criticized by some Shan nationalists that this system of translation completely ruins the tradition and identity of Shan literature. Venerable Pandita, discussed above, was among the members of the SPTC.

It is worth noting that only two of the eleven versions have been published in modern book form, while the other nine are preserved in the form of hand-written manuscripts. So far, my translation of Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* into English is the first such translation of any of these eleven versions. These eleven can only be a fraction of the true number. So few monastic collections, let alone those copies near the Buddha shrine in their own houses, have been catalogued. Moreover, we have seen that the cataloguing that has been done indicates what variety may be found among the texts, with duplications being rare. As indicated above, only repeatedly requested, popular works survive, through sponsors requesting writers or copyists to make copies of their favourite books. Zao Amat Long's text is among these because he was recognized as one of the greatest composers of Shan literature in recorded history.

2.9. Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*:

A Justification for Annotated Translation

Of the eleven Shan versions of *satipaṭṭhāna*, I shall limit myself focusing on the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* (1875) for the remaining of this chapter, with also an annotated translation of the text in the following chapter. I shall first discuss the different publications and manuscripts of this text. After that, I shall give an account of the dating of this treatise, followed by a discussion on the popularity and shortcoming of the treatise. At the end of this section, I shall point out some significance of this version and hence became the main reason I have chosen it as the primary resource of this thesis.

Although the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* was written in 1875, it was printed in book form only in 1968, ninety-three years after the work was written. Two reasons come to mind may explain the long delay in its publication. Firstly, the traditional hand-writing system on native handmade papers was highly regarded in Shan society, and secondly, the printing press system was not a popular medium of reproducing texts, for very few press (printing) companies even existed in Shan State until the 1960s. However, it seems that, for that time being, the delay of printing in book was not a problem at all, because people were, of course, familiar with the method of producing books by hand writing system. Of course, there may

have been many copies of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* in manuscript form. Venerable Sobhana of Mueang Naung, the editor of the 1968 publication of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, gives an account in his Preface, which indicates that they had access to five manuscripts, more than I have been able to find.¹⁵³

The date of Zao Amat Long's text is certain, as he mentions the date twice in his work, once in its introduction and again in the conclusion. In the introduction, he explains in detail of how his work '*Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*' came into being; such as who requested that he wrote it, the nature of their relationship, why he accepted the request, where and when it was written, and so on. The following is a translation of relevant page from the introduction of Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* extracted from the full translation that I provide later in the thesis:

Just by chance, this year, I had left Mueang Naung, which is a pleasant place, my hometown, and then come to Laikha. There I met Pra-Dakar Ugyi who is well known in the whole area. This is in the year of Sakkarāja 1236 (1875 AD), reaching the time of *tithi* [lunar day] 15 which means a line of the good acts in my previous lives leads me here. I take this opportunity and make a determination to fulfill the perfections for the sake of both myself and others living in this world. Mr Phra-taka Ugyi, aspires to achieve Buddhahood through faith in order to rescue and relieve humans and gods from the rotten mire (*saṃsāra*). So, to fulfill the wishes of Mr and Mrs Phra-taka Ugyi, I may have come to their house like the appearance of a white elephant. Mr and Mrs Phra-taka are very reliable. Even community seniors are amongst those who respect them. Their words are powerful for what they say is always true. They treat me as their own son or nephew as if we were relatives. So they are pleased to be with me. They really love me like their own first born son who drank his mother's first breast milk.¹⁵⁴

Again, in the conclusion, he clearly mentions the date and time of completing the work:

Sobhinna, Maung Nge, the tiny man, who is well known as 'Zare Mueang-Naung', an expert of Pali grammar, and with the title '*Ñāṇavajirūpamā Sutāvudha*', has composed the revised version of this extraordinary treatise, rightly and correctly. Let the wise and learned gentlemen read and listen to it, and remember it in mind. In the *Sakkarāj* year 1237 on 5th of 8th month of the rising moon, I have completed this treatise.¹⁵⁵

2.10. Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained that meditation instruction is provided in two, to some extent contrasting contexts in Shan communities, in the traditional way accompanied by the ritual of listening to poetic texts on meditation, which takes place at a monastery, and the

¹⁵³ Amat Long 1968, Editor's note.

¹⁵⁴ Amat Long 1968, pp. 3-4.

¹⁵⁵ Amat Long 1968, pp. 277-278.

modern intensive meditation practice, which takes place at specialised meditation centres independent from monasteries. For the former, I have discussed my observation on the ritual of temple sleeping at Wat Piang Luang, a Shan village temple in Northern Thailand, and for the latter, I have outlined some of the history and development of meditation practices of MMG centres. I have then identified a wide range of meditation texts in the form of *lik long* in a variety of collections around the world, mostly in manuscript form, two of which are published. None of these has ever been translated into a European language before. This brings me to identify Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* as an appropriate text for translation. I discuss the significance of the text and use it to explain *lik long* features more thoroughly in Chapter Four. First, in Chapter Three, I provide a full translation, extracting a section, as observed earlier, to Appendix Three, in order to stay within the thesis word limit.

CHAPTER THREE

An Annotated Translation of

Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*

“The Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness”¹⁵⁶

3.1. Introduction: A Biography of Zao Amat Long

By way of background to the annotated translation to the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, I shall discuss the biography of the author this work, Zao Amat Long, who is regarded as one of the best Shan poets of all time. In the course of his career, Zao Amat Long wrote over forty works on Buddhism.¹⁵⁷ By exploring the biography of Zao Amat Long, I intend to highlight the Shan Buddhist social context, including textual and ritual practices of Shan poetic literature of the time. The facts and information of Zao Amat Long discussed here are mainly based on Lung Khun Mahā's *Puen Khumaw Lik Tai Hok Zao* [‘The biography of six Shan scholars’], originally published in 1970 and reprinted in 1996, and on what he himself says in his introduction to *MSP*.¹⁵⁸

Zao Amat Long was born in 1854 and died in 1905.¹⁵⁹ He was called by different names as he grew up. There are two possible reasons for the change of his names – a feature not unknown among Tais. The first concerns religious or social status and the second concerns professional career. First, he was given the name ‘Sah Aung’ (these are Burmese loan words) when he was born and then was called ‘Maung Nge’ (a proper Burmese name) as an adult, possibly during his further education in Mandalay where the majority of people were

¹⁵⁶ In the annotated translation of *MSP*, I attempt to maintain all the Pali words used by Zao Amat Long by putting them in three ways: for a more systematic *nissaya*, the Pali words are stated in the bold font format; for a loose translation, the Pali words are stated in italic font format and located in the brackets or in the footnotes, these include the Pali words that are not from the canonical *MSS*.

¹⁵⁷ Forty-three titles are listed in Lung Khun Mahā's *Puen Khu Maw Lik Tai Hok Zao*, although he also said that there would be more of Zao Amat Long's works, which are yet to be found. Khun Mahā 1996, pp. 134-137.

¹⁵⁸ Khun Mahā 1996, pp. [104]-137.

¹⁵⁹ Amat Long was born in the *Sakkarāja* era 1216, on Friday the 4th of 12th month. Although the era has its roots in India, it has been used by many nations in Southeast Asia. In the Chiang Mai Chronicle, this era is called as Anuruddha era, as he ended the old (*mahāsakarāja* 622) era and began a new era (Wyatt 1995: 5-6).

Burmese.¹⁶⁰ The fact that both names were Burmese terms indicates the prestige of Burmese language even for the names of Shan children and adults in the 19th century, a prestige we shall see reflected in the integration of Burmese terms or Burmese loanwords in Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*. (See Chapter Four). Secondly, he was given a Pali name “Sobhinna” when he became a novice. It is a tradition to have a Pali name when a person was ordained and some like to use it even after they left monkhood as Sobhinna did. This tradition is still prevalent.¹⁶¹ While it is a common tradition in the Theravada Buddhist communities that when a person becomes a novice or a monk, he or she will be given a Pali name, in Shan Buddhism it has greater significance in that people continue to use the Pali name even after they leave the monastery and return to the lay life. For a person to have a Pali name it is not only a privilege but also an indication of a respectable status, as an ‘educated’ or ‘disciplined’ person in the community. Today, although the tradition and conception of this privilege still exists, it is declining. Thirdly, he was called “Zare Zong Yao” in his early stage of his writing career. “Zare” was a well-known job title for poet and/or poetry reciter in the 19th and 20th centuries; Zongyao is the name of the village where Amat Long was born. This type of naming custom tells us a use of rare and unique job / professional title in the 19th century Shan communities. It is a title related to intellectual or higher education, which is perhaps equivalent to doctorate degree or the initial ‘Dr’ in the West. Finally, he was called “Zao Amat Long” when he was appointed a chief minister of Mueang Kueng, a principality located in present central Shan State. ‘Amat Long’ means ‘great minister’, i.e. a ‘chief minister’ in a king’s court. ‘Mueang Naung’ is the name of the town and state where he was born. Thus, Zao Amat Long’s various names reflect his life in a context where Burmese language use was hegemonic, his experience of monastic ordination, his high status and his geographic base.

Another interesting aspect of naming custom found in Zao Amat Long’s biography is the names of his parents. The biography states that Zao Amat Long was a son of Phra-taka Lung Man-zee and Phra-taka Pa Man-zee. ‘Phra-taka’ literally means the donor of a Buddha statue, and ‘man-zee’ means decorating a temple’s shrine etc. with cut-glass ornamentation. Buddhist shrines, thrones for the Buddha statues etc. are usually decorated with pieces of cut-glass so that they are bright and shown when contrast with the light of candles or sun light through windows. Thus, people, who have performed such acts of merit, are usually called by

¹⁶⁰ ‘Sah Aung’ is a broken Burmese term for ‘Thar Aung’ (following the Pali system of pronunciation, the Shan pronounce Burmese sound ‘tha’ as ‘sa’) and Maung Nge is a definite Burmese name.

¹⁶¹ Marshall, 2002, p.1.

people as ‘phra-daka’ and ‘man-zee’. These names are definitely not their birth names but were given at a later stage of their life. Because the names are in fact related to socio-religious activities, they represent their social status. Therefore, we can assume that, by seeing their names, Zao Amat Long’s parents were well-to-do people, and of course they might have been among the rich and generous people of Mueang Naung.¹⁶²



Fig. 3.1. Image of Zao Amat Long. Photo Source: Lung Khun Mahā 1996, p. [104].

We learn from his story that Zao Amat Long had the opportunity to attend famous schools and studied under some of the best-known teachers of that time. To begin with, he started primary education from a very young of age. He was only six years old when his parents sent him to Wat Shwe-Pook-Taw monastery of Wan Zing, Mueang Naung. There he

¹⁶² Mueang Naung is a well-known town in Shan State. It is famous for producing scholars and writers, such as Zao Amat Long, Zao-sra Paṇḍita (also known as Zao-sra Mueang Naung), the founder of MMG *vipassanā* meditation centres throughout Shan State (discussed in Chapter Two), and Sai Nandasīha, the historian, and the like.

started his education under the abbot Zao-Sra Sumedhā. Zao Amat Long was a temple boy¹⁶³ for one year and received a primary level education in reading and writing Shan and Burmese and a few other text books: *paritta*,¹⁶⁴ *samaṇera sekhiya*¹⁶⁵ and *lokanīti*.¹⁶⁶ A year later, he became a novice (*samaṇera*) and was given the Pali name ‘Sobhinna’ (mentioned above). This story tells us that during the 19th century, in Shan State, Buddhist monasteries were used as major centres for all types of education. However, the town of Mueang Naung, particularly during the time of Zao Amat Long, did not seem to be a place for higher education. The evidence is that, Zao Amat Long, aged only eight, was sent to Kesi, which is far away, where he could continue on higher studies under learned teachers. At Kesi he studied Shan astrology for four years under Zao-Sra Jāgara, the abbot of Kho-Ung temple. However, Sobhinna did not stop at acquiring skill in astrology alone. At the age of twelve, he then moved to Wat Mueang Nim, Kesi where he continued his higher studies, such as Shan poetry and literature (*alaṅkāra*),¹⁶⁷ metrics (*vuttodaya*),¹⁶⁸ Pali grammar (*sadda*)¹⁶⁹ and *nissaya* under the famous and learned teacher Zao-Sra Neminda,¹⁷⁰ the abbot of Wat Mueang Nim. Sobhinna was so clever that after six years of study he was skilled in all the aforementioned subjects and passed all the tests that his teacher gave him.¹⁷¹

Having completed his advanced studies, Sobhinna, aged eighteen, disrobed and returned home to stay with his parents. This story reflects the custom in Southeast Asia of

¹⁶³ A boy who lives in monastery helping with the temple work, he is also accepted as a student so he receives primary education there, before he can ordain as a novice. Milne 1910, pp. 54-56.

¹⁶⁴ A Pali chanting book of protective texts, consisting of some of discourses of the Buddha such as to start with *Maṅgala Sutta*, *Ratana Sutta*, *Mettā Sutta* and so on.

¹⁶⁵ The book of rules for novice.

¹⁶⁶ The word ‘Lokanīti’ literary means ‘Ways or Principles of the world’. It was one of the most famous books at the time for primary education of the youths, written in Pali and along with Burmese and/or Shan *nissaya*. It is about the ways of progressing in life.

¹⁶⁷ A famous book of rules for poetic writing, based on the book *Subodhālaṅkāra* (Pali) by Saṅgharakkhita, a pupil of Sāriputta during the reign of King Brakkamabāhu of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) in the 12th century. See Malalasekera 1928, p. 190. The *Subodhālaṅkāraya* was edited and translated into English by Labugama Lankananda in 1947.

¹⁶⁸ A famous book of rules for writing stanzas, based on the book *Vuttodaya* (Pali) by the 12th-century Sri Lankan monk Saṅgharakkhita.

¹⁶⁹ A Pali grammar book, possibly the *Kaccāyana Sadda*, a famous Pali Grammar book, written by Kaccāyana Thera. Law 2000, pp. 620-623.

¹⁷⁰ His name is uncertain as some referred to him as U Sanda; some as U Devinda and others as U Candimā. He was a Shan, born in the town of Shwe Gyin in Burma. He was educated under U Cakkinda, a famous learned monk, who wrote the *Nissaya of Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* in Burmese, which was the main reference book for Zao Amat Long when he wrote the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* in Shan. It is also said that U Neminda went to Sri Lanka and studied there for seven years. Khun Mahā 1970, pp. 107-108.

¹⁷¹ Khun Mahā 1996, pp. 107-109.

becoming a monk temporarily, particularly for education, rather than undertaking it as a lifetime commitment. Ordination as a novice or a monk provides for their material needs as well as a basic education. Most monks and novices, after obtaining higher studies or advanced degree or being matured in life, disrobe to lead their lives as normal people. Indeed, this tradition and practice has been prevailed in the mainland Southeast Asia for many centuries.¹⁷²

We come across in the biography of Zao Amat Long evidence about belief in miracles in the Shan communities. On the day Sobhinna returned home, there was a miracle at Zong Yao, Sobhinna's village. A miracle is said to have happened just before he reached home: the temporary altar,¹⁷³ erected in front of his house for a seasonal offering to the Buddha, was seen by the whole village to rise up a height level with the tree tops and then descend standing still on a post. The interpretation of the miracle was that it marked how wonderful it was that Sobhinna was returning, after finishing his higher studies. It is a common belief in Southeast Asia that miracles are usually associated with holy men or extraordinary people.¹⁷⁴

Sobhinna did not have much chance to spend time with his parents. Less than a year later, when he was 19 years old, Khun Tun, the Zao-pha (Prince) of Mueang Naung invited him to the town to work on writing religious treatises and other subjects. There he first wrote the *Mahosadhā* Volume III¹⁷⁵ as requested by Khun Tun, and went on to write several books for the Zao-pha. Within two years, his fame was so wide spread that he had to recruit eight apprentices to work with him. At that time, people called him 'Zare Zong Yao' (the poet of Zong Yao), after the village of his birth.

Sobhinna (Zao Amat Long) was not only a great scholar but also a man who loved to travel for his work to enrich his writings and increase his opportunities to read his works to others. Many of his writings were composed while travelling. After working for the Zao-pha

¹⁷² Also see Swearer 1995, pp. 46-52.

¹⁷³ The Shan term for the altar is 'kheng tang put', which literary means 'the altar for offering things to the Buddha.' There is a tradition that the Buddha used to take three months retreat in *Tāvātimsā* heaven preaching Dhamma to his mother. Therefore at the end of the retreat, people would build up a small but high altar in front of their houses waiting for the Buddha to come down from *Tāvātimsā* heaven to receive their offerings. This tradition is still prevalent in most areas of Shan State today. (For picture, see Dautremer (trans Scott) 1913 between pages 336 and 337).

¹⁷⁴ For more information on miracle and holy man in Shan (Tai), Lao and Thai communities, see Cohen 2001, pp. 227-247 and Wilson 1997, pp. 345-364.

¹⁷⁵ There are four volumes of *Mahosadhā Jātaka* written by Zao Amat Long. The first and third volumes were requested by Khun Thun, the Zao-pha of Mueang Naung, the second volume was requested by Nang Kham Pae, the Mahādevi (princess) of Worakhae and the fourth volume was requested by Zao Naung Daw of Mueang Kung. Khun Mahā 1970, pp. 134-136.

of Mueang Naung for sometimes, he and his pupils started their journey to southern Shan State in 1875. They wandered from place to place carrying books with them and writing their works according to the needs of the people wherever they arrived. For instance, they would read the *Lik Long* poetic texts to the audience, writing *Lanka* on new subjects when requested or when they found time and copying the old books for those who wanted to keep a copy in their homes or donate a text to monasteries.¹⁷⁶ The *Mahāsatipatthān* was written during his visit to Laikha, a city of a Shan principedom located in present day southern Shan State. He wrote the *Mahāsatipatthān* in that year, when he was only twenty-one, an indication of Amat Long's skills in poetry as well as deep knowledge in Buddhism at such a young age.

We can assume that activities of Sobhinna and his pupils were, in many ways, similar to those of missionaries or adventurers. They even traveled further to Kayah State in the south and Maehongson in Thailand where there were sizable Shan populations. During their journeys to south and east, they faced many dangers. Two of his pupils lost their lives; one attacked by a wild elephant and the other drowned in Nam Khong (Salaween River). Sobhinna himself only narrowly escaped from death in these incidents. In 1897, Sobhinna along with his pupils set out their journey to the north and stopped over at Mueang Kueng. Khun Mong, the Zaopha or prince of Mueang Kueng, was pleased to hear of the arrival of Zare Sobhinna and his pupils. So he built a house for Sobhinna and a few months later, Lung Loi Zadi, a generous and wealthy man built two more houses and a library for him and his pupils. While staying there, Sobhinna, who was now over forty, realized he was getting old and wanted to settle down in Mueang Kueng. So, he brought his wife and children from Mueang Naung to live there. In 1900 AD (1262), he was appointed as an Amat, a minister, of Mueang Kueng, becoming "Zao Amat Long Mueang Naung."¹⁷⁷ This suggests that there were many chief ministers working under the Zaopha or ruler of Mueang Kueng state at that time, hence in order to differentiate Amat Long from other chief ministers, the name of his hometown "Mueang Naung" was added next to his name. It has been a tradition in the Shan communities that the name of one's hometown is used as the last name (surname) of respected or highly regarded people.

¹⁷⁶ It has been a tradition among the Shans that when a person died, his/her relatives then request a writer to make a copy of Dhamma treatise, or nowadays buy a Dhamma book and donate it to temple so that the merit would go to the dead person. The tradition reading *Lik Long* to the audience is also highly considered as an important one. Usually only well-to-do people can be the host of such ceremony by providing a hall and food for those taking part in the ceremony. They believe the host of the ceremony will earn a large amount of good results. See a related story in Cochrane 1915, pp.158-162.

¹⁷⁷Khun Mahā 1970, p. 120-121.

Zao Amat Long's plan to settle down for the rest of his life in Mueang Kueng was soon disrupted. In 1904 (1266), after he had served as a minister of Mueang Kueng for four years, he received a letter of invitation from Khun Sang Ton Hoong, the Zaopha of Hsenwi. Whilst at Hsenwi, Zao Amat Long's dream of a printing press, which could publish books with a beautiful typeface at great speed, had the chance to materialize. Upon his arrival, a delighted Khun Sang Ton Hoong told him, "In this world, whatever we want to do for progress, we need to have wisdom, good-will (*cetanā*) and money. You have wisdom and good-will, and I have good-will and money. We are like a tripod now!" and handed a sum of 10,000 Dengars¹⁷⁸ to Zao Amat Long and said, "Please manage it as you wish to, it's up to you. If you need human strength, please don't hesitate to take as you want." Thus, with the sum of funding for education from the prince of Hsenwi, he set out with a team of six men from Hsenwi to Kyawk Mae where they caught a train to Mandalay and then to Rangoon where he could buy a printing machine. At that time, there were only five printing presses in the whole country of Burma: two in Molmine and two in Rangoon and one in Mandalay. Pali Saya Nyunt, the Editor of Pyi-Gyi-Man-Dai Press, helped Zao Amat Long to get a printing press, which was installed in Hsenwi, the first printing machine ever in the Shan State.¹⁷⁹

There is another strong evidence of how Zao Amat Long loved to lead his life as a wanderer. Soon after the printing press was properly set up and running well at Hsenwi, Zao Amat Long asked permission from Khun Sang Ton Hoong to continue his wanderings: writing and reading *Lanka* to people in diverse places. Although Khun Sang Ton Hoong did not want him to leave, he neither objected to nor sought to prevent his leaving. Instead, Khun Sang Ton Hoong presented him with valuable gifts, clothes and a sum of 1,000 dengars and requested him to take as many copies of the already printed books as he wanted. This suggests that Amat Long was not only a man who loved to travel but also inspired great confidence and patronage. At the same time, he seemed to have expressed no strong attachments to any one person or place.

¹⁷⁸ The money used in Shan State and Burma at the time was called 'Dengar'. Most of them were coins of real rupee. Today they are still of high value in exchanging with modern bank currency.

¹⁷⁹ Other early Shan presses are the Kamboja Tai Press in Hsipaw (date unclear but seems existed in the 1940s, and the third and fourth are the Shan Pitaka Press and Wong Wan Shan Press set up around 1960s and 1970s and both of them are in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. The Shan Pitaka Press was set up for particular purpose of the Foundation of Shan State Saṅgha Organisation, founded 1957, already discussed in Chapter Two. The Wong Wan Press belongs to the modern Shan scholar Lung Tang Kae, who successfully produces huge amount of Shan literature for all types of Shan readers.

It is heartrending that such a great Shan scholar did not live very long. Amat Long seems to have had a tumour on the right side of his neck for a long time. People at the time were unaware of the disease now known as cancer. People tried to cure the disease in various ways but he never fully recovered. Although sometimes he got some relief, sometimes the cancer got worse. But nobody realized that Zao Amat Long would soon die. Hopes remained high for his recovery. So, Zao Amat Long and his pupils travelled as normal, selling their books from village to village and town to town, while the disease on his neck continued to worsen. When they reached Kyauk-Mae, the disease suddenly got worse. It caused Zao Amat Long so much pain that he could not take any food at all. He died there at the age of fifty-one, on Saturday 16th September 1905.

Over fifty years after the death of Zao Amat Long, Lung Khun Mahā, the author of '*Puen khu maw lik Tai*' ['A History of Shan Scholars'], worked hard on researching and collecting the works of Shan classical authors including Zao Amat Long. He found out a number of Zao Amat Long's works and the seals of his honorary titles. A seal of honorary titles is a stamp bearing Zao Amat Long's name, presented to him by a prince as a mark of respect. These stamps are then used to impress his personal 'signature' on documents. During his lifetime, Zao Amat Long had received a number of titles and awards from several Zao-phas. Five seals of his title were collected by Lung Khun Mahā. One of the greatest honours he received is the title 'Ñāṇavajirūpamā Sutābhivuddha Paṇḍita Sukhaminda'. There may be many more documents about the life and works of Zao Amat Long requiring research to find and preserve them.

To sum up, the biography of Zao Amat Long reflects several aspects of Buddhist social context, including textual and ritual practices of *Lik Long* poetic literature, in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The tradition of *lik long* poetic literature and its recitation ritual was at their prime time before and during the time of Amat Long and continued to the middle of 20th century when a new face of Buddhism and literature was introduced into Shan Buddhist communities.

I shall now provide my translation of Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*. Throughout my translation I provide detailed notes explaining aspects of the text, the terminology used, the doctrines, titles, terms and beliefs mentioned or hinted at.

3.2. Notes for the Translation of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*

I use the printed version of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* (*MSP*), which was published in 1968 by the Shan Tipitaka Press, as the original text for this translation. Thus in the translation, I refer to this 1968 printed version of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* as ‘the original text’ but at some points, e.g. on a section textual analysis, I refer to this text as ‘*MSP* 1968’ or ‘Amat Long 1968.’ As the 1968 printed version has no paragraph numbering, I have created for them in the scanned copy of this text, also see the rules below.¹⁸⁰

For the translation of the canonical *Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, I use the PTS version, which was edited and translated by T. W. Rhys Davids’s *Dialogues of the Buddha: translated from the Pali of the Dīgha Nikāya, Part Two*, reprinted in 1977 (1st ed. 1910), although at some points I also use Mauric Walshe’s *The Long Discourses of the Buddha, a Translation of the Dīgha Nikaya* (1995), particularly for the terms of translation that are significantly different from that of Rhys Davids’ version.

For the translation of terms and the commentary of *MSS*, I mainly use Soma Thera’s *The Way of Mindfulness* (1999, 1st ed. 1941). In addition, I also use *The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary*, edited T. W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede.

For the translation of Shan terms, I use Sao Tern Moeng’s *Shan-English Dictionary* (1995), a modified version of J. N. Cushing’s *Shan-English Dictionary* (1st ed. 1881).

I have left most of Amat Long’s quotations of Burmese verses untranslated but added notes saying that the meanings of those verses are exactly the same with what Amat Long have just explained before he quoted the Burmese verses from Cakkinda’s *MSN*.

The system of rules of using special marks for my annotated translation is as the following:

1. **Original text:**

In the translation, I refer to the original or main text of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* (1968) in Shan as the ‘original text.’

2. **Paragraphing:**

For precise and accurate referencing and cross-referencing between the original text

¹⁸⁰ The scanned copy of the 1968 version, with paragraph numbering, of Amat Long’s *MSP* is attached in the DVD disk of this thesis.

of *MSP* and the Annotated Translation of *MSP* (*MSP-AT*), I use the paragraphing system. As the original text does not contain the paragraph numbers, I have inscribed them and I have checked that both those paragraph numbers in the original text and those in the translation are matched.

3. Containing the Pali Terms:

I contain the Pali terms in the brackets, some in the main texts and some in the footnotes as used by Amat Long, to indicate his style of writing and the privilege of Pali among the Shan Theravada Buddhists.

4. Square Bracket [...]

The words in the square brackets do not exist in the original text but are added to make the meaning of clearer.

5. Square Bracket with invited comas [‘...’]

The English words in this brackets are the translation of non-English terms. E.g. *wan sin* [Shan: ‘precept day’]. Note that the non-English term is marked with italic style, see below.

6. Italic

Most of non-English words, i.e. Shan, Pali and Burmese words, are marked in *italic* style.

7. Round Bracket (---)

The round bracket is used for non-English terms, usually found next to the English terms that share the same meaning. This indicates the source of the terms which are originally not English. E.g. Perfection (*pāramī*).

3.3. Annotated Translation of the *Mahāsatipatṭhān*

Homage to the blessed, noble and perfectly enlightened one

[Para. 1.] By your leave, Lord!¹⁸¹ Here with five-fold prostration,¹⁸² through three manners of respect, namely, body, words and mind, and by reflecting on his qualities, I pay homage to the Lord Buddha, venerating the soles of his feet which possess the one and eight characteristics, since he is a Great Man¹⁸³ who masters the thirty one realms¹⁸⁴ and three levels of existence.¹⁸⁵ In addition, raising my ten fingers together like fragrant flowers, I pay my homage to the summation of his teachings called the sacred *pitaka* of *dhamma-vinaya*,¹⁸⁶ which have but one taste of freedom,¹⁸⁷ consisting of the four stages of Path, the four stages of Fruition (Attainment) and Nibbāna.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, there are noble disciples, who have completely cut off rotten blooms [of defilement]¹⁸⁹ in their thousands. To them too, I bow

¹⁸¹ Amat Long uses the Pali term *Okāsa* for three times at the beginning of this text, a common character at the beginning of Shan Buddhist literature. For more definitions of *okāsa*, see *PED* s.v. ‘okāsa’.

¹⁸² Five-fold prostrations are: according to the Sutta Piṭaka: the surface of both knees and both hands and forehead touching on the floor; according to the Abhidhammā Piṭaka: threefold bodily veneration i.e. venerating with full respect while sitting, standing and lying prostrate in the floor, once verbal veneration by saying “*vande vandāmi*”, and once mental veneration by thinking in mind “*name namāni*”. For different interpretations, see *PED* s.v. ‘Pañcapatitṭhitaṅg.’

¹⁸³ A ‘Great Man’ is a man destined by fate to be a Ruler or a Saviour of the world. *PED* s.v. ‘mahāpurisa’: The 32 major and 64 minor physical attributes of the Mahāpurisa are given in the *Lakkhaṇa Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* (*DN*) but the 108 characteristics mentioned here more likely refers to the way of depicting the Buddha’s footprints in Mainland Southeast Asia. More discussion on the Buddha’s footprint is found in the Chapter Four.

¹⁸⁴ The 31 realms or planes of existence (*loka*) are: 4 unhappy realms (*apāya*), 7 blissful realms (*manussadevaloka*), and 20 brahmaloka (16 rūpa, having form; 4 arūpa, formless). Nārada 1956, pp. 266-73.

¹⁸⁵ The 3 levels of existence are: a state of existence dominated by pleasure (*Kāma bhava*), Fine material existence (*Rūpa bhava*) and formless existence (*Arūpa bhava*). *PED* s.v. ‘Kāma bhava’, ‘Rūpa bhava’ and ‘Arūpa bhava.’

¹⁸⁶ ‘Pitaka’ literally means ‘basket.’ Here, it stands for the teachings of the Buddha or Buddhist canon of sacred literature. It was first divided into two sections, namely, Dhamma = the Teachings and Vinaya = the code of conduct. The Dhamma was again divided into two, namely, Sutta = the discourses and Abhidhammā = the philosophical doctrine. So, the Buddha’s teachings, *pitakas*, are also known as Tipitaka ‘Three Baskets’, namely, *vinaya-pitaka* or *the book of the discipline*, *sutta-pitaka* or the discourses, and *abhidhamma-piṭaka* or the philosophical doctrine. For details on the structure of the *tipitaka*, see in the introduction of *Samantapāsādikā*, Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Vinaya-pitaka*.

¹⁸⁷ In the main text, Zao Amat Long uses the Pali term ‘*vimuttirasa*’ of which similar account is found in Buddhaghosa’s commentaries. *Samantapāsādikā*, vol. I, p.16.

¹⁸⁸ The four paths, the four fruitions (attainments) and Nibbāna are called ‘the nine phenomena beyond the worldly things’ (*navalokuttara-dhamma*). They are the stages of progress on the spiritual path namely, stream-entrance, once returner, non-returner and arahant, then Nibbāna. The phrase ‘wisdom of the Path’ (*maggañāna*) and ‘wisdom of the Fruition’ (*phalañāna*) will also be seen in later parts of this work.

¹⁸⁹ The author uses decayed or rotten flowers as a simile of defilements (*kilesā*).

down three times with respect and attended mind, reflecting on their noble qualities.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, there are *gurus* and *ācāriyas*¹⁹¹ my first teacher, second teacher and third teacher, who are very learned, and skilled in aspects of Pali grammar such as gender,¹⁹² number,¹⁹³ *suffixes*,¹⁹⁴ *metre*,¹⁹⁵ *composition*,¹⁹⁶ word-for-word commentary,¹⁹⁷ memorizing Pali stanzas, interpreting the meanings of Pali words, who taught me Dhamma, imparting knowledge to me, making my eyes and ears bright and illumined. To them too, I offer my veneration, joining my ten fingers as fragrant, beautiful lotuses, contemplating on their virtues of their entire lives from young to old age. Here, as a result of the merits [accrued hereby] in paying homage to the Buddha, his teachings, his noble disciples and my teachers, may I be free from the misfortunes of accidents, torture, murder and from all other dangers. May the power of the Dhamma protect me from dangers while writing this religious treatise. For the benefit of this life and the next,¹⁹⁸ along with all lives throughout the round of rebirth,¹⁹⁹ may I, by the blessing of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, be successful in fulfilling the thirty perfections²⁰⁰ and thus gain freedom from the mire of suffering.²⁰¹ In my

¹⁹⁰ Traditionally most authors of Buddhist works including Buddhaghosa pay their homage to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha at the beginning of their works. See Crosby 2012. Noticeably some authors such as Zao Amat Long, the author of this book, also pay respect to their teachers after the homage of these three. Some also pay homage to their parents.

¹⁹¹ *Khu* in Shan is derived from *guru* and *sra* from *ācāriya*, although, here, the author uses both terms *guru* and *ācāriya* in the sense of ‘teacher.’ Obviously both have the meaning of ‘teacher’ but *khu* is usually a more respectable teacher in comparison with *sra*. The meaning of *khu* is slightly changed when a word is added next to it e.g. *khu-maw* (scholar or intellectual), *khu-saun* (teacher) and sometimes a medical doctor is also called as ‘*khu-maw-ya*.’ The teachers referred by the author here are those who taught him reading and writing Shan, Pali and the teachings of Buddhism.

¹⁹² In grammar, mark of sex, characteristic gender, is called ‘*Liṅga*’. Here this is a reference to the branch of grammar, which specialises in the gender of nouns.

¹⁹³ Knowing *vacana*, a Pali word whether it is singular or plural is considered as an important skill in Pali grammar.

¹⁹⁴ The suffixes (*Taddhita*) added to the verbal root to make the basic forms of words. ‘Taddhita’ is a section in the famous Kaccāyana Pali Grammar, which is about the rules of generation of Pali words.

¹⁹⁵ ‘Chanda’ (metre) is a famous subject regarding to the rules for writing Pali stanzas.

¹⁹⁶ The technical term of Pali word for composition is ‘*ganthi*.’

¹⁹⁷ *Nissaya* is a way of translating Pali to Shan, Burmese etc., literal translation word for word. For more information on Burmese *Nissaya*, see Okell 1965, and Pruitt 1994.

¹⁹⁸ Concerning the result of one’s action, the term used in the main text is ‘*diṭṭha-samparāyika*’ literally meaning seeable now and belonging to the next world (*samparāyika*). *PED*: s.v. *diṭṭha-samparāyika*.

¹⁹⁹ The Pali term used in the main text is ‘*samsāra*’ meaning the cycle of rebirth. The author, as a Buddhist, believes that unless and until one has attained Nibbāna, he/she has to be reborn again and again in the cycle of rebirth. The term *samsāra* will also be seen in later parts of this thesis.

²⁰⁰ The author uses the Pali term ‘*pāramī*’ for perfection. Basically, there are 10 perfections in the Theravada Pali canon. The 10 perfections become 30 by multiplying the 3 levels of quality in performing each perfection. The author, who belongs to the Southern School (Theravada), has desired to fulfil the 30 perfections in order

final birth, by being advanced in wisdom (*Paññādhika*), may I become a full and complete Buddha,²⁰² one who unlocks the ‘fivefold gate’²⁰³ to Nibbāna, for humans and gods,²⁰⁴ washes away their distress and helps them to enter the stages of Path and Attainment²⁰⁵ where there is complete freedom from worldly phenomena and transcendence of all suffering.²⁰⁶

[Para. 2.] [Determination] Now, having paid respect to the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and teachers by praising their abilities with fine words, I must compose a treatise on the *Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta*, providing detailed commentary so that men and women will be able to understand it properly. The first and foremost devotee who has requested me to write about this sacred *Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta* is Phra-taka Ugyi of Naung Long [Lai Kha], who has pure and clean faith²⁰⁷ and who aims for the ‘top city’ (Nibbāna).²⁰⁸ So generous and famous for his greatness is he that people call him ‘*lu-myat*’ (noble man) in Burmese and ‘*kon-hu kon-tat*’ (the learned) in Shan.

to free himself and other beings, in other words, to become a Buddha. As pointed out by Crosby 2003, this indicates that the vow to become a Buddha (rather than an *arhat*) is found Theravada and not confined to forms of Buddhism included under the umbrella term ‘Mahāyāna’.

²⁰¹ Fulfilling perfections is indeed the work of Bodhisatta, wishing and doing good for himself and many, wanting to see others happy. Therefore, a Bodhisattva will do what he can to help others free themselves from suffering.

²⁰² A Pali term ‘*paññādhika-sammā-sambuddha*’ is used in the main text. There are different ways of enlightenment, for example, some people have aims to enlighten through wisdom (*paññā*), some through faith (*saddhā*) some through endeavour (*vīriya*), and so on. Here Amat Long has emphasized that he wishes to gain enlightenment through the means of wisdom.

²⁰³ In the Pali literature, a gate is usually seen as a simile of hindrance. So, unlocking the gate means opening the way to Nibbāna. Here the fivefold gate means the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) viz. (1) sensual desire (2) hatred or ill-will (3) sloth & drowsiness (4) flurry & worry and (5) doubt. *Saṅgīti-Sutta*, *Pāthika-vagga*, *Dīghanikāya*; *PED* s.v. ‘nīvaraṇa’.

²⁰⁴ The phrase ‘unlocking the fivefold gates to Nibbāna for humans and gods’ again indicates that Theravada Buddhists do not pursue a purely ‘selfish’ goal as claimed by some who see it as a representative of Hīnayāna, as opposed to Mahāyāna. In fact, this aspiration, the equivalent to the ‘bodhisatta vow’, is quite common throughout the Theravada world, being frequently found in association with the composing or copying of texts (See above and Crosby 2003).

²⁰⁵ See notes above.

²⁰⁶ According to the Buddhist philosophy, as long as we are in this world, we cannot enjoy absolute freedom and the highest happiness. Instead, one can enjoy the same only when one has entered the paths and fruitions.

²⁰⁷ A Pali term ‘*saddhādhika*’ literally means ‘faith, the main task’ is used in the main text.

²⁰⁸ *Weng zawm* in Shan literally means ‘Top City’ or ‘Highest City’, which is used as the imaginary state of Nibbāna in Pali. In fact, Nibbāna literally means ‘blown out’ and, therefore, Nibbāna in the real sense means ‘blown out’ or ‘cessation of’ suffering rather than a state or city. However, many Buddhists and scholars such as Zao Amat Long use imaginary term of state for their perception or explanation of Nibbāna. Nārada 1985, pp. 356-7. For more information on Nibbāna as cities, see Collins 1998, *Nirvana and other Buddhist felicities*, pp. 135-282.

[Para. 3.] This year, by chance, I left my hometown of Mueang Naung, which is a pleasant place, and moved to Lai Kha. There I met Phra-taka U Kyi who is well known throughout the region. It is the year of *Sakkarāja* Era 1236 (1875 AD), approaching the time of the 15th lunar day. A line of good acts in my previous lives must have led me to be here at this auspicious time.²⁰⁹ I take this opportunity with resolute determination to realize the Perfections, both for my own sake and for the sake of others.

[Para. 4.] By being advance in faith (*saddhādhika*), Mr Phra-taka U Kyi aspires to achieve Buddhahood through faith in order to rescue and relieve humans and gods from the rotten mire [*saṃsāra*]. To fulfil the wishes of Mr and Mrs Phra-taka U Kyi, I came to their house like the appearance of a white elephant.²¹⁰ Mr and Mrs Phra-taka are very respectable; even those who are advanced in years look up to them. Their words are powerful for what they say is always true. They treat me as if we were relatives, as though I were their own son or nephew. They take pleasure in my company. They love me like their own first born son who drank his mother's first breast milk.²¹¹

[Para. 5.] [Introduction] When the First Buddhist Council²¹² was held under the leadership of the Elder Mahā Kassapa in Rājagaha, the capital of King Ajātasattu, the Elder Kassapa asked Venerable Ānanda, a cousin of the Buddha, about the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*.²¹³ Kassapa Mahāthera said: “As you heard it from his mouth, Ānanda, you who are a relative of the Buddha and used to go out for alms along with Him, please tell me how the Lord Buddha taught the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*.”

²⁰⁹ *Tithi* means ‘lunar day.’ Day 15 is the full moon day, which is regarded as auspicious throughout the Theravada world. While this understanding is universal in Theravada, Zao Amat Long’s decision to mention it in his work may reflect his earlier training in astrology before he studied the Shan poetry.

²¹⁰ A white elephant is considered as ancestral or sacred animal in Buddhist societies. For examples, Queen Siri Māyā, mother of the Buddha, dreamed of a white elephant when she became pregnant, and in the Burmese and Thai histories, during the time of Burmese King Bayinnaung (king of Hongsā) and Thai King Chakra for example, they fought each other several times in order to possess a white elephant from the opponent. Vincent 1988, pp. 65-69; Banomyong 1999, pp. 39-43.

²¹¹ It is the perception in Asia that the mother’s love toward her first baby is the highest true and genuine love. As such, it is used as a simile of the greatest love to which Buddhists should aspire. The most famous example of this simile is found in the *Karanīya Mettā Sutta* ‘Just as a mother would protect with her life her own son, her only son, so one should cultivate an unbounded mind towards all beings.’ *Mettā Sutta* of *Suttanipāta*, and Norman 1995, p. 17.

²¹² The First Buddhist Council was held three months after the passing away of the Buddha. This statement claims authority for the teaching about to be delivered for the texts of the Sutta and Vinaya Pitakas are believed to have been rehearsed at the first council, and that mentioning it reminds the audience that the teaching they are about to hear is a rendering of the words of the Buddha. For further details of the First Buddhist Council, see Bapat 1956.

²¹³ The abbreviation ‘MSS’ is used for *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* in some parts of this thesis, although the full text is used where it needs emphasis and clarity.

[Para. 6.] “In which country, state, town, area and place did the Lord Buddha, the Glorious One who has the six kinds of radiating rays of enlightenment and the halo around him,²¹⁴ deliver the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*? To whom did He deliver it? Who listened to the sermon?” Thus, in the midst of kinsmen, monks, brahmins and the rich who wanted to listen, hear, understand and take notice, the most venerable Kassapa Mahāthera, the head of the school, put his questions to Ānanda. During the time of the First Buddhist Council, questions and answers were made in the midst of the assembly of monks. The Most Venerable Kassapa Mahāthera put his questions regarding the Basket of the Discourses (Sutta Pitaka) to the learned Venerable Ananda who was in the audience.

[Para. 7.] On the Outset²¹⁵ Being questioned by Kassapa Mahāthera, Ānanda Thera, sitting still in the midst of the audience, started with the phrase “*evaṃ me sutāṃ ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā kurūsu viharati kammasadhammaṃ*²¹⁶ *nāma kurūnaṃ nigamo*” (I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammasadhamma) in order to narrate the story of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* to the monks and all the audience.²¹⁷ “Dear venerable Mahā Kassapa, leader of Mahā Sangha, and all of the audience, who are fed up with senses and worldly things, please listen carefully and take notice. I will now narrate the story of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* as I have heard it.”²¹⁸

[Para. 8] The Exalted One, radiating the rays of enlightenment and the halo around him, was once surrounded by a number of monks staying at *Kammasadhamma* market-village, a place that was neither too far nor too near to the crowd of people and houses (*avidūre*), in the state of Kurus.

²¹⁴ The radiant lights is believed to be beaming around his upper body/head.

²¹⁵ The term ‘Nidāna’ is used in the original text, which literally means ‘ground’ or ‘foundation.’ Here it means the outset or the beginning of the discourse. *PED* s.v. ‘nidāna.’

²¹⁶ ‘*kammasadama*’ is found in some versions of the *MSS* Pali. The commentary of *MSS* explains that ‘d’ and ‘dh’ are changeable.

²¹⁷ I leave the phrase of Pali words in the invited coma as it is written in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* by Amat Long without translating them. This is to maintain Amat Long’s style of writing the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* as he quoted the Pali source of *MSS*. Here the English translation is given in the bracket. This style of writing will be seen throughout the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* of Amat Long. The English translation *MSS* used in this thesis is from “*Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta: The Great Frames of Reference*” (*DN 22*), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, June 8, 2010, <<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.22.0.than.html>> [date visited 10.10.2010].

²¹⁸ This is apparently a phrase of words supposed to be spoken by Venerable Ananda during the First Buddhist Council, as imaginarily invented by Amat Long.

[Para. 9.] At that time, the Blessed One, who is omniscient, exalted at the pinnacle of the world and has defeated the five kinds of *Māra* (the devils),²¹⁹ called for his pupil monks, the blood-sons of the *Sakya*.²²⁰ The Glory of Gold²²¹ (the Buddha) said, “Monks!” in a pleasant voice. Many of the monks, junior and senior, young and old, bowed down to His feet and replied in acknowledgement, “Lord!” All of them, junior and adult, new and senior, young and aged, gathered with joy under the feet of the Blessed One. The Jewel-Radiance²²² (the Buddha) then spoke of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness on that occasion and taught and trained the bodies and minds of his son-like pupils, who were comparable to types of silver, diverse jewels and pieces of gold.²²³

3.4. The Announcement of the Teaching on the Foundation of Mindfulness

[Para. 10.] Dear monks, who practise well and wish for the ‘country of happiness’ and liberation from suffering, look into the dangers of *saṃsāra*, and the attachment to sensual life, which result in the suffering due to pain, suffering due to conditioning and suffering due to changing.²²⁴ By seeing and understanding this, you will then wish for liberation from them and reaching the Village of Nibbāna. Those beings, who live with lustful desire, hatred and delusion will remain in darkness and then suffer from the bad effects of karma, their bodies

²¹⁹ *Māra* is the name of evil in Buddhism and Pali literature. There are five kinds of *Māra*. They are (1) the five aggregates of existence (*Khandha-māra*), (2) volitional actions, both good and evil, that lead to rebirth (*Abhisankhāra-māra*), (3) death (*Maccu-māra*), (4) the Evil One, the death-dealing deva (*Devaputta-māra*), and (5) the defilements (*Kilesa-māra*).

²²⁰ ‘Sakya’ is the name of royal race or society to which the Buddha belonged. In canon, usually only some monks such as Ananda, was called a son of Sakyan (*Sakya putto*) since he was a real close relative of the Buddha, but the term Sakya was not used for monks as a whole. However, in Shan view, all monks including novices are usually considered as the race of Sakyan to which the Buddha belongs. For example, when a boy is ordained, the Shans say ‘he enters into the race of Sakyan’ to which the Buddha belongs. Also, monks and novices are literally considered as the sons of the Buddha. Nevertheless, this kind of term seems to have been a common concept in all Theravada Buddhist communities. For instance, in Thailand, the temple abbot is called ‘Luang Po’ (Royal father) by his pupil monks and devotees. Likewise, some Buddha statues are sometimes called ‘Luang Po’ in front of their names. For example, the big Buddha statue in Yasothorn province is known as ‘Luang Po Sothon.’

²²¹ The Shan term *mun kham* [‘The Glory of Gold’] is very often used for the Buddha in both writing and speaking of the Shan language. Gold is, of course, globally recognized as a property of high value. Perhaps this is the main reason why the Shans use the term ‘gold’ as an epithet of the Buddha.

²²² The Shan term *ngao saeng* [‘Jewel-Radiance’] is not used as much as the term *mun kham* [‘Glory of Gold’] as an epithet of the Buddha in Shan. The term *ngao saeng* is mostly seen in writing only.

²²³ As silver, jewel and god are of high value, the Buddha’s disciplined disciples are spiritually invaluable.

²²⁴ The Pali terms for suffering due to pain, suffering due to conditioning and suffering due to changing are *dukkha-dukkha*, *saṅkhāra-dukkha* and *viparināma-dukkha* respectively used in the main text of Amat Long’s *Mahāsatiṭṭhān*. VM, p. 499, and Rahula 1978, *What the Buddha Taught*, pp. 19, 20.

and heads burning. However, these Four Foundations of Mindfulness are the way to lessen the desire for the world of sensual pleasure, the desire for the world of form and the desire for the world of formless.²²⁵ The fetters (*saṃyojana*) will be removed quicker.²²⁶ All the bad smell and the dirty things will be loosened [from your mind], and [your mind] will then eventually be purified. “Oh monks! In fact, it is our own minds that make things clean or dirty, leading men and women, husband and wife, to like sensual pleasure.” If [your] mind is profane, sad and rotten, then there will be things that are not suitable; [your] habit will be rude; morality will be rotten; the act of giving will also be impolite. So, there will be darkness like the smoke of fire and no pleasant scene at all.

[Para. 11.] That is why, there is the Golden Saying [of the Buddha], “*Mano-pubbaṅgamā dhammā*” [‘Mind is the forerunner of all phenomena’].²²⁷ This refers to the mind with intention. If the mind has good intention, the results of generosity, morality and developing mental culture will be of high quality. Those who have purified practices will be noble men and women and become holy and sanctified ones. Here, in order to have a cultured and purified mind, one should take the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, as the objects of insight meditation, and practise hard in order to get rid of the confused mind and to clean the mind to achieve purification. Actually, these Four Foundations of Mindfulness can destroy lustful desire, hatred and delusion. They can help us get out of the darkness of ignorance and wash away the subtle dirt [defilements] and become purified.

[Para. 12.] There are those beings, who experience suffering, grievances, worry and sadness time and time again, feeling distress and having their minds upset all the way.²²⁸ If they reflect on those suffering and grievances and look into them through the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, they will calm down, and consequently worry and stress will vanish. However he/she is suffering in mind and grieving the death of father, the death mother, the death of son, the death of nephew, the death of husband, the death of wife and relatives, however much he/she cries and grieves, if he/she reflect on the circumstances with

²²⁵ The Pali terms for the desire for the world of sensual pleasure is, the desire for the world of form and the desire for the world of formless are *kāmarāga*, *rūparāga* and *arūparāga* respectively.

²²⁶ The Pali term for ‘Fetters’ used in the main text is ‘*saṃyojana*’ literally meaning ‘to bind’ and here it means binding beings to the round of existence. Nārada 1956, p. 370.

²²⁷ Amat Long’s reference to Dhammapada verse 1, the words, which are the opening lines of the Dhammapada, an indication of Amat Long’s in depth of the Buddha’s teachings.

²²⁸ Amat Long begins this sentence with the Pali word *sokaparidevaanam*, an example of Amat Long’s unique style of writing, which is a combination of ‘loose’ *nissaya* translation and commentaries or further explanation of the term. For instance, here, while the terms ‘grievances’ and ‘worry’ are the direct translation of the Pali term *sokaparidevaanam*, the rest are of Amat Long’s own contribution.

the Dhamma of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, all those grief and anxiety will be vanished. His/her mind will thus be healthy and strong.

[Para. 13.] Whoever wishes to gain the knowledge (*ñāyassa-adhigamāya*) of the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna,²²⁹ the ‘sacred town’ of pleasant smelling flowers,²³⁰ he/she must cut off *samsāra* to finish off all suffering without delay. If he takes the teaching of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness into his heart, he will be scared of the nature of impermanence, suffering, and selflessness. Then, he will see the door or way out from the five rooms²³¹ and experience Nibbāna very easily. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, of which the Buddha delivered in the state of Kuru, is the way, the only way (*ekāyano-maggo*) to the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, cutting all the 1500 defilements together with branches and leaves and burning them with fire so that they will not exist anymore.²³²

[Para. 14.] What are the Four Foundations of Mindfulness? Monks! Listen carefully and take notice in your hearts; one is the foundation of mindfulness of the contemplation of body; one is the foundation of mindfulness of the contemplation of feeling; one is the foundation of mindfulness of the contemplation of mind; and one is the foundation of mindfulness of the contemplation of ideas. All these four are the Foundations of Mindfulness.

[Para. 15.] Monks! All of you, small and great, new and old, young and elderly, all the noble son like pupils! During the period of my teachings, after my passing away up to 5000 years,²³³ a monk, mindfully contemplates his body, to see it clearly as the impermanence of the aggregate of form, as the suffering of aggregate of form, and the selflessness of the aggregate of form.²³⁴ He also contemplates the aggregate of form in details in terms of hair, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, blood, bones, and the like. Then he contemplates their

²²⁹ See note in the homage section above.

²³⁰ For more information on terming Nibbāna as ‘city’, see Collins 1998, pp. 135-182.

²³¹ Five rooms would refer to the five kinds of sensual pleasure (*kāmaguna*), namely, visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes and touch. The texts often stress that what fetters/binds man to the world of senses are neither the sense-organs nor the sense objects but lustful desire (*chandarāga*). See, *Buddhist Dictionary* by Nyanatiloka.

²³² Amat Long uses ‘fire’ as a simile of ‘wisdom’, so burning the defilements with branch and leaves would mean eradicating all the defilements with wisdom. According to Abhidhammā, greed, hatred and delusion are the roots of unwholesome deeds (*akusalamūla*). So, according to Amat Long’s interpretation, other defilements are the plant, branches and leaves of unwholesome deeds.

²³³ The figure of 5,000 years is found in the commentaries rather than the canonical texts. Also this figure is associated with Buddhist belief particularly in the Buddhist world of Southeast Asia.

²³⁴ The Pali terms for the impermanence of the aggregate of form, the suffering of aggregate of form, and the selflessness of the aggregate of form are *rūpakkhandhā-anicca*, *rūpakkhandhā-dukkha*, and *rūpakkhandhā-anatta* respectively used by Amat Long in the main text. This system applies to the remaining four aggregates.

nature of bad smelling, being foods for worms, and balloon-like bloated flesh. He tries to see the unpleasantness or foulness of his body, for the more he sees it, the more mindfulness will he have. And then he will gain knowledge of clear comprehension.

[Para. 16.] One should be mindful, not neglectful, and reflect on the nature of old-age, sickness and death to realize that, in whatever world our bodies are, they are impermanent. When contemplating the body, one should look at the world in a way that it is full of sensual pleasure and huge amount of lustful desire, causing the continuity of lives; we are born and die in innumerable lives, and our bodies [whether burnt or buried] add to the soils of the earth. Any monk, who lives in solitude and contemplates or reflects on or looks into his body like this, he will be able to wash away the dirt [defilements] from his heart; consequently he will be detached from sorrow and distress. [On the Mindfulness of Sensation,] we should reflect on the variety of sensation or feeling such as pleasant feeling, painful feeling and neutral feeling that make us good or bad, happy or sad, laugh or cry. Here too, we should take the nature of impermanence, suffering and selflessness into the place while looking at the three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling, six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling. By reflecting on them, we will have clear comprehension and disengage from those feeling.

[Para. 17.] As you yourself put your effort on contemplating on these feelings again and again, you will get knowledge of clear comprehension and disengaging [from worldly things] and experience the impermanence of sensation, the suffering of sensation and the selflessness of sensation. Thus, the light of wisdom comes unto you. Be mindful and do not forget that the lives of human and gods are fearful in that they are in the midst of troubles inherent in the five kinds of sensation. Look at the lives [of all beings] in the world; they all are full of sensual pleasure, lustful desire and greed, which are the darts of the defilements. There is no state of satisfactoriness for them. If a monk, with mindfulness, contemplates on the changing of sensation, suffering of sensation, selflessness of sensation and sees all things thoroughly, covetousness and distress will vanish, and there will be nothing to disturb him.

[Para. 18.] Observe the aggregate of consciousness to see how the human mind and the divine mind associate with and enjoy over a thousand defilement, which are the cause of troubles and dizziness from wandering around. The mind knows the objects which are yellow or white, good or bad. It (the mind) also likes sweet and pleasant things. But all these things are subject to the nature of impermanence, suffering and selflessness. So observe and look at it carefully. Practise hard, tirelessly. Do not let your mind wander anywhere; think about how much you wish to attain Nibbāna. While developing your mindfulness, look at or observe

every movement of your mind; be alert to do insight meditation day and night; Look at the world of eighty-one minds,²³⁵ enjoying the world of sensual pleasure, the world of fine form and the world of formless. The impermanent mind leads us to the three impermanent worlds raising us up and lowering us down turning us round and round.²³⁶

[Para. 19.] Monks! Whoever reflects or meditates day and night on the aggregate of consciousness as impermanent, suffering and selfless, he/she will not be affected by covetousness and distress. On the contrary, he/she will experience joy and happiness; his/her mind will be developed and cultured. Dear monks, all of you who are the royal lineage of *Sakya*, followers of the Buddha and practise well! Monk or layman, whoever wishes to gain the wisdom of the Path, the wisdom of the Fruition and Nibbāna, where there is complete freedom from all kinds of suffering, he should repair and fix his mind. The aggregate of perception and the aggregate of mental formations are included in the Foundation of Mindfulness of Contemplation on Ideas. So, please observe and look at them, saying ‘This is a perception, this is a mental formation.’

[Para. 20.] Put your effort with mind and body to disengage from the perception and the conditional things in your body. Observe that the aggregate of perception is impermanent, unsatisfactory and devoid of any self. Also observe that, in fact, all conditioned things are impermanent, unsatisfactory and devoid of any self; they are just momentary phenomena, changing very fast like the fire burning a heap of straw. These too should be divided into three worlds. Be mindful and think of things happening in [your stomach] of one span and your body of one fathom. It is good to do insight meditation on perception, saying in mind repeatedly while walking back and forth, ‘Oh...this is just a conditional thing, which is but impermanent, suffering and selfless!’²³⁷ Keep your head and body still, and think of the suffering of *samsāra* and then develop your mental culture again and again. Oh monks! Such a person will gain peace of mind and tranquillity, like a quicksilver,²³⁸ with no more worry, covetousness or distress.

²³⁵ According to *Abhidhammā*, altogether there are 89 or 121 kinds of mind. Of them, 81 minds are associated with worldly things (*lokiya*) and 8 or 40 are unworldly or above the world (*lokuttara*). Nārada 1956, pp. 80-83.

²³⁶ ‘Raising us up and lowering us down’ implies ‘making us reborn in higher and lower realms’ namely, heaven (high), human world (middle) and hell (low). Unless and until we have attained Nibbāna, we have to be reborn here and there in the three realms.

²³⁷ Pali terms used in the main text: *saññakkhandhā-anicca*, *saññakkhandhā-dukkha* and *saññakkhandhā-anatta*.

²³⁸ It is not sure if ‘quicksilver’ is the right term for this translation. Nonetheless, the item seems very clean, bright and cool, and hence it is worth to be compared with a calm and clean mind.

3.5. The Contemplation of the Body: The Section of Breathing²³⁹

[Para. 21.] Dear monks who wear the clean robes! How should a monk who reflects on the foundation of mindfulness for the contemplation on body live and behave? Please, all of you, listen to the sermon and take it to your heart. A monk, in my teaching period of 5,000 years, having trained and observed the precepts, clean and pure, goes to observe the “the forest practice” (*araññaka-dhutaṅga*);²⁴⁰ or when it rains and is wet, goes and sits under the tree and develops mental culture by observing his body; or goes to a quiet or empty place - where there is no man but daunting place- and contemplates on his body in order to disengage with it.

[Para. 22.] There [a monk] sits cross-legged, keeping his head and body still, and wearing his ‘robe of nine blocks’²⁴¹ around his body neatly, neither loose nor baggy. He keeps his body upright and erect, neither bent over nor prone, and observes his body. He may also use tree leaves as a mat, spreading it out neatly to sit cross-legged on it. Then, he pays attention to his breathing in and breathing out, the short stroke or long stroke of the breath. The monk contemplates his body intensively, step by step, until he has the feeling of *saṃvega* or ‘spiritual shock’.²⁴² He keeps his head and body still and watches his short and long breathing in and out. He tries, with the knowledge of disengagement and clear comprehension,²⁴³ to understand the nature of his airy body, which is pleasant for worms.

[Para. 23.] “Oh... this is the out-breath!” “And this is in-breath!” When there is long breathing out, he notices, “This is the long out-breath!” When there is short breathing out in hurry, he notices “Oh...this is the short hurry out-breath running quickly along the throat!”

²³⁹ Pali terms *kāyānupassanā* and *ānāpānappabba* are used for the sub-headings in the main text, *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 14. This norm of writing is found throughout *MSP*, and in order to notify this, those Pali terms will be put in the footnotes but not repeating the note of explanation.

²⁴⁰ Usually, monks, who observe and practise *araññaka-dhutaṅga*, live and practice meditation in the forest faraway from human habitation. In Thailand, those monks who dwell from place to place and spend most of their time in the forest practising meditation are known as ‘Phra Thudong’ the term of which is derived from the Pali word ‘dhutaṅga.’ Tiyanich, 2007, p. 245.

²⁴¹ A monk’s robe is made with blocks in it, usually nine blocks. The blocks are symbols of fields. This is taken to be symbolic in several ways. The community of monks (Saṅgha) is like a field of good soil for cultivating. Monks are fields for cultivating merits. There are nine qualities of the Saṅgha. So, the monk’s robes are usually made with nine blocks on them. For details, see in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*.

²⁴² *Samvega* literally means being stirred, moved, and inspired by awe. It is the ‘spiritual shock’ that prompts people to seek a way out of *samsāra*. One may experience *saṃvega* by realizing that the acts of going, standing, etc are impersonal activities or processes devoid of any self. The Buddha has said that there is no liberation for one without *saṃvega*. Eight objects inducing emotion are: birth, old age, illness, death, misery in the *apāyas*, and the misery caused by *samsāra* in the past, present & future stages. *PED* ‘saṃvega.’ An alternative spelling of *Samvega* for Romanized scripts is ‘saṃvega’, see Rhys Davids (ed.) *PED* ‘saṃvega’.

²⁴³ For this phrase, Amat Long uses the Pali term ‘*sampajāna-nibbindanyan*’.

When there is long and slow breathing in through the throat, he notices “Oh...this is the long in-breath stretching along the throat like the belt of a machine wheel!”

[Para. 24.] When there is short breathing in with a strong panting effort, he notices “Oh...this is the short in-breath with quick moment of lingering like the band of a lathe!” The sensation through the body of form is obviously conditioned from the beginning through to the middle and the end of breathing in and out. So, one, with mindfulness, should reflect on the breathing in and breathing out and keep it in mind until one comes weary of or grows disillusioned with the body. When the breathing in and out is drawn out and back, too fast and too short, one should try to fix it in order to become soft, gentle and comfortable. Do not let your mind wander around too often. When there is long and lengthy breathing in our bodies, one should reflect and contemplate on that. Examine the nature of its impermanence. It is a good object for developing insight meditation.

[Para. 25.] Dear monks! Young and old, all the audience! What can breathing in and breathing out be compared to? I will now explain it to all of you. Listen carefully and take note. It is like a strong bodied and skilled turner or potter or his apprentice, turning the wheel. When the turner or his apprentice draws or pulls the rope to turn the wheel, we can see his skills using his hands, feet and eyesight while turning the wheel round and round.

[Para. 26.] When he slowly makes long turn, he knows that the rolling rope is long. When he pulls the other side of the rope, which is now shorter, he is well aware that the rope has become shorter in relating to the other longer side. He thinks, “Last time I turned the wheel a little bit too fast and hard so that, being too wobbly, it was not smooth enough.” Being aware of this, he then tries to turn it properly to get the proper rhythm and balance as required.

[Para. 27.] In the same way, my son-like pupils! Be clear in mind with this simile. A monk should keep himself alert and develop his mind with the mindfulness of breathing. “Oh, this is the long out-breath through my throat!” thus he understands this as he meditates, “and this is the short out-breath taking place in a hurry!”

[Para. 28.] “Oh, now it is the long in-breath, just like the rope turning back and forth!”; “and this is the short breathing in with strong panting effort!” This is how the pleasant smelling mouth of the Golden Sayings of the Glory of Gold has explained in his own words. Thus, one should contemplate the body internally and externally, comparing the bodies of others to one’s own body in that all are faced with the confusion of the mind.

[Para. 29.] When breathing in, the air will go to the heart and then end at the navel and when breathing out it goes up to the lung and then ends at the top of the nose, above the mouth, and then goes downward back to the stomach day and night like the turning of the lathe for a felt-work. We therefore should contemplate our body like this, internally and externally, to understand that all beings are just like this and I am also the same; we are not different from each other; the air is a precondition for the body; so be afraid of suffering and disengage with it; contemplate and watch your breathing in and out with full attention to see the air of your breathing up and down through the throat making the sound ‘phaw...phaw...’

[Para. 30.] This physical body, consisting of thirty-two components,²⁴⁴ is the base for experiencing suffering with five kinds of sensation. So, contemplate the body again and again to see how things arise from the long and short breaths. Also contemplate the body again and again to see how things change and vanish such as breathing, dying and being reborn, going to the earth and beginning again. So, a monk who wishes to experience the knowledge of the Path, the knowledge of the Fruition and Nibbāna should contemplate the body with the mindfulness of breathing, watching the arising and vanishing of phenomena in the body. Our bodies, yours and mine, are made up of the same stuff as each other, namely of intestines, membranes etc. This means that each of us can experience the truth of impermanence within us.

[Para. 31.] Dear noble sons! You should reflect and contemplate on [the body] to be disengaged with it; become disgusted with it by seeing its evil. This section of contemplation on the body, dealing with the Mindfulness of Breathing Meditation, helps us gain experience to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness enabling our mind to brighten up and leave sadness behind.²⁴⁵ The monk, who has knowledge and awareness and understands the nature of the impermanence of breathing in and breathing out, is absolutely independent; when he stands up or sits down or while walking, in whichever posture he is, he has no clinging, desire, pride or wrong view.²⁴⁶ He has destroyed and uprooted the desire for five kinds of sensual pleasure.

[Para. 32.] There are five aggregates of form, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness, which are the cause of clinging to this world. One should make effort to

²⁴⁴ The full list of 32 components of the body is mentioned in the next section on the Repulsiveness of the Body.

²⁴⁵ There are altogether 14 sections of the contemplation on the body in the *Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta*, the mindfulness of breathing being the first section.

²⁴⁶ See more details of the four postures in the following section of the Body Movement Posture.

avoid attachment or clinging to the five aggregates in terms of thinking or saying: “This is ‘me’, this is ‘my body’, I control them, and I depend on them.”²⁴⁷ Do not speak and think in these terms. Besides, an enlightened person has no attachment to any possessions in thought or speech of the following kind or something else: “This is my property, my money, my gold, my belongings, my cow, my buffalo, all of which are the source of lustful desire that causes suffering.” He contemplates the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, and has no desire for the five kinds of sensual pleasure. In fact, he has Dhamma in mind.

[Para. 33.] Dear sons! Young and old, you pupils of the Buddha who are virtuous and practise well, please keep in mind and memorize the points mentioned above. Take this physical body as an object of insight meditation and contemplate it again and again until you wake up and take fright. Whichever posture you are in, standing or sitting, be awake and disengaged with the body. Everything that has been discussed so far is a tool for cutting off the 1500 stinking defilements that are responsible for blindness.²⁴⁸ I hope that all the wise people, noble men and women will contemplate and reflect on their minds day and night, developing meditation and look for knowledge gradually to experience *samvega*.

[Para. 34.] This was how the fully Enlightened One, the Unthinkable One,²⁴⁹ the pinnacle of three worlds (of human, gods and brahmas), the omniscient, with His blessed lips, delivered the sermon in the country of Kurus surrounded by his lovely sons of Sakya on that day for the sake of those wishing to understand the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. I have now translated it into poetic Shan language, which is the language of nine countries.²⁵⁰ So I transfer it into Shan words as if I am providing a big candle [for the Shan audience]. This completes the first section, *paṭṭhamam kaṇḍam niṭṭhitam*.²⁵¹ We should take a break from the

²⁴⁷ An example of Amat Long’s messages on the teaching of non-self (*anattā*) that I shall discuss more in detail in the Chapter Four.

²⁴⁸ Blindness is a simile for the ‘ignorance’ of beings.

²⁴⁹ Amat Long uses the Pali term *Acinteyya*. *PED* s.v. ‘*aciteyya*’.

²⁵⁰ The nine countries referred to here are: Keng Hung (Chiang Rung), Keng Tung, Keng Hai (Chiang Rai), Keng Khaung, Keng Mai (Chiang Mai), Keng Saen, Keng Lao (Chiang Dao), Keng Kham and Keng Lom. These nine principalities were called nine countries in ancient time. In the modern period, these nine countries are spread across the current geographic borders of Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and China. I have given the Shan versions of the place names first, with the Thai variants in brackets afterwards. ‘Keng’ in Shan is pronounced ‘Chiang’ in Thai, and some ‘H’ in Shan is ‘R’ in Thai such as Chiang Rung, Chiang Rai. Saimong 1965, p. 42.

²⁵¹ Here, in the original work, the author has explained the grammatical form of Pali phrase including *paṭṭhamam kaṇḍam* ‘the first section.’

section of the mindfulness meditation of breathing. We the hill-Shans (mountain Shan) take an interlude and stop the performance for a while. Let us rejoice! (*Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu*).²⁵²

3.6. The Contemplation of the Body, the Section of the Postures²⁵³

[**Para. 35.**] Again, praise to the Emerald Star (the Buddha)²⁵⁴ who taught many kinds of techniques to assist in the realization of the Truth. This how considerate the Lord Buddha is! Since the text of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* continues with the phrase in Pali: *Puna ca paraṃ bhikkhave bhikkhu gacchanto vā gacchāmīti pajānāti* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, when he is walking, is aware of it thus: – ‘I walk’],²⁵⁵ the voice of the golden tongue hails as if saying, “I am not giving up yet! I will continue giving the sermon revealing the methods, one section after the other.” Oh pupils who are like sons to me! Young and old, senior and junior, all the audience! Any monk, who fears and gets shocked at the suffering of *samsāra* in the worlds of human and spirit beings, should meditate to be disengaged with the body.

[**Para. 36.**] When the verbal root ‘to go’ operates,²⁵⁶ the two feet take to moving the sole of the feet walking forward, the practitioner then notes it with mindfulness, ‘oh...going...going...’. So, while walking, he gains the knowledge of clear comprehension and disengagement with worldly things. When he stands still, not going anywhere, he notes with awareness, ‘oh... standing...standing...’ He takes notice of bodily postures again and again until he is well aware of his body. When he sits down, keeping his head and body still, he notes with mindfulness, ‘oh...sitting... sitting...’ saying like this in his mind until he gains he knowledge of clear comprehension and disengagement with worldly things. When he lies

²⁵² It is a Theravada Buddhist tradition that all the audience ‘sādhu’ three times at the end of a sermon or at the end of each section, which is a way of rejoicing in the performance of the Dhamma (and is not used outside of religious contexts), as well as participating in the merit of that performance.

²⁵³ As in the canonical *MSS*, the Pali terms *kāyānupassanā* and *iriyāpathapabba* are used for the sub-heading in the main text of *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 22.

²⁵⁴ *Saeng Lao* [‘Emerald Star’] is often used as an epithet of the Buddha in Shan literature.

²⁵⁵ The Pali passage here is from the Pali canon as quoted here by Amat Long probably as an authorization before composing in his own words for the new section. This similar norm of writing applies throughout *MSP*. Translation in the bracket is from Rhys Davids 1977, p. 329.

²⁵⁶ A Pali term *gamudhātu* meaning ‘to go’ is used in the main text. Grammatically, ‘*gamu*’ is the root of ‘*gaccha*’ meaning ‘going.’ Here, Zao Amat Long starts a sentence with ‘*gamudhātu*,’ a Pali verbal root of *gacchanto vā* in the canonical text of *MSS* to explain the mindfulness of walking meditation.

prostrate in a sprawling manner, he notes, ‘oh...lying... lying...’ reflecting on his body lying prostrate on a bed under a blanket.

[Para. 37.] Everything that has been said is about the postures of standing, walking, sitting and lying, all of which are operated or driven by the air element making the body shake or be still, lean over or lie down. This applies to bodies of all, both layman and clergy. The physical body of 32 components is operated by the force of air element, which makes it standing up, sitting down, walking, and lying down. So, if any monk contemplates the four postures of standing, sitting, walking and lying, then he will be doing well with meditation on developing mental culture by observing his body, contemplating and reflecting on his mind. Thus, one should make an effort on contemplating one’s own postures repeatedly in order to be free from the danger [of *saṃsāra*].

[Para. 38.] We should contemplate on ourselves and others, inside and outside, and that means our own bodies and those of others. Reflect on the bodies of humans and non-humans living in the three realms as their borrowed houses appearing and disappear, wandering around in the ‘three planes of existence’.²⁵⁷ The point is, monks, you should listen and keep in mind; oh...my son-like pupils! Sit down still and listen carefully in order to get *saṃvega* and be disengaged with the body, which is in reality dark blue, full of maggots, and a rotten bag with a dreadful stench.

[Para. 39.] What does ‘going’ mean? Who goes? A pig’s going, a dog’s going, a cow’s going, a buffalo’s going, a bandit’s going, a wise man’s going -- there are different types of ‘going’ due to different nature and status of beings. Although the act of their going is the same, their insights into it do not match up at all. All beings and animals, rats and birds, pigs and dogs, deer and barking deer, monks and righteous men are totally different. But as far as noting or understanding the movement of postures such as sitting or lying is concerned, a bandit’s understanding is one way and an intellectual’s understanding is quite another.

[Para. 40.] Dear royal pupils! Young and old, all of you who belong to the lineage of the good listeners! The ‘goings’ of bird, rat, pig, dog, cow, buffalo, pundit, robber, etc. are not associated with mindfulness at all. The reason is that they do not understand the Foundations of Mindfulness; they do not have understanding; and consequently they only perform unwholesome deeds, have thought of bad behaviour, and thus store up hellish rebirths repeatedly.

²⁵⁷ See the three levels of existence above.

[Para. 41.] When standing up, they (the animals) do so with desire; when going too, they do so with desire; when sitting, they do so with desire; and indeed when they sleep they sleep with desire. So, the wall of the five hindrances and the defilements surround their heads and bodies.²⁵⁸ A robber's speech, a thief's speech, pundit's speech and a silly man's speech are the same. When they speak, they speak with desire; when they laugh, they laugh with desire; when they smile, they smile with desire. So they are full of lustful desire, anger and delusion. The eleven kinds of fire are in fact the force,²⁵⁹ pushing them to perform unwholesome deeds, and so they are not familiar with the Foundations of Mindfulness. Wise and righteous people contemplate on the body and develop mental culture as they fear the danger of *samsāra*. When performing various postures they do so mindfully, for instance when they either stand up or sit down, they only contemplate the five aggregates as impermanence, suffering and selflessness. They reflect on the nature and see the nine doors of conditional things,²⁶⁰ and aspire to go beyond the three realms of existence.

[Para. 42.] The aggregate of form, which contains 28 components,²⁶¹ is neither my body nor others, neither female nor male, neither person nor being. What 'I' or 'other' or 'woman' or 'man' indicates is merely a feature of perception, a word, a term coined by the unenlightened of the world. The aggregate of form, which contains the 28 components, is the heap of bones that connected each other in a functional manner. In fact, this body, of 32 parts and 9 doors of air, is constituted of the four great elements of earth, water, fire and air.

[Para. 43.] What does 'go' mean? What goes? Who goes? Which being goes, by lifting the feet up and walking forward? Actually, it is not me 'going', not you 'going', not others 'going', not a woman 'going', not a man 'going'. In fact, it is the heap of flesh and bones that is moving and walking together on the road. Why does the heap of flesh and bones move? Why are the head and body shaking, bending and walking? It is because of the force of the air element that makes the heap of bones walk. Why is the heap of bones standing, sitting,

²⁵⁸ The five kinds of hindrances are mentioned earlier. In Shan Buddhism, these hindrances are usually compared with walls or gates, because they prevent us reaching the realm of happiness, which is at the other side of the walls of hindrances. So, one who wishes to be free from suffering and experience happiness, he must destroy the walls of hindrances.

²⁵⁹ According to the Buddha, we are burning from eleven kinds of physical pain and mental agony: lust, hatred, illusion sickness, decay, death, worry, lamentation, pain (physical and mental), melancholy and grief. Dhammānanda 1964, *What Buddhists Believe*, Online: <http://www.budsas.org/ebud/whatbudbeliev/303.htm>

²⁶⁰ The nine doors are: two holes of the eyes, two holes of the ears, two holes of the nose, the mouth, the urethra, and the anus.

²⁶¹ For details of the 28 components of the aggregate of form, see Nārada 1987, pp. 324-326.

turning and walking around? It is the force of the air element that pushes the heap of bones standing, sitting, shaking the body and lying prostrate in bed under a blanket.

[Para. 44.] Here there is a comparison, my dear sons, young and old, who are virtuous! In order to understand things, do remember and keep in mind of the following simile. The aggregate of form, which is comprised of 28 components, is like a ship in the ocean. It reaches to the other shore because of the force of the air. So, the aggregate of form, comprising of 28 components, is like the ship sailing into the deep ocean by the force of the air. The aggregate of form, which is the heap of bones, is able to shake, move, stand, sit or lie down because of the force of air element.

[Para. 45.] There is another simile. As the string of the bow when pulled shoots the arrow flying fast, in the same way, the aggregate of form, containing the heap of flesh, bones, muscles, sinews and tendons, sounds noisily because of the movements of the air, like the sound of the warp of cloth pulled by a woman. The aggregate of form, of 28 parts, is able to reach here and there according to one's wish or desire, even to sit or bend over. This body, the heap of bones, being wrapped in by muscles, can bend over, lie down, shake, walk, stop, pause, be lost in thought, move with slow motion, stand, incline, stand up or sit down because of the force of air element. Why does the air element persuade or tempt the heap of bones and muscles to move, stand up and walk with slow motion or with fear? It is because of the force of mind that pushes the air element to act whatever way it the mind wishes, including moving forward or backward.

[Para. 46.] The air element has the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and selflessness, responsible for finishing the life of aggregates sooner and dying sooner. When the mind leaves the body, the air also leaves the body, and then the heap of bones and muscles will gradually become very smelly, blue, pallid, rotten and putrid to a highly offensive degree. So, contemplate the body, like this, which is characterised by change, suffering and selflessness. Keep this in mind and reflect on the body day and night. Until we reach the country of Nibbāna, in every single life in the *samsāra*, we must be reborn, grow old and die. The aggregates vanish and appear again making the *samsāra* long and lengthy. That is what has been pointed out by the Buddha. Here we have discussed the bodily postures of standing, sitting, walking and lying down that one should contemplate for mental development.

3.7. The Contemplation of the Body, the Section of Clear Awareness²⁶²

[Para. 47.] Again, the majestic Golden Lips [of the Buddha] continue the sermon [in Pali], “*Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī hoti*”²⁶³ [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother – whether he departs or returns – is aware of what he is about’]²⁶⁴. Dear moral sons, you virtuous monks in lineage of *sakya*! If a monk wishes for the highest city he should contemplate the Foundations of Mindfulness. When he moves forward or backward, he does so with full attention and clear awareness of the nature of human and spirit-beings as to how they like and enjoy sensual pleasures. So, he stays with the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation on the body, reflecting on the evil and suffering in the three realms of existence.²⁶⁵

[Para. 48.] When looking straight forward, here too [a monk] makes a mental note with knowledge and wisdom to see things inside the body as they are arising and disappearing. When seeing near or far, gazing or looking out, he observes with full attention, developing mindfulness. In the movements of getting up, sitting, standing, walking and also bending and stretching out his arms, he takes notice and reflects on his movement with full attention. When the air element pushes his arms to stretch and spread the fingers out, or spread the palm out, here too, he contemplates on every single movement whenever bending or stretching. When putting on robes or carrying a bowl or any other requisites of monks, he does it with care and mindfulness.

[Para. 49.] When eating, drinking or chewing, he is mindfully attentive. When going to lavatory to evacuate or to put the night soil and urine away, which are unclean things, here too, he meditates on all the movements to see the nature of the body. When standing, sleeping, sitting still, here too, he contemplates on the movements with knowledge and wisdom to see the suffering of *samsāra*. When awakening, speaking, keeping quiet, he is always mindful in line with the four foundations of mindfulness day and night. Thus he is alert and has clear comprehension.

²⁶² Pali terms *kāyānupassanā* and *sampajāñña* are used in the main text, *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 29.

²⁶³ Amat Long begins the new section with a quotation of Pali phrases at the beginning of this section in Pali as it is in the canonical *Mahāsatiipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (*MSS*), indicating the authority of Pali to approve that all what Amat Long will write in this section are based on the Pali canonical *MSS*, hence sending a message to his readers and audience that he draws on a reliable source. This norm of writing is seen in several places, especially at the beginning of the new sections, of the *MSP*.

²⁶⁴ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 329. For alternative translation, see Walshe 1995, p. 337.

²⁶⁵ Three realms of existence are human world, heaven and hell.

[Para. 50.] One should observe oneself and others. We are those who missed or were far away from ‘the 16 islands.’²⁶⁶ We instead are fond of the darkness of delusion. Thus, time and time again, contemplate on the physical body, which is impermanent, suffering and selfless. We are born and grow old and return to become young again and then die here and there again and again in the midst of the three realms. This body, for a perfectly formed human body, inside and outside, is made up of altogether 32 parts. Contemplate on the aggregate of form (corporeality), of 28 components. All is subject to arise and vanish having the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and selflessness. We are born and die serving the effects from our deeds in the previous lives.

[Para. 51.] The interpretation is like this. Dear monks, [who wear] the thick robes of 7 lines, 6 points and 5 blocks,²⁶⁷ belonging to the lineage of Sakya! Please listen and keep in mind. The words ‘clear comprehension’ (*sampajāna*) means ‘recognizing’ or ‘considering’ or ‘taking notice’ when we move forward or backward; ‘Disengagement’ (*Nibbinda*) means when we understand the nature of our bodies in the sense that they are full of black and white spots, then we will be disillusioned about them. Thus, a monk, with the knowledge of clear comprehension on the disengagement, contemplates or is aware of the lives of spirit and human beings, as subject to arising and ceasing. The aggregate of form, of 28 components, is like a dancing string puppet, which is pulled or controlled by someone behind the show. So, the body is like a puppet that controlled by someone behind the curtain, making it play, stand, sit, walk, go and dance in the show.

[Para. 52.] The dancing string puppet whose arms, body and legs move back and forth, left and right, is, in fact, controlled by the puppeteer who pulls the string. As he pulls the strings, the puppet moves to act, doing this and that, shaking its head, moving its body and blinking its eyes. In the same way, this physical body, of 28 components, is just like the puppets of the two brothers, Rāma and Lakṣhaṇa (*sic*), playing and jumping on a stage show, fighting with the Monkey Hanumān.²⁶⁸ This body, the aggregate of form, is like the puppet;

²⁶⁶ Possibly, Amat Long talks about the 16 steps of *jhāna*, or the ‘survey of *ānāpānasati* in 16 steps,’ which could be a simile of islands while the sea or ocean surrounding the island could be the simile of all suffering. Thus, as long as one is sunk in the ocean and not yet reached on the islands, he/she cannot avoid but experiences suffering. For the survey of *ānāpānasati* in 16 steps, see Anālayo 2003, *Satipaṭṭhāna: A Direct Path to Realization*, p. 135.

²⁶⁷ This is probably a reference to the manner of stitching the monk’s robe. Also see *MSP*, paragraphs 51 and 168, and footnote on Section of Breathing.

²⁶⁸ This is a reference to the three main heroes of the Indian Ramayana story, which has been popular in all regions of Southeast Asian countries, and is traditionally a favourite subject for puppet shows and other types of entertainment. The continued cultural significance is indicated by the name Rama being given to the kings

the mind is like the puppeteer; and the air element is like the strings that tie with the puppet, which dances to the rhythm of drums and gongs under the flashing illumination of the spotlights.

[Para. 53.] Thus, as explained above, the aggregate of form consisting of 28 components, is also like a string puppet that shows the performance through the control of strings. It is the air element that makes the heap of flesh, bones and muscles get moving, twisting and dancing in a festival. But it is not long before the dawn comes, the voice of drama becomes quiet, the morning fog falls [early morning arrives] and the string of puppet too is hung up on the clothes-line. Too tired to dance the people will give up and have a rest loosening their belts. It is very late in the night and so the audience in the show have already gone home. This aggregate of form, the physical body, is indeed impermanent. It cannot exist for long. The air element eventually cannot make it stand, sit and lie down anymore. It becomes a dead body, and the bones, flesh, muscles and skin will finally be scattered, separated from each other.

[Para. 54.] Clear comprehension means contemplating and reflecting on the nature of the body as it moves forward or backward, bends or turns around, and the like. [A monk thinking,] ‘When I move backward or forward it may cause goodness or evil, or whatever my movement is, whether ‘gazing’, ‘looking forward’, or ‘going’, I will be mindful extensively throughout the movement to see the suffering of *samsara*.’ Dear son-like pupils! Listen to me and take notice. There are four kinds of clear comprehension. There are these four kinds of comprehension: clear comprehension of purpose, of suitability, of resort, and of non-delusion.²⁶⁹ These four are mentioned by the majestic mouth of the Golden Glory (the Buddha).

[Para. 55.] ‘Clear comprehension of purpose’ means knowing and understanding clearly whether one’s postures are useful or not, [for example] knowing whether one’s postures of ‘going’, ‘moving backward’, ‘moving forward’, and the like, have any benefit or not. ‘Clear comprehension of suitability’ means knowing whether one’s activities such as what one is doing, where one is going, moving forward or backward at any given time suitable or not, that also includes even when gazing at something. ‘Clear comprehension of

of the current Thai dynasty, the current King Bhumibol Adulyadej being the Rama IX. The name of Rama’s brother ‘Lakshmana’ is preserved in Shan as ‘Lakkhaṇa’.

²⁶⁹ Pali terms for the four kinds of clear comprehension: *sāthaka-sampajañña*, *sappāya sampajañña*, *gocara sampajañña*, and *asammoha sampajañña*. Soma Thera 1999, *The Way of Mindfulness*, p. 66.

resort' implies taking the three general characteristics i.e. the nature of impermanence, suffering and no-self as the objects for contemplation. And, 'clear comprehension of purpose of non-delusion' means contemplating and understanding the Five Aggregates, i.e. the nature of form and phenomena, which gather together to form a house, doors and gates (of human personality). In fact, this body is nothing but flesh, blood and bones. The above short interpretation is in accordance with the teaching of the Four Clear Comprehensions as taught by the Lord Buddha.

3.8. The Contemplation of the Body, Section of Reflection on Repulsive²⁷⁰

[Para. 56.] *Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu imam-eva kāyaṃ uddham pādatalā aṭṭho kesamattakā tacapariyantam pūram nānapakārassa asucino paccavekkhati* ['And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother reflects upon this very body, from the soles of his feet below upwards to the crown of his head, as something enclosed in skin and full of divers impurities'].²⁷¹ Now that I have finished explaining the Clear Awareness, it is time to talk about the Contemplation of Repulsive as taught by the noble mouth of the Lord Buddha to let his pupils hear. Dear my noble sons, great and small, new and senior, young and aged, who are happy with five kinds of *vasībhoga*,²⁷² let a monk contemplate the body as an object for the Foundation of Mindfulness, and meditate.

[Para. 57.] This body, from the toe of the foot up to the knot of the hair on the head, measures one fathom long. From the knot of the hair down to the sole of the foot, too, this body is a fathom in measurement. On the outside, the skin covers the bad smelling flesh and the nine holes of air. The body, which is like a bag, containing bad smelling muscles and tendons, persuades the cuticle to cover all over the outer parts of the skin. It is so disgusting having some kind of insipid or pungent smells, and there are nine doors of air inside. There are various things, which have certain bad smells that are indeed very disgusting; some fall in drops and some are leaking and flowing down (through those nine doors). Thus, one should

²⁷⁰ Pali terms *kāyānupassanā* and *paḍikūlamanasikara* are used in the main text, *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 34.

²⁷¹ The translation in the bracket is from Rhys Davids 1977, p. 330. For alternative translation, see Welshe 1995, p. 337.

²⁷² The five *vasībhogas* are: 1) *avijjana-vasībhoga* = analysis, 2) *samapajjana-vasībhoga* = joy, 3) *paccavekkhana-vasībhoga* = reflection, 4) *adhitthāna-vasībhoga* = determination and 5) *vuddhāna-vasībhoga* = effort. These five are the facts related to meditation practice.

then gain clear awareness and the knowledge of disengagement [with the body],²⁷³ putting this into heart by reflecting on the body of form to see the nature of human and gods that they are being subject to arising and disappearing.

[**Para. 58.**] The body, covered in hair, pursues the eyes of men and women to attract one another day and night. Like a cluster, which is so clean and bright that one can see an image reflected in it, our physical bodies [when young and beautiful] are the objects of persuasion. In fact, it is a hell for the mind. It is in fact rotten and disgusting, composed of 32 components,²⁷⁴ being a place for worms and insects setting their webs widespread inside of the body. [Of the 32 components], ‘**head hairs**’ (*kesā*)²⁷⁵ refers to the group of 25 million of hairs, with innumerable knots on the head, which is like a thick bush of flowers, falling over the shoulders. They are, however, impermanent, turning grey and falling out before long. ‘**Body hairs**’ (*lomā*) refers to the 990,000 body hairs of men and women, fluffy and luxuriant, which can be plucked one by one. ‘**Nails**’ (*nakhā*) refers to the nails of fingers and toes, that are to be cut off and then grow again, being 20 altogether, like fish being rich in scaly skin. ‘**Teeth**’ (*dantā*) refers to the group of 32 teeth, touching each other in a line in the crack of the mouth, which will soon fall out. ‘**Skin**’ (*taco*) refers to the skin wrapped round the body, being subject to wrinkle and shrink soon.

[**Para. 59.**] ‘**Flesh**’ (*mamsam*) refers to the 900 lumps of flesh, frightfully bloody, hanging and mixing up together in the body. ‘**Sinews**’ (*nhāru*) refers to the 900 sinews (muscles) wrapping around the bones, and the 7000 muscles, which produce taste and flavour, the muscle for the urine, all of them great and small, making branches in the body. ‘**Bones**’ (*aṭṭhi*) refers to the 300 of bones, joints and ribs, situated in pieces and parts, as constructed in the body. ‘**Marrow**’ (*aṭṭhimiñjam*) refers to the marrow that flows within the bones. ‘**Kidneys**’ (*vakkam*) refers to the two kidneys that we all similarly have. ‘**Heart**’

²⁷³ The Pali term *sampajāna-nibbindanyan* [‘clear awareness and notion of disengagement’] is used in the main text.

²⁷⁴ 32 components are: head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, intestines, spleen, lungs, bowels, stomach, undigested food, feces, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, lymph, spittle, nasal mucus, oil of the joints, urine. Details are followed in the texts one by one as found in the *Visuddhimagga*, indicating the physiology known at the time of Buddhaghosa was relatively primitive, so that perhaps the detailed descriptions of the parts are of little use to the modern meditator, but there is much of practical value in contemplating such parts of the body to be disengaged with them and to reduce lustful desire or attachment to the body. *VM* has provided interpretations of the 32 parts in different ways. Ñāṇamoli 1991, pp. 349-351.

²⁷⁵ *VM* compares the head hairs with *kuntha* grasses. Ñāṇamoli 1991, p. 349.

(*hadayam*) refers to the one, which is a fatty pointed shape and full of blood. **‘Liver’** (*yakanam*) refers to the bloody liver, which varies in size, from large to small.

[Para. 60.] **‘Pleura’** (*kilomakam*) refers to the membranes, the diaphragm and other forms of membranes that are intermixed and messed up in the body. **‘Spleen’** (*pihakam*) refers the 80 confused mass of the spleen in the stomach, as foods for worms and insects. **‘Lungs’** (*papphāsam*) refer to the lungs where the 32 pieces of new flesh assemble. **‘Mesentery’** (*antam*) refers to the large intestine, that it is 32 cubits long in a man and 28 cubits long in a woman, coiled and encompassed in the stomach. **‘Bowels’** (*antagunam*) refers to the smaller intestines of more than 20 rounds surrounding the large intestines. **‘Stomach’** (*udariyam*) refers to the undigested food, which we have recently eaten and swallowed down through the throat and further into the intestines.

[Para. 61.] **‘Excrement’** (*karīsam*) refers to the food that I had eaten about two or three days ago, which is now become multicoloured, being green, yellow, etc., and smells badly. **‘Brain’** (*matthalungam*) refers to the brain, which has a pungent smell and pale colour, existing inside the skull. **‘Bile’** (*pittam*) refers to the bile, which is as bitter as the *tama* tree from which tooth sticks are made. **‘Phlegm’** (*semham*) refers to the phlegm that we spit out, which is also like the moss or green substance on the water surface. **‘Pus’** (*pubbo*) refers to the dark green, syrupy and turbid. **‘Blood’** (*lohitam*) refers to the deep red blood that spreads throughout the bod

[Para. 62.] **‘Sweat’** (*sedo*) refers to the wetness on body when the weather or climate is warm and hot. **‘Solid fat’** (*medo*) refers to the fat, which is like a partially coagulated wax, winding around the membranes. **‘Tears’** (*assu*) refer to drops of water that falls from the eyes when one is sorry, sad or troubled in mind. **‘Liquid fat’** (*vasā*) refers to the fat, which is pure like sesame oil. **‘Saliva’** (*khelo*) refers to the dribble that we spit out, which is not a few. **‘Dirty nasal mucus’** (*siṅghāṇikā*) refers to the liquid that starts flowing from the brain in the skull and then down through the two holes of the nose. **‘Synovial fluid’** (*lasikā*) refers to the oil of the joints, which is like the leaf of *arum* that is cut by a man at the boundary of his farm. **‘Urine’** (*muttam*) refers to the urine of pungent in smell like the water that washes down over eight slopes of a mountain, or like the smell of raw fish, or a smell of staleness.

[Para. 63.] Everything mentioned are actually things that smell offensively. So, look at other people’ bodies that they are just like yours [to get *saṃvega* and be disengaged with worldly things]. The 32 parts of the body are such sorts of pungent smell and dirty like the

mud of algae or vomit. They are mixed up, rubbing each other in the stomach of the body, like the nets of *Yang* people.²⁷⁶ So, in order to understand the 32 parts clearly, one should contemplate and reflect on them again and again. The body is nothing but emptiness. Dear noble sons, young and old, great and small, all of you, who have left the field of sensual pleasure! Please listen, take note and keep in mind how this body of 32 parts looks like.

[Para. 64.] For example, monks, there is a bag with an opening of each end, which is made of animal's skin. It is neither too big nor small but able to contain about 20 or 30 cups of rice to make it full, fat and stout. And there are various kinds of grain to be filling in the bag such as hill-paddy, paddy, green gram, cow-pea, sesame and husked rice, and so on. So the bag is full and stout when those varieties are put into the bag.

[Para. 65.] Then, suppose, the bag is to be examined by a healthy man with good eyesight. He then would have poured all the varieties out off the bag and examined them, by choosing them one by one with his hand. He then would point at each of them and say, "this is hill-paddy, this is paddy, this is green gram, this is cow-pea, this is sesame, this is husked rice," thinking in his mind that he found many kinds of varieties in the bag. He would then put the varieties separately into each group.²⁷⁷

[Para. 66.] Dear monks, my dear pupils, all of you seniors and juniors, my noble sons! Take note that a man who has not lost his eyesight is able to examine what is contained in the bag. In the same way, monks, a monk, who has aims for the attainment of Nibbāna, practises hard on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. He contemplates the body and says, 'I must reflect on my body, which is like the bag of 32 parts being food for worms and insects.'²⁷⁸

[Para. 67.] Regarding to the body, which is one fathom long, [a monk] contemplates the hairs, the 25 millions of head hairs, and the beard and moustache being mixed colours of blue and green, like the wings of carpenter-bee. Or he contemplates the 990,000 body-hairs of men and women, causing pain when pulled. Or he contemplates the nails of the fingers and toes, 20 altogether, that are to be cut off and then grown again. Or he contemplates the group

²⁷⁶ *Yang* is the name of a tribe in Shan State, whose profession is mainly fishing using their hand-made nets.

²⁷⁷ Pali terms were integrated by Amat Long in this paragraph: *seyyathidaṃ damenaṃ muñcitva* [...Shan...], *cakkhumā puriso* [...Shan...], *ime sāli ime vīhi ime muggā* [...Shan...], *ime māsā ime tilā ime tantulā* [...Shan...], indication of Amat Long's 'loose' *nissaya* translation.

²⁷⁸ Pali terms used by Amat Long in this para: *bhikkhave, paccavekkheyyaṃ, evameva kho, imameva kāyaṃ paccavekkhati*.

of 32 teeth, touching each other in line in the crack of the mouth. Or he contemplates the skin, which wraps over the body, being bright and good to look at.²⁷⁹

[Para. 68.] There are the fearful 900 lumps of flesh inside of the body, being bloodily red. There are 900 sinews, some long and some short, being deep green like creepers climbing over trees. There are 300 of bones, joints and ribs, being in pieces and parts, untidily constructed in the body. There is a marrow, flowing within the bones. There are two kidneys, hanging in the chest near the heart. There is a heart, which is the centre for the element of mind and the element of mind consciousness.²⁸⁰

[Para. 69.] There is a liver, which is attached to the two kidneys between the two breasts. There are membranes, being untidily intermixed and messed up with things inside the body. There is the confused mass of the spleen in the stomach, which is food for worms or insects. There are the lungs of 32 new flesh with pungent smell. There is the large intestine, of which a man has 32 cubits long and a woman 28 cubits long, encompassing in the stomach. There are small intestines, like snakes with their scales removed, their heads cut off, then placed in a vessel or pot of blood.²⁸¹

[Para. 70.] There is undigested food that we just have eaten and swallowed down through the throat. The undigested food that we have just eaten a few minutes or hours ago and it is now palely melt and puffy like a dog's waste dropping on the road. There are excrements that we had eaten about two or three days ago, some of which are now hard and some soft with offensive smell. There is a brain, which is pale in colour and placed in the skull of a human being.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ This paragraph contains commentaries on five body-parts. Amat Long begins with Pali terms for each of the body-parts, namely, *kesā* (hair), *lomā* (body-hair), *nakhā* (nail), *dantā* (teeth), *taco* (skin), followed by his commentaries in Shan. This system of translation is applied to the remaining body-parts in the following paragraphs and other similar areas of the text.

²⁸⁰ This paragraph contains commentaries on six body-parts, each of which begins with the Pali term, namely, *mamsam* (flesh), *nhāru* (sinews), *aṭṭhi* (bones), *aṭṭhimūñjam* (marrow), *vakkam* (kidneys), and *hadayam* (heart), followed by commentaries in Shan; Amat Long also uses Pali term *Manodhātu* for the 'element of mind' and *manoviññanadhātu* for the element of mind consciousness.

²⁸¹ This paragraph contains commentaries on six body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *yakanam* (liver), *kilomakam* (membranes), *pihakam* (spleen), *papphāsam*, *antam*, *antagunam*, followed by commentaries in Shan.

²⁸² This paragraph contains commentaries on three body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *udariyam* (undigested food), *karīsam* (excrement), and *mattaluṅgam* (brain), followed by commentaries in Shan.

[Para. 71.] There are two kinds of bitter bile, namely, the bile as organ or the bile-with-base and the bile as fluid or the bile-without-base.²⁸³ The bile as organ is in a form of small bag hanging beside the two kidneys, which is as bitter like the taste *tama* tree from which tooth sticks are made. So this kind of bile has its base or house. The bile as fluid is spread all over the body except hairs, nails and teeth. So, this bile has no base and is like oil.

[Para. 72.] There is phlegm that we spit out and replaced with more. There is pus, which is thick green, syrupy and turbid in colour when our bodies is hurt, sore, pain or wounded. There are two kinds of blood, namely, flowing blood (*calalohā*) and un-flowing blood (*acalalohā*). Flowing blood refers to the blood that spreads everywhere in the flesh, intestines, bones, stomach etc. Un-flowing blood refers to the blood in the kidneys and lungs. This kind of blood trickles down from the top of the breast.²⁸⁴

[Para. 73.] There is sweat that is wet on body or armpits when the climate is warm and hot, being insipid or salty. The word sweat refers to ‘dirt’ or ‘unclean’. So the sweat comes out of our bodies by the heat of the sun or fire. It has bad smell like the dry scarab beetle. There is solid fat, bright and yellow like turmeric. When the fire element heats up, it melts and spreads all over the body. Shan people say to those who have solid fat “Fat person, pregnant person.” A person who is skinny and bony is called “thin person,” because the liquid fat is not spread all over; it is only along the knee and shin. That is why such person is very skinny.²⁸⁵

[Para. 74.] Drops of tears fall from our eyes when we are happy or sad or trouble in mind. So, tears drop from our eyes when we are either very happy or sad. They are impure things, wet on our cheek and chin. It is like the urine of a small *cicada* bird. Generally, the liquid fat oozes through the armpits, forehead and on top of the nose. That liquid fat, when it is wet and melts on the skin and hairs of our body, smells pungently.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ This paragraph contains commentaries on one of the body-parts, beginning with Pali term *pittam*; Amat Long quoted Pali terms *baddhapitta* for the ‘bile-with-base’ and *abaddhapitta* for the ‘bile-without-base’. See *PED*, s.v. ‘pitta’, with reference to *VSM* 359; *VbhA* 65, 243.

²⁸⁴ This paragraph contains commentaries on three body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *semham*, *pubbo*, *lohitam*. Two types of blood also with Pali terms: flowing blood (*calalohā*) and un-flowing blood (*acalalohā*).

²⁸⁵ This paragraph contains commentaries on two body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *sedo* and *medo*.

²⁸⁶ This paragraph contains commentaries on two body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *assu* and *vasa*.

[Para. 75.] Oh that is the saliva like the bubble of the sea. It literally means the water that comes out from the root of the tongue and the teeth, and it never runs out although we spit it out a lot. It is like water coming out from the sand. The dirty nasal mucus, which is wet on the nose, needs to be rubbed out and cleaned. There is synovial fluid, the adhesive substance between the bones and joints. There is urine, which is the yellowish liquid containing waste products that is excreted by the kidneys and discharged through the urethra, having pungent smell. So, all that has been described is filthy and detestable. We should reflect on the bodies of others as similar to our own. This body of 32 parts is in fact the heap of bones, flesh and intestines that we call the ‘body’ of experiencing suffering. The shore of the other side is unseen (the end of suffering is very far).²⁸⁷

[Para. 76.] Speaking about the colours of our bodies, of men and women, we do not know them well; some are yellow, some are white, some are black, some are red, some are pale and some are green. This body of one fathom is in fact full of flesh and blood of different colours. Speaking about the form of the flesh, intestines, liver and lungs in our bodies, there are many different shapes and forms, flat and round, bitter and insipid, spicy and pungent, sour and astringent. Speaking about the smell, some smell of raw meat, some smell pungently and some smell offensively. The muscle, bones, flesh and intestines are wet and melt, and there are full of sore and liquid in our human bodies. The body, of 32 parts, is formed by four things i.e. karma, mind, season (*utu*) and food. The hairs, body-hairs, nails, bones etc., all of the 32 parts, are unclean and detestable things, smelling badly and being foods for worms.

[Para. 77.] Dear monks, who practise well, develop mindfulness meditation and fear of the cycle of rebirths! A person who wishes for the Realization of the Path (*maggāñāna*), the Realization of the Fruition (*phalañāna*) and Nibbāna should contemplate on the body to get religious emotion that we are old like monkeys. Do contemplate the body that is one fathom long. The body of 32 parts is in fact full of desire, anger and delusion leading to the rebirth of mind and body. When there is an appearance, then there is the nature of vanishing. All of us have to experience such things, which is indeed the universal law. So, do contemplate and reflect on the body gradually to get weary of the inessential (empty) body.

[Para. 78.] Thus, we have discussed the physical body, the aggregate of form of impermanence, suffering and no-self, with adequate explanations. Contemplation on the body

²⁸⁷ This paragraph contains commentaries on four body-parts, each beginning with Pali terms, namely, *kheḷo*, *siṅghāṇikā*, *lasikā*, and *muttaṃ*.

means to look into the bodies of human and spirit beings in their suffering from being born and dying again and again. In whatever life we would be reborn, we have to suffer with more than a thousand flower gardens (defilements) that cause us to wander in *saṃsāra*, die here and be born there again and again. Now, in order to acquire the knowledge of clear comprehension and attitude that leads to detesting the three levels of existence, which have lots of dangers, let the wise men and women contemplate their bodies day and night, practising mindfulness meditation on the body continuously to acquire *saṃvega*.....
*Sādhu...sādhu...sādhu.*²⁸⁸

[Para. 79.] Next, here comes another way and technique of practising the Four Foundations of Mindfulness that should be delivered and shown. Here again, the Lord Buddha taught us the nature of mindfulness meditation on the body in the section containing the Pali words *ajjhataṃ vā bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati* [A monk remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or focused externally]. Dear monks, seniors and juniors, all of you noble son-like pupils, who have attained the five levels of *jhāna*! If an unenlightened person fears the suffering of *saṃsāra*, he should contemplate the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

[Para. 80.] All of us inwardly or outwardly suffer with dizziness in the midst of over a thousand snares,²⁸⁹ starting with the tree of greed. Do contemplate and think about the worry, difficulty and entire burden that come and go, following behind Mr Greed. This rotten body, which is the group of forms, is subject to vanishing, passing away and restarting (being reborn) again and again. So, do contemplate internally and externally on worry, anxiety and troubles that we all experience in every birth of life cycle.

[Para. 81.] The group of the 32 parts, which are intermixed in this body, one fathom long, is called “body-group” (*kāya-kotthāsa*), created by karma, mind, season and food, causing us to be ill and sick. The contents of the stomach, faeces, pus and urine – these four come into existence owing to hot and cold seasons. Sweat, tears, saliva and nasal mucus – these four come into being because of warm or cold season and the mind.

²⁸⁸ Mark of interval, when a *zare*, the recitor of this text reaches this point, he would stop for a short break, and during the break members of the audience would change their sitting postures in preparing for the next section, some may do walking meditation. This time of short break is also a time of discussion or question with the *zare* or among themselves on the section of the text they have just listened.

²⁸⁹ Snare is a simile for defilement.

[Para. 82.] The left 24 parts of the body, such as hairs, nails, kidneys etc. come into being owing to the consequences of karma, mind, climates and food. Thus, the 32 parts come into existence because of these four causes, and most of them are mixed up and connected to each other in the stomach. They will then be in the process of becoming rotten, foods for worms, become multicoloured such as yellow, pale, black and mixed colours in the bodies of men and women.

[Para. 83.] The heap of bones means the body, full of bones, muscles and blood, mixed up with dirty things. Bones mean the bones of hands, feet, waist, upper legs etc., which are connecting to each other as if they were chiselled and fixed [by a carpenter]. Thus, there is a Pali verse, delivered by the golden mouth of Jewel Star (the Buddha): *Haṭṭhapādamamsassitā catusaṭṭhi dvipaṇhikā, catukopphaka-caṅghatthi dvecanuruditthica*.²⁹⁰ Thus, that is what has been taught by the pleasant mouth of the Lord Buddha. **Catusaṭṭhi haṭṭhapādamamsassitā** means there are 64 pieces of hands' bones, 64 pieces of feet's bones and 64 pieces of young bones in the flesh and muscles. So they all are partially joined together. **Dvipaṇhika** means the two sides of the heel's bones that help lift the foot and then step up and walk forward on earth. **Catukopphaka-caṅghatthi** means the bones of the two sides of shin, there are two pieces on each side, so they become four pieces altogether plus the four protuberant bones of the ankles. **Dvecanurukaditthica** refers to two pieces of the kneel's bones, two pieces of the legs' bones, two pieces of the waist's bones, become six kinds of bones altogether. All these were addressed by the Golden Words (*Kwam Kham*) of the Emerald Star (*Saeng Lao*), the Buddha.

[Para. 84.] *Aṭṭhārasapitthitthīni, catuvīsati phāsukā, cuttasura hadayekaṃ, dvekkhakakotta-pahukaṃ*²⁹¹ – this is the verse that was delivered by the Lord. [Here is a translation of the Pali verse.] There are 18 skeletons of the back bones, which are linked and joined each other, two sides of the ribs having 12 skeletons on each side so become 24 altogether, 14 skeletons in the chest, one skeleton in the heart, two collarbones, two fowl's wings and one skeleton each in the upper parts of the arms, which are joined, constructed and interconnected with flesh and muscles; all of these is in fact like a puppet that was made by people.

²⁹⁰ Cakkinda 1873, p. 52. For other commentaries and interpretations on the 32 parts of the body, see VM 1991, pp. 349-357. A *nissaya* translation and commentaries follow in the next sentences.

²⁹¹ Amat Long starts this paragraph with the Pali stanza as quoted in MSN, followed by his Shan translation. Cakkinda 1873, p. 52.

[Para. 85.] *Caturo aggabāhutthī, sattagīvā dvihānukam, nasikekam dvikhikanha, nalātamuttha-mekakam, navasisakapālatthi, evam tisata-atthika.*²⁹² [Here is the translation.] There are the skeletons of lower parts of the arms, having two branches on each side, seven skeletons in the neck, two of the chin's bones, one skeleton in the nose, one each at the bottoms of the ears, two skeletons rounding the two eyes, one skeleton of forehead and nine pieces of bones joined and against each other in the skull, which are indeed so fearful! So as mentioned above, there are altogether 300 skeletons, connected, joined and against each other [in the body].

[Para. 86.] The Golden Glory [Buddha] names the body 'the heap of bones'. It is the air element that manages the heap of bones to stand, walk, lie down, speak and talk about this and that. This heap of bones could stand, relax, sit, or bend only because of the air element, which has its root in the mind.²⁹³ Just like the rope pulling a puppet, the mind-rooted air element manages the heap of bones to move, turn around, get up, go, scold, shout and even develop the mind.

[Para. 87.] The 64 bones of the hands, 64 skeletons of foot-bone, 64 young gristles of the cartilages, 2 skeletons on each of 2 heels, 4 protuberant bones of the ankle, 4 skeletons of shin, 2 balls of knee joint, 2 femurs or upper bones of the legs, 2 skeletons of waist, 18 skeletons of the backbones, 24 skeletons of rib, 14 bones of the breast, one bone of the heart, 2 collarbones, 2 Scapulas or shoulder blades, 2 skeletons of the upper arms, 4 skeletons of the lower arms, 7 pieces of the neck-bone, 2 lower jawbones, one skeleton of the nose, the skeletons rounding the eyes, 2 skeletons at the root of the head, one skeleton of the forehead, the skull, 9 skeletons in the skull—all these are gathered in big amount untidily, and all of these bones and skeletons are subject to be melt down into the surface of the earth.

[Para. 88.] Thus, it has been said: *Let-chey-yonu, catu-chatthi, dvi-panhi thet, pamyet-myin-ghong, lay-khyong-cee-phit, pushit bong-kha, nabacitha, kyauk-ma-se-shit-khu, ctuvisa, nam-yo-kya-leang, cuttasa-yin-phong, na-lone-da-myo, nyat-yo-let-pyin, maung-twin-nit-pa, maung-pya-lay-ta, le-mah-nit-khu, nit-khu-mayyo, damyo-nah-dwin, myet-gwin-nit-pa, na-dwin-nit-khah, nala-deka, muttha-ekam, khaung-khun-ka-ko, maw-gun-tho-thee,*

²⁹² Amat Long starts this paragraph with Pali stanza as quoted in *MSN* followed by his Shan translation. Cakkinda 1873, p. 52.

²⁹³ The Pali term *cittajavāyodhātu* is used in the original text (*MSP*) for the air element that is rooted in the mind.

*ayo-thon-yah-byi-tha-dee.*²⁹⁴ [a Burmese verse, the meaning is the same as the paragraph above]. Thus, the learned and venerable persons who are expert in Tipitaka had composed this verse.

[Para. 89.] This is the translation in Shan [poetry]: *zang-nai daun lup-num tang-lai, hok-sip-pai-si-sik; tin-mue nap-hom-nyi, hok-sip-si nang-kan; saung-phai-son-tam-lin, lup-ta-tin si-luk; min-khaung lup-na-khaeng, nap-si-taeng tem-ze; pusit ho-khao-pom, mak-nim-kom saung-luk; paung-yo khueng-yip-tuk, saung-paung-luk kha-hao; ka-titthi tan-aeo, lup-saung-thaeo kaut-nyap; nanyo zue-lup-khang, sao-si-ngang yai-kan; pitthi lup-lang-kung, khwai-san-mung tang-thap; tang-loug nup-mao-kik, sao-paet-sik tem-ze; uruthi lup-ok, sip-hok yaum-saung-sik; ho-zai taun-lup-ke, sik-nueng-se khat-zaun; khaen-paung-tai-paung-kan, phai-saung-an si-sik; khaen-paung-nuea-zap-mah, nup-pen-kwah saung-an; saung-pa khaup-him-nah, lup-kwang-tah kaet-waung; nuea-nai lup-khaw-jap, en-thaung-tap ken-pai; zet-sik khwai-zap-tang, lup-khu-lang sik-nueng; tong-kang-taun-lup-ke, saung-sik-se khat-zaun; saung-pa lup-nai-hu, win-hu-tu kit-haup; an-leo tik-kauk-luk, ngop-pham-tuk ho-hao; nah-phak-lup an-leo, kyaw-en-kheo thong-phaut; kauk-ho-luk-mon-khaup, paw-mae-haup zem-laeng; kao-sik lup-nai-kang, kwai-zaun-khwang khong-khaeng; tang-long lom-sam-pak, nuk-lueat-mak en-toi; zat-zat-yao-pan-pan, kueat-ma-phan kham-wot; sut-pan-seng-khantha, paet-kang-pa sang-khaeng; mot-pok-lap-maeng-kin, zueam-pen-lin kwa-seng; tai-se-sam-khuen-te, mit-thuea-he phua-ma; yai-yao-thao-lang-kaum, khun-tai-zaum maup-khoi.*²⁹⁵

Therefore, do keep in mind and fear the dangers of suffering. Be awake and disengaged with the body of flesh and blood, the body of bones, the body of skeletons and the body of emptiness.

[Para. 90.] [The Pali term] *vakkam* and *hadayam* refer the kidneys and the heart hanging in the chest. The heart is the place for the mind element (*manodhātu*) and the element of conscious mind (*manoviññādhātu*) where the mind comes into being (*cittuppāda*) from the blood of our heart. This heart (*hadayavatthu*) emerges between the two kidneys, like a lotus blooming, which is called in Shan ‘*ho-zai*’. It is also like a banana bud pointing down, where blood drops day and night.

²⁹⁴ Zao Amat Long made a quotation from U Cakkinda’s Burmese version of the *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya (MSN)*. Cakkinda 1873, p. 53.

²⁹⁵ A Shan poetry, quoted by Amat Long, the meaning is the same as in paragraphs 87-92. Amat Long did not give his reference. This passage seems to be a formula for Shan meditators to recite when they observe the practice of ‘temple sleeping’ as discussed in the Chapter Two.

[Para. 91.] Here it is said (in Burmese): *Vatthu-hadaya apaka-pyay-pyit-than-shin, adwin-ka daboat-kha-u-tha-poi, ale-nai boung-nget-se-saan-louk.*²⁹⁶ It means the outside of the heart looks like a *lake-lotus*, which is red and fresh but inside is wholly and empty, like *mak-mop.*²⁹⁷ People, who are intelligent wise and learned, have pure, clean and fresh hearts, like a *kumudra lotus*, blooming in the lake during the season. Those who are foolish, silly and unwise have ugly hearts, like bogus lotuses, which are made of paper.

[Para. 92.] In other words, there are six kinds of people, i.e. a person who has lustful desire (*rāga*), a person who get angry easily (*dosa*), a person who is under delusion (*moha*), a person who worries too much (*vitakka*), a person who has strong faith, and a wise person. How would the blood of the heart of the lustful person be? How would the blood of the heart be outraged? How would the blood of the silly person be? How would the blood of the faithful person be? And how would the blood of the wise person be? So, some more ways of explanation follow.

[Para. 93.] Please listen to me, ladies and gentlemen, all the audience. For those who are full of lust and defilements, their heart-blood is pinky red, like laundry water (the dirty water that comes out when washing clothes). They are impatient and angry easily, threatening to cut [off the heads] of those who annoy them. Their minds are like poisonous snakes. Their hearts are dark like the colour of indigo, blue like the colour of rice-steamer and dark like charcoal. It is very dark that when a person grinds the ruellia preparing for ink in mixing with catch, but the colour of the heart of a nasty person is darker than that by one hundred thousand times.

[Para. 94.] Those, who have no wisdom, are not secured in mindfulness but instead are silly of forgetting front and back.²⁹⁸ These kinds of people have heart-blood like the liquid-water of washing meat, viscera or internal organs, being webbed, fibered and muddied, being the lump of fat, and hanging like a curtain. There are people who worry a lot (*vitakka*) and have trouble in mind, envisioning this and that. These people have hearts of mixed colour, dingy dirty colour, and dark brown and fade colours. It is like the liquid water of

²⁹⁶ A Burmese quotation as also mentioned in *MSN*. Cakkinda 1873, p. 53.

²⁹⁷ *Mak-mop* is a type of fruit. There are types of *mak-mop*: *mak-mop-khom* (bitter gourd) and *mak-mop-long* (luffa pentandra). Tern Moeng 1995, *SED*, p. 237.

²⁹⁸ 'Forgetting front and back' is a Shan phrase, literally means 'forgetting this and that' or 'very forgetful', and usually referred to the aged people.

steaming soya bean, flowing over the pot and becoming bubble, making the tripod wet, which is made for washing clothes.

[Para. 95.] There are people who have strong faith, attention and generosity, and venerate the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, venerate the sage and the wise, aiming for the ‘top country’ (Nibbāna). For these kinds of people, their hearts are yellow like gold, and fluffy and soft like a bloom of lotus with pleasant smell, tempting bees and insects to swarm about. They are also like the bloom of *mahāleka*.²⁹⁹ The hearts of the wise and the learned are fresh, clean and bright, like blooms of roses in a cup, when applied with gold powder on top (to become a candle), and then light it in the glass-house. Concerning the learned and the expert in the Tipitaka, their heart-blood is pure and clean like the diamond of mount *Vebulla* and mount *Gandhamā*. They are pinky like the stone of ruby or carbuncle, very bright, indeed brighter than the beam of fire.

[Para. 96.] Thus, a scholar, Venerable Cakkinda, *Abhisīrisaddhamadhaja Mahā-dhammarājā-dhirājaguru*,³⁰⁰ composed a poem with pleasant words: “*Nimyan raga, dosa mye-nga, tase moha, takka-peye, wathe saddha, panna pyo-pyak, zaw-ta-myat-tho, htein-lyet-yaung-pyan-hin-tha-dee*.”³⁰¹ Here, may I request you all ladies and gentlemen to take notice and remember these words in your hearts and minds.

[Para. 97.] In other words, when there is pleasant feeling, one is joyful and happy that he/she would forget even about his/her poverty. At that time, the heart’s blood is red as though it was vermilion or red sulphurate of mercury (*han laeng*) of *mai* flower (*mauk mai*) or a cock’s blood. People use it (cock’s blood) to mix with pinky colour for painting the paper for finger-puppet and dance in the midst of a festival. When there is unpleasant feeling, worry and anxiety, his heart becomes black like the smoke of fire, it is burning and hurt that one has to cry and cry. However, when there is moment of neutral feeling, neither happy nor sad, just in the middle, neither inferior nor superior, then the blood of the heart is so clear like sesame oil.

[Para. 98.] Thus, concerning these three kinds of feeling too, Venerable Cakkinda, *Abhisīri-saddhamadhaja Mahā-dhammarājā-dhirājaguru*, composed in poetry, saying:

²⁹⁹ *Mahāleka* is a common flower, which is popular for having both beauty and pleasant odour.

³⁰⁰ We learn from this message that U Cakkinda, the author of the Burmese version of *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya* (1873), was honoured with the title *Abhisīrisaddhamma Mahādhammarājā-dhirājaguru* [‘the high glory of the dhamma and the teacher of the great lawful king’].

³⁰¹ A quotation in Burmese, meaning is similar to the previous paragraph. Cakkinda 1873, p. 53-54.

“*Somanassa Nimyanla-ee, dosa mye-swa, upekkha-mu nan-see tu-hu, mat-yu-ta-nee kyam-la-dee*” [‘Pleasant feeling with red, unpleasant feeling with black, and neutral feeling [of the colour of the heart’s blood’ is like sesame oil’].³⁰² This is another way [classifying the nature of feeling] being composed in poetry.

[Para. 99.] Liver (*Yakanam*) refers to the liver that connects the two lungs near the heart, which is normally flat in shape. The liver of the wise has two or three pieces in a very good flat shape clinging together in the cave near the heart. The liver of the foolish, however, has only one piece, being not flat and largely ugly shape. The liver of *dviheit* [*dvihetuka*],³⁰³ the brighter person, has two sections, joining side by side, being mixed with blood, like a portion of roasted and boiled glutinous rice.³⁰⁴ The liver of *tiheit* [*tihetuka*],³⁰⁵ the brightest person, is small and divided into three sections that placing on one the other, and the shape of such a liver is thin and evenly flatted. Thus, what has been said about the portion of the body (*kāya-kutthāsa*) concerning the kidney, heart, liver and spleen is that these four things have interconnection from one to the other. So, it is clearly said, “*Athae-ta-seik, Pein-nya-seik-ee, dviheit-nit-lone, ti-heit-thone-hu*” [‘One’s wisdom is defined by one’s own liver: *dvihetuka* person has a liver with two sections and *tihetuka* person has a liver with three sections’],³⁰⁶ for a clear comprehension on the teachings of *satipatthāna*.

[Para. 100.] Intestine (*Antam*) refers to the large intestine in our human body that it is like a king cobra when its head and tale were cut off and its skin was taken off. In a woman’s body, the intestine has seven fathoms long, coiling in the midst of the womb, thrusting in between the kidneys till up to the gullet and throat. In a man’s body, the intestine has eight fathoms long, and it is like a snake coiling its body in a bag.

[Para. 101.] Undigested food (*Udariyam*) refers to the undigested food, which we swallow through our throat and then further into our stomach and mixes with the old digested food. Being swallowed, the undigested food is divided into five portions. One portion

³⁰² A quotation in Burmese, meaning is similar to the previous paragraph. Cakkinda 1873, p. 54.

³⁰³ The terms *dviheit* [*dvihetuka*] and *tiheit* [*tihetuka*] refer to the four types of individuals, who were differentiated by their nature of rebirth. Ko Lay 1997, *Abhidhamma in Daily Life*, pp. 87-88 [Online: <http://www.dhammadownload.com/htmlbook/page.php?page=10&id=8>]. *Abhidhamma in Daily Life* is a translation of Ashin Janakābhivamsa’s Burmese text, *Ko Kyin Abhidhamma*.

³⁰⁴ Amat Long uses Shan term *Khao zi*, which means ‘roasted boiled glutinous rice’. *SED*

³⁰⁵ See note above.

³⁰⁶ A Burmese verse quoted by Amat Long, but not found in Cakkinda 1873, p. 54 where there is a discussion on the livers of *dvihetuka* and *tihetuka* persons, leading me to believe that Amat Long’s found his quotation from somewhere else.

disappears on account of the heat of the fire element. The second portion becomes excrement. The third portion becomes urine, pouring on the soil of the earth. The fourth portion becomes the food for trembling insects in our bodies. Oh, be afraid that our muscles are in fact full of worms and insects, and have to depend on the elements of fire, water, air and earth. The last and fifth portion is the only portion that becomes flesh and blood, accumulating little by little from day to day, and so we are grown up by the energy from one-fifth portions of the food we eat everyday. Thus, concerning the commentary on the interpretation of ‘*udariya*’, the undigested food, the learned poet of *alaṅka* has composed a poem in accordance with the nature of kamma: “*Posa-laung-mee, gyin-gyi gyin-nge, ta-thoi thwe-tha, phit-le-ngya-thee, nga-pa-asa-khoy-vwe-tee.*”³⁰⁷ In this way, let the gentle people, men of moral and women of *dhamma*, take notice and keep it in their hearts and minds, forever.

[Para. 102.] [The Pali term] *Bhāvarūpa*³⁰⁸ refers to the two sexes of our human body, the sensitive part of the body (*kāyapasāda*), the pus (*puppo*), the sweat (*sedo*), the fat (*medo*) and serum (*vasā*). These six physical forms spread all over the body.³⁰⁹ In other word, man or woman form, the *kāyapasāda*, the bile and the blood are assimilating together. With the faculty of life (*jīvitindriya*) and full of lust, desire of having sex, men and women, doing sin together for hell, and spread out their hands, touching against the breasts of one another, dive their hands into their waists, reaching the muscle, having a tickling sensation, feeling violently itch, getting wet and then finally come ‘*asuci*’ or the semen. What has been referred to here is extremely disgusting and worthless for liberation. So, do observe them [the six physical forms, mentioned above] and be disengaged with worldly things. Here, when the Lord refers to something as ‘*asuci*’ it means ‘not clean’, ‘dirty’ or ‘disgusting’, spreading all over the body.

[Para. 103.] Therefore, the sub-commentator of this treatise [U Cakkinda] has explained clearly, ‘*bho pathada, lohita, jiva thee-khye thok,*’³¹⁰ literally means the form of male or female, the sensitive part of the body (*kāya-pasāda*), blood, the faculty of life (*jīvitidriya*), semen and the bile-without-base (*abaddhapitta*)—all these are actually spread all over the body. These factors are in fact mixed and spread all over the body, as it is said (in

³⁰⁷ A Burmese verse as quoted from *MSN*. Cakkinda 183, p. 54.

³⁰⁸ *Bhāvarūpa* is the abbreviated form, the state by means of which masculinity and femininity are distinguished. Nārada 1987, p. 330.

³⁰⁹ There are seven altogether but it is counted as six because man-form and woman-form can be counted only one at a time.

³¹⁰ Cakkinda 1873, p. 54.

Burmese): “*Ko-lone nan-phyā, tee-neyā, kyan-lah man-tha-mok,*”³¹¹ a passage that students should take note of and remember.

[Para. 104.] Losing the bile means there are two kinds of bile, namely, the bile that exists within a net or space (*baddhapitta*) and the bile without net or space (*abaddhapitta*), of which spreads all over the body. When one loses the ‘net-bile,’ [he/she] goes mad, and such disease cannot be cured; he/she has to be miserable until he/she dies; it is in fact the results of his/her actions from previous life-cycle (*vaḍḍavipāka*). Losing the ‘bile-without-net’ means the bile that does not exit in a particular place but spreads all over the body and dries up. When a person loses the bile-without-net, his body will be shaking; his flesh will be smelling badly; he will also feel itching, like birds caught by a hunter’s net; his eyes will be yellowy, that is what had been said. Each and every one of us actually lives with the nature of bile, climate, food and karma, which also create diseases. But, losing this bile-without-net can be cured by effective medicine; it will be relieved gradually and uprooted after one or two years.

[Para. 105.] **Semham** means phlegm, of which the new one is replaced when the recent one was spitted off and smell badly. The portion of stomach (*kucchicheya kutthāsa*) is the bag in which old and new foods are intermixed, and then they are in a process of becoming soft, sultry and supple, then being licked and eaten by worms and insects. The muggy phlegm covers up the new food that smells offensively. It is like the moss or the green slimy substance, gathering messily on waters, in big or small streams, particularly gathering at the deep place in a body of water (as in the bend of a mountain stream where the water is calm). It is, in fact, like a sheet of cloth, covering over the water. When we throw stones or bricks onto the water-moss, or when one puts his/her hand onto it, the mosses then are pried out, and then there is an open gap. But it is not open and left as a gap like that for long. When the stone or wood stick has sunk into the water, the mosses gather together again to close up the gap so that it is thoroughly compact without an opening.

[Para. 106.] In the same way (as the mosses cover up the water), the muggy and sticky phlegm covers up the new (undigested) food [that we have just swallowed down] into the stomach. The phlegm is swollen, puffy and wet, covering up the new food, like putting in a cup in measuring that it is full up a *khwak*³¹² (approx. 4 cups). We swallow all kinds of foods,

³¹¹ Cakkinda 1873, p. 54.

³¹² The Shan term *khwak* is used for the measurement of capacity (usually grains), 4 cups are equal to a *khwak*, 2 *khwaks* are equal to a *pae*.

desserts, rice, curry through the gullet and snuff together in the hollow place of the intestines. When the food is swallowed, they go down, colliding the muggy phlegm and then shoving into the stomach, and soon after, the phlegm gather together again to cover it up. So, losing phlegm (broken phlegm or unhealthy phlegm) means the phlegm does not cover up the rotten foods, which are in dark blue colours and bad smell that runs up to the throat. That is why, those whose phlegm is unhealthy (*semika puggala*), have more up-air than low-air. So their mouths are smell bad like a rotten log.

[Para. 107.] Acaloha refers to the blood that drops from the heart to help the liver, kidneys and intestines cool and fresh. The heart is like a *kuk-jein-khang*.³¹³ The blood is like the drop of water, which is pinky red, dripping and flowing down. If this type of blood dries up and does not drop over the lungs and other places in the stomach, then the fire element will be abnormal; it could create sore, ache, cold, nodding through drowsiness beside the fire, giving back to the fire for warm, and feeling thirsty. With the heat of fire element, transmitting the fame to singe the heart, liver, kidneys and intestines, one then feels the suffering together with the bodily consciousness,³¹⁴ which is outside object, such as cold and freezing, that one needs to put on a blanket or coverlet; because of the heat inside, one has to drink water repeatedly.

[Para. 108.] ‘Synovic fluid’ (*Lasikaa*) means the slippery-oil made of the skin of cotton tree that people use for feeding the nut of the wheel etc. The ‘synovic fluid’ exists between the joints that girded on one another, tweezing and compressing. Ladies and gentlemen! Remember that when the wheels are not applied with slippery-oil, it will not be winding smoothly. ‘Slippery-oil’ means the oil of the black varnish tree, boiling them with the glossy lard [of animals]; it melts when spreading it out in the sun; then it is applied on the nut of the wheel used by a lady for cleaning seeds from cotton so that the wheel will be winding smoothly. The three hundred bones and joints are like a machine, which is fixed with nuts. The ‘synovial fluid’ is like the slippery-oil that makes the handle of a wheel slippery.

[Para. 109.] The aggregate of form of 28 parts is in fact the heap of flesh and bones. It is moving by the force of air, and connected together by muscles, enabling the aggregate to get up and go. It is able to get up and go because the synovial fluid is so well applied between

³¹³ Unfamiliar term, although it is clear that it is simile for the heart.

³¹⁴ In the original text, the Pali term *dukkha-sahagata-kāyaviññāna* is used.

the joints, like the slippery-oil applied on the nut of a wheel. That is what has been said. Oh all the audience, who are listening to the treatise, please take notice. If the synovial fluid between the joints has dried up, men or women will suffer that when they stand up, walk, sit down, lie down, bend or change the posture of their bodies, the joints then clash and sound ‘*krop-krep krop-krep*’.

[Para. 110.] In addition, when one travels on a long journey of one *yojana* or two, his/her legs will be aching and he will feel tired. This is certainly because of the hot air, and there is pain caused by the heat. Actually, it is the inflammation due to abnormality in the bile and the elements (earth, water, fire and air). So, one has to sleep bent up by the fire to warm one’s waist and back. Regarding the condition here, it is more true to the aged and old people who are weak and unhealthy, and have bad eyesight. It is because the synovial fluid between the joints has dried up, with only a little left. The fire element is abnormal and, as a result, the muscles are drawn up and the upper body is bent downward. Such people have less energy and much difficulty in getting up or sitting down. So, here, let the lay devotees, old and young, who are listening to the dhamma, take notice and take it into heart and have *saṃvega* in order to be disengaged with the body that carries the of ‘rebirth-cycle’ (*samsāra-vaṭṭa*), experiencing death repeatedly.

[Para. 111.] What has been said is about warning of the repulsiveness (*patikūlasañña*), the rotten body. So, there is a Pali phrase *kāye kāyānupassi viharati*, which means ‘Look into the bodies of human and spirit beings, who are facing death repeated times, go and come, wandering in the four streams,³¹⁵ as is familiar to all of us.’ With the warning of the repulsiveness, [a meditator] should contemplate the head-hair, body-hair, muscle, sinew, bones etc. and develop his/her mind to get the *saṃvega*. This is in order to dislike the three worldly realms, wandering round and round, die up and die down.³¹⁶ In order to understand [the warning of repulsiveness] clearly and get the emotion of fearing the danger of *samsāra*, please continue to the next section.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Four streams: human world, deity world, animal world and hells. These four worlds could be the four streams (*ogha*) that the author refers to, as one has to reborn in one of the four places unless and until he/she has attained Nibbāna.

³¹⁶ ‘Die up and die down’ would mean ‘sometimes die and reborn in haven, sometimes back to this world and sometimes go down to hell.’

³¹⁷ This encouragement to continue to the next section marks another break in the text.

3.9. The Contemplation of Body: The Section of Reflection on the Elements³¹⁸

[Para. 112.] “*Puna ca paraṃ bhikkhave bhikkhu imameva kāyaṃ yathāthitaṃ yathāpanihitaṃ dhātuso paccavekkhati*” [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother reflects upon this body, however it be placed or disposed, with respect to its fundamentals’].³¹⁹ The Golden Glory [the Buddha] taught us and explained repeatedly regarding the nature of four great elements, namely air, earth, fire and water existing in our bodies. Oh many of you (*bhikkhave* [monks]), who behave and practise well, yearning for the liberation from the nation of poverty and suffering, you pupils of great and small, young and old!³²⁰ A monk, who has contemplated the ‘consideration of repulsiveness’, should next contemplate the four elements. Dear son-like pupils, great and small, young and old, this physical body, which is the rotten one, is to be contemplated with the fire, water, air and earth, which are the four elements.

[Para. 113.] Day in day out, as you walk, you would stop somewhere and stand still. At such moments, suppose you are standing, do not just stand for in vain but hurry up and contemplate the four elements in your body. Sometimes, you may be in any one of the four postures, walking, going, sitting or lying down, here too, do contemplate your body as having air, earth, fire and water, in order that you may gain full awareness at anytime. The bodies of men and women, which are standing or in any posture, are in fact full of hairs, being worldly body, forming the five things, namely, body, sensation, perception, mental condition and consciousness to become ‘you’.

[Para. 114.] There are 20 earth elements, taking the land of this country, for example of earth elements. These earth elements are everywhere in our bodies, combining with the mind inside, enabling one to bend over, get up and walk. The twelve water elements are also full up in the muscles, sinew and bones, and form the wetness of sores, wounds and pus. The four fire elements too make us old sooner, wrinkle sooner, weak of energy sooner, the hairs become grey fast; the eyes no longer see things clearly. All these are because of the force of

³¹⁸ Pali terms *kāyānupassanā* and *dhātumanasikāra* are used in the man text, *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 64.

³¹⁹ English translation in bracket is Rhys Davids 1977, p. 330. It is worth noting that Rhys Davids rendered his translation for the Pali terms ‘*dhātuso*’ as ‘fundamentals,’ although many scholars, including Maurice Walshe, translate it as ‘elements.’ Walshe 1995, p. 338.

³²⁰ Noting the switch between addressing monks, as the Pali canonical text does, but Zao Amat Long’s interpretation or way of addressing is that he makes sure he covers a broader audience, ‘great and small, young and old.’

the fire element. The air element too helps to move, turn, get up, sit down, stand, walk or lie down, at our whim in relation to those four postures.

[Para. 115.] All these elements of water, earth, fire and air are in fact operating in our bodies. Thus, put this into your hearts about the fearing of water, earth, fire and air elements in your bodies, which are in deed the causes [of birth, old age, decease and death]. Do contemplate them respectively. Work hard in order to get clear comprehension and become disenamoured of the body that is full of flesh and covered by skin. Dear good monks, who have obtained *jhāna* or not, the noble sons of young and old! What do these four elements look like? Please take notice and remember by heart:

[Para. 116.] Take a skilled butcher (*goghātaka*), as an example, who is skilful in slaying cows, with his apprentice, the evil slaughterer, who is cruel giant-minded tending to be in hell. They kill a cow and put it down to the ground and then they quickly cut up into many pieces. Having done so, they then separate the flesh into portions, saying: this is the lung; these are the intestines; this is the liver and these are the internal organs, which should be put into a big pot and boiled.

[Para. 117.] Then the flesh is being carried to a big market at a crossroads where people are crowded, so the flesh can be displayed [for selling]. As the flesh has been separated and prepared into portions, people are rushing to that place to buy some portions of the flesh. The sellers/shop keepers try to convince their customers by beating the weighing scales and showing the weight of the measure. They also tell the customers, “This is the [cow’s] feet’s skin; this is the head’s skin, the body, the internal organs and this is the flesh of the breast.” They are also talking about the price, “This type [of beef] should be worth to such and such number of *wats* and that one is worth so many *kyats*.” The seller says, as he prods the legs, “This type [of beef] is cheaper; it is worth only *nueng-mat* (25 pences) or *nueng-mu* (50 penny).” So, he is preparing his beef products for sale and grins tastelessly while packing and measuring it. Having received lots of money from selling the beef, he keeps happily sharpening his knife.

[Para. 118.] After they have sold them out, the butcher and his assistant sit down and look at their profit as to which type of portions are best selling and which one are less. In this

way, oh dear sons, who have either obtained *jhāna* or not, ‘a monk abides contemplating the elements of water, earth, air and fire in his body.’³²¹

[Para. 119.] While standing, review the aggregates in your body. Contemplate each and every four elements and see their nature. Beside the moment of standing, there are other moments of getting up, sitting down, going and sleeping. At such moments too, reflect your mind and contemplate the four elements in your body. Whatever you do in your business, review all the movements of your body. Reflect on the cause of going, getting up or sitting down as they are operating day and night.

[Para. 120.] In this same body, there are full of the four elements. Thus, a monk reflects in his body and says, “Oh, in this body, there are the water element, the earth element, the air element and the fire element.” Do such meditation again and again in order to understand the true nature of the body. Look at the nature of your own body, which is impermanent. Watch the births of the four elements becoming and arising there. Also, look at the bodies of others, which are outside of and far from yours. Watch the bodies, which are full of the four elements, namely of water, earth, fire and air elements, all the bodies being the same.³²²

[Para. 121.] Otherwise, look at both your own body and the others’ bodies. Stay still and develop your mind by contemplating on those bodies again and again to see the four elements that they are the nature of arising, which is the cause of suffering. Also, look at the four elements in those bodies to see that they are subject to be moving, passing away and disappeared. They cannot hold and stay any longer. Contemplate the greed that has led you to be puzzling in the three realms, by renting a house and stay in for a week or so, causing you in longer extent of *sangkhāra*. For more clarification, oh virtuous monks, who wear the yellow robes of nine blocks, more details of the four elements are explained as the following.

[Para. 122.] Dear the audience, remember that head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, undigested food, faeces, brain - all these twenty of the body-

³²¹ The section in quotations is a direct translation from the canonical text, while all the details of the butcher are a substantial expansion on the original.

³²² In this verse, the author has interpreted the Pali words *ajjhata* ‘internal’ as one’s own body and *bahiddha* ‘external’ as the bodies of others, whereas elsewhere it is interpreted as the inside of one’s own body and the external body (and sometimes immediate surrounding) of one’s body. The interpretation of this phrase is one of the divergent developments in commentarial traditions on the *Mahāsatipatṭhānasutta*.

groups are named by the Lord as ‘**the earth element**’ (*pathavīdhātu*) owing to their toughness and hardness.

[Para. 123.] Thus, it is said a phrase in the Pali treatise, “Those body-parts starting from hair up to brain all the twenty body-parts are the kind of earth element in our body, which are mixed up and dirty.”³²³ The bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine – these twelve body-parts, which are sore, wet and liquid in our bodies, are named by the Lord as ‘**the water element**’ (*apodhātu*), being juicy water. Therefore, the teaching of element (*dhātuvinicchaya*) was laid down by the Lord, “Those body-parts starting from the bile and phlegm up to the urine, the wet sores spreading on the body are all liquid water.”³²⁴

[Para. 124.] What about the fire element? There are found kinds of fire element, namely: warming fire element (*santāpana-tejo*), aging fire element (*cīrana-tejo*), burning up fire element (*dāhana-tejo*) and digesting fire element (*pācaka-tejo*).³²⁵ What does ‘warming fire element’ mean? It is the cause of high temperature to become ill and sick. The heat of fire element spread quickly all over the body and the heart operates abnormally, making one yawns from drowsiness. Thus, the truthful words of the Light of Star (the Buddha) were delivered: *ekāhati carena santāpananti santāpanam*.³²⁶ This kind of fire element refers to the nature of perspiring when we are ill. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **ekāhati carena** means the intermitting for a day of fever. **Yaṃ tejo** means the fire. **Santāpanaṃ hoti** means being profusely heated. Therefore, the fire is called “the warming fire element”. Indeed, it is really disgusting of getting the wet of fat on our bodies when the warming fire element is heated up.

[Para. 125.] What does ‘aging fire element’ mean? It is the fire of making the shape of our bodies faded and old quicker, loosing our flesh, becoming thin, raising gas from our stomach and coughing. We will be getting old day by day and getting near to death, just like the rice in a steamer on a tripod heating by fire, which is getting closer to well cooked. Thus, the Lord has delivered the nature of the root-words (*viggaha, vacanattha*): ‘*kesāti santāpanena cīranti cīranaṃ*.’ **Kesāti santāpanena** refers to the grey hairs and the broken

³²³ Amat Long’s Pali quotation: *Kesati matthalungantā, pathavingsāti vīsati*.

³²⁴ Amat Long’s Pali quotation: *Pittāti muttakantā te, jalamsā dvādasīritā*.

³²⁵ For more information on the fire elements, see *Vsm* XI, 36. Ñānamoli offers English terms for the four kinds of the fire element as: ‘whereby, ages, burns up and whereby what is eaten, drunk, chewed and tasted gets completely digested.’ Ñānamoli, 1991, *The Path of Purification*, pp. 345-346.

³²⁶ *Nissaya* translation follows in the next sentence.

teeth; **cīraṇaṃ hoti** means declining. Because of such capability of declining from our age like grey hair and loosing teeth, the fire is called ‘aging fire element’. As word analysis (*viḡgaha*) this is called “dependent determinate compounds” (*tappurisa-samāsa*),³²⁷ a phrase of words describing the flame of fire element.

[Para. 126.] What does ‘burning up fire element’ mean? It is the fire that arises inside of our bodies, causing us pain with a burning sensation. When such heat element blows up, it is like the smoke of fire when one drops fire into the pot of gunpowder during the sixth month, *luean-hok*.³²⁸ Hence, there is a Pali phrase: *abhivegena dahati dahagāṭṭi dahanam*. **Abhivegena** means ‘with great force’; **dahati dahagāṭṭi** means to be blazed. Hence, the fire inside the womb, like the flame of black gunpowder, singes and burns through all the body to the head. Thus, the fire is called ‘burning up fire element’. So, let the wise and noble men-to-be reflect and meditate on the fire.

[Para. 127.] What is ‘digesting fire element’ mean? It is the fire that makes undigested food that we had eaten earlier today becomes digested, melted and separated into two ways. When we swallow whatever food down to stomach through the hole of our necks, it is the fire element that singes and burns the food. Here the context of words in Pali: *asitādadariyaṃ pāceti paripācakaṭṭi asitādipācako*, which is a brief phrase from the commentary, meaning: The fire that digests the undigested food is called ‘digesting fire element’ or *asitādipācaka-tejo* in Pali. *Asita* is one word and *pācaka* is another; when the two words were combined, it is called the fire element of digesting in accord with the treatise of Kaccāyana, the Pali grammar book.

[Para. 128.] Therefore, the lord has said [in Pali], “*yena santāpanaṃ-yena, cīraṇaṃ dahanam tathā, yena-asitādi-pācakoti, caturaṃsānalāthikā*.”³²⁹ Thus, there are four kinds of fire element, namely warming fire element, aging fire element, burning up fire element and digesting fire element; they have the nature of burning human body with four huge flames, like the heat of live coals. Here is the translation in our Shan words. The ‘warming fire element’ (*santāpana tejo*) is the fire element inside the womb, and when its heat spreads, the body becomes abnormal, experiencing hot temperature inside but badly cold outside, so one has to drink water repeatedly. The ‘aging fire element’ (*jīraṇa tejo*) is the fire element that

³²⁷ Maung Tin 1914, *Pali Primer*, p. 56.

³²⁸ *Luean hok* or the sixth month of Shan calendar is the time of rocket festival. Thus the author refers to the fire caused by the gunpowder of the rockets.

³²⁹ Interpreted style of translation follows in the next sentences.

destroys the shape of our body to become old and wrinkle. Thus, this body of parts and parcels declines soon, bends over soon, loses energy, the ears become dull of hearing, the eyes are dim-sighted and teeth are broken. So, gradually and every week, we become older and older. Our cheeks become hollow, ugly and thin. The ‘burning up fire element’ (*dahana tejo*) is the fire element that wildly blazes in our hearts, like soldiers marching; flames grow up and burn. So, all parts and parcels of this body experience the hot temperature owing to the singeing of the fire element. Moreover, because the ‘digesting fire element’ (*pācaka tejo*) is the fire element that heats inside our belly. When we swallow something down to the belly, the food then becomes digested and goes to two ways, namely: urine and excrement. The four fire elements occur inside the belly of our bodies, which are so horribly hot. Therefore, the Lord names them ‘the group of four fire elements’ (*tejodhātu-kutthāsa*), which exists inside our bodies, causing our teeth to break, us to age sooner, bend over sooner, have short-sighted eyes sooner, have grey hair sooner, lose strength sooner and suffer ringing in the ears.

[Para. 129.] What is the air element? It is the element that makes the body move, turning to front and back, with the head soft or hanging down from drowsiness. Here are the six kinds of winds: up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the belly, winds in the bowels, winds that course through all the limbs and in-breath out-breath winds.³³⁰ All six kinds of winds are but blowing in their own ways, making the body bending forward or backward or putting it up right. What does the up-going wind mean? Here is the contact of words in Pali: **Uttham gamati gacchatīti utthaṅgamā**. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Uttham** means up right or above. **Gamati gacchati** means to go. Thus, when combining these words altogether, it refers to ‘the air that has ability to go up right or above’ that is called up-going winds. That is how the lord (Buddha) narrates the nature of air according to the treatise. Here is our Shan explanation of the contact of words for the Pali term *utthaṅgama*, which means one has convulsions or pleurisy through the cylinders inside the body. Thus, *utthaṅgama-vātā* is the up going winds crossing between the flesh and the bones and then going up right.

[Para. 130.] What does down-going wind mean? It is the air that goes from head down to the body. The root of ‘going downward’ (*adhogama*) in grammatical term refers to the ‘element of going’ (*gamu-dhātu*) with the ‘prefix of downward or under’ (*Adho sadḍūpapata*). Thus, it is the air of rolling downward. Here is the Pali phrase for the contact

³³⁰ Vsm XI, 37.

of words for the term: *Adhobhāgaṃ gamati gacchatīti adhogamā*. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **Yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Adhobhāgaṃ** means the lower part of the body. **Gamati** means the capability of going. Thus, the wind that possesses the capability of going below or downward is called ‘the down-going wind’ (*adhogama-vātā*). This is how the Burmese commentarial gloss on the canonical text’s Pali *nissaya* describes the down-going wind spreading in our bodies.

[Para. 131.] What does ‘wind in the belly’ mean? It talks about the air that sometimes cause you to suffer from flatulence in the stomach. The Pali term for this kind of air is called *gucchitha-vātā*. The term *gucchitha* has its root at the ‘element of existing’ with the prefix term ‘belly’ (*Gucchi-saddūpapada thā-dhātu*),³³¹ **gucchi** is one word and **thā** is another word – altogether it describes the condition of the air inside the belly, outside the intestines cramming and pushing all over the belly. Thus, here is the contact of words in Pali: *gucchite gucchisamim gucchimhi thāti titthati patitthitiiti gucchitthā*. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **Yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Gucchite gucchisamim gucchimhi** means inside the belly, outside the intestines. **Thāti titthati patitthati** means to exist. Thus, such air is called ‘the wind in the belly’ (*gucchitha-vātā*). This is how the treatise explains about the air running along the intestines.

[Para. 132.] What does the wind in the bowels mean? It is the air inside the small and large intestines, pushing and cramming in there like full bags. The Pali term for this kind of air is called *gotthāseya-vātā*. *Gotthā* is one word and *seya* is another, thus when combining them together, it means the winds that are rumbling in the intestines. So, contemplate on them (the rumbling air in the intestines to see the nature of arising and disappearing). Here is the Pali phrase for the contexts of words as instructed by Mahākaccāyana, *the grammarian*: *Gotthāse gotthāsamhi gotthāsamim seyyati paseyyati anuseyyatīti gottāseyyā*. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **Yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Gotthāse gotthāsamhi gotthāsamim** means in the intestines. **Seyyati paseyyati anuseyyati** means to be present or exist. Therefore, such air is called *gotthāseya-vātā* as explained by Pali system of word analysis in the grammatical book that we should learn to know.

[Para. 133.] What does the winds that course through all the limbs mean? It is the air that makes our limbs such as arms and legs moving; it takes us to sleeping, leaning, bending in our arms and legs; it makes us quick and able to move and turn around. The separated

³³¹ Pali grammatical analysis made by Amat Long.

words are *anga*, *maṅga*, *anu* and *sāri* – and with *sara-dhātu*, it could make parts of the body moving, turning around, bending in, stretching, lifting, getting up, sitting down, stepping, going, reaching here and there so the body could be wandering to different directions, but all these are because of the air. The Pali term for this kind of air is called *aṅgamaṅgānusariya-vātā* and here is the Pali phrase for the contacts of the term: *aṅgamaṅge aṅgamaṅgaṃhi aṅgamaṅgsamiṃ anuggamena sarati pavattatīti aṅgamaṅgānusārī*. Here is a *nissaya* translation: **Yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Aṅgamaṅge aṅgamaṅgaṃhi aṅgamaṅgsamiṃ** means in all the small and large parts of the body. **Anuggamena** means through movement such as bending, stretching etc. being in process. **Sarati pavattati** means the process of happening. Thus, such air is called *aṅgamaṅgānusārī*. This is how the Pali system of the contact of words describes the nature of the air that makes our hands and feet moving, stretching out, carrying something on both arms, chewing something, and so on.

[Para. 134.] What does in-breath out-breath wind mean? It is the wind that we breathe in and out with a strong panting effort through the tube of the neck like a blowing of bellows. The Pali term for this kind of wind is called in-breath out-breath wind, *assāsapassāsa-vātā*. *Assāsa* is one word and *passāsa* is another; the root of word [in Pali] is *apa-saddūpapada sād dhātu*³³² in the sense of breathing in and out that sounds ‘paw paw’ in the tube of the neck (throat). Here the contact of words for the term: *assasati assasanto tato passaasatīti assāsapassāsā*. Here is the *nissaya* translation: **Yaṃ vātā** means the air. **Assasati** means the ability of going out. **Assasanto** means having gone out. **Passasati** means the ability of coming in. **Tato** means from that which it has been in. **Assasati** means the ability of going out again. Thus, such kind of air is called *assāsapassāsa* and let the young and old know about the nature of breathing in and breathing out.

[Para. 135.] All these six kinds of the air element blowing through the tube inside the body are in fact like a string (rope). Thus, this body is like a string-puppet, the mind is like a person controlling the string behind the puppet and the air is like the string connected to the puppet. A puppet performance such as dancing and turning around can be made only by a string and a person behind it. In the same way, the mind has to depend on the air, which is cramming inside of our body. These six kinds of air element are operating inside the body-house. There is a Pali verse on the air element: *Uddhadhogamagucchitthā*,

³³² Verbal root and grammatical analysis.

*gotthāsayaṅgasārica, assāotica viññeyyā, chalaṃsā vāyunissitā.*³³³ Remember this, dear audience, who are looking around, with eyesight, and fear the evil consequences of greed.

[Para. 136.] Uddhadhogamagucchitthā means the upward air, the downward air and the air cramming in the stomach as explained by the lord. So, watch them in order to see them clearly. **Gotthāsayaṅgasārica** means the air in the small and large intestines and the air operating between small and large parts of the body. **Assāotica** means the breathing in and out with strong panting effort. Thus, what have been said are the scary things inside the bodies of men and women, being six kinds altogether. Let the wise and all the audience reflect and see the image of the body being depended on the air element. Here the discussion on the section of reflection on the four elements (*catudhātu-manasikāra*) is completed. They should be kept in heart that they are meditation objects. The discussion has been too long and let me stop the sermon here for a while and let it be so! *sādhu... sādhu... sādhu...*³³⁴

[Para. 137.] Next, the explanation will be given for the people in the nine states of Shan princes. You among the audience here, for those do not know, in order to know, and for those are not clear, in order to become clear, listen to the Dhamma again. As the earlier flowers of the *dhamma* have fallen off the tree, now the new blooms sprout out with pleasant odor and sweet-smelling.³³⁵ In order to become free from the suffering of *saṃsāra*, in the form of the 1,500 defilements, let the wise men and the wise women work hard on fulfilling the perfection of giving, morality and mental development, and then try to get out of evil consequences and troubles.

[Para. 138.] [Here comes a Pali phrase:] *Ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati*, which means look at one's own body and the bodies of others, being dazzled and missing a great chance to reach the 16 islands, waiting to be reborn as boys and girls and then young and old again. [And another phrase:] *Samudayavayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmim viharati*, which means that the four elements are subject to change, and so they are impermanent, *anicca*. Because of impermanence, they are the cause of suffering, *dukkha*. Because of suffering, they become selfless, *anatta*. One cannot depend on oneself, as he/she has to be reborn; both body and mind has to suffer, becoming a red baby crying noisily, lying

³³³ The *nissaya* translation follows in the next paragraph.

³³⁴ Amat Long has given an unusual signal here for interval break, probably with a thought that the audience needs a break after long commentaries on the 32 parts of the body.

³³⁵ Amat Long compares the sections of his work with the process of blooming flowers.

on the floor, being carried in a blanket; being conceived in the womb again and again to become 'you' and 'others.'

[Para. 139.] This conditioned body, *kāya-saṅkhāra*, in fact consists of the elements of earth, water, fire and air, which are depending upon one another. The analysis of *satipaṭṭhāna* is that there is no 'I', no 'other', no 'being', no 'person', no 'woman', no 'man'. They are just the combination of air, earth, fire and water, which are the four elements. It is like a skilled butcher and his apprentice, killing a mighty ox.

[Para. 140.] When the butcher and his apprentice were feeding the ox, the ox looks happy making a roaring sound. By such time, those people, who see the ox with energetic and roaring loudly looking for a fight with other oxen, would say 'the ox! the ox!' When the butcher and his apprentice had killed the ox or having hit and knocked the ox down on the earth face and not died yet, people still would called it 'the ox.' However, after the ox was completely killed and cut it into pieces, the flesh is then separated into different portions such as the breast, the hip, and the legs and so on.

[Para. 141.] This is the intestine; this is the lung; this is the liver – all of which are connected with internal organs, and they are the flesh of the ox. Both the butcher and his apprentice hold a sharp knife each and slice the flesh and then put them into many portions. By such time, the mighty ox is not called 'the ox' anymore. People do not call it 'the mighty ox' anymore. They just look at the flesh portions and call them 'the shank-flesh', 'the breast-flesh', 'the leg-flesh', 'the head-skin', 'the internal organs' - which are dispersed here and there. The notion of the previous name is lost and the new name 'the dead ox' takes its place. The skull, the feet-bones, the ribs and the leg-bones, which are dispersed here and there, become the portions for crows, dogs and vultures to pull out and split; it is where the flies assemble and halloo.

[Para. 142.] In the same way, regarding the aggregates of form, men and women, when they have not reflected on the four elements, they claim them to be 'my body', 'my husband', 'my wife', 'my children', 'my niece and nephew', 'my man', 'my woman', 'my lady', 'my gentleman' or such and such terms, counting and attaching to their belongings everyday, boasting and talking too much. However, when they reflect on the elements of air, earth, fire and water being assembled in the human bodies, they will notice that there is no 'body', no 'being', no 'person', no 'I', no 'others', no 'woman', no 'man', no 'my husband', no 'my wife', no 'my children', no 'my nephew' – all are but the elements of earth, water, fire and

water, of which in combination of four is called “primary matter” (*bhūta-rūpa*); so having become tied up together, they become a bundle. They are all subject to vanish and disappear.

3.10. The Contemplation of the Body: Section of the Nine Charnel-field Observations, The First Charnel-field³³⁶

[Para. 143.] Remember, dear audience listening to the dhamma, the collection of stanzas, provided that you have completed the four elements method, next analyse the dhamma on the nine cemeteries. What is the cemetery about? It is talking about a cemetery where there is a scary corpse, which smells dreadful, which is rotten, full of worms and is disintegrating into the earth. It literally means ‘cemetery’; according to the discourse on the foundation of mindfulness, it is called *sivathika* in Pali; in the commentaries, it is called *susanna*; Tai people call it *pa za* or *pa heo*; and the Burmans call it *sang khaeng*.³³⁷ For this particular section, it can be called nine places of cemetery (*navasivathika* or *navasusanna*). Here, the first cemetery is one; the second cemetery is one; the third cemetery is one; the fourth cemetery is one; the fifth cemetery is one; the sixth cemetery is one; the seventh cemetery is one; the eighth cemetery is one; the ninth cemetery is one – altogether there are nine types of cemeteries where there are graves for disposing of the corpses of human beings.

[Para. 144.] *Puna ca param, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ ekāhamataṃ vā dvīhamataṃ vā tīhamataṃ vā uddhumātaṃ vinīlakaṃ vipubbakajātaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ ti. Iti ajjhataṃ vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, ajjhatabhiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassī viharati, samudayadhammānupassī vā kāyasmīṃ viharati, vāyadhammānupassī vā kāyasmīṃ viharati, samudayavayadhammā-nupassī vā kāyasmīṃ viharati.* [And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field, died for one, two, or three days, swollen, turning black and blue, and decomposed, applies that perception to this very body (of his own), reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of even such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate). So does he, as to the body, continue to consider the body, either

³³⁶ Pali terms used in the original text: *Kāyānupassanā*, *Navasivathika-pabba*, *Paṭṭhama-sivathika*. Rhys Davids rendered his translation for ‘*sivathika*’ as ‘charnel-field’, while some other scholars such as Maurice Walshe translate it as ‘charnel-ground’ ‘meaning a place where dead bodies are discarded and so can be used by the meditator to observe the decomposition of bodies. Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 331; Walshe 1995, p. 338.

³³⁷ Actually *sang khaeng* is an adopted Burmese loanword. The actual Burmese term for cemetery is ‘thin-gaing’.

internally or externally, or both internally and externally. He keeps on considering how the body is something that comes to be, or again he keeps on considering how the body is something that passes away; or again he keeps considering the coming to be with the passing away]³³⁸ – these are but the Māgadhian Pali (*Pali Māgadha*)³³⁹ words which were taught by the Lord. The lord delivered the message in pure Māgadhian Pali without its *nissaya*. It is about the foundation of mindfulness on the contemplation of the body, here the section of cemetery, where different kinds of cemetery are explained.

[**Para. 145.**] ‘**And moreover, bhikkhus**’ (*Puna caparaṃ bhikkhave*) means dear sons, who aims for freedom and the five levels of *jhāna*, here is more information. ‘**A brother just as if he had seen the body**’ (*bhikkhu sarīraṃ passeyya*) means whoever a monk has seen the putrid corpse, rotten body with bad smell in front of him. ‘**Abandoned**’ (*Chaḍḍitaṃ*) means the dead body that was carried and thrown away at a cemetery and gradually the body becomes bloated and bad smell. So, the cemetery is where there is such a dead body with opened mouth and teeth closed in a grin, messy hairs and offensive smell. ‘**The body**’ (*sarīraṃ*) means having seen the putrid corpse, the rotten body being swollen and bloated.

[**Para. 146.**] ‘**Either one day**’ (*ekāhamataṃ vā*) means the dead body, which is a day passed, has its green sinews come up and it was carried away by people. ‘**Or two days**’ (*dvīhamataṃ vā*) means after two days passed, the dead body becomes swollen and bloated and look very different. ‘**Or three days**’ (*tīhamataṃ vā*) means as three days passed the dead body will be rotten, putrid and bloating with gas inside; the sinews swell up and become sultry. ‘**Swollen**’ (*uddhumātakaṃ*) means the swollen and bloated corpse, which is completely changed and scary. ‘**Turning black and blue**’ (*vinīlakaṃ*) means the corpse has changed into white, yellow, blue and mixed colours and the face has changed its shape and colour. ‘**Decomposed**’ (*vipubbakajātaṃ*) means the corpse has changed into the state of putrid, which is full of liquid, pus and dripping water.

[**Para. 147.**] ‘**The body**’ (*sarīraṃ*) means the offensive smell, rotten body, which is black, brown and bruise, and it becomes very soft and yielding. It is only a blank corpse left without breathing. ‘**That brother**’ (*so bhikkhu*) means the monk, who has seen and watched

³³⁸ Quotation from the *Pali* in Pali. Translation in the brackets is my addition taken from Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 331.

³³⁹ Here, the use of ‘Pali’ as a language and ‘Māgadha’ as a nation and/or country that used the language, and for more information on the spread of the term Palibhāsa to refer to the language alongside Māgadhi, see Crosby 2003. ‘The Origin of the Language Name Pali in Medieval Theravada Literature’, *Journal of Buddhist Studies*, Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka, Vol.2, Dec 2003: 70-116.

a corpse mentioned above, takes notice and compare it with his own body and fears of rebirth as human and god, and will inevitably die in every life. He reflects on his body like this: “In the same way of that corpse, this body of mine, which can, by the force of air element, stand, lean, sleep, walk and go, will one day be rotten.”

[Para. 148.] **‘Is even so constituted’** (*evaṃdhammo*) means oh, I will be rotten and bloated; I will die and loose my life and body. **‘Is of such a nature’** (*evaṃbhāvī*) means my body will be like this one day, though we never know when the time comes, may be at night or in the morning, sooner or later. **‘Has not got beyond that (fate)’** (*evaṃ anatīto*) means no matter how much you fear of the death, you cannot get rid of it but must face it. **‘Applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting’** (*iti imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati*) means I will also be like this; I will be rotten with offensive smell like this; I will be putrid and bloated like this – thus how one should develop his mind by contemplating the corpse and comparing it with his body, saying: “Oh, my body too will one day be perished.”

[Para. 149.] **‘So either internally’** (*iti ajjhattaṃ vā*) means regarding this situation, a monk or whoever should develop his/her mind by reflecting his/her own body. **‘As to the body, [so does he] consider the body’** (*kāye kāyānupassī viharati*) means he should contemplate the body with mindfulness meditation and work hard in order to be frightened and discontented with the body. **‘Or externally’** (*bahiddhā vā*) means he should also look at people around and think of your own body. **‘As to the body, [so does he] consider the body’** (*kāye kāyānupassī viharati*) means he should reflect on the presence of mindfulness on the body and say, ‘oh those people too will be like this; they will be putrid and bloated like this too’. He should do such contemplation again and again for his/her mental development.

[Para. 150.] **‘Or both internally and externally’** (*Ajjhattabahiddhā vā*) means once and again, look at both others’ bodies and the body of yourself in order to get disenchanted with the suffering of samsara. **‘As to the body, [so does he] consider the body’** (*kāye kāyānupassī viharati*) means with the presence of mindfulness, think and say: ‘Oh, I and others too will be like this; we all will be rotten with offensive smell like this too; we all will be putrid and bloated like this too.’ – thus reflect your mind again and again in order to get *saṃvega* (‘spiritual shock’).

[Para. 151.] **‘Something that comes to be’** (*samudayadhammānupassī vā*) means again, look at the aggregate of form consisting of 28 kinds, there are ears, eyes, legs, waist,

head – all the body of one fathom came into being by setting a soul of pregnancy. **‘Keeps considering how the body is’** (*kāyasmīṃ viharati*) means contemplating on the body with the presence of mindfulness and reflect in mind that this physical body, the rotten one, consisting of 28 kinds, has the nature of beginning to be Chinese, Burman, Taung-su, Yon, Lawa, Palaung, Tai, Jawk, Lem and Indian due to greed.³⁴⁰ **‘Something that passes away’** (*vayadhammānupassī vā*) means the next thing to be contemplating is the body of form, which is subject to impermanence, change, breaking into pieces and vanishing.

[Para. 152.] So, one should reflect and says: ‘oh the body of form, this rotten body consisting of 28 kinds, is subject to breaking and vanishing; since it has formed, it shall be broken and departed from one another; it shall die with grief and no one can get rid of it.’ **‘The coming to be with the passing away’** (*samudayavayadhammānupassī vā*) means the next thing to be contemplating is the mixture of arising and disappearing. So, one should reflect and says: oh the body of form, this rotten body consisting of 28 kinds, is subject to becoming and disappearing, forming and vanishing, of one life and another by generations, competing with many worlds with many spans of life for so long; die and reborn.

[Para. 153.] Remember, dear the audience, what have been said is about the first cemetery, orderly explaining the first section of various cemeteries. When you have seen a dead body, of passing two or three days, with offensive smell, changing into the condition of swollen, blue and festering, regarding his own body, it is called a type of cemetery. By seeing such others (corpses), take them to compare our own bodies. The effect of observation with the presence of mindfulness will be the development of knowledge, wisdom and mindfulness and the detachment of lust, deceit and wrong view; our minds will be purified and cultured. Having given the explanation of the first charnel-field (*paṭṭhama-sivathinka*), the next Dhamma section follows for description of the second cemetery.

The Second Charnel-field

[Para. 154.] *Puna ca param, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ kākehi vā khajjamānaṃ kulalehi vā khajjamānaṃ gijjhehi vā khajjamānaṃ kaṅkehi vā khajjamānaṃ sunakhehi vā khajjamānaṃ byagghehi vā*

³⁴⁰ The statement of people from different ethnicity listed by Amat Long here is mainly for his poetic rhyming but it also indicates the awareness of ethnicity and multicultural of people who share a common thing about the true nature of their bodies which have the same origin and are subject to change and vanishing. Amat Long 1968, p. 86.

khajjamānaṃ dīpīhi vā khajjamānaṃ siṅgālehi vā khajjamānaṃ vividhehi vā pāṇakajātehi khajjamānaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanattīto’ ti. [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field pecked by crows, ravens, or vultures, gnawn by dogs or jackals or by various small creatures, applies that perception to this very body (of his own), refelecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]³⁴¹ – thus the Glory of Gold delivered this teaching to his disciples to prepare them to see the second cemetery clearly.

[Para. 155.] Here is the Tai translation. **‘Bhikkhus/monks’** (*Bhikkhave*) means oh dear disciples of the Buddha, great and small, after explaining the first section of *sīvathinka*, there is another one, the second section, which is to be explained. Dear monks, wherever you come across a cemetery, you will find dead bodies, which were thrown away by people in the charnel ground. There is a mass of crows biting the person who lost his breath and aggregates. In the middle of the wood [of the cemetery], many groups of crows are croaking noisily, biting and pulling the flesh off the dead body.

[Para. 156.] Hawks (*kulāla*) are making a feast out there with great noise, pecking the dead body by pulling off the flesh through the offensive smell. Also, there are big vultures, scary looking and cruel in manner with red crests, sucking on the stomach of the dead body, while some pecking and some pulling, with their heads moving around in a quick and busy manner. A group of birds is making a festival of entertaining special guests with great noise biting, dragging and pecking the flesh of the dead body.

[Para. 157.] The horrifying corpse, after many days dead, becomes swollen and bloated. The putrid body with offensive smell, which was carried away to the forest, was left at the foot of the hill. Sometimes, the dead body was gnawed by dogs; the feet, the body, the head, the breast, etc are being gnawed and eaten by the dogs; also the internal organs are being torn off and eaten by the dogs. Sometimes, the dead body is being carried away by a male tiger of long tail, the master of the jungle, who then eats up the flesh of the breast, the hip and internal organs.

[Para. 158.] Sometimes, jackals (*dīpi*) drag the dead body away and eat the feet, the hands, the body, the eyes and the waist; the head has been detached from the body as if it was cut off and cut up by people. Sometimes, the dead body is found being gnawed, dragged and

³⁴¹ Translation given in bracket is from Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, pp.331-332.

eaten by foxes (*siṅgāla*) with great noise; the foxes are licking and biting the bones and other parts of the body. In addition, there are various kinds of creatures, such as ant, white-ant, flies and worms, assembled on the dead body.

[Para. 159.] Dear monks, you many, who aim for the top city, the peaceful country [Nirvana], a monk who has seen such dead putrid body in a charnel ground being bit and eaten by dogs and vultures, he compares it to his own body and thinks: ‘Oh, this my present body, formed of five aggregates, is of the same nature. I will inevitably become like that. I will become meal for hawks and vultures like that. Thus, one should reflect upon his own body with the presence of mindfulness in order to understand the true nature of the body.’

[Para. 160.] The Pali terms ‘internal’, ‘external’ and ‘both internal and external’ have exactly the same meaning as explained earlier. Let one reflect on his/her own body and says: ‘Oh I will also be the same nature like that; other people also will be the same nature like that; both I and other people will be the same like that; I will become the meal/food for hawks and vultures like that; other people also will become food for hawks and vultures like that; both I and others will be food for hawks and vulture like that; it is inescapable to be like that; finally all will be meal for ants, white-ants and worms as we will be thrown away in the middle of the jungle or will be the excrement of tigers or jackals.’ Oh, audience, listen carefully! All what have said is the second charnel-field (*dutiya-sivathika*) where hawks and other creatures are assembling. Seeing other people at other places should be taken to compare with one’s own body in order to get weary of the mire of suffering (*saṃsāra*) leading us dazzle going up and down in the realm of three streams.³⁴²

The Third Charnel-field

[Para. 161.] *Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ aṭṭhikasaṅkhalikaṃ samaṃsalohitaṃ ṇhārusambandhaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ ti* [And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field [reduced to] a chain of bones hanging together by tendon, with flesh and blood yet about it, or reduced to bare bones, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting:

³⁴² The three realms are: the world of sensual pleasure (*kāma-loka*), the world of form (*rūpa-loka*) and the world of formless (*arūpa-loka*).

‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]³⁴³ – thus how the Dhamma is as delivered by the Lord. After completing the explanation of the second cemetery, again, monks, there is the third one to be continuing the discussion on cemetery so the disciple will understand it clearly.

[**Para. 162.**] Here is the Tai *nissaya* translation. Dear monks, young and old disciples! Say when one goes and finds a charnel-ground, he would see a dead body which was carried off and thrown away by people. ‘**With flesh and blood**’ (*Samamsalohitam*) means the corpse has no hairs nor skin but only flesh and bones, which are full of maggots and the smell of putrefication that makes one retch or vomit. ‘**A bundle of sinews**’ (*nhārusambandham*) means the thousand lines of sinews joining and connecting from one another all over the body. ‘**A chain of bones hanging together by tendons**’ (*Aṭṭhikasāṅkhalikam*) means the tendons, which are connected with the skeleton with some flesh and sinews.

[**Para. 163.**] The flesh, blood, sinews - all are attached to the skeleton, held together by tendons, being rotten and melting and dropping rotten liquid. If any monk or layman sees such corpse in front of his eyes, he should reflect on his own body and say: oh this very body of mine has flesh, blood, bones, sinews bound together like a bundle of twigs. He should also compare the corpse with his own body and say: oh I am of same nature like that; my body also has such flesh, blood, bones, and sinews connected one to another like that; my body too is inescapable to be like that. Sooner or later, the king of death will defeat me; such time will come but we never know exactly when.

[**Para. 164.**] This rotten body, consisting of the five aggregates, is like an old house, composed by short posts, long posts, thatch and so on. Indeed, it is not worth the appellation ‘my body’, it is in fact the body of flesh, bones, blood and sinews, connecting one to another like the strings binding around the *gaung-khum* [‘round drum’]. Oh dear sons, what I have explained is the third charnel-field (*tatiya-sivathika*), the third cemetery. By seeing others dead, one should take as them as objects for meditation and reflect on sorrow and suffering.

The Fourth Charnel-field

[**Para. 165.**] *Puna caparam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarāram sivathikāya chadditam aṭṭhikasāṅkhalikam nimaṃsalohitamakkhitam nhārusambandham. So*

³⁴³ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 332.

imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ ti [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field [reduced to] a chain of bones hanging together by tendon, stripped of flesh but yet spotted with blood; or cleaned of both flesh and blood; reduced to bare bones, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]’³⁴⁴ – thus the next section of the *Dhamma* as revealed by the Lord. Having completed the third section of sivathika, the third cemetery, now is the time for the fourth charnel-ground, which ought to be noticed and remembered.

[**Para. 166.**] Dear noble sons, do reflect on the worldly things and get weary of them. Whenever you go and see or get close to a cemetery, think of the dead body thrown in the charnel ground. ‘**Stripped of flesh but yet spotted with blood** (*Nimaṃsalohitamakkhitam*) means there is no any flesh left but only the blood-smearred skeleton and some sinews attached to the bones. The bones of feet, hands, legs, waist and breast joining each other.

[**Para. 167.**] The horrible dead body has only its skeletons left. If a monk or anybody goes and sees such skeleton, he/she should compare it with his/her own body and say: ‘Oh this is the skeletons, the group of bones; my body will be of the same nature like this; my body also will one day have left only skeletons like this and will be food for ants and other insects.’

[**Para. 168.**] Remember, oh dear monks, who wear the thick robes of seven lines, six points and five blocks and observe the precepts,³⁴⁵ when seeing other people, do compare them with your own body, your own bones, flesh, blood and sinews, contemplating them time and again in order to develop and culture your mind. What has been said is the fourth cemetery, the quiet jungle. Look at the form of other bodies and the bodies of our own, which are mixed with fire, water, air and earth, being food for worms, insects and all kinds of creatures.

The Fifth Charnel-field

[**Para. 169.**] *Puna ca paraṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ atthikasāṅkhalikaṃ apagatamaṃsalohitaṃ ṇhārusambandhaṃ. So*

³⁴⁴ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 332.

³⁴⁵ The author refers these numbers to the style of monk’s robe. Also see *MSP*, paragraphs 51 and 168, and footnote on Section of Breathing.

imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ ti [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field [reduced to] a chain of bones hanging together by tendons, or cleaned of both flesh and blood; or reduced to bare bones, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]’³⁴⁶ - thus is the wording of sacred canonical text about the nature of the fifth cemetery. Oh monks, again, when you have finished the fourth cemetery, then the account of fifth cemetery commences.

[**Para. 170.**] Dear noble sons, here is the dhamma on the cemetery as a thatched grove, where dead bodies were thrown away. The corpse of the deceased has only sinews and bones left. ‘**Cleaned of both flesh and blood**’ (*apagatamaṃsalohitaṃ*) means the flesh was finished; the blood was dried up; the empty body of aggregates has been under the wet rain and hot sunlight without flesh and blood. ‘**A chain of bones hanging together by tendons**’ (*aṭṭhikasāṅkhalikaṃ*) means a heap or assemblage of bones. ‘**A bunch of sinews**’ (*ñhārusambandhaṃ*) means no flesh, no blood; all were dried up and only the bones and the sinews were binding the bones together, facing the wet of rain and the hot of sunlight.

[**Para. 171.**] When a monk goes across a cemetery and sees such dead body, do contemplate it in order to get the emotion of *saṃvega*. A monk, who sees other bodies, should compare them with his own body, his own bones and sinews time and again in order to get disenchanted with *saṃsāra*. ‘Oh, my body here now is in fact not mine to control and subject to be ruined soon.

[**Para. 172.**] Oh, my body has such of nature like that; my body shall be left with only bones and sinews like that; my body shall also be inescapably like that. Thus, one should take it as an object of meditation to develop one’s mind in order to get disenchanted with compounded things *saṅkhāra*. Reflect on one’s own body and the bodies of others puzzling in **Wa-go-phung** [‘the nine states of zero’].³⁴⁷ What has been explained here is the fifth charnel-field, as taught by the Lord, to be memorized and remembered by his pupils.

³⁴⁶ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 332.

³⁴⁷ Possibly Amat Long refers to the hell as the place of having nothing (zero) but suffering.

The Sixth Charnel-field

[Para. 173.] *Puna ca paraṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarāraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ aṭṭhikāni apagatasambandhāni disā vidisā vikkhittāni, aññena hatthaṭṭhikaṃ aññena pādaṭṭhikaṃ aññena goppakaṭṭhikaṃ aññena jaṅghaṭṭhikaṃ aññena ūruṭṭhikaṃ aññena kaṭiṭṭhikaṃ aññena phāsukaṭṭhikaṃ aññena piṭṭhiṭṭhikaṃ aññena khandhaṭṭhikaṃ aññena gīvaṭṭhikaṃ aññena hanukaṭṭhikaṃ aññena dantaṭṭhikaṃ aññena sīsakaṭṭhikaṃ. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanattito’ ti [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field reduced to bare bones, loosed from tendons, scattered here and there, so that the bones of a hand lie in one direction, in another the bones of a foot, in another those of a leg, in another a thigh bone, in another the pelvis, in another the spinal vertebrae, in another the skull, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]’³⁴⁸ – thus is canonical text in Māgadhī as delivered by the noble mouth of the Golden Glory.*

[Para. 174.] Dear pupils, you many sitting around me! Again, having explained the fifth cemetery, there is another one, the sixth charnel-ground. The decomposed body gradually decays further because of the weather, wet rain and hot sunlight. The sinews disintegrate and break into pieces; there is no more flesh and the blood is totally dried up and finished; all in all, there are only the bones left. ‘**Scattered here and there**’ (*Disā vidisā vikkhittāni*) means the skeletons were scattered to the four directions and the eight directions [all directions].

[Para. 175.] ‘**The bones of a hand lie in one direction**’ (*aññena hatthaṭṭhikaṃ*) means the sixty-four splits of hand-bones were separated from one another scattering here and there in the middle of the field or bounded into a bush. ‘**In another direction the bones of a foot**’ (*aññena pādaṭṭhikaṃ*) means the sixty-four splits of foot-bones, too, are scattering all over the tangled grasses in the cemetery. ‘**In another the pelvis**’ (*aññena goppakaṭṭhikaṃ*) means when looking around, a protuberant bone of the ankle is found, being food for insects, covered with earth and destroyed by white ants. ‘**In another the spinal vertebrae**’ (*aññena jaṅghaṭṭhikaṃ*) means the shin bones, which are on both sides of the lower legs, were split out from one another and scattered in the cemetery. ‘**In another a thigh bone**’ (*aññena*

³⁴⁸ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 332.

ūruṭṭhikaṃ) means at one place, two bones of upper legs were found, separated from one another, and the hipbone was also split away.

[Para. 176.] ‘**In another a rib bone**’ (*aññena phāsukaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, a rib bone can be seen in the midst of the wood in the quiet cemetery. ‘**In another a waist bone**’ (*aññena kaṭṭhikaṃ*) means when looking around at one point a waist bone is seen. ‘**In another the back bones**’ (*aññena piṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, the broken backbones were found scattering here and there. ‘**In another the joins and shoulder-bones**’ (*aññena khandhaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, the joints and shoulder-bones are seen. ‘**In another a collarbone**’ (*aññena gīvaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, collarbone, which is the joint connecting the neck with the lower jawbone, is seen. All the said parts of the skeleton have indeed dropped and dispersed north and south (all) directions lying between the grasses.

[Para. 177.] ‘**In another jawbone**’ (*aññena hanukaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, two white lower jawbones are seen. ‘**In another the tooth bones**’ (*aññena dantaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, the tooth bones, which are called by the Marns (Burmans)³⁴⁹ as ‘Thwa-yo,’ are seen splitting up from one another, scattering over all directions, the south and to the north, to the east and to the west. Indeed they are scary things. ‘**In another the skull**’ (*aññena sīsakaṭṭhikaṃ*) means at one point, a skull is seen rolling over there. Thus, if any of you monks go and see or find such things, do reflect on your own body. The monk, who sees other bodies, should regard them as if his own aggregates and contemplate it again and again.

[Para. 178.] Oh this body of mine, here and now, which is the body of five aggregates of depending on the four elements, is of the nature like that; my body also will be finally left with bones scattering and bounding here and there like that; my body, too, will inescapably become like that. Thus one should take it as a meditation object in order to develop the knowledge of reflection and contemplation. One should reflect on one’s own body and the bodies of others to realize that the lineage of humans and gods are all worldly phenomena. All that I described is the sixth charnel-field (*saṭṭhama-sivathika*), which is the cemetery of bones as explained in the sacred text of the Lord. Soon then another sacred passage of the sacred text will follow in the right order.

³⁴⁹ ‘Man’ (pronounced as ‘marn’) is a Shan term for the Burman; and related terms are ‘kwam man’ Burmese language, and ‘mueang man’ Burma/Myanmar (country).

The Seventh Charnel-field

[Para. 179.] *Puna ca paraṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ aṭṭhikāni setāni saṅkhavaṇṇapaṭibhāgāni. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanātīto’ ti* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field [reduced to] white bones the colour of a sea-shell, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’] ³⁵⁰ – thus the sacred text as delivered by the Golden Glory Jewelry Star so that [his followers] will understand clearly. Oh dear pupils, you many, who follow the rule of vinaya and practice *dhutanga*! Again, having explained the sixth cemetery, there is another one, the seventh charnel-ground; the blossom crest has bloomed again explaining the next level [of the corpse].

[Para. 180.] When any of you, son-like pupils, reflect on the cemetery, there the skeletons can be found in the middle of the field, such as skull, ear-bones, the bones of the sockets of the eyes, the bone of the nose, the bones of the legs, together with the bones of feet, the bones of hands, collarbone and the waist-bone. They were bounded to west, north and south, separated from one to the others, some pieces are found here and some are there. The rib-bones alone, the hand skeletons alone, the skull alone lying down there facing the wet rain; all are but in white (*setāni*) like dead sea-shells. So, if any monk or any person has seen such bones, do not look at them merely but reflect on one’s own body and make them the basis for meditation.

[Para. 181.] Oh, the body of mine, here now, is indeed similar to the bones in white like bony shells. My body too is of nature like that; my body will also end up as only bones being dispersed here and there like that; also that my body will become like that is inescapable. Thus, one should take such a sight as a meditation object as prescribed by the Emerald Star (Buddha). All that I have described is the seventh charnel-ground as taught by the Lord of old. So, let the audience, the listeners to this poetry, who make an effort to do good deeds, remember and take this explanation to heart.

³⁵⁰ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 333.

The Eighth Charnel-field

[Para. 182.] *Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarāraṃ sivathikāya chaḍḍitaṃ atthikāni puñjakitāni terovassikāni.*³⁵¹ *So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanattito’ ti --* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field [reduced to] a mere heap of bones three year old, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’].³⁵² There are still many sections left before reaching the conclusion, so all must shown. Dear you many, the noble jewels, all the pupils who wear the skin (robe) of the Buddha! Again, having explained the seventh cemetery, there is another one, the eighth charnel-ground as taught by the Lord.

[Para. 183.] Dear noble sons, if any one of you observe the cemetery which is full of skeletons, he will see the skeletons dispersed in different directions, north, south, west and east; one piece of bone is found here and the other found there. **‘Three years old’** (*terovassikāni*) means the skeletons last for three years, sometimes getting wet by heavy rain and sometimes getting burn by hot sunlight. So, the bones have been exposed to the weather for three years.

[Para. 184.] If a monk sees such pieces of bones gleaming white exposed to rain and sunlight, he should take it as a basis for insight meditation and contemplate it in order to see the nature of reality. He would contemplate it with the four foundation of mindfulness. When he sees some one at other place, he should also compare it with his own body and reflect it with cultured mind in order to see the body as a dreadful thing.

[Para. 185.] ‘Oh this body of mine, here and now, is indeed of the same nature with the bones that last for three years getting wet with rain. My body too is of the nature like that; my body will also be remained with bones and got wet with rain like that; my body too will inescapably become like that.’ Thus one should observe the nature of humans and gods, observing that one’s own body and the bodies of others are the same in nature on the basis of

³⁵¹ In Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, he follows the alternative Pali term ‘*therovassikāni*’ and has translated it as ‘a year old’ but in Rhys Davids 1966, the term ‘*terovassikāni*’ is used in the main text while ‘*therovassikāni*’ is in the footnote. Here in Amat’s *MSP*, ‘*terovassikāni*’ is used and that this is the correct reading as far as the tradition is concerned is confirmed by its translation in Shan as ‘three year old’. Amat Long 1968, pp. 100-101.

³⁵² Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 333, with my emendation of the term ‘three year old’ instead of ‘a year old’ as discussed in the previous note.

the sermon preached by the Lord of old. All that I have described is the eighth charnel-field as taught by the Lord of old.

The Ninth Charnel-field

[Para. 186.] *Puna ca param, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathāpi passeyya sarīraṃ sivathikāya chaddītaṃ aṭṭhikāni pūṭīni cuṇṇakajātāni. So imameva kāyaṃ upasaṃharati: ‘ayaṃ pi kho kāyo evaṃdhammo evaṃbhāvī evaṃanatīto’ ti* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, just as if he had seen a body abandoned in the charnel-field reduced to rotten bones being decayed powder, applies that perception to this very body (of his own) reflecting: ‘This body, too, is even so constituted, is of such a nature, has not got beyond that (fate).’]³⁵³ – thus the sacred Pali texts emerged with task for commentarial gloss. The Pali phrase ‘*ayampi kho kāyo evaṃ dhammo evaṃ bhāvi evaṃ anatītoti*’ has been heard in the text since the first cemetery section in order up to the ninth cemetery, which the last one. Oh dear many sons, the lineage of the Sakya! Again, having explained the eighth cemetery, there is one more, the ninth and the last charnel-ground.

[Para. 187.] Dear lovely noble sons! Suppose any one of you has seen a quiet cemetery, where there is no living being and it is scary, there you find pieces of bones, which are rotten and decayed (*putīni*). Such bones become soft and easily crumbled when one sets foot on them; the decayed bones are just like decayed lime. This is the scene of a cemetery, where there are disintegrated skeletons. **‘Disintegrating bones being decayed to powder’** (*Cuṇṇakajātāni kitāni*) means the decayed bones were broken into small pieces dispersed here and there.

[Para. 188.] Suppose any monk or anybody goes and sees such a cemetery, he should reflect upon it with awareness. When seeing other body, take it as a comparison with oneself; develop and culture the mind with the teaching of mindfulness. In reflection on the cemetery, one should think: ‘Oh this body of mine, here and now, is alive with *kamma*, mind (*citta*), climate (*utu*) and food; this body is impermanent but subject to change and be broken or separated into pieces; this body is of the nature like that; this body will be left with bones that will be finally broken into pieces like that; this body will inescapably become like that; oh wherever I go and hide or cover my body with something, the King of Death will definitely find me; inevitably, one day, he will come to me.’

³⁵³ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 332.

[Para. 189.] [A monk/ meditator] should contemplate his own body and the body of others, inside and outside, to get disenchanted with the suffering of *saṃsāra*. He should reflect on the body again and again, with mindfulness, in order to be tired of or disenchanted with the body. [He should say in his mind like this while meditating:] “Oh, the three realms! I am discontented with you now! You, the three realms, who are full of craving (*tanhā*) and ignorance (*avijjā*), the two defilements, which are astringent, sour, pungent and bitter. Because of the two roots (craving and ignorance) of defilements men and women commit wrong action, sailing backward in the midst of ocean as ships on the brink of sinking to the depths (of hell).” One should think: “Oh, I fear it, the long snake with three heads!³⁵⁴ It is in fact setting the time for Chin and Tai people drowning [in the ocean of *saṃsāra*] again and again! Whatever life we are reborn, we live with greed, hatred and delusion, going up and down in the three streams of sensual pleasure, form and formless, rolling up and down in the spinning wheel.”

[Para. 190.] In whatever life we are, the fire of lust, the fire of hatred, the fire of delusion, the fire of birth, the fire of old age, the fire of illness and the fire of death – all these flames heat up our minds and bodies. Unless and until we have attained the country of Nibbāna, we shall have to sink then float here and there, being gods or men, bewildered in the ocean; wherever we start (are reborn) we are but impermanent. Let the wise and good people reflect on this true nature in their mind in order to get the emotion of *saṃvega*. Read the four foundation of mindfulness often and control the mind from wandering around; hold a ceremony of listening to literature (*dhamma-sabhaṅga*) and learn to memorize it. From the beginning, starting with the section of breathing, the section of body movement posture, the section of clear comprehension, the section of contemplation on repulsiveness, the section of reflection of the four elements and the section of the nine cemeteries – all the been explained one by one. Now, we shall brake and conclude the fourteen ways of practising mindfulness on body. All of them have been accomplished. Oh, Amen, Sirs! (*sādhu, sādhu, sādhu.*)³⁵⁵

³⁵⁴ Possibly Amat Long compares the life-cycle (*saṃsāra*) with a snake and the three realms with the three heads of the snake.

³⁵⁵ Here we return to the usual signal for an interval break after the end of the Contemplation of the Body, one of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

3.11. The Contemplation of Feeling³⁵⁶

[Para. 191.] Now, just as a new blossom blooms, there arises another section of golden words of Dhamma. Long ago, the Lord delivered it in the joyful country of Kuru, in the village of Kammasadhamma. The fourteen ways of practising mindfulness have been explained, but more was said [by the Lord] on that day and this is now contained in the sacred text of the *Suttanta. Kathaṅca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharati* [‘And how, bhikkhus, does a brother, as to the feelings, continue to consider the feelings?’].³⁵⁷ Thus the sacred words have been delivered in accordance with the foundation of mindfulness on sensation so that [the pupils] will understand.

[Para. 192.] Dear son-like pupils sitting together in rows! Let any monk seeking for his own sake, contemplate feeling, which is a foundation of mindfulness, and analyse it so that he will understand it well. Dear noble sons! There are three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling, six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling, all of which are either pleasant, unpleasant or neutral as described by the Lord. In order to know the reality of oneself, reflect on the three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling [and the like] again and again, day in day out, for instance, while getting up or while stepping forward.

[Para. 193.] How should one contemplate or reflect on the three kinds of feeling or the five kinds of feeling? Perhaps some of my disciples are not clear on this. *Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu sukhaṃ vā vedanaṃ vedayamāno sukhaṃ vedanaṃ vedayamīti pajānāti* [‘Herein, O bhikkhus, is a brother when affected by a feeling of pleasure, aware of it, reflecting: ‘I feel a pleasurable feeling.’].³⁵⁸ These Pali texts have been explained very clearly. Dear sons! When you have pleasant feeling (*sukha-vedanā*) and are happy with joyful mind, then you observe and notice: ‘Oh, now I am happy and joyful; I am smiling; I am laughing; I can feel the pleasant feeling.’ Thus, one should know clearly whenever feeling appears.

[Para. 194.] Not too long, after you were happy, you will experience painful feeling (*dukkha-vedanā*); you will be depressed and lonely, badly unhappy, suffered heatedly. At such time, one should observe and say: ‘Oh, now I am depressed; I am suffering; I am lonely; I am very upset’ so that one should see instantly how the heat inside is in fact hotter than fire.

³⁵⁶ The Pali term *Vedanānupassanā* is used in the main text, *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. 105.

³⁵⁷ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 333.

³⁵⁸ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. 2, p. 333.

[Para. 195.] When one experiences the neutral feeling (*adukkhamasukha-vedanā*), he should observe and say: ‘Oh, now, I can experience the neutral feeling; it is neither pleasant nor unpleasant; neither happy nor unhappy; neither wide nor narrow’³⁵⁹ so that one understands the image of the body clearly.

[Para. 196.] While experiencing pleasant feelings concerning material things (*sāmisa-sukha-vedanā*), enjoying the world which has more than a thousand gardens, duped by the King of Death, dazzling in the midst of lust (*taṇhā*), one should stand back and say: ‘Oh, now I am experiencing pleasant feeling material things; what I am happy with is that in fact I am happy with lust, senses and sensual pleasure, glancing at the five branches of toxic flowers (five senses) with attachment; I am dazzled by the entertaining garden as if I am convinced by the King of Death.

[Para. 197.] While experiencing pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things (*nirāmisa-sukha-vedanā*), not concerned with lust or greed, one should notice and say: ‘Oh, what I am enjoying now is neither concerning lust nor defilements nor sensual pleasure; what I enjoy is that in fact it is beyond lust; my enjoyment is beyond attachment; my enjoyment is beyond sensual pleasure.’ We should try to realize that our minds are happy and enjoy with the Dhamma, beyond worldly things.

[Para. 198.] Sometimes, while experiencing unpleasant feeling concerning material things (*sāmisa-dukkha-vedanā*), suffering mentally, yearning for something because of the defilement of greed, one should notice and say: ‘Oh, I am experiencing unpleasant feeling concerning material things; I am depressed and worry not because of other things but because of lust and other defilements; because of sensual pleasure, the flame of lust grows and burns; there can find no peace as the firewood are being added more and the fire flame grows.’

[Para. 199.] Sometimes, while experiencing unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things (*nirāmisa-dukkha-vedanā*), being anxious, worried and burning inside with mental suffering, one should notice and say: ‘Oh, now I am experiencing unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things; the suffering I am experiencing is not concerning with lust or sensual pleasure or any defilements but it is the specific suffering resulting from karma at a certain time; it is not concerning material things at all, not a twig nor a sprout.

³⁵⁹ ‘Neither wide nor narrow’ is an additional explanation of neutral feeling, comparing it with the medium size of measurement.

[Para. 200.] Again, sometimes while experiencing neutral feeling, neither gross nor subtle, just in the middle, oh dear son-pupils, one should notice and say: ‘Oh, now I am experiencing the neutral feeling; it is neither pleasant nor unpleasant; it is not divorced from material things so it is called “the neutral feeling concerning material things” (*sāmisā-adukkhāmasukha-vedanā*).

[Para. 201.] Again, when the neutral feeling arises, one should notice and say: ‘Oh, I am now experiencing the “neutral feeling concerning spiritual things” (*nirāmisā-adukkhāmasukha-vedanā*), which is neither thick nor thin, just about the middle and not concerning the five kinds of sensual pleasure.’

[Para. 202.] Here is the interpretation. Dear noble men and women, who are listening to the Dhammic literature on mindfulness meditation, do remember that there is pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling and neutral feeling – altogether there are three kinds of feeling we should think of and reflect on. In other words, there is pleasant mental feeling (*somanassa-vedanā*), unpleasant mental feeling (*domanassa-vedanā*), pleasant physical feeling (*sukha-vedanā*), unpleasant physical feeling (*dukkha-vedanā*) and neutral feeling (*upekkha-vedanā*) – altogether there are five kinds of feeling. To align this list of five with the list of three kinds of feeling, the mental pleasant feeling and the physical pleasant feeling can be regarded as one kind of feeling, and the unpleasant mental feeling and the unpleasant physical feeling can also be regarded as one kind of feeling, while the neutral feeling can be regarded as the feeling that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant.

[Para. 203.] In other words, the feeling can be divided into three, namely: pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling and momental feeling.³⁶⁰ Pleasant feeling is matched with pleasant mental feeling, painful feeling with unpleasant mental feeling, and momental feeling with neutral feeling.³⁶¹ Putting it differently, the feeling can be divided into six, namely: pleasant feeling concerning material things, pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things, painful feeling concerning material things, painful feeling concerning spiritual things, neither pleasant nor painful feeling concerning material things, and neither pleasant nor painful feeling concerning spiritual things.³⁶² These six kinds of feeling become nine kinds of feeling

³⁶⁰ Pali terms for the 3 kinds of feeling as used in the main text of *MSP*: *sukha-vedanā*, *dukkha-vedanā* and *tadaññā-vedanā*.

³⁶¹ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *Sukha-vedanā*, *somanassa-vedanā*, *dukkha-vedanā*, *domanassa-vedanā*, *tadaññā-vedanā* and *upekkhā-vedanā*.

³⁶² Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *Sāmisā-sukha-vedanā*, *nirāmisā-sukha-vedanā*, *sāmisā-dukkha-vedanā*, *nirāmisā-dukkha-vedanā*, *sāmisā-adukkhāmasukha-vedanā* and *nirāmisā-adukkhāmasukha-vedanā*.

by adding: pleasant mental (*somanassa*), unpleasant mental (*domanassa*) and neutral (*upekkha*) as mentioned earlier. We should remember what has been delivered.

[Para. 204.] ‘Pleasant worldly feeling’ (*sāmisa-sukha-vedanā*) means enjoying with five kinds of sensual pleasure, by being greedy and having a mind defiled in relation to any pleasure. Enjoying the sense of beautiful form, enjoying the sense of pleasant voice, enjoying the sense of pleasant smell, enjoying the sense of pleasant taste and enjoying the sense of soft touch – all that I have listed are indeed the worldly joyful things. One is so joyful and delighted at having sensual pleasure and there is no satisfaction.

[Para. 205.] The pleasant feeling is dwelling with worldly conditional things and it is hard to be fully satisfied by them. One is greedy for more cows and buffalos, clothes and enjoyment at festivals. A person would say: ‘the beauty of the sense of form, I have glanced and watched; to the sense of pleasant voice too, I have listened to and heard; to the sense of pleasant smell too, I have sniffed and smelled; of the sense of pleasant flavor too, I have tasted, swallowed, drunk and eaten; the sense of pleasant and soft thing too, I have touched, liked, wallowed and enjoyed; now, I am so delighted.’ Such a man or woman, who is proud of himself/herself, is named by the Lord as ‘a person who experiences the pleasant worldly feeling,’ finding enjoyment in the five kinds of sensual pleasure, losing the Path.³⁶³

[Para. 206.] What does the “Pleasant unworldly feeling” (*nirāmisa-sukha-vedanā*) mean? Whoever reflects on impermanence, suffering and selflessness, unoccupied by skin which is shed, contemplates on the sense of form, the sense of voice, the sense of smell, the sense of taste or flavor and the sense of touch, the five kinds of sensual pleasure as causing us mental suffering, as being like carrying a basket going up and down in the stream of the three realms. Having performed good *karma* in the past, we are fortunate to be reborn and encounter the Dhamma delivered by the Emerald Star (Buddha), like the pouring fog of *mettā* (loving kindness). [One reflects] ‘Oh, I was born as a human during the time that the teaching of Buddhism has prevailed, shining bright in the midst of the country. [I] devote to the holy Buddha, holy Dhamma and holy Sangha and refuge in the three jewels consistently. They are so delightful and so my heart is cheerful and overjoyed.

[Para. 207.] [We] are joyful with the good deeds or skillfulness (*kusala*) of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*) and mental development (*bhāvanā*), taking them as our property day

³⁶³ Possibly Amat Long refers to the Path to Realization (*magga-ñāna*) or the Noble Eightfold Path (*aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*).

and night, being friendly with the Dhamma. With the sense of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha and the Nibbāna in order to be free from the heat of *samsāra*, the mire of suffering, the mind is so pleased and joyful that one has to touch his own breast with his hand. The desire for the donation of the Buddha has been done; the desire for the donation of the Dhamma has been done; the desire for the donation of the Saṅgha also has been done; the desire for the acquiring the forty types of *kammaṭṭhāna* meditation also has been done;³⁶⁴ the desire for the meditation of the dead body (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*) also has been done; the desire for acquiring *kaṣiṇa* also has been done; the desire for the sixteen levels of knowledge (*ñāṇa*) has also been gained. They easily become as we wish, without facing any difficulty.

[Para. 208.] In other words, when [we] study the texts of *Dhammakhandha* of *Tipitaka* in concerning with the nature of the texts, for instance the heavy and light sounds of the alphabets, [we] study and listen to [the teaching] again and again; [we] try to memorize the texts by reading out repeatedly, [as a way of] fulfilling the perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramitā*). Thus, because of the knowledge followed us from the past (knowledge accumulated from good karma in the past or in our previous life), whatever we study we will understand it very quickly. For listeners (*sotujana*) and the readers (those try to memorize the texts), when they could understand [the meaning of the texts] soon they will be delighted; having been delighted, they will be joyful (*pīṭi*); having been joyful, they will be pleased (*sukha*); having been pleased, they will be overjoyed (*somanassa*) because he is intellectual, expert in treatises and satisfied with his wisdom.

[Para. 209.] There are people, who enjoy the sense or experience of the Buddha, the sense of the Dhamma and the sense of the Saṅgha along with the senses of impermanence, suffering and selflessness. All what has been said is enjoyment beyond the defilement of lust or enjoyment beyond the five kinds of sensual pleasure. Actually, they are so calm and peaceful without any danger or hindrance; they are bright and pure like the cloudless blue sky of the 11th (lunar) month. We are fortunate to be reborn with good *karma* getting the opportunity of access to the three heaps of dhamma,³⁶⁵ the peaceful shelter where we can take refuge. The wise and virtuous people, who take the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha as the senses or centres for their minds or as their meditation objects, those senses (the mind-

³⁶⁴ Amat Long refers to the forty *kammaṭṭhāna*, i.e. Buddhaghosa's classic systematisation as a way of summarising the entire scope of meditation. As Crosby pointed out elsewhere in relation to the far more strikingly different *borān yogāvacara kammaṭṭhāna*, it is not a matter of different doctrinal content or object of meditation, rather it is a matter of a different style of delivering meditation Crosby et al. 2012.

³⁶⁵ Amat Long refers the three heaps of dhamma to the 'three baskets' (*tipitaka*) of Buddhist canonical texts.

focus on the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha) will be the tools for preventing greed, lustful desire and delusion, which are the causes of defilement and darkness. So, [their minds] are temporally free and peaceful for a certain period of time.

[Para. 210.] ‘Unpleasant feeling concerning material things’ (*Sāmiṣa-dukkha-vedanā*) means the person, whoever yearns for something and, because of greed, desire of lust, starves for five kinds of sensual pleasure, concerning for oneself. With worldly unpleasant feeling, we greedily wish for good jewel, gold and money, striving day and night. Our minds are anxious and worried because we know only we want. Whatever [attractive thing] we come across our hearts attach to it, yearning for it day and night, generating fire burning our own bodies. We want the beautiful form (*rūpārammaṇa*) but we cannot get it; we want the pleasant voice (*saddārammaṇa*) but we cannot get it; we want the pleasant smell (*gandhārammaṇa*) but we cannot get it; we want the pleasant taste/flavour (*rasārammaṇa*) but we cannot get it; we want the soft thing to touch (*phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa*) but we cannot get it. We feel endlessly despondent, yearning for things because of our greedy desire.

[Para. 211.] Even we want money we cannot always get it; even we want gold we cannot get it; even we want jewel we cannot get it; even we want cloth we cannot get it; we want cows and buffalos, some want handsome men, some want beautiful women but we cannot get them. Subsequently [our minds] are burned with the heat of live coals, fumes going in our faces. [One then reflects:] ‘Oh I was born as a human in this life with very less fortune; I am unlucky, having a hard life and suffering in mind; I am so depressed.’ In many cases, [the desired object] looks near for eyesight but far to reach, causing heat and burning inside for not being able to have it, so he cries soaking his head under the blanket moaning on this and that. Concerning the five kinds of sensual pleasure, [sometimes] we find those whom we love but in turn they do not love us; they do not care at all. [Such time] we just want to die and leave human life, we feel so sad and miserable.

[Para. 212.] Wherever you live, you cannot escape there; You will be more miserable when you face the wind blowing against you; you will feel tired and depressed. So, one who in such a situation will think of himself and say: ‘Oh now, even though I want to wear nice clothes, I cannot get it; even though I want to eat nice rice and delicious curry, I cannot get it; wanting a handsome man but cannot get it; wanting beautiful lady but cannot get it; he/she does not like nor love me, glaring at me with fixed eyes. Besides indicating hatred of me with the way he/she closes and opens the eyes, he/she even shows this with his/her mouth but I do

not take in what he/she is making explicit, fretting as I am because my mind is preoccupied with wanting him/her.

[Para. 213.] All kinds of senses found in the more than a thousand gardens persuade and convince us to watch them without ever being sated. If one wants something and cannot get it, he will be depressed, angry and upset; if angry and upset, then he will experience great suffering; if he is experiencing great suffering, he will be very much disappointed (*domanassa*); the boiling heat and the smoke of the flames in him becomes completely black, he walks through shrub and bush [as he cannot see the way clearly]; his mind is not in a happy mood even at receiving some money; he becomes mad. Oh, dear devotees, we are upset when others scold at us; we want to react when others gossip about us, launching the smell of *siew* flower around the hill.³⁶⁶ Because we have listened to the rude words, they upset our ears, which is just a hole in our sinewed skin, causing our minds to anger quickly and heat up.

[Para. 214.] When one is upset and angry, he should say: ‘Oh now I am getting angry; I am upset; I am experiencing the unpleasant feeling concerning material things’ so by understanding, one should be patient. One should say ‘Oh my anger has punished me; my anger has brought unwholesome *karma* into my head’ in order to become disenchanted with worldly things. All different kinds of beings are alive with lustful desire along with the fetters, the ten-fold rope. When we have not got what we want, we are anxious and worry; we work for money and gold day and night with no rest. Once you cannot get [what you want], then you work even harder in order to get it.

[Para. 215.] Your greed encourages you to work restlessly on trading, buying and selling, to feed your wife and children. You are busy all the time as there is no end of work; sometimes you have to sit think of [what to do] and your head becomes confused and you do not have time even to scratch when you are itching. For instance, there is the desire of wanting to have possession, wanting to eat, wanting to wear and wanting to see a beautiful person who would be a long term mate. We wanted before we have not got it and after having got it, it is then in the hands of enemy, namely at the mercy of the danger of water and the danger of flood [and the like] which cause us to lose our possessions, and we weep and cry when we have lost them.

³⁶⁶ Probably, Amat Long compares the smell of *siew* flower to the smell of gossip words.

[Para. 216.] All worldly belongings, such as our wives and children, horses, cows, money and gold, are not permanent, as the Lord has taught us. My beautiful lady was taken away by others; my handsome gentleman was also taken away by others; my money and gold were also taken away by others; my cows and buffalos were also taken away by others; my house was also destroyed by fire; all my bed sheet and blankets were burned in the fire – the person who say like this is not happy, his head is downcast.

[Para. 217.] One who reflects on himself and says ‘Oh now, my possession was already destroyed by others; my body was also tortured by others; my wife and children were also destroyed by others; I am poor and suffered so much; others treated me severely; others blamed me a lot; others do not like me; others scold me; others drove me; others forced me to flee’ – he thinks like this, his countenance sad. When one has heard of ill words and rude words, he will be dislike them; if he dislikes them, he will be upset and angry; if he is upset and angry, he will suffer severely; if he suffered much, the anger in his mind will be like fire burning his body, jumping around with sword.

[Para. 218.] When anger is arising, one should notice and say: ‘Oh now my anger is appearing; I am upset; I am experiencing the unpleasant worldly feeling; what I am worrying about is actually not a good result but the cause of falling from high chasm or deep hole in the earth (the cause of going to hell). ‘I worry because I want; I worry because I do not want to lose; I am upset because I heard others scolding me and blaming me’ – all that I have described is called “unpleasant feeling concerning material things” because they connected to worldly things. We cannot see the Path because we are blinded by the influence of the darkness of ignorance.

[Para. 219.] Next, “unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things” means the person who reflects on his mind and worries about oneself with suffering mind. This refers to a learner who reads the Dhamma, tries to memorize the Dhamma and wants to understand the Dhamma, studying hard day and night. In order to know and see the Dhamma, his teacher explains it in details with cause and effect but finds it hard to remember the words and verses. He suffers mentally as he could not understand the Dhamma. He becomes exhausted and worn out.

[Para. 220.] His desire has not been fulfilled; he has not been able to memorize for he is dim and unintelligent. No matter how hard he studies, he was not better of understanding the meaning [of the Dhamma words he studied], as he is so dull that he even finds it difficult

to open his eyes [to go through the texts]; he is so distressed. While moving his study to the next stage, he has already forgot the previous ones; as the nature of the Dhamma is deep and complicated, he is totally confused and finds it hard to understand. The reason is that the Dhamma of the Lord is deeper than the ocean, which is greatly deep and wide for we cannot see its shores.

[Para. 221.] The learner is like the example royal brother of Venerable Mahāpan “Great Wisdom”, Venerable Cūlapan “Little Wisdom” who finds it too hard to study the Dhamma. During the whole three months of rains retreat, he cannot memorize even a stanza of 32 words, or even 16 words, or even 8 words, or even 4 words; whenever he studied the beginning, he forgot the end again and again. He finds it really hard and cannot bear it so he cries and moans. Thus, studying the Buddha’s Dhamma is not easy if you do not have good *karma*, having heard of or listened to it in your previous life. However much he wishes to understand the Dhamma, he cannot understand it because it is profound (*gambhīra*) and too deep for him.

[Para. 222.] Nowadays people think it is easy to learn the Buddha’s Dhamma; they think they are bright enough. Actually they do not read the Dhamma nor memorize it nor teach it like the wise did. They just bring the texts and read them occasionally and they are really delighted in staying near or listening to them. They are just talking too much. The learner Cūlapan, younger brother of Mahāpan, made a great effort in studying the words of the Dhamma. But, for three months of rains retreat, he could not memorize even a verse or a phrase of 32 words, 16 words, 8 words or 4 words. It was very difficult for him to remember even though he studied hard sitting too long until he got back pain.

[Para. 223.] In that then it is the time for the holy Lord of the word, Gotama Buddha, who has enormous glory with halo around him. The Light of Gems (Buddha) then took a new hand towel and gave it to Cūlapan and then asked him to repeat the words “**rajoharanam, rajoharanam**” [‘dust-removing’] while holding and kneading the hand towel with his hands. Till late in the quiet of the night while all were sleeping and the fog was falling on the south continent all silver-colored, the younger brother of Mahāpan (Cūlapan) still kept repeating the words “**rajoharanam, rajoharanam**” until the hand towel was faded.

[Para. 224.] When the hand towel becomes faded, the inconceivable one, being the Lord of the three realms [of heaven, human world and hell?], the Golden Glory said, ‘Oh Culapan! Your body of aggregates is a rotten body, [similar to] your hand towel, which was a

new one earlier, neither dirty nor disgusting [but now is dirty and disgusting].’ Thus, having given the right example, Cūlapan, who was dull in intellect, then Cūlapan understood clearly. After he had listen to the words of the Lord Buddha, he reflected on his body and said to himself, ‘Oh, this body of aggregates seems to have been borrowed [from some one].’ Oh, it is really hard to understand nature of “rotten body, the putrid body” and because of ignorance (*avijjā*) it takes long time to see the Dhamma.’

[Para. 225.] Oh dear Cūlapan! Your body of aggregates is indeed the rotten body. Your hand towel is, not too long ago, a new towel, which was white and clean, there was no any spot of disgusting. The Lord said to Cūlapan again, ‘When I gave it to you early, being not dirty yet, it was very clean.’ Venerable Culapan listened to the Lord and reflected on himself again and again until he was tired; he was so ashamed for being a man of not understanding the Buddha’s words. The Lord taught him again and again and to repeat the words “**rajoharanam, rajoharanam**” while kneading and rubbing the hanger chip till the dawn of the morning.

[Para. 226.] Let the audience reflect upon the one thousand and five hundred defilements being turbid like muddy water. That is why, the Lord Buddha said, ‘The rotten body or the putrid body is in fact the log of impermanence, the log of suffering, the log of selflessness, the log of lust and the log of ignorance. Therefore, the bodies of men and gods are swimming in the four big lakes,³⁶⁷ like the logs turning round and round, sinking at one time and rising at another in the lake. In that moment, when the meditative Dhamma falls into his heart and body, the pupil (Cūlapan) aims for a higher level, getting much better and having a *kaṣiṇa* more clear for the obtaining of *jhāna* and knowledge. After doing the *kammaṭṭhāna* (meditation) several times, he instantly sees and understands all the *Tipitaka* of 84,000 sections of the Dhamma, the *Dhammakhandha*. So, having completed his learning and attained wisdom, he was so delighted.

[Para. 227.] Having realized thinking mind, wandering mind, joy, happiness and onepointedness, which are the five-fold factors of *jhāna*, he was like an Arahant, who can perform the miracle of changing his body. So, he determined, ‘let my body be multiplied into a hundred; let my body be multiplied into a thousand; let my body be multiplied into a

³⁶⁷ Possibly, Amat Long refers the four big lakes to the Four Floods (*oghas*) in the Abhidhammā, i.e. 1. Sense-desires (*kāmogha*), 2. Attachment to existence (*bhavogha*), 3. False Views (*ditthogha*), and 4. Ignorance (*avijjogha*). Nārada 1987, pp. 361-363.

hundred thousands.³⁶⁸ He kept saying it repeatedly so the replica of his body appeared more and more that it was not known how many thousands of millions, being all monks everywhere in the style of studying the texts. Looking at all directions even in the sky there are so many monks for the eyes and ears [to look at them and listening to them] reciting the words of the Dhamma; some are staying in the temple, some are doing walking meditation, some studying the texts, some lying down, some sitting, some standing, some walking, some going out, some just getting up and tending to go, some returning and some are delivering sermons.³⁶⁹

[Para. 228.] Some are filling water [into the water pots], some doing other temple duties, some whipping [the temple floor or the temple ground], some spreading the mats [before sitting on it] like those receiving their guests, some are hurrying up putting the chairs; [those who see the scene] would get confused [because all the monks look busy with their duties]. When looking upward the sky, some of them are shaking out their robes, while some sew their robes, some knead their robes and some wash their robes – all of them are seen in a line of procession and a cloth-line of a rattan vine is being set up for spreading out the robes on the sunny day, making the onlookers confused. Thus, here it is said the “unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things” arose first and the happiness came afterwards. When one obtained the knowledge of *jhāna*, he will be delighted and joyful; when he is joyful, he will then overjoyed; immediately anxiety vanishes and happiness comes.

[Para. 229.] When studying the texts and repeating the scripts, [the suffering] is called “unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things” because it is not concerning with worldly thing. When obtaining the knowledge of *jhāna*, he experienced the “pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things” because it is not concerning with the body of five kinds of sensual pleasure. Again, after a moment, the younger brother of Mahapan reflect on what he used to do in his many previous lives to see the cause of his obtaining knowledge from the presence of hanger chip; he divinely eyes look back.

[Para. 230.] Long time ago, in one of his previous lives, he was a universal king. One day when he set out for a riding his air-plane (*phaung cakya*) into the sky, his queen gave him a hundred thousand valued piece of cloth as a face-towel, which brand new and whitely clean. While riding the plane in the sky – and being a sunny day – he had sweat in his armpit.

³⁶⁸ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *sataṃ me hoti, sahaṣṣaṃ me hoti, sataṣaḥṣaṣṣaṃ me hoti*.

³⁶⁹ The practice and miracle described here may explain the much-discussed ‘thousand’ Buddha paintings found in famous wall and cave paintings such as Pagan in Burma and Dambulla in Sri Lanka.

Whenever he got wet with sweat, he used the new clean towel to wipe off. He used the towel to wipe off his sweat and dirt on his body until the towel was faded and dirty.

[Para. 231.] Later the towel was wet and much dirty with offensive smell of dirty sweat from the sun's heat. The golden heart of the lord (the king) then reflected on the towel and got *saṃvega*. He said [in his mind] 'Oh, this towel goes faded, discolored and bad smelling because of my body; it is wet with bad smell; not new like earlier anymore.'

[Para. 232.] 'Earlier, this towel was white and clean, pure and soft but when it had contact with the sweat on my body it became dirty with offensive smell. I do not use the old towel anymore [because it was wet and dirty]; now I have to use another new towel; the old towel was early a new towel; now it is faded and gray' – saying like this in his mind became disenchanted with it, developing his mind through meditation so that his understanding became clear. 'The towel was faded because of my body; it became spots because of my sweat; oh the substance of defilements is wet like sweat; this body of aggregates is indeed the rotten body, the putrid body; the new towel changed into old; earlier there was no such disgusting thing in it' – said the great king with mindfulness and reflection in order to arrive at *saṃvega*. Thus, [his problems] had been on account of the bad *karma* he had done in his previous lives, when looking back the beginning of his tree of life.

[Para. 233.] In the time of Great Gotama, he became the younger brother of Mahāpan obtained the knowledge of *jhāna* and freedom (*vimutti*) by the help of a small towel, which was related to his previous karma. Next, he reflected on his life again to see the reason why he found it so hard to learn the scripts. During the time of Acinteyya Kassapa Buddha, he was a lovely monk practising the virtues. He was so intellectual and had lots of knowledge in the Dhamma treatises. People everywhere praised him for his expertise in the *Tipiṭaka*, [his fame] spread astounding the country.

[Para. 234.] But that [monk] had committed some bad verbal actions (*vacī-kamma*), spoken evil of others. Seeing others learning scripts or repeating the texts, he was evil-minded; his heart was neither pleased nor joyful. Once, he reviled a monk who studied hard the texts of the dhamma. The monk found it so hard in pronouncing the Pali words because he was deficient in intellect and dull of understanding. In seeing this, the intellectual monk later to be Cūlapan (younger brother of Mahāpan)] told the poor monk, 'If you found it so hard like that do not study and do not recite the scriptures anymore! Your intellect is like a joke!' So he spoke ill to that poor monk. When the poor monk recited the scriptures, he

laughed at him and he harassed the poor monk day and night by imitating the monk's manner of reciting.

[Para. 235.] The poor monk was too ashamed and dispirited whenever he thought of his study. When he saw the intellectual monk's coming, he stopped studying and hid himself because he did not dare to recite the scripts in front of the intellectual monk. It was in this time of our Gotama Buddha that the intelligent monk became the younger brother of Mahāpan called "Cūlapan" and found it hard to learn the texts. During the whole three rainy months, he could not memorize even a verse or a phrase of even 32 words; he could not memorize even 16 words; he could not memorize even a phrase of 4 words; whenever he studies forward, he forgot the back (the texts he previously studied); he found it too hard and was so deeply depressed that he eventually wept.

[Para. 236.] Thus it was that the omniscient, holly, pinnacle, jewelry star, golden glory, the Lord of the Ship came to say with pleasant words, 'The learned people and the virtuous people are associated together or dependent on one another.' If there are no scholars, the virtuous people cannot speak to themselves whether their practices are on the right way to real peace according to the dhamma. The virtuous people will end their generation and die in wrong practice.

[Para. 237.] For this reason, gratitude to the learned people should not be forgotten or abandoned by the virtuous people at anytime. If one does not forget the learned people, it is like he does not forget the grace of my qualities, the wholly omniscient golden glory. Whoever has any chance of listening to the words of learned people, it is like they have listened to the words from the golden mouth of the Lord; indeed, it is like praising and supporting my teaching. For those who suppress learned people, it is like they suppress the teaching of Buddhism. For those who scorn others who study or read the texts, it is like they make wish 'may I do not know the *Tipitaka* in any life' so putting it aside from him.

[Para. 238.] In his previous life, because he sneered at others studying or reading scriptures as 'stupid,' So in the time of our Gotama Buddha, the learned monk earlier had become Culapan who faced difficulty in studying scripts and suffered in mind; he moaned in distraction because he could not understand the meaning of the dhamma and so, time and again, his big brother pushed him to disrobe. The commentary on the neutral feeling too is similar to that mentioned earlier.

[Para. 239.] The neutral feeling is divided into two types, namely: neutral feeling concerning material things and neutral feeling concerning spiritual things.³⁷⁰ Neutral feeling concerning material things refers to the attachment of the five kinds of sensual pleasure that influences [people] by its false pretenses. The ordinary people (*puthujjana*), who take five kinds of sensual pleasure as meditation objects, are neither happy nor unhappy, even though they are associated with material things (*sāmisā*) and coated with filth or dirt. Neutral feeling concerning spiritual things refers to [the feeling of] a person, who reflects on the Dhamma locating his mind in a suitable place. His mind is not associated with the five kinds of sensual pleasure; his attitude is in accordance with his *karma*, i.e. *karma* is his property; *karma* is like the seed of plant in nature.

[Para. 240.] One should reflect on the sensual pleasure starting from form, voice, smell, taste and touch and all flesh, sinews and blood in the five aggregates and say, ‘Oh, these five kinds of sensual pleasure and these five aggregates are but the nature of impermanence, suffering and selflessness.’ He analyses them thoroughly and understand clearly. Dear monks, you lovely sons of the same Sakyan lineage! Do contemplate the three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling, six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling. All what have said are the objects to be reflected on and examined thoroughly.

[Para. 241.] **Ajjhattaṃ vā vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharatī** means: Contemplate the forms or movements of the nine kinds of feeling moving, pressing, fighting each other or thrusting at one another inside the body. **Bahiddhā vā vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharatī** means: Also investigate the feeling of other bodies, which are arising and disappearing, altogether being six and nine in number. **Ajjhattabahiddhā vā** means: Again, investigate inside and outside movements of feeling or the feeling in our bodies and the bodies of others, which are changing by replacing the old feeling with new one. **Vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharatī** means: Look at the three kinds of feeling, six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling in five or six groups, which are arising and disappearing.

[Para. 242.] **Samudayadhammānupassī vā** means: Again, when the feeling appears for the first time, contemplate it carefully and notice the time the feeling appears and say, ‘Oh, the pleasant feeling has appeared; the unpleasant feeling has appeared; the neutral feeling has appeared; the pleasant feeling concerning material things has appeared; the pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning

³⁷⁰ Amat Long uses Pali terms - *sāmisā-adukkhamasukha-vedanā* and *nirāmisā-adukkhamasukha-vedanā* – which indicate the authority and privilege of using Pali in Shan Buddhism.

material things has appeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared; the neutral feeling concerning material things has appeared ;the neutral feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared.’ Try to see the nature of feeling clearly.

[Para. 243.] **Vayadhammānupassī vā** means: Again, contemplate on the feeling when it is vanished and disappearing. Notice the movement of the feeling and say, ‘Oh, the pleasant feeling has disappeared; the unpleasant feeling has disappeared; the neutral feeling has disappeared; the pleasant feeling concerning material things has disappeared; the pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has disappeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning material things has disappeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has disappeared; the neutral feeling material concerning things has disappeared; the neutral feeling concerning spiritual things has disappeared.’ That is how one should notice carefully and say in mind to see when the feeling comes and goes.

[Para. 244.] **Samudayavaydhammānupassī vā** means: Again, contemplate the feeling when it has appeared and disappeared replacing by another one. Say, ‘Oh, the pleasant feeling has appeared and then disappeared; the unpleasant feeling has appeared and then disappeared; the neutral feeling has appeared and then disappeared; the pleasant feeling the neutral feeling concerning material things has appeared and then disappeared; the pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared and then disappeared; the pleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared and then disappeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning material things has appeared and then disappeared; the unpleasant feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared and then disappeared; the neutral feeling concerning material things has appeared and then disappeared; the neutral feeling concerning spiritual things has appeared and then disappeared.’ Thus, one should notice the feeling in details by noticing the three, five, six and nine kinds of feeling separately to see when the feeling comes in and goes out.

[Para. 245.] Oh, tens of thousands of ladies and gentlemen, who wish for liberation from the three aches and the nine passageways,³⁷¹ please try to remember. Reflect on what has been said in order to see the three kinds of feeling, the five kinds of feeling, the six kinds of feeling and the nine kinds of feeling. Contemplate them with mindfulness in order to see

³⁷¹ The three aches mean three kinds of feeling and the nine passageways mean nine kinds of feeling. This indicates how Zao Amat Long uses another alternative way of explanation on feeling to his audience. When he says ‘passageway’ the audience would first imagine the passageways in their villages but later they will understand that in their bodies too there are nine passageways, which are the nine kinds of feeling moving around in their bodies just like people walking on passageways.

them clearly. All these feelings are indeed the log of impermanence, the log of suffering and the log of selflessness.³⁷² They cannot last for long but just like a bubble, which is full of air inside and can be broken very easily. The person, who contemplates on the foundation of mindfulness of identification of feeling, should say, ‘Oh, the aggregate of feeling is impermanent; the aggregate of feeling is suffering; and the aggregate of feeling is selfless.’ That is how a person should practise consistently.

[Para. 246.] Thus, the Unthinkable One, Gotama, the Lord of three realms, the Jewelry Star and Golden Glory, who is the owner of big ship of ‘*maggang*’,³⁷³ has delivered the Foundation of Mindfulness of Identification of Feeling in the State of Kuru, and here with the extension of commentary and we ought take it to heart and remember. Those who do not know, in order to know, and those who are not clear, in order to be clear, ask and listen to the learned, the intellectuals and those who are skillful in the Tipitakas again and again in order to understand the meaning [of the Satipathan] clearly. Having done so, the Perfections we have been fulfilling will be matured sooner, the seed shall be fertile, the year [fruition] shall be sooner, with full of sprouts on the stump [of a tree] and fresh cluster, making the young leaves blooming everyday, so we will reach the State of the Path and the Fruition sooner, Oh, you all! (*sādhu... sādhu... sādhu...*).

3.12. The Contemplation of Thought³⁷⁴

[Para. 247.] Now, here is an amazing section of discussion on the nature of thought in the Foundation of Mindfulness. For the benefit of learners, who have little knowledge and do not know or do not believe in the teachings of discourses preached by the Lord and for those who are still confused in thought, I shall now light a candle. In the previous section, we have discussed three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling, six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling, which are but impermanent things. I have now described and analysed every aspect of them, including the Pali canonical wording, the *nissaya* and commentaries completely. Now the reading of the canon comes up again starting with [the Pali passage] “*Kathañca*

³⁷² Note that a log is used as a simile of feeling. From a Shan meditative view, a human body is often compared with a log of wood (as above), which is subject to rot and decay. Here as feeling appears in the body they are inseparable. So, Zao Amat Long compares it with a log.

³⁷³ ‘*Maggang*’ is the name of the Buddha’s ship carrying humans and gods crossing the ocean of *samsara*. *Maggang* is derived from Pali ‘*maggāṅga*’, ‘the collective factors of the Path’, i.e. the Noble Eightfold Path.

³⁷⁴ Pali term *cittānupassanā* is used in *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. [132]. For the translation of ‘*citta*’ as ‘thought’ I follow Rhys Davids 1977, p. 334.

pana bhikkhave bhikkhu citte cittānupassī viharai” [‘And how, bhikkhus, does a brother, as to thought, continue to consider thought?’]³⁷⁵ in accordance with the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Thought. Please listen and remember. I shall now interpret, analyze and explain in order to make it clear to understand.

[**Para. 248.**] **Bhikkhave** means: Dear monks, you many pupils, who belong to the community of noble lineage and well practice! **Bhikkhu** means if any monk reflects on the foundation of mindfulness for the contemplation of thought, he should analyze its nature so he will understand it clearly. **Citta** means beginning with three kinds of mind, namely: the thought with full of lust, the thought with full of hate, and the thought with with full of delusion. **Cittānupassī viharati** means reflecting on the sixteen kinds of the foundation of mindfulness for the contemplation of thought. One should practise this day and night such as when getting up, sitting down, going and stepping forward in order to understand one’s own body clearly.

[**Para. 249.**] How one should contemplate, reflect on, view over and investigate thought? This may not be clear in the minds of son-like pupils. So the Lord starts with Pali words, “*Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu sarāgaṃ vā cittā sarāgā cittanti pajānāti*” [Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother, if his thought be lustful, is aware that it is so.]³⁷⁶ – regarding the sixteen kinds of the foundation of mindfulness for the contemplation on the mind for us to investigate thought clearly.

[**Para. 250.**] **Sarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: Dear lovely sons! There is thought that is full of lust and sensual pleasure that is also mixed with dirt of defilement. **Sarāgaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Such kind of thought is neither wholesome (*kusala*) nor resultant (*vipāka*) nor functional (*kiriya*). In fact, it is a defiled thought and greedy thought leading humans and gods to wandering [in the rebirth cycle] and being stuck with trouble in the realm of three streams. **Vītarāgaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There is another thought, which is not accompanied with sensual pleasure. This thought, despite concerning material things, is wholesome and neutral. **Vītarāgaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: This kind of thought is called “the thought without lust” (*vītarāga-citta*), so one should see the nature of thought with such example.

[**Para. 251.**] **Sadosaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are two kinds of evil-thought, which is accompanied with harshness and violence. **Sadosaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Because such

³⁷⁵ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 334.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

a mindset does not avoid the two kinds of repugnance (*paṭigha*), it is called the “evil-thought” or “hateful thought” (*sadosa-citta*) which is full of hate; such thought is actually firewood which enflames the fire letting the sinews burn; it is a boiling and heated thought.

Vītadosaṃ vā cittaṃ means: The remaining worldly, wholesome and unproductive thoughts are called the “evil-free- thought” or “hate-voided- thought” (*vītadosa-citta*) because they are free from hatred. **Vītadosaṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: In this way, one should understand the nature of thought.

[Para. 252.] **Samohaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There two kinds of thought, which are accompanied with darkness and doubt, just as if someone has sore eyelids and cannot see things clearly or goes into a cave or into the dark night. **Samohaṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: Such kind of thought is called the “delusional- thought” (*samoha-citta*) because the two delusional minds are accompanied with ignorance, a dark cave, dark building. As the delusional thought is associated with darkness and doubt, a person who has such kind of thought cannot clearly where he is; he loses his way in the cave. **Vītamohaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: Out of delusional thought, there are wholesome thought concerning material things and unproductive thought, which are out of darkness. **Vītamohaṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: These kinds of thought are called “delusion-free-thought” (*vītamoha-citta*) because they are free from delusion. Thus, one should always contemplate and recognize such thought as the “unforgetful thought.”

[Para. 253.] **Samkhittaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are five kinds of prompted (*sasaṅkhārika*) thought, which is rooted in greed and hatred. These kinds of thought are associated with laziness, sleepiness, sloth and torpor. **Samkhittaṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: Therefore, such kinds of thought are called “constricted thought” (*samkhitta-citta*) because they have been driven by others. For instance, there are those who often pretend to be tired or sick because they are too lazy to work. They are in fact influenced by constricted thought, so other people have to push them to work. **Vikkhittaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There is one thought, which is connected with restlessness and wandering around. **Vikkhittaṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: Such kind of thought is called “distracted thought” that one should see and understand it clearly.

[Para. 254.] **Mahaggataṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There is moral, resultant and functional thought pertaining to the form-sphere and the formless-sphere, accompanied with the factors of *jhāna*. **Mahaggataṃ cittaṃ pajānāti** means: Such types of thought are called “great thought” (*mahaggata-citta*) because they have reached the holy and top stage, and one should

study to understand their nature clearly. **Amahaggataṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are 54 types of immoral, moral, resultant and functional thought pertaining to the sensuous-sphere.

Amahaggataṃ cittanti pajānāti means: Such types of thought are called “not-great-thought” (*amahaggata-citta*) because they have not reached the holy and top stage. Thus, one should learn to understand thought of humans and gods.

[Para. 255.] **Sauttaraṃ vā cittaṃ** means: The same again, the 54 types of immoral, moral, resultant and functional thought pertaining to the sensuous-sphere. **Sauttaraṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: These thoughts are called “surpassable- thought” (*sauttara-citta*) because, among the worldly thought (*lokiya-citta*), there are the 27 types of moral, resultant and functional thought pertaining to the form-sphere, which are holier and higher than the 54 minds pertaining to the sensuous-sphere. **Anuttaraṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are the knowledge of *jhāna* pertaining to the form-sphere and the formless-sphere, which are all the great knowledge and the thought of Brahma. **Anuttaraṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Such types of minds are called “unsurpassable thought” (*anuttara-citta*) because, among the worldly thought, there is no any but higher than the great-thought (*mahaggata-citta*).

[Para. 256.] **Samāhitaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are two types of concentration, namely, the preparatory concentration and the attainment concentration, both of which are still-minded. When concentrating on different types of objects and signs of meditation, the moral and functional thought is so tranquil and standstill. **Samāhitaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Therefore such types of consciousness are called “concentrated- thought” (*samāhita-citta*).³⁷⁷ **Asamāhitaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: Leaving all the moral and functional thought pertaining to the sensuous-sphere, the form-sphere and the formless-sphere, the remaining worldly thought of humans and gods are moving and not standstill. **Asamāhitaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Therefore, such thought is called “unconcentrated-mind” (*asamāhita-citta*) because it has not obtained the two types of, preparatory and attainment, concentration.

[Para. 257.] **Vimuttaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are various types of worldly moral thought, which can be momentarily cut off or avoid the defiled mind-states. **Vimuttaṃ cittanti pajānāti** means: Such thought is called “freed-mind” (*vimutta-citta*) because they are temporarily away from defilements. That is how such thought is described in relation to the minds of humans and gods. **Avimuttaṃ vā cittaṃ** means: There are some types of thought

³⁷⁷ The two grades of concentration, i.e. preparatory concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and attainment concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) are found in DA I.217; Vism 127. In Vism 144, a 3rd Preliminary grade is added as ‘momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*). Also see PED s.v. ‘samādhi’.

that are always mixed up with defilements; they cannot even avoid the dirt of defilements for a moment temporarily. **Avimuttam cittanti pajānāti** means: Such thought is called “unfreed-thought” (*avimutta-citta*). Remember that such thought are of immoral, worldly resultant and functional thought except the moral and functional thought, being in separate parts and portions. Oh, dear audience listening to the Dhamma, please take notice!

[Para. 258.] Thought with lust is one type; thought without lust is one; the thought with hatred is one; the thought without hatred is one; the thought with delusion is one; the thought without delusion is one; the constricted thought is one; the scattered thought is one; the great thought is one; the not-great-thought is one; the surpassable thought is one; the unsurpassable thought is one; the concentrated thought is one; the unconcentrated thought is one; the free thought is one, and the unfreed thought is one; altogether, there are these sixteen types of minds, belonging to humans and gods. One should learn to understand the nature of the mind.

[Para. 259.] The mind-with-lust refers to the 8 types of thought rooted in greed are adhered to the five types of sensual pleasure and full of sticky substance. Out of 8 types of thought, 4 of them are unprompted, accompanied with pleasure and wrong view, while the other 4 are prompted, accompanied with indifference or neutral and wrong view. These 8 types of thought are called the “thought-with-lust” because they are always associated with greed for enjoyment and sensual pleasure. That is why, the mind-with-lust is always looking for enjoyment and by the guide of greed, humans and gods are not ready to go to the holy place. The mind-without-lust refers to the thought beyond the 8 types of thought rooted in greed, the 2 types of thought rooted in hatred and the 2 types of thought rooted in delusion, which are the 17 types of mundane moral thought, the 32 types of mundane resultant thought and the 20 types of mundane functional thought. Altogether these 69 types of thought are called the “thought-without-lust” because they are not associated with lust. Thus, all four kinds of audience ought to help remember.

[Para. 260.] The thought-with-hatred refers to the 2 types of thought, which are respectively prompted and unprompted, accompanied with displeasure, and connected with ill-will. These 2 types of thought are associated with hatred and feeling bad all the time. Being rough and tough, they cannot see where is deep and where is not.³⁷⁸ The thought-without-hatred refers to the mind beyond the 2 types of thought rooted in hatred together with the thought rooted in greed and delusion; - altogether there are 69 types of mundane moral

³⁷⁸ Shan idiom *ti luek ti tuen* literally means the place [in the water] where is deep and where is not deep. Here the actual meaning is about the place where one should go or not, or the thing that one should do or not.

indeterminate thought of humans and gods. These 69 types of thought are called the “thought-without-hatred” because they do not quarrel with others; they do not have bad feeling toward others and they do not scold others. Thus, one should contemplate the Foundation of Mindfulness in order to understand it clearly.

[Para. 261.] The thought-with-delusion refers to the 12 types of immoral thought, which are rooted in greed, hatred and delusion. Such minds are indeed very forgetful. They do not reflect on the Triple Gems and the gratitude of the Buddha and his teachings. Therefore they are called the “thought-with-delusion.” Out of this, there are 69 types of mundane moral and indeterminate thought. These types of thought are called the “thought - without-delusion” because they do not forget the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, teachers and parents.

[Para. 262.] The constricted mind refers to the 4 types of thought, which are unprompted, accompanied with pleasure or indifference, and connected with wrong view or disconnected with wrong view; and 1 type of thought, which is unprompted, accompanied with displeasure, and connected with ill-will. These 5 types of thought are accompanied with sloth and torpor, the lazy-mind, the empty-thought, the hold-off-thought. So, they are usually yawning and feeling sleepy all the time. The scattered mind refers to the immoral thought, which is rooted in delusion, accompanied with indifference and connected with restlessness. This kind of thought is called the “scattered thought” because it is not standstill but splatter, blown away and spread everywhere.

[Para. 263.] The great mind refers to the 27 types of form-sphere and formless-sphere moral, resultant and functional thought, which are the minds of Brahmas. The various kinds of *jhāna* thought, starting from the initial application, sustained application, joy, happiness, and one-pointedness, have in fact reached the high and holy level. Therefore, they are called the “great thought” the minds of Brahma world, the heavenly thought and the thought that practise *kaṣiṇa*. The not-great mind refers to the 12 types of immoral thought, the 18 types of thought without root or cause (*a-hetu*), the 8 types of moral thought of the sensuous sphere, the 8 types of resultant thought of the sensuous sphere, and the 8 types of functional thought of the sensuous sphere. Altogether the 54 types of thought of the sensuous sphere, which are the minds of humans and gods, are in complex that one should study to understand clearly. The aforementioned 54 types of thought are called the “not-great mind” because they have not reached the high and holy level. In fact, they are still far away from the Highest City.

[Para. 264.] The surpassable mind refers to the 54 types of thought of sensuous sphere too because it is accompanied with mundane phenomena. There are other types of thought that are higher and holier than the thought of sensuous sphere, namely, the 27 types of Brahmin thought. Therefore the 54 types of thought of sensuous sphere are called the “surpassable thought.” Out of the 54, there are 15 types of moral, resultant and functional thought of form-sphere, and there are 4 types of moral thought of formless-sphere, 4 types of resultant thought of formless-sphere and 4 types of functional thought of formless-sphere, altogether 12 types of thought of formless-sphere. All these (15+12=27) types of thought are the minds belonging to the Brahma world. These 27 types of thought are indeed higher and holier than the 54 types of thought of sensuous sphere as mentioned above. Among the mundane thought, there is no other higher than the “great thought” and therefore they are called the “unsurpassable thought” and let the audience, young and old, take notice and remember the nature of thought.

[Para. 265.] In other words, the 27 types of great thought are also called “surpassable thought” because there are 4 types the Path and 4 types of the Fruition, which are indeed higher and holier than the 27 types of the great *jhāna* minds, which can lead one fly or go under the earth. So, the unsurpassable minds here refer to the Path of Stream Enterance, the Fruit of Stream Enterance, the Path of Once Returner, the Fruit of Once Returner, the Path of Non-Returner, the Fruit of Non-Returner, the Path of Arahant and the Fruit of Arahant – the thought of people who have attained the Arahantship, *jhāna* and higher knowledge. Among the thought of sensuous sphere, the thought of form-sphere and the thought of formless-sphere, there is none that is higher or holier than supramundane thought. Therefore, the 8 types supramundane thought are the highest, holiest and most glorious.

[Para. 266.] The concentrated mind refers to the 8 types of moral thought of sensuous sphere, and the 8 types of functional thought of sensuous sphere – altogether 16 in number. There are also 5 types of moral thought of form-sphere, 5 types of functional thought of form-sphere, 4 types of moral thought of formless-sphere and 4 types of functional thought of formless-sphere as delivered by the Lord. The said types of thought are accompanied with the proximate concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and ecstatic concentration (*appaṇā-samādhi*),³⁷⁹ which help one carlm in dealing with all faculties. Therefore, the concentrated thought is the stable thought, which is not scattered but one-pointedness. The unconcentrated thought refers

³⁷⁹ PED s.v. ‘samādhi’.

to the 64 types of mundane thought, which are the minds of humans and gods and subject to change and shaky. So, such types of thought are called the “unconcentrated thought” because they have not obtained the proximate concentration) and ecstatic concentration but shaky when they come to contact with senses.

[Para. 267.] The free thought refers to the 8 types of moral thought of sensuous sphere, 5 types of moral thought of form-sphere, and 4 types of moral thought of formless-sphere, which are counted altogether. The said types of thought are called “free thought” because they are able to temporarily destroy or overcome the defilements. Out of these, there are immoral thought, mundane resultant thought and indeterminate thought, which are in complex with defilements, being dark and dirty like sour ‘water moss salad’.³⁸⁰ Except the great thought, the moral thought, the functional thought and the Arahant’s thought, the above mentioned types of thought are actually the dirty thought, the inferior thought and the low-grade thought, causing to spread out continuously, like creepers climbing a bush [and when they are died and dried out], they get half burned by smoke of fire, which are totally black.

[Para. 268.] In other words, the 4 types of the consciousness of the Path and the 4 types of the consciousness of the Fruition are accompanied with the knowledge of *jhāna*, namely: Stream entrance, Once returning, Non-returning and Arahant. The Arahant, who are have cut off the defilements and their roots. The said 8 types of suramundane thought are called “free mind” because they have completely cut off all kinds of defilements. All the left, the 81 types of mundane thought of animals, humans, gods and *brahma* are called “unfree mind” because they are wild and untamed, and fond of sensual pleasure. The said types of thought are called “unfree thought” because they cannot become completely clear off the defilements but sunk in mire and get dirty with black spots.

[Para. 269.] **Bhikkhave** means: Dear lovely sons, young and old, all of you, the noble and the ordinary, wearing the yellow robe! **Citte cittānupassī viharati** means: Contemplate the minds of humans and gods; take them as meditation objects; investigate them with concentration in order to understand their nature. **Ajjhattam vā** means: Think of the nature of impermanence and change in our bodies. **Citte cittānupassī viharati** means: Contemplate the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion etc. and meditate to see the nature of thought. **Bahiddhā vā** means: Think of the bodies of others

³⁸⁰ Water moss salad (*ti sa*) seems to be a popular Shan menu since the time of Zao Amat Long. So, using this simile means his audience can imagine how ‘water-moss-salad’ looks like. Today, water-moss is still a popular vegetable menu among the Shan, Thai and Laotian people.

somewhere in human world or in heaven. **Citte cittānupassī viharati** means: Contemplate their thought-with-lust, their thought-with-hatred and their thought-with-delusion etc, altogether being 16 groups. So, make sure you are attentive and mindful in whatever you do, such as when you are standing up or when you are sitting down.

[Para. 270.] **Ajjhattabahiddhā vā** means: Think of both one's own body and the bodies of other, inside and outside; be wary of the dangers of *samsāra*, of experiencing suffering in the circle of life. **Citte cittānupassī viharati** means: Contemplate the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion etc.; be still and meditate and be wary of the danger of *samsāra*. **Samudayadhammānupassī vā** means: Again, reflect on ignorance, lustful desire, intentional action, thought and mental properties (*nāma*), matter (*rūpa*) etc. all of which are the cause of becoming. The thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion arise because of ignorance, lustful desire, intentional action, thought and mental properties, matter – all of which are the cause of becoming and arising. So one should contemplate them with mindfulness.

[Para. 271.] **Vyadhammānupassī vā** means: Again, contemplate the mind, which is constantly disappearing and vanishing. Ignorance, lustful desire, intentional action, thought and mental properties, matter etc. are the cause of its vanishing. **Cittasamīṃ viharati** means: So, one should understand this in order to see the nature of thought. **Samudayavayadhammānupassī vā** means: Again, contemplate thought, which has the nature of arising and disappearing. **Cittasamīṃ viharati** means: Reflect on the ignorance, lustful desire, intentional action, thought and mental properties and matter, accompanied with the nature of arising and disappearing, like a wheel turning round and round in the *samsāra*. Reflect on different kinds of object, being yellow, white, black or mixed colours in different sizes and forms that they are in real existence. So, one should watch out to see the nature of all phenomena.

[Para. 272.] **Assa bhikkuno** means a monk, who meditates on the mind. **Paccupaṭṭhitā sati vā pana hoti** means reflecting on the ignorance, lustful desire, intentional action, thought and mental properties and matter, which are accompanied by the nature of arising and disappearing that can be seen instantly. **Yāvadeva ñanamattāya paṭisattimattāya** means: So as he meditates on the mind, developing wisdom and mindfulness and the teaching of the foundation of mindfulness, it will lead him to make progress step by step, getting more

and more benefit, leading him to the ‘everlasting city’ (*weng yuen*).³⁸¹ **So bhikkhu** means the monk, who reflects on the Foundation of Mindfulness. **Anissito ca** means getting rid of lustful desire, deceit and wrong view; he will have a clear mind; without having filth, his mind will be bright day and night.

[Para. 273.] **Loke** means the world of thought of sensuous sphere, form-sphere and formless-sphere. **Attāti vā** means we lost our way (having a concept of wrong view on the five aggregates) by saying: ‘they are my body, I control them, and I possess them.’

Attāniyati vā means we also have a wrong view with our properties by saying: ‘this is my property, my gold, my silver, my cloth’ and so on. We are attached to the realms of three spheres with lustful desire, deceit and wrong view. So, the said concept should be avoided and kept away; do not let them attach to your mind. Dear you many, the disciples of the Buddha! The above mentioned are in fact the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation on Mind as preached by the Lord.

[Para. 274.] Starting from the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion, all the 16 types of thought have been thoroughly explained by the Lord, accompanied with its commentary and the auditory voice. Whoever reflects on the Foundation of Mindfulness will be benefited in the cultivation of wisdom, knowledge, mindfulness, and the like of outcome will be enhanced to the men and women who meditate on every movement such as standing up and stepping forward, day in day out. Remember, dear the audience, who are scare of suffering, wish for goodness and reach the Long Last City, where is free from all kinds of misery and effect of Karma. There is too much suffering we are experiencing! The suffering of birth, the suffering of old age, the suffering of sickness and the suffering of death, and starting a life again and again in the *samsāra*. In whatever life we are, we are not free from the enormous prison of lustful desire and the flames of defilements, making our heads and bodies burning. We are completely defeated by the king of death; we are vanished and appear again as humans or gods; but we are still not fear of the *samsāra* and all kinds of suffering.

[Para. 275.] Dear ladies and gentle men, please make your effort and practice hard in order to reach the state of Mahā Nibbāna, the peaceful and happy place. Be alert and mindful. Reflect on the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion etc. and cultivate your thought in order to understand the nature of thought clearly. The aggregate

³⁸¹ The term *weng yuen* [‘everlasting city’] is a Shan epithet for Nibbāna.

of thought, the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion etc. are in fact the log of impermanence, the log of suffering and the log of selflessness. They are not everlasting but subject to change and vanishing; we are born to die. One, who meditates on the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Mind several times, should say: ‘Oh, the aggregate of thought is impermanent! The aggregate of thought is suffering! The aggregate of thought is selfless!’ Contemplate like this again and again with enthusiasm and diligence.

[Para. 276.] Thus, the golden mouth of the Golden Glory has poured water with inscent of the taste of his teaching. After delivering the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Feeling, he then delivered the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Thought of 16 categories. Dear the audience, for those who do not understand, in order to understand, and for those who are not clear, in order to be clear, please listen again and gain, ask again and again. Keep discussing Nibbāna, which is the highest city, the secured place. If your thought is not straight, in order to be straight, if your habit is not good, in order to be good, please make an effort to train yourself, taking the Buddha’s teaching as your guidance. Reflect on the realms of three spheres and be frightened the old age [and the like of all suffering], and keep your thought on your in and out breath. Let us rejoice!!! (*sādhu... sādhu... sādhu...*).³⁸²

³⁸² For the remaining translation of Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, i.e. the section on the Contemplation of Ideas (*dhammānupassanā*), see Appendix Three.

CHAPTER FOUR

Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*

in Comparison with the Canonical *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and its Commentaries

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous Chapters, Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* (henceforth *MSP*) is composed in the Shan poetic style that is especially prepared for reading aloud to an audience. As such, it reflects the particular teaching style traditional in Shan Buddhism, even for meditation subjects. The features unique to this Shan style of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (henceforth *MSS*) become clear when comparing different versions and commentaries on *satipaṭṭhāna*. Particularly, there are two commentarial works on the canonical *MSS*, which have a close link with *MSP*. The two works are: the Buddhaghosa's fifth century *Sumangalavilāsinī* (henceforth *SV*), the commentary of *Dīgha Nikāya* ['long length sayings'] (*DN*), containing *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā* (henceforth *MSV*), which is the commentary on *MSS*, and the *Mahā thati-pat-htāna-thok Pali-daw neik-thaya* or *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya* (henceforth *MSN*)³⁸³ of the 19th century Burmese scholar monk U Cakkinda.³⁸⁴ These two texts are undoubtedly the main sources of Amat Long's *MSP* as I shall illustrate below. Yet, it is interesting to study how he has adapted them to his style

³⁸³ While the proper title and its Burmese accent of Pali pronunciation is *Mahā thati-pat-htāna-thok Pali-daw neik-thaya*, its equivalence *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya* is the international standard. Hence the latter term is used throughout this thesis. The original date of this text is unknown.

³⁸⁴ U Cakkinda, better known as U Budh (pronounce as 'bok'), was a renowned Burmese Buddhist scholar of the 19th century. His earlier name seemed to be Jambudhaja (Kalāsa 1981, pp. 41-43). He was conferred by two honorary titles: one is Cakkindābhīdhaja by King Bagyidaw in 1819 and perhaps how became known as Cakkinda and the other is Cakkindābhisīrisaddhammadhaja-mahādhammarājādhīrājaguru. He was also known as Aung Mye Bone Zan Sayadaw because he was the abbot of Aung Mye Bone Zan monastery. However, basing on his earlier name and his skills in writing, he was better known as U Budh. He seemed to be popular in both Burmese and Shan communities. There was a claim in Burmese Buddhism that there were three Budhs in Buddhism, namely the Buddha (the first budh), Buddhaghosa (the middle budh) and U Budh (the last budh). In this context, Buddhaghosa was considered as the person who knows the will of the Buddha and U Budh knows the will of both the Buddha and Buddhaghosa in terms of their knowledge, skills and ability of writing commentaries on the Buddha's teachings. See Kelāsa 1981, pp. 32-43 and Bode 1897, pp.133-134.

of writing: his method of exegesis, through which he makes the techniques of mindfulness meditation practice accessible to his Shan audience.

In this chapter, I shall first discuss the complexity of terminological system used by Amat Long within the context of Shan poetic language, as he incorporated Pali and Burmese terms in his composition of *MSP*. Secondly, I shall explore the influences on and also uniqueness of *MSP* by comparing the *MSP* with *MSV*, *MSN* and other commentarial works on *satipaṭṭhāna* or mindfulness meditation. I shall look at how Amat Long adapted the Burmese version of *MSN* to his own style of writing *MSP* in the form of Shan poetry. Finally, I shall discuss the significance of *MSP* by analysing Amat Long's expressions of devotion (*saddhā*), spiritual shock (*saṃvega*), and non-self (*anattā*) as important messages related to *satipaṭṭhāna* or the foundation of mindfulness meditations.

4.2 The Use of Pali and Burmese Terms in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* and other *Lik long*

As is the nature poetic work, *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* (*MSP*) is rich in beautiful words and phrases used for both essential terms and decorative words throughout the text of *MSP*. Terms used to achieve this rich style are not only Shan but also Pali as well as Burmese. There are two reasons for using Pali terms. Firstly, it is the fact that Pali is the source language and language of the Pali canon, and secondly it is the prestige of Pali generally because of its association with authorised Theravada texts, be these canonical, para-canonical or empowering texts, such as *yantra* and *mantra* writing.³⁸⁵ Amat Long begins his *MSP* with the Pali term 'okāsa', which literally means 'excuse me Lord' or 'by your leave Lord', which is often used at the beginning of Buddhist formula for recitation of ritual or devotional texts.³⁸⁶ Moreover, within the very first two lines, he uses two more Pali phrases, namely, *pañcapaṭiṭṭhita* ['fivefold veneration'] and *kāya-vacī-mano* ['body, words and mind']. This is a signal given by Amat Long that a number of Pali terms will be found throughout his *MSP*.

Apart from Pali terms, Amat Long also used Burmese words and phrases for the composition of *MSP*. This seems strange for today's generation of Shan and they find it hard

³⁸⁵ Crosby 2003 (vol. 2, pp. 836-841).

³⁸⁶ Throughout the Theravada Buddhist world, the formula *okāsa* is characteristic of non-reform litanies. Although the reform such litanies took place through the 18th to the 20th centuries in Sri Lanka and Thailand, and especially in 19th-early 20th century Thailand, the majority of Buddhist sects (*nikāya*) in Southeast Asia use the non-reform litanies, as is the case in Shan Buddhism.

- in the context of modern tensions about the place of Shan State in the Union of Burma - to accept or even understand such Burmese influence on Shan language and culture. However, it is understandable in the context of Shan social conditions and Shan-Burmese relations during the time of writing *MSP* in the 19th century. In fact, Burmese influence on Shan language seems to have begun at least since the second half of the 16th century when Burmese king Bayinnaung invaded the Shan states. Since then the assimilation of Burmese into Shan language has been an on-going process, resulting in part from Burmese political hegemony and in part from international Burmese imposition, a process that has continued to this day. For example, Susan Conway (2009) discusses Burmese influence on Shan culture in relation to Shan paying tribute to Burmese, getting education there and adopting Burmese dress on occasion.³⁸⁷

Under influence from the Burmese, many Shan writers even translated or incorporated Burmese texts into Shan to create new *lik long*. In the case of Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, although he is aware of which sections of the text belong to the Pali canon, which to the Pali commentary and which to the Burmese, he based his text on a Burmese version written by U Cakkinda, as shall be discussed further below, to which he added some similes and explanation are closely relevant to daily life of his readers, and such examples help his readers develop a better understanding on the *satipaṭṭhāna* mindfulness meditation. I shall give more examples of Burmese influence during the time of Amat Long in the next section.

Having discussed the issue of using Pali and Burmese terms more generally, I shall now look at some specific Pali and Burmese terms in the *MSP*. I shall first analyse Amat Long's usage of Pali terms. Throughout the text we find that Amat Long quotes Pali and uses Pali terms. In general this gives the text an authoritative and sacred tone, a feature found in much Southeast Asian religious literature in the vernacular. Amat Long uses this specifically at the start of sections, which may be a way of varying the tone to give extra authority and energy to the new topic. Amat Long also uses individual Pali terms throughout the text. In cases this is because the Pali technical terms are those used for a the specific religious vocabulary, especially that of meditation and *Abhidhamma*, just as – to a less extent – we find Pali terms being used by Western English-speaking. For example, the Pali terms *Abhidhamma* and *vipassanā* are used for meditation practice globally as these techniques and

³⁸⁷ Conway 2009, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 33-34.

technical vocabulary spread globally. It is clear that the concepts spread with Buddhism, so the terms for those concepts come in the words given for them in the source language. Then there are cases where Amat Long seems to have selected specific Pali terms, when other Pali, Burmese or Shan terms would have done or even been more usual. Thus in his homage to the Triple Gems, Amat Long uses the Pali term *mahāpurisa* [‘Great Man’],³⁸⁸ rather than following the usual manner of paying homage to the Buddha in Shan by reflecting on his nine major qualities (which are common in both Shan and Pali).³⁸⁹

On the other hand, there are places where Amat Long rejects just using the Pali term of the original, even though it is familiar to his audience. Nor does he provide a simple translation. This reflects his ability to entice his readers and audience to listen. For example, he has translated a simple Pali word ‘monks’ into Shan with several various glosses. Some of his glosses of the term ‘monks’ are:

Monks! You all, who practise well and wish for the country of happiness and liberation from suffering!³⁹⁰

Monks! All of you, small and great, new and old, young and elderly, all the noble son like pupils!³⁹¹

Monks! All of you who are the royal lineage of Sakya, followers of the Buddha and practise well!³⁹²

Monks! You all who wear the clean robes!³⁹³

Monks! All of you, noble sons, young and old, all the audience!³⁹⁴

Dear noble sons!³⁹⁵

Oh my pupils, who are like sons to me! Young and old, senior and junior, all the audience!³⁹⁶

³⁸⁸ See more discussion on the term *mahāpurisa* in the section on the expressions of devotion in Chapter Four.

³⁸⁹ The nine major qualities of the Buddha are: That Blessed One is such since He is (1) Accomplished, (2) Perfectly Enlightened, (3) Endowed with knowledge and Conduct or Practice, (4) Well-gone or Well-spoken, (5) the Knower of worlds, (6) the Guide Unsurpassed of men to be tamed, (7) the Teacher of gods and men, (8) Enlightened, and (9) Blessed.

³⁹⁰ *MSP*, para. 19.

³⁹¹ *MSP*, para. 15.

³⁹² *MSP*, para. 19.

³⁹³ *MSP*, para. 21.

³⁹⁴ *MSP*, para. 25.

³⁹⁵ *MSP*, para. 31.

Dear noble pupils! Young and old, all of you who belong to the lineage of the good listeners!³⁹⁷

Dear moral sons, you virtuous monks in lineage of Sakya.³⁹⁸

Monks, [who wear the robes of] 7 lines, 6 points and 5 blocks,³⁹⁹ belonging to the royal lineage of Sakya!⁴⁰⁰

Dear son-like lovely pupils!⁴⁰¹

Dear noble sons, great and small, senior and junior, who enjoy with five kinds of *vasībhoga*.⁴⁰²

Dear noble sons, young and old, great and small, all of you, who have left the field of sensual pleasure!⁴⁰³

Monks, my dear pupils, all of you, seniors and juniors, my noble sons!⁴⁰⁴

Dear monks, who practise well, develop mindfulness meditation and fear of the cycle of rebirths!⁴⁰⁵

Dear monks, seniors and juniors, all of you noble son-like pupils, who have attained the five levels of *jhāna*.⁴⁰⁶

Given the use of Burmese loanwords and even full texts, it would be interesting to know more about how Burmese expectations of poetry at this time relate to Shan tastes and practices. Such research has yet to be done. However, as a contribution towards the possibility of such research I shall now highlight the aspects of Zao Amat Long's work that are regarded as characteristically Shan. Taking Amat Long's work as an example of Shan

³⁹⁶ *MSP*, para. 35.

³⁹⁷ *MSP*, para. 40.

³⁹⁸ *MSP*, para. 47.

³⁹⁹ This is a reference to the manner of stitching the monk's robe. According to the *Vinaya* or the Book of Monastic Rules, the Buddha recommended that the robe design should be cut in the pattern of paddy-fields. For more details, see "cīvara" in Keown 2003, *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*; "The Monastic Robes" in buddhanet.net (http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhistworld/robe_txt.htm); "Buddhist Monks' Robes" in religionfacts.com (http://www.religionfacts.com/buddhism/things/monks_robos_hats.htm) [Date visited: 12.12.10].

⁴⁰⁰ *MSP*, para. 51.

⁴⁰¹ *MSP*, para. 54.

⁴⁰² *MSP*, para. 56.

⁴⁰³ *MSP*, para. 63.

⁴⁰⁴ *MSP*, para. 66.

⁴⁰⁵ *MSP*, para. 77.

⁴⁰⁶ *MSP*, para. 79.

poetic writing, it is helpful that we have a Burmese precursor, i.e. Cakkinda's Burmese text for comparison.

From the above passages, one can see that Amat Long's style of writing is very much a type of 'a decorative writing' or 'the writing that is decorated with poetic words.' This type of decorative writing is called 'decoration with leaves and flowers' (Shan: *sai mauk sai mai*), a phrase that Amat Long uses in the body of his work to refer to the ongoing blossoming of the tree of the *dhamma*. As well as alluding to the tree of the dhamma in a broader sense, the image conjured up by this phrase is that of the text of core meaning of the dhamma presented in the text as a tree. The trunk of a tree is similar to the essential facts, crucial to the structure of the text, while its leaves and flowers are but decorative words, not the essential facts. For instance, there are two occurrences where Amat Long describes the monks' appearance by referring to the design and structure of the robe they wore (*MSP* para. 22 and no. 51). Here, the word 'monk' is the essential fact, part of the trunk, in that it is part of the canonical original, even though both Buddhaghosa's commentary, *MSV*, and Amat Long also include laypeople in their audience in addition to monks, as I shall explain below. The description of the monks' robes, on the other hand, is something unessential but related to the monks, making the epithet more enticing. This addition or ornamentation of the text is a flower. While such flowers and leaves are unessential to the progress of the narrative and not in the canonical texts, these extra words become essential to Amat Long's style of writing. It is the flower words that make *MSP* entertaining because they convey the sense of humour and amusement for its readers and audience. They also affirm aspects of the community: the relationship between the reciter / the Buddha and the audience, the respect for and role of the monks, the inclusion of young and old at this communal event – the elaborations draw the audience in and make them crucial to the narrative, embedded within the performance. This type of writing seems to be common in Shan literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries, as I shall discuss in greater depth later in this chapter.

It is also worth of noting that some of the above passages contain the terms 'pupils', 'sons', 'young and old' and 'audience'. These terms in fact indicate people from all walks of life who practise meditation. The text in the Pali canon, as mentioned above, is address to monks only, and the most common term of address used for this is *bhikkhave*, 'monks'. This has led to what I regard as a misinterpretation by scholars that meditation is 'only for monks.' Richard Gombrich observes in relation to Sri Lanka that "little or none of the [*samatha* or *vipassanā*] meditation is known to the traditional laity who practice 'meditation' by reciting

Pali verses at temples on holy days and he is of the opinion that Dharmapāla is perhaps the first [lay] Buddhist to learn meditation from books after he discovered a Pali manuscript on meditation in 1890.⁴⁰⁷ This suggests that *samatha* or *vipassanā* meditation practices among lay Buddhists in Sri Lanka have been recently developed or revised. However, in the *SV*, Buddhaghosa makes it clear that meditation should ideally be practised by both monks and laity. To make his point, he even provides examples of working people discussing their meditation at watering places, etc. and even of an animal practising meditation.⁴⁰⁸ Similarly, Amat Long regarded meditation as being for all walks of life, ‘young and old’ people from all kinds of backgrounds. Apparently he composed the *MSP* (1875) mainly for lay Buddhists who practise the practice of temple sleeping on holy days when they also seriously practise meditation. He has also rightly interpreted that Pali the term does not literally refer to only the community of ‘monks’ but to all walks of life, young and old, senior and junior. In practice, certain groups of people are – as Buddhaghosa acknowledges – more likely to make time for the practice. In Shan practice, as I found in my fieldwork and explained above, this means that laypeople doing temple sleeping are more likely to be more senior members of the community, whether female or male.

Now, I shall return to look at how some Burmese terms used by Amat Long in his *MSP*, as this also influences the specific style of Shan literature in those areas that received Burmese influence. To begin with, noticeably there are at least eighteen Burmese words on the first page of the *MSP*. Of them, some are obviously Burmese while some are Shan version of Burmese or broken Burmese. I shall discuss the latter further below. The more obvious Burmese terms used by Amat Long at the beginning of his *MSP* are: *shi-kho-ngapa* [‘five kinds of veneration’], *u-khya* [‘bow down’] *pha-wa* [‘footprint’], *hta* [‘to keep, store or place’], *tayashit-kwak* [‘one hundred and eight spots’], and *kyam-myat* [‘sacred treatise’]. What is interesting here is that Amat Long uses Burmese terms even for simple words, such as ‘five’, and ‘one hundred and eight’, the terms, which definitely exist in Shan language, rather than being neologisms where loanwords can be crucial or reflect the source of the new concept or object being expressed. As such, the appearance of Burmese terms in *MSP* seems to be for other purposes rather than adopting Burmese terms for loan words out of necessity.

⁴⁰⁷ According to Gombrich, lay Buddhists learn meditation from meditation masters/monks only, not from texts. Gombrich 1990, pp. 26-27, 237.

⁴⁰⁸ *SV* (PTS) 1971, vol. 3, pp. 742-743. Crosby questions this modern scholarly understanding of lay practice as a modern development in Crosby 2006 and is working on pre-reform non-monastic including animal inclusion in meditation currently. Crosby 2006, vol. 126, no. 2, pp. 180-181.

One possible reason is that Burmese terms were added to enrich the vocabulary for the cadence of poetic work.

Amat Long's usage of Burmese terms to enrich vocabulary is seen more clearly when he uses both Burmese and Shan terms together within a sentence. For example, the phrase '*zi-phyan khon-laikha*' (*MSP*, para. 33), *zi-phyan* is Burmese and *khon-laikha* is possibly a new Shan term created by Amat Long; both terms share the same meaning of 'repeating a certain technique of practising meditation' or 'practising a certain type of meditation repeatedly'. Sometimes, Amat Long even mentions all the terms of the languages he possibly knew. For example, in the section of the nine cemeteries (*MSP*, para. 123), he says, "It [cemetery] is called *sivathika* in Pali; in the commentaries, it is called *susanna*; Tai people call it *pa za* or *pa heo*; and the Burmans call it *sang khaeng*". Here, Amat Long states that *sang khaeng* is a Burmese term. It is actually a broken Burmese or a Burmese loanword; the actual Burmese word for cemetery is *thin-gyaing*, not *sang khaeng*.

In fact, Amat Long uses a lot of Burmese loanwords in his *MSP*. Loanwords here mean words that have a Burmese origin but have been modified to the flavour of the Shan tongue or accent. Some such loanwords can be easily identified while some are hardly recognized as Burmese. For example '*sung-myo*' (in para. 1) is derived from the Burmese word '*thone-myo*' ['three types'], and '*sa taw*' (*MSP*, para. 19) from Burmese '*thar-daw*' ['royal son'].⁴⁰⁹ The method behind this transition seems to be that the Shan pronounce the Burmese syllable '*tha*' as '*sa*', and the method has possibly originated from the system of Pali pronunciation in that the Burmese pronunciation of Pali syllable '*sa*' as '*tha*'. For example, the Pali phrase '*namo tassa*' is pronounced in Burmese as '*na-maw tat-tha*' and in Shan as '*na-maw ta-sa*'. Yet the Shan, at least at the time of Amat Long, have applied this system to the whole Burmese language, not just Burmese pronunciation of Pali as it should be. Hence, we see Burmese loanwords in *MSP*, such as *Thwak-sak wang-sak*, Burmese *htwek-thet win-thet* ['in and out breathing'].⁴¹⁰ Another strange pattern using Burmese loanwords in Shan language is the pronunciation of '*in*' as '*ang*'. For example, *Sang khyang* is equal to Burmese '*sin-chin*' ['to reflect on'].⁴¹¹ However, as Terwiel noticed (2003: 13), many of the Burmese loanwords

⁴⁰⁹ The term *sa taw* is also used as a royal term in some Shan palaces, particularly in Sipaw and Yawnghe states, which are closer to Mandalay, the then Burmese capital until 1880s.

⁴¹⁰ *Assāsa-passāsa* (Pali) *twak-sak wang-sak* (Shan Burmese) *lom-khao lom-auk* (Shan) *mao-man mao-me* (Burmese Shan), *pyaung le* (Burmese). (*MSP*, para. 31). Note that Amat Long uses Pali, Shan Burmese and Shan terms within a sentence.

⁴¹¹ *Kuet-kauk thauk-thang sang-khyang* (*MSP*, para. 19).

used by the Shans ‘are not intelligible to a Burmese’. So, only people who know both languages (Shan and Burmese) can then recognise that they are Burmese loanwords. Such Burmese loanwords are recognised by linguists and by the *zares* I interviewed in greater depth as the Shan version of Burmese or Shan Burmese.⁴¹² My informants knew that, while they could identify Burmese etymologies for such terms, most Shan could not.

Amat Long often uses a mixture of vocabulary from all three languages, i.e. Shan, Pali and Burmese, within a sentence. For example, in the first sentence of *MSP*: ***Okāsa okāsa*** (Pali), *zang-nai* (Shan) ***pañca-paṭiṭṭhita kāaya-vacī-mano*** (Pali) *zaw-zai-*(Shan) *nalung-sung-myo shikho-ngapa* (Burmese) *tak-ma* (Shan) *u-khya phawa lya-lya* (Burmese) *katta khup-to-*(Shan) *tha twa-*(Burmese) *tai-kung-*(Shan) *taw* (Burmese).⁴¹³ In this sentence, there are 8 Pali words, 8 Shan words, 11 Burmese words, and at least 19 loanwords adopted from Pali and Burmese: the Pali terms are marked in bold and the Burmese terms are marked with underline. Here is another sentence: *pacchimabhavika phawa asung-taeng nan hai lai khing pen paññādhika sammāsambuddha phara tapa phung-aa phung-lwa aakyi ilot pot hui khui tu takha nga-khan nippan saw kon phi sai sao*.⁴¹⁴ In this sentence there are 4 obvious Pali words and 7 Burmese words while the rest are Shan and loan words. It is astounding that with the mix of terms from the three languages, the rhythm and the flow of the poetry tune really well. This style of mixing terms from all three languages is seen throughout the text of *MSP*. Another example of text is Zao Kawli’s *Sutta Mahā Nibbāna* (1876), which has 20 pages with around 6000-6500 words of which around 450 are Burmese loanwords.⁴¹⁵ Moreover, Zare Muling’s *Law ka phe wot* (1962) has 33 pages and contains 25-30 Burmese loanwords a page. Thus, Burmese loanwords can be easily found, sometimes even written in Burmese scripts among the Shan texts, on every page of *lik long*. From our textual analytical studies, the average of Burmese loanwords in *lik long* is around sixteen per cent of the whole text. As Terwiel (2003: 12) points out, Shan literature of other areas had less contact with the Burmese so we may conjecture that it is likely to contain correspondingly fewer Burmese loanwords and may instead contain loanwords from other languages. This issue may be

⁴¹² For more discussion on the Shan version of Burmese language, see Terwiel 2003, *Shan manuscripts, Part I*, pp. 13-14.

⁴¹³ For the translation and notes on this passage, see *MSP*, para. 1.

⁴¹⁴ *MSP*, para. 6.

⁴¹⁵ Each page, except the last one, has 38 lines, the last page has 35 lines; each line contains 7-10 words. So, the approximate words of the whole text would be between 6000 and 6500. A copy of this text is kept at the library of the Oxford Buddha Vihara, Oxford, UK.

confirmed as more work, such as that mentioned in Chapter One, is done to document the Shan literature of different regions.

A possible disadvantage of having Burmese words in Shan *lik long* is that it causes trouble for Shan readers and listeners alike, many of whom do not know Burmese. This may be why many of my informants doing temple-sleeping in northern Thailand told me that it was only after some time repeatedly attending the more sophisticated *haw lik* that they acquired the ability to understand it. The use of Burmese terms in Shan language seems strange for today's generation of Shan and they find it hard - in the context of modern tensions about the place of Shan State in the Union of Burma- to accept or even understand such Burmese influence on Shan language and culture. However, it is understandable in the context of Shan social conditions and Shan-Burmese relations in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the period of most *lik long* texts were composed.

While there may be more now, as a result of recent history, for Shan seeking to preserve traditional Shan practices to distance themselves from Burmese influence, that influence has in fact stretched back centuries. A historical sketch of early Shan-Burma relations is found during the period of Burmese Pagan dynasty (1044-1287). For instance, the *Glass palace chronicle of the Kings of Burma* (GPC) mentions that King Anawratha, the founder of the Pagan dynasty, had travelled to a Shan (Tai Mao) region that now straddles the China-Burma border, in his in search of the Buddha's tooth relics. The Shan king from Mueang Mao presented his daughter, Zao Maun La, to be the chief queen of Anawratha.⁴¹⁶ However, there is no clear record or strong evidence whether the Burmese language had influenced on Shan/Tai language or vice versa during the Pagan period. As we move forward to the second half of the 13th century CE, we see more records on Shan rulers and their relations with Burmese counterparts. For example, the three Shan brothers, who were the rulers of upper Burma, were all Buddhists and had social intercourse with the Burmans.⁴¹⁷ One of the remarkable events occurred with Sam Saeng Sai (Burmese: Thihathu),⁴¹⁸ the youngest, that when he defeated the Chinese invaders, he danced and sang in triumph with a

⁴¹⁶The name of the lady is spelled in the *GPC* as Sawnunhla and the country as Mau. *GPC* 1923, pp. 81-83; Hurvey 1925, p. 30.

⁴¹⁷*HM* 1992, vol. I, pp. 361-77. The 1992 edition of this Burmese Chronicle records as "Min Nyi Naung Thong Ba" (The Three Brothers) without mentioning "Shan" but Harvey and Wyatt wrote in their works as the "Three Shan Brothers." Harvey 1925, pp. 75-80; Wyatt 2003, pp. 43-44, 47-48.

⁴¹⁸Thihathu is Burmese accent for the Pali term *Sīhasūra* 'lion-hero'. As the term was recorded in Burmese chronicle as Thihathu, and early western scholars, particularly during the British colony of Burma, followed the Burmese records when

Burmese song, which is believed to be composed by himself.⁴¹⁹ This suggests that the Shan's association with Burmese language and literature, particularly among the Shans in upper Burma and today's western Shan State, already took place in the 13th century CE.

The Burmese influence on Shan language seems to have accelerated from the second half of the 16th century when Burmese king Bayinnaung invaded the Shan states. This shows most clearly in the development of Shan royal and monastic terms. For instance, while there are some Shan own words, such as *Zao Pha* ['lord of the sky' i.e. ruling prince], *Zao Kaem Mueang* ['crowning prince'] and *Haw* ['Palace'], for Shan royal terms, there are many words, such as *Zao Sa Taw* ['royal son'], and *Amat* ['minister'], which were obviously adopted from Burmese language.⁴²⁰ The spreading of Burmese language over the Shan seemed to become a Burmese strategy for their political power expansion.

One of the Burmese strategies for the assimilation of the Shan language and literature is seen through the sending of Burmese Buddhist texts by the Burmese court to Shan courts.⁴²¹ For instance, *Mhan' nan'' mahā rājavan' to' krī'*, also known as *Hmannan (HM)*, a Burmese chronicle written in the early 19th century CE by the Burmese court, states that, after the Burmese invasion to the Shan states in the late 16th century CE, King Bayinnaung sent Burmese version of Tipiṭaka texts and missionary monks to the Shan regions. Noticeably, *HM* states the missionary monks as *ariya-saṅgha* ['noble monks'] and the Shan rulers were called *micchādiṭṭhi* ['wrong viewers']. We do not have sufficient evidence, for example textual evidence from before this point, to assess the accusation of holding wrong views – we are obviously dealing with a biased account, but the point is that, the Burmese chronicle describes the transmission of texts from the Burmese court to the Shan under the Burmese King Bayinnaung as a follow up to his invasion of Shan territories.⁴²² The influence of Burmese literature on Shan literature and language may therefore go back to at least the 16th century. Even in the materials we have we can see that there were numerous translations and extractions of Burmese texts into Shan works, in addition to – and contributing to – the uptake of Burmese words.

⁴¹⁹ *HM* 1992, vol. I, pp. 362-3; Harvey 1925, pp. 75-9.

⁴²⁰ The development of Shan royal terms had automatically stopped since the handing over of power from the Shan princes to the government of Shan State in 1959.

⁴²¹ *HM* 1992, vol. 2, pp. 300-308.

⁴²² *HM* 1992, vol. 2, p. 308.

The adoption of Burmese words into Shan language was accelerated through the adoption of Burmese systems of education. We see this through the sending of the ruling Shan chief or Zao Pha's children to receive their education in the palace at Mandalay.⁴²³ For example, Zao Amat Long and Zao Naw Kham, both born in mid 19th century CE, were sent to Mandalay Palace for their further education.⁴²⁴ Like Zao Amat Long, Zao Naw Kham was recognized as one of the greatest Shan scholars of all time. By the late 19th century CE, using Burmese words became a custom or fashion among the Shan writers. In an interview with Zare Auto, a knowledgeable *zare*, he speculated that the more complex style of the 19th century compositions was also influenced by Burmese fashion.⁴²⁵ By the time of Amat Long, the use of Burmese words in Shan literature had, then, already been established and reflected Burmese authority in the Shan regions. It seems to have been particularly fashionable for the last two centuries, even during the British colonial period, until as late as the 1960s. Thus, Amat Long was writing long after the Shan absorption of Burmese language, but before the 20th century centralization of education systems in Burma and before any organized resistance to the adoption of Burmese. In this context, Pali and Burmese are clearly status languages at the time that Amat Long was writing.

Moreover, on the monastic side, for centuries, Shan monks and novices were sent to Burmese monastic institutions in the cities of central Burma to learn Buddhism through Burmese Buddhist texts and practise Burmese monastic rules and traditions. After they finished their studies and returned to their hometowns and villages, they naturally taught their Shan students what they had learned, through the system of Burmese monastic education. The modern Shan monastic education system even ignore the Shan traditional *lik long* literature, as it follows the modern Burmese system of monastic education. Saokhu Khammai Dhammasami, a modern Shan monk-scholar, has pointed out that the Shan monastic education system turns away from its century-old literary heritage, the *lik long* poetic literature, because it has “under the pressure to develop along the line of its Burmese counterpart, with the narrowly defined, government-sponsored written examination-based education system.”⁴²⁶ He argued that the Shan Saṅgha educationalists have had to face a

⁴²³ Mandalay was the capital of Burma until 1885 but remained as one of the most important cities for higher education until present day.

⁴²⁴ Khun Mahā 1996, pp. 142-143.

⁴²⁵ From fieldwork notes of interviewing Zare Auto conducted in July 2009 by SOAS-based group research on Shan Buddhism at the Borderlines.

⁴²⁶ Khammai Dhammasami 2009, p. 39.

difficult choice: “If they do not follow closely the curriculum of the state-sponsored examinations, there may never be hope of the government recognizing their qualifications.”⁴²⁷ Thus, the influence of Rangoon Burmese Saṅgha, which was backed by the central government, on Shan monastic education, including the Shan Buddhist literature, has inevitably continued to this day.

The privileging of Burmese in the early 20th century was also seen among the Shan communities in Northern Thailand. For example, when a Saṅgha official from Bangkok went to Maehongson in 1934, as quoted by Kamala Tiyavanich, to inspect monasteries there and to distribute religious texts written in central Thai, he mistakenly recorded the Shan communities in Maehongson area as ‘Burmese’ (Phama). He complained that local people did not want to learn Thai: “Most monks and novices in this province do not want to learn Thai,” the inspector wrote. “They prefer the Burmese [actually Shan] education and tradition. This is because the majority of local people are Burmese [Shan]... When I suggested that they take up Thai, they [the Shan monks] argued that the language is useless here. It is very difficult to convince people to learn Thai.”⁴²⁸ Note that this Saṅgha official, who came from Bangkok, mistakenly called the Shan people “Burmese”. My own fieldwork in Maehongson confirmed the importance of Burmese education on Shan communities in northern Thailand before the forced centralisation of the Thai Saṅgha and imposition of a Thai curriculum, the context in which the inspector was writing. Thus, Wat Jong Klang still houses amongst its library of *lik long* the Burmese texts brought over by its abbot in the early 20th century following his education in lower Burma, just before this temple was forced to adopt Thai language.⁴²⁹ Thus, the Burmese fashion or Burmanization are seen among the Shans even on the Thai side of the Burma continued into the 20th century. And now, of course, Shan Buddhism in Thailand is having to deal with the increasing Thai influence which is one of the reasons for the divergence between Shan practices, especially *lik long* recitations, in the Shan State and in Thailand. Though, of course, other Shan Buddhist practices continue, like temple sleeping, the ordination festivals, etc.

⁴²⁷ Ibid, p. 44.

⁴²⁸ Kamala Tiyavanich refers to Phra Khru Wiratham-sunthon’s letter to Phra Thammakosajan, saṅgha head of monthon Phayap, in *Thalaengkan khana song* [Bulletin of saṅgha affairs], no. 24 (May 1935), p. 447.

⁴²⁹ From an interview with the abbot of Wat Jong Klang conducted by Kate Crosby and Jotika Khur-Yearn during the SOAS group fieldwork research in July/August 2009. The language issue was in fact negotiated and became more flexible. On which, see Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010, p. 7.

The modern Shan resistance to this privileging of Burmese language and culture is a relatively recent phenomenon, dating back perhaps only to the 1950s. The resistance was accelerated in the 1960s reflecting the political tension marked by the Burmese military coup led by dictator general Newin in 1962. One of the main reasons for the military coup was the problem of sharing power between the Shan and the Burmese political administration. Without this event, one might argue, the Shan language would have continued to be replaced by the Burmese.

An attempt for the resistance to the privilege of Burmese and for the preservation of Shan cultural identities was the campaign of teaching and learning modern Shan scripts, known as *Lik Tai Pan Mai* [‘modern Shan scripts’], in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Many Shan university students were actively involved in running Shan classes during the summer vacation. The Burmese officers saw this literacy campaign as political movement and consequently many Shan teachers were arrested.

Other resistance to the privilege of Burmese was the reformation of Shan Buddhist literature. These include the invention of Shan scripts for writing Pali and the re-writing of *lik long* literature without Burmese loanwords. After several attempts made by several groups and individual scholars,⁴³⁰ a Shan system of writing Pali was recognized by the Shan Sangha Organization in 2001.⁴³¹ As for the composition of *lik long* texts, Zare La Tun, a modern Shan poet, has composed a new *lik long* retelling the last ten Jataka stories without using Burmese loanwords. This is a stylistic innovation in the composition of *lik oong*, given the tradition of using a mix of Shan, Burmese and Pali terms.

Regardless of Shan attempts to preserve and prioritize their own language, the education system, with Burmese secular and monastic educational institutions being given better resources, has continued the process of privileging Burmese on the Burma side of the border. Modern Shans, particularly those born in the cities, use Burmese as their medium language. Usually, they would speak Shan only to their parents or older relatives who encourage their children to speak Shan. I have documented elsewhere parallel problems of

⁴³⁰ See more discussion on this in the final section of this chapter.

⁴³¹ The official statement of recognition of the Shan State Sangha Organization on the Shan system of writing Pali and a table of comparison with the Burmese and Romanized scripts for writing Pali were mentioned in the *Paritta* Pali text, published in 2002, which seems to be the earliest text in Shan Pali scripts.

the Thai side of the border at different points in Thai history and due to educational and economic reasons to this day.⁴³²

4.3. The Distinctive Characteristics of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* in Comparison with the Canonical *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and Its Pali and Burmese Commentaries

To transmit the Buddha's teaching of mindfulness meditation practice through the composition of Shan poetry seems a great challenge, despite the support of Pali and Burmese commentaries. In this section, I shall investigate Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhan* (*MSP*) as an attempt to deliver the Buddha's teachings of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (*MSS*) to his Shan audience. I shall discuss the distinctive characteristics of *MSP* by comparing it with the canonical *MSS* and its commentaries, such as *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇaṇā* (*MSV*) of the *Sumangalavilāsini* (*SV*), the 5th-century commentary of Buddhaghosa on the *DN* and U Cakkinda's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya* (*MSN*), a 19th-century Burmese version of commentarial work on *MSS*.

First, let us look at the main scope of the two *satipaṭṭhāna* works: the canonical *MSS* and Amat Long's *MSP*. The entire canonical *MSS* is framed by an introduction, describing the occasion of its delivery by the Buddha, and a conclusion, highlighting the delighted reaction of the monks at the end of the Buddha's sermon. In contrast, Amat Long's *MSP* begins with the words of veneration paying homage to the Triple Gems and the author's teachers before describing the occasion of its composition including the name of the sponsor who requested the composition of *MSP* and the description of the place the author lived while composing *MSP*. In the conclusion, Amat Long writes in detail about the composition of *MSP*, i.e. a brief profile of the author and date of the completion of the treatise. This fits with patterns observed elsewhere for post-canonical literature observed by Crosby (2012), who points out that this becomes particularly developed in authors later than Buddhaghosa (2003). Amat Long goes a step further that the authorial openings observed by Crosby, however, in the attention he pays to the sponsor and place of composition. This reflects a distinctive aspect of Shan *lik long*, namely lengthy authorial openings which are specific to the occasion of sponsorship of composition. *Lik long* authorial openings are further often

⁴³² Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010, pp. 3-7.

preceded with a scribal opening praising the sponsoring of the copy, hence the blank pages left by some copyists in anticipation of sponsorship, as mentioned in Chapter One. In the process of cataloguing *lik long* collections in 2009 I had to alter the cataloguing system, based on catalogues of other kinds of Theravada literature, to accommodate this unique feature of Shan manuscripts, a feature which could allow the study of Buddhism in the 19th-early 20th centuries, especially, in great detail, since so many aspects of Buddhist sponsorship and merit-making are described in them with specific dates and people.

Generally, the main text of *MSP* can be divided into two types of material: a loose *nissaya* translation and further commentary in plain Shan. These two types of commentary are applied side by side and paragraph by paragraph throughout most of the text: the *nissaya* being a translation into Shan that adheres closely to the style and content of U Cakkinda's *MSN*, which in turn stayed close to the original Pali. The core of this provides the main structure of the text, with further elaboration in Shan in the form of a commentary that extends the meaning. Nonetheless, this system is not applied to the whole text. For instance, at some points, a Pali or Burmese word or phrase or even a few lines are used by Amat Long just for evidence or quotation rather than matching the Shan words next to it.

Amat Long's method of writing is rather a surprise to many Buddhologists, who have tended to see *nissaya* and the types of elaboration in Amat Long's text as a kind of commentary, in the biblical sense – a commentary expounding a scripture within a specialist scholarly study community. However, the function of the Shan text is different. It is more likely a representation of the text itself, rather than a subordinate commentary. As such, the text is within the commentary and for Shan, Amat Long's text is the *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta*, not just a commentary on it.⁴³³ However, when one looks into it closely, the *nissaya*-like section of *MSP* being further divided into the Burmese-based and the specifically Shan further explanation, so: – the translation of *MSS* mainly based on *MSN*, commentaries on *MSS* mainly based on Buddhaghosa's commentary and Amat Long's own commentary or way of explanation for his Shan audience. All three are in Shan and use Pali and Burmese quotations and Burmese loanwords, as described above, but the specifically Shan-authored sections have fewer Pali and Burmese quotes and are more accessible, as are the stories given as examples (on which see further below). Hence, in addition to Amat Long's significant

⁴³³ It is believed that Buddhaghosa's commentaries were based on the old commentaries, which are believed to have existed since the Buddha's time.

style of writing, this last part also makes *MSP* unique when comparing it with other versions of *MSS*.

There are also some other reasons for the popularity of Amat Long's *MSP*, such as his skills in using terms for clear explanation, using similes when amplifying some difficult words or phrases in the theory of mindfulness meditation, having good presentation and so on. For example, he uses a puppet as a simile in comparison with the human body, a rope as a simile of the air element, and the puppet-show performer as a simile of the mind; thus, only when all three – the mind, the air element and the body – are well connected, the body is then able to move around.⁴³⁴ This is how he skillfully explains the doctrine of *anattā*, or selflessness. There is no God who creates and controls our bodies and minds. In fact, our bodies and minds exist only because of the earth, water, fire and air elements. This is how Amat Long explained that we should always be mindful about the impermanence (*anicca*) and selflessness (*anattā*) of our bodies, as taught by the Buddha.

Another important feature seen in this version is the expertise and skill of the author, in that he understood well the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* in terms of *Abhidhamma*, Buddhist theory or doctrine. For example, when he explains about the human body concerning the foundation of mindfulness, he goes into detail about the four great elements, i.e. earth, water, fire and air, which are operating inside and outside of our bodies. He also outlines the different kinds of feeling when he explains the *vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhān*, the foundation of mindfulness on sensation, such as pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling and mutual feeling, which are often found in the *Abhidhammā Piṭaka*.

Returning to Amat Long's introduction, I shall further highlight details peculiar to the style of Shan literature. As is common to many discourses in the Basket of Discourses (*Sutta Piṭaka*), the *MSS* begins with the Buddha's cousin attendant Venerable Ananda's words 'thus have I heard' (*evaṃ me sutam*) (see Crosby 2012). Amat Long, however, as mentioned, started composing his *MSP* with the words of veneration, paying homage to the Triple Gems and respect to his teachers. Consequently, he makes wishes for success without any hindrance or danger while writing the treatise, as he says, "May the power of *dhamma* protect me and prevent me from dangers while composing this religious treatise."⁴³⁵ He also makes a great vow, by the effort of writing the treatise, to become a Buddha through 'the main gate of

⁴³⁴ *MSP*, para 135 (1968, p. 77).

⁴³⁵ *MSP*, para. 1.

wisdom' to free himself and other living beings from the world of transmigration or cycle of life, *saṃsāra*.⁴³⁶ This is the kind of information found in colophons in some other Theravada manuscript traditions.⁴³⁷ This indicates that the ideal of Bodhisatta practice has existed among the Shan who are followers of Theravada or Southern form of Buddhism, confirming – as a few scholars have pointed out – that the Bodhisatta ideal is also practised by some Theravādins, not only by Mahāyanists or followers of the Northern form of Buddhism as claimed by others.⁴³⁸ Compared to the canonical version of *MSS*, Amat Long's *MSP* is considerably longer. One reason for this is that it incorporates explanations from Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *MSS*. For example, it is said in *MSS* that the Buddha was staying in the market-village of Kammāsadamma. However, Amat Long wrote in his *MSP* that the Buddha was not actually staying in the village but in the wood outside the village where it is neither too far nor too near to the crowd of people and houses. This point is mentioned in *MSV*, which is evidence that *MSP* is a type of commentary on *MSS*, but Amat Long then strengthens the details of such aspects.⁴³⁹ This manner of painting a picture of people going about their lives to make the text entertaining or accessible lies behind another feature of Amat Long's work, which again adds to the length: he often gives examples, using subjects familiar with his audience, for further clarifications on certain points of the *MSS* in dealing with the perception and techniques of mindfulness meditation practice. For instance, in the section on breathing (*MSP* 1968: 16), he compares the in and out breathing with the belt of a machine wheel, which is winding round and round;⁴⁴⁰ and, in the section of reflection on repulsiveness, he compares the undigested food that we have just eaten a few minutes or hours ago with a dog's turd scattered on the road!⁴⁴¹

While *MSP* is a *nissaya* on *MSS*, it also incorporates *MSS*'s commentaries. It also incorporates passages of other commentarial works, such as the *Visuddhimagga* and its commentary, particularly with reference to the 32 parts of the body, and the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, two works regarded as strong authorities for 'orthodoxy' in

⁴³⁶ The 'main gate of wisdom' refers to the analogy of Nibbāna as a city with a single gate in Sāriputta's 'lion's roar' praise of the Buddha's wisdom found in several places in the canon, for example, *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*.

⁴³⁷ See Crosby 2012.

⁴³⁸ For more on the Theravada *Bodhisatta*, see Crosby 2003. It is hard to know at this stage of research into Theravada literature whether this *bodhisatta* vow arose under the influence of other forms of Buddhism or not.

⁴³⁹ Soma Thera 1999, pp. 18-19.

⁴⁴⁰ *MSP*, para. 23.

⁴⁴¹ *MSP*, para. 70.

Theravada. Below is an example indicating the differences between Amat Long's *MSP* and the canonical texts of *MSS*. First, look at a passage in the beginning of *MSS*: **“There is, monks, this one way to the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and distress, for the disappearance of pain and sadness, for the gaining of the right path, for the realisation of Nibbāna: - that is to say the four foundations of mindfulness.”**⁴⁴² It is worth noting that the above passage contains five purposes of mindfulness meditation: namely the purification of beings, the overcoming of sorrow and distress, the disappearance of pain and sadness, the gaining of the right path, and the realization of Nibbāna. In the *MSP*, Amat Long gives his explanation of the five purposes one by one. Below is Amat Long's commentary on the passage: “Whoever wishes to gain the knowledge of the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, the ‘holy city’ (*Mueang Myat*) of pleasant smelling flowers, one must cut off *samsāra* to finish off all suffering without delay. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, which the Buddha delivered in the state of Kuru, is the way, the only way (*ekāyano-maggo*) to the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna, cutting all the 1500 defilements together with branches and leaves and burning them with fire so that they will not exist anymore.”⁴⁴³ From the above two passages, we can see how Amat Long consults both the canonical texts of *MSS* and *MSV* for his *MSP*. First, it is worth noting that the above passage of the canonical *MS* contains the words ‘path and Nibbāna’ while Amat Long's passage in *MSP* contains the words ‘the knowledge of the path, fruition and Nibbāna.’ This is an example of Amat Long's expertise in Abhidhamma and how he is drawing in Abhidhamma analysis, regarded as a more precise formulation of dhamma, into the exposition. According to Abhidhamma, there are two kinds of knowledge: ‘the knowledge of the path’ (*maggañāṇa*) and ‘the knowledge of the fruition’ (*phalañāṇa*) and that is how Amat Long has explained the text to us here, and then added a visual imagery which makes the process more concrete and accessible.

A further example of the way Amat Long makes this more accessible by making them more concrete is by using and extending the classic description of Nibbāna as a ‘holy city’ (*Mueang Myat*).⁴⁴⁴ He encourages his audience, if they wish to reach the ‘holy city’ of Nibbāna, to cut off and stop ‘the cycle of life transmigration’, *saṃsāra*, which is, in other words, the world of suffering. Again, in the same text of *MSP*, he also describes Nibbāna in other different ways. For instance, he illustrates Nibbāna as ‘the country beyond all kinds of

⁴⁴² Walshe 1995, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: a Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, p. 335.

⁴⁴³ *MSP*, para. 1.

⁴⁴⁴ Steven Collins has given extensive discussion of Nibbāna as an imaginary city or state (1998, pp. 224-229).

trouble and difficulty’ (*Mueang pon tang yap tang yak*),⁴⁴⁵ as the ‘top city’ (*weng zaum*),⁴⁴⁶ and in verse 15, he refers to Nibbāna as the ‘country of happiness’ (*mueang suea*).⁴⁴⁷ Another example of Amat Long’s significant way of expression in concerning with the state of Nibbāna and the way to attaining it is that he compares the fivefold hindrance (*nīvaraṇa*) with the gates at the entrance to a city. Thus, he explains that if one wishes to reach the city of Nibbāna, he/she must unlock or destroy all five gates, i.e. the five kinds of hindrance.⁴⁴⁸ The way he expresses himself in Shan poetry makes these concepts more accessible to his audience – they can imagine the scenery of the holy city of Nibbāna surrounded by the gates of five kinds of hindrance, and so on. Thus, we can see how *MSP* is significant for its commentarial contribution to his Shan readers and audience, not just in rendering it into Shan.

4.4. Zao Amat Long’s *MSP* and U Cakkinda’s *MSN*: Similarities and Differences

We shall now look at U Cakkinda’s Burmese version of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya* (*MSN*) in comparison with Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipatthan* (*MSP*).

It is obvious that Cakkinda’s *MSN* is Amat Long’s model for his composition of *MSP*. This is proved by quotations of Cakkinda’s works in the *MSP*. For example, in the section of ‘the contemplation on repulsive’, Amat Long quoted the verses mentioned in Cakkinda’s *MSN*. To provide authority for his quotation, he compliments the author at one point (*MSP* 1968: 52), says: “those verses were composed by learned and venerable persons who are expert in the Tipitaka”,⁴⁴⁹ and at another point (*MSP* 1968: 55-56), he even mentions the full names of U Cakkinda, with his honourable titles i.e. “Cakkindābhisirisaddhama Mahādhammarājādhirājaguru”⁴⁵⁰ [‘Cakkinda the glory of the noble teachings and the great teacher of the great righteous king’], which were, most likely, given by the king (Mindon) at

⁴⁴⁵ *MSP*, para. 1; Amat Long 1968, p. 3.

⁴⁴⁶ *MSP*, para. 2; Amat Long 1968, p. 3;.

⁴⁴⁷ Amat Long 1968, p. 7; *MSP*, para. 10. In Burmese Buddhism, Nibbāna is often described as ‘Holy Golden State’ (*Shwe Pyi Myat*).

⁴⁴⁸ Amat Long 1968, p. 3; *MSP*, para. 1.

⁴⁴⁹ *MSP*, para. 88.

⁴⁵⁰ *MAP*, paras. 96, 98.

that time. Not surprisingly, Cakkinda's *MSN* has impressed Amat Long leading him to transform and modify the style of *MSN* into *MSP*, in his Shan version of *MSS*.

To begin with, *MSN* and *MSP* have similarities in terms of the style of *nissaya* translation. One of the most common features found in both works is that each section of the *nissaya* translation is followed by explanation in plain (without Pali) Burmese in *MSN* and plain Shan poetry in *MSP*, the explanation would either be based on Buddhaghosa's commentaries or the author's own contribution to the techniques of mindfulness meditation practice. Nevertheless, Amat Long did not simply follow Cakkinda's style and system of writing. For example, Amat Long did not give any explanation at the end of the section of breathing as did Cakkinda. Instead, he concludes the section with the repetition, as in his introduction to this treatise, of how and where the discourse of *MSS* was delivered, and then he gives a signal for an interval during the performance, for the audience to take a break, writing, "I translate this into Shan poetry like lighting a candle for Shan nations [to understand the teaching of *MSS*]. This completes the first section – let us stop here for awhile."

In his introduction to *MSN*, Cakkinda discusses the significance of *MSS*, by narrating three stories of animals—the bat story, the ox story and the hen story, all of which are related to recitation of *MSS*.⁴⁵¹ These animals, having listened to the discourse of *MSS*, were reborn in happy lives in heaven and the human world and finally attained Nibbāna.⁴⁵² These stories reveal the significance of *MSS*, saying that even animals can get the benefit from listening to it even without understanding the meaning but having faith, respect and devotion to it. It is interesting that Cakkinda has given us three stories on animals related to *MSS*. Perhaps it is his psychological implication for his readers that, if even animals can gain the benefit of *MS*, humans can certainly acquire it if they wish to. Thus, having narrated the stories, Cakkinda urges his readers to listen to and learn the holy discourse of *MSS*. In comparison, Amat Long writes his introduction to *MSP* in a different way. Unlike Cakkinda's introduction to *MSN* using the stories of animals benefiting from the listening to *MSS*, Amat Long pays homage to the Triple Gems and gives respect to his teachers and then makes wishes for safety and security without any hindrance or disturbance while composing the treatise of *MSP*. Amat Long's final wish is to become a Buddha following which he briefly narrates the history of

⁴⁵¹ The animal mentioned by Buddhaghosa is different: a parrot who does not just listen to the text but rather practises the meditation on bones.

⁴⁵² Cakkinda 1873, pp. 22-30.

the First Buddhist council to give an illustration of how *MSS* was recorded as discussed above.

4.5. A Comparative Textual Analysis of *MSP* in Comparison with *MSV*, *MSN* and other Commentarial Works on *MSS*.

In this section, I shall analyse some significant points made by Zao Amat Long in his *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* (*MSP*) in comparison with both early commentarial works on *MSS*, such as *MSV* and *MSN*. In addition, the scholarly works on *satipaṭṭhāna* by modern authors, such as Soma Thera, Mahasi Sayadaw, Silananda, Analayo, and Rupert Gettin will also be consulted.

To begin with, there is the phrase ‘**the purification of beings**’ (*sattānaṃ visuddhiyā*), which is worthy of making comparative analytical study between the commentarial works, particularly *MSN* and *MSP*. Here both Cakkinda and Amat Long realised that it is necessary to clarify the meaning of ‘purification of beings’, as some may have a view of ‘cleansing the body’ instead of ‘purifying the mind’. Therefore, Cakkinda gives his explanation for the phrase ‘purification of beings’ as ‘cleansing from various kinds of defilements’.⁴⁵³ Amat Long gives further details of the defilements, which are the dusts of the mind or mental taints. He says, “Those beings, who live with lustful desire, hatred and delusion will remain in darkness and, as a result, suffer from the bad effects of lustful desire and the like. However, these four foundations of mindfulness are the ways to lessen the desire for the world of sensual pleasure, the desire for the world of form and the desire for the world of the formless”.⁴⁵⁴ Amat Long goes on to stress the importance of the mind, as he says, “It is our own mind that makes things clean or dirty, leading men and women, husband and wife, to like sensual pleasure.” He even quotes the words in the *Dhammapada* ‘mind is the forerunning object’ (*mano pubbangamā dhammā*) to prove his explanation on the importance of the mind. In fact, both Cakkinda and Amat Long’s clarification and explanation are based on Buddhaghosa’s commentaries on *satipaṭṭhāna*. But, Cakkinda gives a briefer explanation on ‘the purification of beings’ while Amat Long provides more details, proving to us again that Amat Long has widely read for his composition of *MSP*, and is not just translating *MSN*.

⁴⁵³ Cakkinda, 1873, p. 31.

⁴⁵⁴ *MSP*, para. 10; Also see Soma Thera, 1999, *The Way of Mindfulness*, p. 23 (1st ed. 1941).

Amat Long does not always follow other authors of commentaries on *MSS* prior to him, such as Buddhaghosa and Cakkinda. For instance, in the beginning of *MSS*, there is a famous phrase ‘**the only path**’ (*ekāyano ... maggo*), the meaning of which has been interpreted by commentators in many ways and I thought it is worth of making an analytical and comparative study here. Remarkably, Buddhaghosa has interpreted the meaning of ‘*ekāyano*’ in many ways, such as the only path, the path that should be walked on alone, the Buddha’s holy path, the path that is possible only in this dispensation of the Buddha, and the direct path to the holy Nibbāna.⁴⁵⁵ Cakkinda follows Buddhaghosa’s way of interpretation closely.⁴⁵⁶ Amat Long, by contrast, sees the phrase as clear-cut, by sticking with only one meaning of the term, i.e. ‘the only path’. He wrote, “The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, which the Buddha delivered in the state of Kuru, is ‘the only way’ to the Path, Fruition and Nibbāna.”⁴⁵⁷ Anālayo, a modern scholar and meditation practitioner, has rendered his translation of ‘*ekāyano*’ as the ‘direct path’, by drawing attention to the ‘*satipaṭṭhāna*’ as the ‘direct path’ because it directly leads to the realization of Nibbāna.⁴⁵⁸

In the section of breathing, the phrase ‘**not clinging to anything in the world**’ (*na ca kiñci loke upādīyati*) has been extensively interpreted by the three commentators, Buddhaghosa, Cakkinda and Amat Long. First, Buddhaghosa interprets the phrase ‘not clinging to anything in the world’ by the statement that ‘with craving or wrong view, one should not say: “This is my soul or this belongs to my soul”’ (*attā vā attaniyaṃ vā*).⁴⁵⁹ Secondly, in clarifying the two words ‘craving’ and ‘wrong view’ which relate to ‘soul’, Cakkinda wrote: With wrong view, one should not cling to the body by saying “the body that I can control”, and with craving, one should not cling to his or her property by saying “this is mine”.⁴⁶⁰ And, thirdly, Amat Long composed in poetry giving explanation to his Shan audience that one should try not clinging to the body of five aggregates by saying or thinking: “This is me; this is my body; I can control it; I possess it” and one should try not clinging to his or her property by saying or thinking, “This is my possession, my money, my gold, my

⁴⁵⁵ For more detail of Buddhaghosa’s account of interpretation on the *ekayano*, see *SV* (PTS), pp. 741-745, and Soma Thera, 1999, pp. 19-23.

⁴⁵⁶ Cakkinda, 1873, p. 31.

⁴⁵⁷ *MSP*, para. 13.

⁴⁵⁸ Anālayo, 2003, *Satipaṭṭhana: the direct path to realization*, pp. 27-29.

⁴⁵⁹ *SV* (PTS) 1971, p. 250; Soma Thera, 1999, p. 58.

⁴⁶⁰ Cakkinda 1873, p. 38.

belonging, my cow or my buffalo”.⁴⁶¹ Thus, of the three commentaries on the phrase ‘not clinging to anything in the world’, Amat Long’s work has given more details and hence clearer explanation to his audience, in particular he makes the topic more concrete. It is also worth noting that his explanation highlights what was considered to be high value property of his time: money, gold and dairy/ beef animals. If he were alive today, he would perhaps have mentioned car, computer, mobile phones, etc.

In the section on postures or the modes of deportment (*iriyāpatha*), with his inspiration from Buddhaghosa’s commentaries, Amat Long has given an extensive discussion on the word ‘going’ (*gaccha*). In referring to the phrase ‘**a monk, when walking, knows that he is walking**’, Buddhaghosa explains how the awareness of physical movement, such as walking, between animal and human is far different from each other. According to Buddhaghosa, an awareness of that sort belonging to animals does not shed the belief in a living being or knock out the percept of a soul. It neither becomes a subject of meditation nor the development of the ‘Arousing of Mindfulness’, *satipaṭṭhāna*.⁴⁶² With his aspiration on Buddhaghosa’s commentary, Amat Long has written even more details on the act of ‘going’. He mentions different types of ‘going’ by different types of animals, such as a pig’s going, a dog’s going, a cow’s going, a buffalo’s going, a bandit’s going, a wise man’s going. He explains that, although the act of their going is similar, their insight into it are totally different; as far as noting or understanding the movement is concerned, such as going, a bandit’s understanding is of one kind and an intellectual’s understanding is quite another. While intellectual’s going is with wisdom or mindfulness, a bandit’s going is without any of them.

Amat Long sometimes gives some special words with hidden meaning. It is understood that the aim of making such hidden text is to encourage his audience to take note and then discuss during the interval of the performance of poetic literature. For example, in para. 42, when describing the nature of human body, he mentions the ‘nine doors of air’ which is quite understandable although these are not mentioned in the canonical *MSS*, neither in Buddhaghosa’s *MSV* nor in Cakkinda’s *MSN*. As mentioned in the footnote of my translation of *MSP*, Amat Long possibly refers the nine doors of air to the two holes of the eyes, two holes of the ears, two holes of the nose, the mouth, the urethra, and the anus. It is understandable that such skills of creating such notable passage and sense of humour can

⁴⁶¹ *MSP*, para. 32.

⁴⁶² “*Evarūpaṃhi --- kammaṭṭhānaṃ vā satipaṭṭhānabhāvanā vā a hoti.*” *Papañcasūdanī* (PTS) 1922, pp. 250-1; Soma Thera 1999, pp. 59-60.

help his audience to have better understanding of the dhamma and take it into their hearts. Also, in *MSP* para. 41, he wrote an interesting passage, “Having seen the nine cemeteries, one should aspire to flee from the three realms of existence.” It is interesting to learn here why Amat Long mentions the passage ‘nine cemeteries’, since full texts are mentioned later in *MSS*. Possibly, it is a well known passage among Shan Buddhists of that time or it is possible that he has introduced to his audience a tempting topic to be read and heard later in the performance of reading and listening to the poetic literature.⁴⁶³ The passage on the three realms of existence, however, is a well-known passage, which is discussed in the footnote of *MSP-AT*, para. 1. It is understandable that such skills are creating such notable passages and a sense of humour can help his audience to have a better understanding of the Dhamma and take it into heart.

Furthermore, in the same section (on the modes of deportment), there is another remarkable phrase, which allows different interpretations: **“In whatever way his body is disposed, he knows that that is how it is”**. According to the commentator as quoted by Sīlānanda, the phrase is just to cover all the four bodily postures but has no different meaning.⁴⁶⁴ Sīlānanda has also offered an analysis of the phrase, with reference to a sub-commentator, that it is to emphasise the body as a whole in contradiction to the emphasis of each and every one of the four postures individually.⁴⁶⁵ Perhaps, he refers this to the statement in *MSN*, about the two ways of contemplating the body, namely, the contemplation of the body by way of emphasising the movement of the four postures and the contemplation of the body by way of emphasising any other movement of the body. Regarding to the way of emphasising the movement of the body, Amat Long has given us further explanation, such as the moment of ‘bending your head or glancing your eyes’ and the like. He says further, “For the purpose of liberation from *saṃsāra* [the cycle of rebirth, the cause of suffering], he [a meditator] should contemplate each and every movement of his body thoroughly and repeatedly.”⁴⁶⁶ Mahasi Sayadaw, as quoted by Sīlānanda (1990), also has the same view on this. He says that the statement “In whatever way his body is disposed, he knows that that is how it is” covers all the small deportments or postures of the body as well; not only going,

⁴⁶³ Amat Long refers the 9 cemeteries to the 9 charnel-fields, which are discussed in paragraphs 143-190 of *MSP*.

⁴⁶⁴ Sīlānanda 1990, p. 31. Sīlānanda does not mention the name of the commentator nor reference to the original commentary he has quoted.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ *MSP*, para. 37.

standing, sitting and lying down but also the small movements like stretching, bending, or looking forward or sideways.⁴⁶⁷

In the section on clear awareness (*satisampajañña*), in attempting to explain the true nature of body movement, Amat Long takes his audience to an imaginary scene of a puppet show. He compares a man dancing in a festival with a puppet dancing in a puppet show. Just like a puppet performance being managed by a hidden puppeteer through the control of strings, the movement of one's body, such as bending and stretching, takes place by the will of mind through the force of the air element. A dancing man is like a string puppet that shows the performance through the control of strings. In the same way, it is the air element that makes the so-called 'man', which is in fact just a heap of flesh, bones and muscles get moving, twisting and dancing at a festival. Just as after a late night puppet show, the voice of narrator becomes quiet, the morning fog falls and the puppet strings are hung up on the clothes-line and the audience of the show have already gone home. In the same way, the aggregate of form, the physical body, is indeed impermanent. It cannot exist for long. The air element eventually cannot make it stand, sit and lie down anymore. It becomes a dead body, and the bones, flesh, muscles and skin will finally be scattered, separated from each other.⁴⁶⁸

It is also worth noting that Amat Long mentions certain Pali words which are not found in Cakkinda's *MSN*, suggesting that Amat Long has had a wide range of reading. The standpoint is that most of Shan Buddhist canonical texts of the 19th and 20th centuries were influenced by Burmese versions. Amat Long's *MSP* itself is mainly based on Cakkinda's Burmese version of *MSN*. Sobhana, the editor of *MSP*'s printed version, even said that *MSN* is the 'origin' of *MSP*.⁴⁶⁹ Nevertheless, there are outstanding points that prove that *MSP* is not just a translation from *MSN* nor entirely based on *MSN*. For instance, in the section of clear comprehension, Cakkinda does not mention any Pali phrases and only mentions a puppet very briefly as an example of movement of body. In contrast, Amat Long mentions Pali words such as *yantaṃ*, *suttavasena* and *cittavasena*.⁴⁷⁰ Despite the fact that his work was

⁴⁶⁷ Quotation by Sīlānada 1990, p. 31. Again, Sīlānada does not give the reference of the sub-commentary he mentioned here.

⁴⁶⁸ *MSP*, para. 33.

⁴⁶⁹ In the introduction to the print version of *MSP*, edited by Sobhana 1968.

⁴⁷⁰ In fact, Cakkinda mentions those Pali words in the previous section but not in the section of *sampajañña*, still indicating Amat Long's thorough reading.

much influenced by Burmese texts, his wide range of reading Buddhist canonical Pali and its commentaries was extensive.

Some Pali quotations in both *MSN* and *MSP* are neither found in *MSS* nor in its commentary nor its sub-commentary, and Cakkinda does not give the reference to his source. For example, in the section of contemplation on the repulsive, Cakkinda, followed by Amat Long, goes on to give further details of the 32 components of the body. For instance, he gives a Pali quotation, with *nissaya* translation, about the 300 bones in the human body, such as the 64 hand bones, the 64 feet bones, the 7 neck bones, etc. For this, he quotes Pali stanzas and then *nissaya* translation but makes no referencing to this fact. The stanzas are not found in the commentary, sub-commentary on *MSS*, neither in the *DN* nor the *MN*, suggesting that, for his *MSN*, Cakkinda used canonical *MSS*, its commentary, sub-commentary as well as other sources such as *VM*. Perhaps this is an indication of Amat Long's admiration to the wisdom and knowledge of Cakkinda and Buddhaghosa for their statement on the skeletons of human body.

4.6. Expressions of Devotion (*saddhā*) in Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*

Among the significant points of Zao Amat Long's *MSP*, his talent for writing poetry with varied styles and rhymes for the expression of devotion (*saddhā*) in the Three Gems are truly remarkable.

Amat Long uses his poetic talents to praise of the Triple Gems in many ways. For example, in his homage to the Buddha, he said he worshiped the Great Man, the master of the thirty-one realms and three levels of existence. The use of the classical term *mahāpurisa* calls to mind not just the usual nine qualities, but covers all qualities of the Buddha. The traditional Theravada interpretation of the *mahāpurisa* or Great Man is that he is a man destined by fate to be a Ruler or a Saviour of the world, based on the *Lakkhaṇa Sutta* of the Pali canon.⁴⁷¹ Visually, this is present in Theravada Southeast Asia through the Buddha's footprint images. These large footprints contain squares displaying 108 symbols of different qualities of the great man (Fig. 4.1.). Amat Long refers to this when he goes on to state in the homage that the feet of the Great Man possess 108 special characteristics distinguishing him from common beings. While canonical texts also state that there are 32 major and 64 minor

⁴⁷¹ *PED* s.v. 'mahāpurisa.'

physical attributes of the *Mahāpurisa*,⁴⁷² the 108 characteristics mentioned here more likely refers to the way of depictions of the Buddha's footprints mentioned above. In Burma, these Buddha's footprints can be found in almost every town or village and the most famous one is the Shwe Set Taw ['Golden Footprint'] Pagoda in Minbu district of Magway Division.⁴⁷³ In Thailand, they have also been popular in large number since at least the 14th century and of them, the most famous one is the Phrabāt in Saraburi Province.⁴⁷⁴ In Sri Lanka, there are about two thousand footprints and the most famous is that on Adam's Peak.⁴⁷⁵

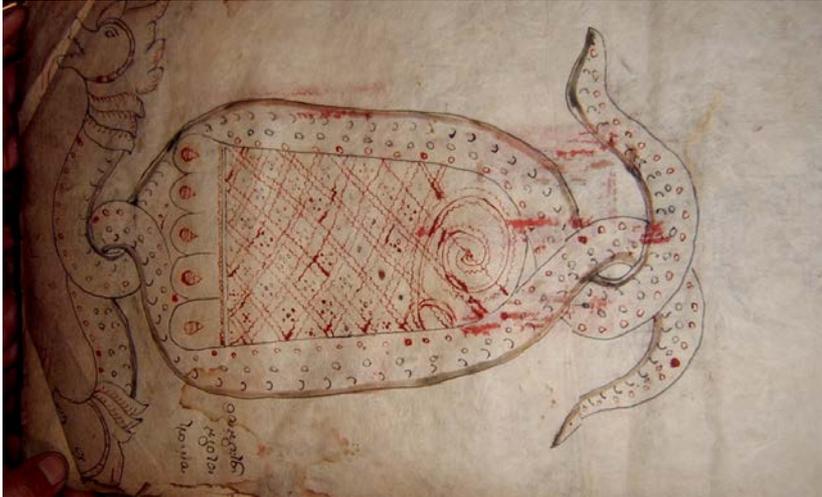


Fig no. 4. 1. A Shan version of the Buddha's footprint protected by two *nagas*. Photo: Jotika Khur-Yearn, taken from a Buddhist manuscript at Wat Samsan, Panglong (2004).

Amat Long uses a devotional style of writing throughout the text of *MSP*, not only in the section of paying homage to the Three Gems. For example, in addition to the classical Pali term *mahāpurisa*, 'great person', Amat Long also uses Shan epithets for the Buddha, such as *Mun Kham* ['Glory of Gold'], *Ngao Saeng* ['Light of Jewel'], *Saeng Lao* ['Emerald Star'] in praising him and his qualities. Usually Amat Long uses such terms at the beginning of each section of his *MSP*. At the beginning of the section on postures, he uses the term

⁴⁷² *Lakkhaṇa Sutta*, *DN*.

⁴⁷³ Online: <http://www.enchantingmyanmar.com/2011/02/the-shwe-set-taw-pagoda/>

⁴⁷⁴ For more information on the Phrabāt in Saraburi and other Buddha's Footprints in Thailand, see Damrongrāchānuphāp, 1968, *Tamnān phraphutthabāt : `athibāi rīrang phrabāt nirāt phrabāt læ lilit thotsaphōn*, and Cicuzza 2011, *A mirror reflecting the entire world : the Pali Buddhapādamaṅgala or 'Auspicious signs on the Buddha's feet'*.

⁴⁷⁵ *DN* vol. III, 1911:142-179; For more information on the Buddha's footprints, see Strong 2004, *Relics of the Buddha*, pp. 87-89.

‘Emerald Star’ in praising the Buddha, suggesting again that ‘devotion’ is an important factor for the setting up of ritual practices including the practise of meditation. It also indicates how the Buddha is treated and respected in Shan communities by comparing him with invaluable materials, such as gold, gems, jewel and the Emerald star.

In brief, Zao Amat Long’s devotional style of writing in his *MSP* leads us to believe that devotion or confidence (*saddhā*) is an important factor for meditation practice. Amat Long believes that such devotional style of poetry can help his audience to have faith, confidence and concentration while listening to the poetic texts of *MSP* and practising meditation at the same time. In fact, devotion is described as one of the most important factors in early Buddhism. For example, it is described as first among the seven treasures, seven virtuous qualities, seven powers;⁴⁷⁶ it is one of the five spiritual faculties (*saddhindriya*) and the five factors of spiritual wrestling (*saddhābala*);⁴⁷⁷ And, it is worth noting that, of the five spiritual faculties and the five spiritual wrestling, Devotion or Faith (*saddhā*) is regarded as the primary factor, conditioning the development of the rest of the four, viz., Mindfulness (*sati*), Concentration (*samādhi*), Energy (*vīriya*) and Understanding (*paññā*).⁴⁷⁸ Hence, it is logical that devotional prayer helps one to develop concentration or tranquillity, and in turn concentration or tranquillity helps one to develop the practice of mindfulness and further to insight meditation. As Crosby has pointed, “in pre-modern [i.e. pre/non-reform] Theravada Buddhism, devotion and meditation are combined and not contrasted.”⁴⁷⁹ And, Rupert Gethin has summed up in this way: “the arising of confidence provides the motivation to act; this involves decision and commitment...”⁴⁸⁰

4.7. Zao Amat Long’s Emphasis on *Samvega* in his *Mahāsatipatṭhān*

Another remarkable Pali term used in Amat Long’s *MSP* is *saṃvega* [‘spiritual shock’].⁴⁸¹ It is interesting how Amat Long has integrated the concept of *saṃvega* into the

⁴⁷⁶ See, *DN*, III. 251; *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part III, pp. 235-36.

⁴⁷⁷ See, *MN*, VIII; *MN*, I I.320.

⁴⁷⁸ Saibaba 2005, *Faith and devotion in Theravada Buddhism*, p. 133-67.

⁴⁷⁹ Crosby 2005, p. 272.

⁴⁸⁰ Gethin 2003, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, p. 115.

⁴⁸¹ See *MSP*, para. 22, where explanations of the term are also discussed. Thanisāro Bhikkhu (2010: *Access to insight*, online) translated the term as ‘sense of urgency’ and Soma Thera (1999: 114) as ‘moral-emotional upsurge’.

practice of mindfulness meditation. For, although the term comes to be important in Buddhism, it is found neither in the canonical *MSS* nor in *MSV* or *MSN*. It is found in *VMA* and Burmese works on the teachings of *saṃvega* more generally. This is perhaps further evidence of Amat Long's wide range of reading. It also suggests that Amat Long had received the conception of *saṃvega* from Burmese Buddhist literature, probably while taking his education in Mandalay.

Some popular Burmese texts on *saṃvega* prior to Amat Long's *MSP* include the 15th century author Sīlavamsa's *Samve khan linka*,⁴⁸² and Jāgarābhīdhaja's *Samvega vatthu dīpanī kyam cā* (1874).⁴⁸³ However, the scope of these texts is solely the teachings of *saṃvega* and is not related to the *satipaṭṭhāna* texts. For example, according to Jāgara, one should review the eight grounds of *saṃvega*, so that he/she will have the feeling of spiritual shock and want to practise hard for the realization of Nibbāna. The eight grounds of *saṃvega* are the four, namely, birth, aging, sickness, and death, with the suffering of the states of loss as the fifth, and also the suffering in the past rooted in the round (of rebirths), the suffering in the future rooted in the round (of rebirths), and the suffering in the present rooted in the search for nutriment.⁴⁸⁴ Hence, the general idea is that, in order to experience the feeling of *saṃvega*, one must reflect on the eight grounds of *saṃvega*.

However, according to Amat Long, one can have the feeling of *saṃvega* through the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna*, not just through the eight grounds of *saṃvega* just discussed; and that the *saṃvega* then inspires one to further effort. Here, the significance of Amat Long's account of *saṃvega* is that he integrates the term *saṃvega* into *satipaṭṭhāna*, both in theory and practice. In fact, the method of integrating *saṃvega* into the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* is seen among modern scholars, such as Soma Thera and Thanissāro Bhikkhu.⁴⁸⁵ Soma Thera is perhaps one of the earliest modern scholars who apply *saṃvega* to *satipaṭṭhāna*. My focus

⁴⁸² Its commentary, *Thanwei khan linka a phye*, was written by U Yam of Taung Oo and published 1276 SE (1914 CE), by Sāsanañōtika Pitakat Press, Rangoon and acquired by the British Museum in 1915, now kept at the British Library.

⁴⁸³ The book was published in 1236 SE at the British Burma News Press, Rangoon; 108 pp.; 21cm; now kept at British Library, bound with other Burmese texts. The full name of the author was mentioned as Jāgarābhīdhajasīripavarālaṅkāra Mahādharmarājādhīrājaguru, resident of Laytat Kyaungdawgyi, Southeast of Mahāmyatmuni Payagyi temple, Ratanāpum Naypyidaw.

⁴⁸⁴ *Jātijarābyādhimaranam, apāyadukkham, atīta vattakamūlakam dukkham, anāgata vattamūlakam dukkham, paccuppane āhārapariyesanamūlakam dukkham*. Jāgara 1874, *Samvegavatthu dīpanī kyam*, p. 6.

⁴⁸⁵ Soma Thera 1999, *The Way of Mindfulness*, p. 114 (also online at www.accesstoinsight.org); Thanissaro Bhikkhu 2010, "Affirming the Truths of the Heart: The Buddhist Teachings on Samvega & Pasada", *Access to Insight*, June 5, 2010 (Online: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/thanissaro/affirming.html>).

here, however, is the analysis of *saṃvega* in the *MSP*. The term *saṃvega* first appears in *MSP* in the section of breathing (*MSP* 1968: 15), suggesting that one can absorb the feeling of *saṃvega* through the meditation on breathing. Amat Long states that a monk can have the feeling or experience of *saṃvega* when he contemplates his body intensively, step by step, for instance, keeping his head and body still and watching his short and long breathing in and out or making the attempt to understand the unpleasant nature of his body, which is only good for worms. As a result, he would grasp the knowledge of clear comprehension and disengagement with worldly things (*sampajāna-nibbidañāna*).⁴⁸⁶ Or, in other words, he gains the feeling of *saṃvega* and consequently, he will be full of desire for the practice of meditation or mental development that will lead him to the cessation of suffering.

Amat Long's emphasis on the expression of *saṃvega* is also confirmed by his long interpretation on the 32 parts of the body in the section on the repulsive.⁴⁸⁷ Details of the 32 parts are followed in the texts one by one as found in the *Visuddhimagga*, indicating the physiology known at the time of Buddhaghosa was relatively primitive, so that perhaps the detailed descriptions of the parts are of little use to the modern meditator, but there is much of practical value in contemplating such parts of the body so as to be disengaged from them and to reduce lustful desire for or attachment to the body. This suggests that the method is popular for insight meditation, i.e. for understanding the true nature of the body, which is subject to change and impermanence, and for detachment from it. For instance, Amat Long wrote (*MSP* 1968: 36), "Like lustre, which is so clean and bright that one can see an image reflected in it, our physical bodies [when young and beautiful] are the objects of persuasion. In fact, it is a hell for the mind. It is in fact rotten and disgusting, composed of 32 components, being a place for worms and insects setting their webs widespread inside the body".⁴⁸⁸ Here, Amat Long compares a beautiful and attractive human body with a lustre and at the same time he compares its negative effect with hell, alerting his audience to feel spiritual shock, *saṃvega*, and the nature of changes that result in suffering and demonstrate uncontrollability.

⁴⁸⁶ *MSP*, para. 28.

⁴⁸⁷ The 32 components are: head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, intestines, spleen, lungs, bowels, stomach, undigested food, feces, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, lymph, spittle, nasal mucus, oil of the joints, urine. *VM* has also provided interpretations of the 32 parts in details.

⁴⁸⁸ *MSP*, para. 58.

Again, in the section on the repulsive, Amat Long wrote (*MSP-AT*, para. 63): “The 32 portions are pungently smelly and dirty sort of things like the mud of algae or vomit. They are mixed up together, rubbing each other in the stomach of the body, like the nets of the *Yang*. So, in order to understand the 32 parts clearly, one should contemplate and reflect on them again and again. The body is nothing but emptiness.” Here the term ‘Yang’ is the name of a tribe in Shan State, whose profession is mainly fishing using their hand-made nets; the 32 portions inside the stomach are composited against each other like a network. What is interesting here is that Amat Long compares the complexity of the 32 parts of the body with a typical fishing-net made by a typical group of people whose main occupation is fishing. Probably, the typical net was well known for its uniqueness or complexity or repulsiveness which persuaded Amat Long to use it as a simile for the structure of the 32 parts of the body; perhaps it was the most suitable example available to Amat Long for the explanation of meditation on the 32 parts of the body so that his Shan audience understand it and experience the feeling of *saṃvega*.

Amat Long concluded the section of repulsive with this message (*MSP* 1968: 63-64), “With the warning of repulsiveness, [a meditator] should contemplate the head-hair, body-hair, muscle, sinew, bones, etc. and develop his/her mind to feel *saṃvega*. This is in order to dislike the three worldly realms, wandering round and round, dying up and dying down (going up to haven, coming back to this world and going down to hell).”⁴⁸⁹ Remarkably Amat Long composed 53 paragraphs (*MSP* 1968: 36-64, *MSP-AT* para. 58 -111) of poetic materials on the commentaries of the 32 parts of the body, indicating his emphasis of meditation on the repulsiveness of human body, which is, he believes, a good source of *saṃvega*. This is in turn a good source for a meditator to set up his/her determination and strong desire for liberation from *saṃsāra*, pushing himself/herself to practise meditation harder. Another remarkable expression of *saṃvega* or the sense of urgency is seen in the conclusion of the Contemplation of the Body (*MSP* 1968: 104), where Amat Long writes: “Oh, I fear it, the long snake with three heads! It is in fact setting the time for Chin and Tai people sinking [in the ocean/*saṃsāra*] again and again! To whatever life we are reborn, we live with greed, hatred and delusion...”⁴⁹⁰ Here it is remarkable that Amat Long compares the three roots of evil – greed, hatred and delusion – with a fearsome three-headed snake. It is indeed a message of urgency alerting his audience to be vigilant. Also note that two ethnic groups of people –

⁴⁸⁹ *MSP*, para. 111.

⁴⁹⁰ *MSP*, para. 189.

Chin and Tai – are mentioned by Amat Long here not for any special reason but for the rhymes and decorative words of his poetic style, and presumably are direct references for his audience so includes them. It is obvious that there are not only the Chin and Tai people, who are sinking in the ocean of *saṃsāra* but all types of living beings do so unless and until they attain Nibbāna. Thus, it is important that one should have the feeling of *saṃvega* and be alert.

4.8. The Emphasis on the Teaching of *Anattā* or Non-Self in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna*

The last and one of the most important contributions of Amat Long to the theory and practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* is the expression of the conception of *anattā* or non-self, which is consistently referred to throughout the *MSP*. While the centre of the canonical *MSS* is to cultivate mindfulness, it also assumes the notion of *anattā* or non-self, the fundamental teaching of Buddhism. For this reason, it is also mentioned in the *MSS*. Perhaps this also reflects the tradition of meditation technique for removing the concept of self (*attā*), a technique that has been widely practised in Shan Buddhist communities as highlighted by Amat Long (*MSP* 1968, paragraphs 15-19). The Pali term *anattā* is a compound made up of the negative prefix *an*, which means ‘not’ or ‘no’, and the noun *attā*, which means ‘self’ or ‘soul’ in the sense of a permanent, enduring, unchanging entity. The term is thus a rejection of the notion of a core enduring entity found in other forms of religion (Hinduism and Jainism) present in the context in which Buddhism arose. Repeatedly in the Pali canon this notion of a permanent self is rejected in the observation that it (any item identified in meditation, or anything to which one is attached) is ‘not mine, this is not I, this is not myself’ (*etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attāti? No hetam, bhante*).⁴⁹¹ *Anattā* is analysed in the Pali canon both as ‘no-self’ and as ‘not-self’, i.e. that one does not have an enduring entity at one’s core (and likewise nothing has an enduring entity at its core) and that nothing can be identified as self. The point is that because everything changes it cannot be identified as a permanent self and because one is powerless over these processes, the process and anything one might like to identify as self is in fact beyond one’s control. Therefore one should not be attached to anything, whether we are talking about anything one identifies as one’s self (such as one’s body) or as one’s belonging or property (such as one’s money, clothes or house) or to other people, who similarly lack self and do not in fact belong to one. Other Shan terms

⁴⁹¹ *Anattalakkhanā Sutta*, SN 22.59 (PTS: S iii 66). The translation of this *sutta* by Ñānamoli Thera can be found at - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn22/sn22.059.nymo.html>.

often used as translations for *anattā* are ‘not owning one’s body’, ‘no essence’ and ‘being unable to control’. Tannenbaum, in her book *Who Can Compete Against the World?*, the title of which is a reflection of a Shan interpretation of *anattā* (Tannenbaum 1995: p. 104), points out the relationship between the issue of control and *anattā* (Tannenbaum 1995: pp.183-184). She points out that Spiro treats the parallel interpretation by Burmans of *anattā* as ‘lack of control’ as an anomaly. However, I would say that this is a non-literal translation to express the meaning in a more clear way, rather than an anomaly. The same is the case in the translation given above of ‘not owning one’s body’ (*am up pueang lai; to ha am lai wa*).

To begin with, as briefly discussed at the beginning of chapter two, most Shan Buddhists learn to memorise the Pali formula of the three characteristics “*anicca, dukkha, anattā*” [‘impermanence, suffering, not-self’] from their parents or senior members of the family from an early age. They say it every night, as they lie down in bed, before falling asleep. Perhaps, we can consider it as the basic or beginning of meditation practice for Shan Buddhists. The level of their meditation practice will then grow and progress as they grow up. Usually in their forties and beyond, they will stay overnight in the temple on precept days (Buddhist holy days) to spend more time practising meditation. From this time then, they are better known as temple sleepers (as discussed in previous chapters). Here, the point is that the Shan Buddhists learn the Buddha’s teaching of non-self, *anattā*, since their early days. For example, when a boy or a girl sneezes or stumbles while walking, sometimes his or her parents would say ‘*anicca*’ for him/her or ask him/her to say it.⁴⁹² Although the children learn to memorise and say the word, they would not take its meaning seriously nor make any attempt to understand it. However, as the perception is there throughout their life, they would catch the sense of it at some points and want to learn more and practise more as they grow and get old. They would not say only the Pali formula of “*anicca, dukkha, anattā*” but also the meaning in Shan next to each word in poetic style: “*anicca am-man-am-mye, dukkha khan-zai-sang-re, anattā to-ha-am-lai-wa.*” [‘*anicca* not steadfast, *dukkha* being distress and suffering, and *anattā* not my body’].

Amat Long’s expression on the teaching of *anattā* is seen in several ways and several places in the *MSP*. One of a few examples is that he applies the three characteristics into the four *satipaṭṭhāna* along with the five aggregates.⁴⁹³ For example, Amat Long suggests that,

⁴⁹² From my own experience. This is perhaps similar to what the English people say ‘bless you’ to someone when he/she sneezes.

⁴⁹³ *MSP*, para. 15-19 and five aggregates *MSP-AT*, para. 41, (the section on postures).

when contemplating the body, “a *bhikkhu* mindfully contemplates his body to see it clearly as the impermanence of the aggregate of form, as the suffering of aggregate of form, and the non-self of the aggregate of form” and he also created Pali formula “*rūpakkhandhā-anicca*, *rūpakkhandhā-dukkha*, and *rūpakkhandhā- anattā*” for meditators to memorise and recite while practising meditation. This technique applies to the rest of *satipaṭṭhāna* and the aggregates.

The emphasis of the teaching of *anattā* can also be seen in the section of the reflection on the elements (*dhātumanasikāra*), as he wrote (*MSP* 1968: 79), “The analysis of *satipaṭṭhān* is that there is no ‘I’, no ‘other’, no ‘being’, no ‘person’, no ‘woman’, no ‘man’. They are just the combination of air, earth, fire and water, which are the four elements.”⁴⁹⁴ And he further wrote in the same section (*MSP* 1968: 80-81), “When people have not reflected on the four elements, they claimed ‘my body’ ‘my husband’ ‘my wife’ ‘my children’ ‘my niece and nephew’ ‘my man’ ‘my woman’ ‘my lady’ ‘my gentleman’ or such and such terms, naming their belongings every day, boasting and talking too much. However, when they reflect on the elements of air, earth, fire and water being assembled in the human bodies, they will notice that there is ‘no body’ ‘no being’ ‘no person’ ‘no I’ ‘no others’ ‘no woman’ ‘no man’ ‘no my husband’ ‘no my wife’ ‘no my children’ ‘no my nephew.’”⁴⁹⁵ Thus, from Amat Long’s point of view, the aim of the contemplation of the body by reflection on the elements is not only to reduce one’s attachment to the body but also to understand the teaching of *anattā* or non-self. Understanding the teaching of *anattā* is seen as the heart of meditation in the tradition of practice in Shan Buddhist communities.

4.9. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the characteristics of the style and content of Zao Amat Long’s *MSP* (*Mahāsatipaṭṭhān* or The Great Discourse on the Foundation of Mindfulness) by looking at its use of language, its structure and by comparing it with the canonical *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (*MSS*) and its commentaries in Pali and Burmese. In terms of language I looked at how this reflected the Burmese hegemony of centuries and the specific politics of his day, but perhaps hindered access in the post 1950s period for a variety of

⁴⁹⁴ *MSP*, para. 139.

⁴⁹⁵ *MSP*, para. 142.

political, educational and economic reasons on both sides of the Thai-Burma border. From examining the content and form, we can see how Amat Long combines external influence with the specific language, stylistic and content changes needed for the piece to work as a medium for the teaching of *satipaṭṭhāna* in the context of Shan temple sleeping, long before the transmission of *satipaṭṭhāna* in special meditation centres.

The main scope of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MSS)* discussed in this chapter is the similarities and differences between *MSP* and other texts on *satipaṭṭhāna* starting from the canonical *MSS* and its commentaries, particularly Buddhaghosa's *MSV* and Cakkinda's *MSN*, which are closely related to *MSP*. A significant feature of *MSP* is that, when comparing it with *MSV* and *MSN*, it is longer because its style of writing is a type of 'decorative writing' or 'the writing that is decorated with poetic words'. Hence, in addition to the essential facts, Amat Long has also added 'flowers and leaves' decorative writing. As a result, *MSP* contains more details of explanation on the teaching of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation, which was especially prepared for his Shan audience.

We have also noticed that Amat Long's text was also different not just in style and in the inclusion of narrative and concrete examples for accessibility, but also in some of its doctrinal emphases, namely in the emphasis on *saddhā* or devotion, on *saṃvega* or spiritual shock, and on expressing the conception of *anattā* or non-self, this last reflecting the tradition of meditation techniques for removing the concept of self (*attā*) that has been widely practised in Shan Buddhist communities as highlighted by Amat Long. In the emphasis on *saddhā* Amat Long's work confirms the picture of pre-globalisation of Buddhist meditation in the 1950s onwards where, for example in the case of Goenka, the faith and ritual elements were minimised. On the other hand, in the emphasis on *saṃvega*, Amat Long seems to be foreshadowing the use of the concept among modernist meditation teachers, and may be reflecting a trend emerging in 19th-century Burmese circles which then found their way into popular meditation culture, but were not found in the main precursors to Amat Long's work.

CONCLUSION

Having explored the ritual and textual practices of Buddhist communities of Shan State, Burma and Northern Thailand, especially as they relate to the production and use of texts on meditation, I would like to conclude this thesis by highlighting the significant findings that have emerged from this study of Shan Buddhism's unique method of transmitting the *dhamma*, even meditation practice, through complex poetry commissioned in commemoration of significant events, and especially of the recently deceased, and performed in the context of 'temple sleeping.'

While the origin of Shan literature remains a subject for further study, we can confirm that the tradition of *lik long* poetic work was already flourishing in the 16th century, as is confirmed by the dates of one of the six famous Shan classical authors, Zao Dhammadinna, who was born in 1541 and died in 1640 (Khun Mahā 1970: 23-33).

Shan *lik long* literature is composed in a classical poetic style of writing, which is connected with centuries-old local customs and ritual practices such as memorial services, temple sleeping, and the inauguration of new houses. While many of *lik long* texts are based on commentaries to the canon, some of the texts do not seem to be found in other Theravada Buddhist countries. Nevertheless the themes, as can be seen from both the survey work and the in-depth textual study carried out for this thesis, correspond to those broadly found in Theravada literature as a whole, whether in the narratives of heroic lifetimes of the Buddha-to-be, stories of merit-making and its rewards, or detailed treatises on doctrine and meditation. My close reading of Zao Amat Long's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, a 19th-century Shan *lik long* based on the canonical *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (MSS)* is a case in point, in that it draws very closely on U Cakkinda's *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Nissaya*, a 19th-century Burmese version of the commentary on *MSS*, which in turn incorporates much of Buddhaghosa's 5th-century commentarial works on *MSS*. This drawing on the earlier works is conscious and fully explicit on the part of Amat Long. He makes no confusion between them, often identifying the source and choosing whether to quote in the original language of those texts, translate, paraphrase, interpret or augment.

While we cannot know without further study how closely other *lik long* relate to the canon and commentaries in this way, my survey work suggests that it is not unusual, particularly in cases where doctrine and soteriological practices are the focus of the text. On

the other hand, the composers of *lik long* manuscripts were not in a process of simply offering translation. In addition to composing in highly complex systems of poetry and offering explanations of their own, they transform the text through tales of exemplification directly relevant to the audience, making the text interesting with entertaining, even scatological and erotic comments (even if these are ultimately in the context of showing the dangers of erotic obsession), or animal stories. The composer uses poetic language, often doubling up Burmese loan words with Shan synonyms to create a richer tone. Terms of address that are quite plain in the precursors are elaborated at great length to include entertaining or encouraging details and to make sure the entire audience of monks and laypeople is included. These are the ‘flowers’ and ‘leaves’ of the tree of the Dhamma, the core text, and Amat Long refers several times in his text to the fresh growth of this kind replacing the older form of the Dhamma and making it newly appealing. The resulting texts are then of great length, so a further feature is the way in which the text is broken up to allow temple sleepers to take a break, and for the reader in public performances to change the tone to mark the stages of passage. We have then a unique form of literature that reflects Shan history and is an integral part of Shan ritual and religious practice. The unique physical form of the *lik long* manuscripts and their coming together as collections is also an expression of both Shan religious belief and practice, as well as of its geographic setting, as we explored in relation to waterproof inks for rainy season reading, the challenges brought about from migration and modern forestry regulation, and how these are being addressed. These various aspects, then, make *lik long* and their associated practices a unique feature of Shan culture, and as such they have been recognized as an integral part of Shan identity.

This uniqueness and the association with Shan identity brings with it both problems and promise. On the one hand we have the destruction and loss of Shan manuscripts for the political reasons that we have outlined. Disruption through wars, the lack of reward for *zare* now gaining expertise in a language that is marginal, and the lack of support for the training due to new forms of script, new national boundaries, government policies and the allure of more productive economic activities, as well as alternative expressions of Buddhism have all played their part in undermining the body of expertise required both to produce and to listen to *lik long*. On the other hand, in the past ten years or so, much has been done on both sides of the Thai-Burma border to ensure the retention and revival of *lik long*. While on the Thai side this effort has come from *zare* keen not to see the skills lost, on the Burma side the strength of reaction to Burmese suppression has in part driven a renewed interest, with a

market developing for recordings of popular *zare* on CD. The association of *lik long* with Shan identity also means that those monks most associated with the introduction of the modern intensive meditation centres that offer a different avenue of access to meditation are also among those who have expressed most interest in and support for maintaining *lik long* traditions. We see with this a new development, also, of scripts and poetry that eschew Burmese forms and terms, as well as collections that do not have their traditional accompaniment of Burmese script-Pali language materials.

While *lik long* literature is dominated by non-canonical texts, and so called ‘apocryphal’ literature, such as *apum* (folk stories), *watthu* (Jātaka stories), and *alaung-aya* (the stories of the Buddha-to-be) are, according to *zare*, the most popular for a general Shan audience, the themes are closely parallel to that of other forms of Theravada. It is the closeness of, in particular, doctrinal and meditation *lik long* to forms of literature such as the canon and commentaries in Pali and Burmese that are most associated with ‘orthodoxy’ that means there is no conflict for those who are reformists to also support this tradition, advocating *lik long* texts and their recitation within the reform and intensive meditation context. Zao Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, our textual case study here, not only includes and interprets its Pali and Burmese precursors, it develops such traditional Theravada themes as *saddhā*, faith, *anattā* selflessness/no-self and, interestingly, *saṃvega*, the spiritual shock at the realization of the true nature of the world that gives one the sense of urgency to take religious practice seriously, a theme that also came to be emphasized in the 19th-20th-century meditation movements of Burma.

This apparent ‘orthodoxy’ flies in the face of much that has been written about Shan Buddhism, which has been repeatedly described as heretical over the century and a half that Westerners have studied it. This characterization of Shan Buddhism has even been important in recent theoretical fashions. I am thinking here of the Shans’ appearance in the recent (2009), influential work of James C. Scott, in which he popularises the use of the new term *zomia* to refer to people of uplands sharing distinctive features as people who have “not yet been fully incorporated into nation-states”.⁴⁹⁶ Scott takes the Shan as an example of such peripheral peoples to which those unwilling to submit to central, government control flee in search of those with “The art of not being governed.” To characterise the Shan as heretical, Scott draws on the evidence of authors from across that 150 year period including – among

⁴⁹⁶ Scott 2009, p. ix.

others – Sir George Scott, the explorer of Shan states for the British colonial government and author of the informative multivolume *Gazetteer* on Shan peoples at the turn of the 19th century; on Edmund Leach’s 1954 classic *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure* and on the anecdotes of a late 20th-century journalist on the Burma-China border. He writes, “Edmund Leach notes that all Shans are Buddhists – virtually a condition of Shanness – he hastens to add, ‘The majority, it is true, are not very devout, and Shan Buddhism includes a number of decidedly heretical sects.’ (As we saw when discussing the Zawti and Paramatt sects (Chapter Two), attributions of ‘heresy’ are not neutral statements, and the very sect described as unorthodox may in fact be an attempt to return to a stricter orthodoxy.) Much earlier, in his *Gazetteer*, Scott describes monks in the Shan states who are armed traders with fortified positions, who smoke and wear skullcaps. He then quotes Cushing [whose views we have cited earlier] to the effect that the degree of heterodoxy increases with the distance from the center of Burmese power. A journalist travelling clandestinely through the Shan states in the 1980s mentions Buddhist monks near the Chinese border who slept with women, smoked opium, and lived in fortified monasteries. It seems probable from such fragmentary evidence that Shan Buddhist [*sic*] may represent something of a living historical archaeology of dissident Buddhist sects suppressed and expelled from the Burmese heartland over the past few centuries.”⁴⁹⁷

While I have no intention to question James C. Scott’s overall thesis (2009), and I find invaluable the details gathered by Sir George Scott on the lives and daily conduct of the Shan a century ago, it strikes me that these authors, as in the case of Cushing, can only make such statements in the absence of any familiarity with the content of *lik long*, the primary vehicle for more complex Shan Buddhist doctrine. It is not whether or not there are monks breaking the monastic rules or behaving in a way that surprises Westerners (see Phibul Choompolpaisal 2010 for Western preconceptions of monks in relation to the academic study of Thai Buddhism) that determines Shan religion as heterodox or orthodox. Clearly those particular monks are not following orthopraxy, at least as far as the anecdotes of sexual relations are concerned – smoking is a different matter, unmentioned in the canonical monastic code, and differently interpreted throughout Theravada. But the evidence of *lik long* and the central part they play in Shan practice throughout Shan regions suggests that Shan Buddhism is not only orthodox but more strongly conservative than the Buddhism of those cultures, such as central Thailand and Sri Lanka, that have been more subject to reform, yet

⁴⁹⁷ Scott 2009, p. 157.

have abandoned close usage of commentarial tradition, relying more on modern interpretation of canonical sources. In its retention of the commentarial tradition, Shan Buddhism is indeed more akin to Burmese Buddhism, known for its concerns over orthodoxy and retention of in-depth commentarial and *Abhidhammic* expertise.⁴⁹⁸ The evidence revealed by this thesis, the first in-depth academic study of *lik long* practices and content, indicates that while its mode of preservation is unique, Shan Buddhism is far from heretical. Of course, this being the first in-depth study of *lik long*, we may find that further studies, particularly of *lik long* from other regions, reveal a different picture. I hope that this study has made a useful contribution to such further research, and at the same time makes readers more aware of the value, richness and sophistication of the Shans' literary heritage.

⁴⁹⁸ On the indepth use of commentaries in decisions over orthodoxy in Burmese Buddhism, see Nagasena Bikkhu's forthcoming study of Burmese *sīmā* practice (SOAS 2012). On the extensive expertise in *Abhidhamma* in Burma see Pyi Kyaw's forthcoming study of *Paṭṭhāna* practice in Burma (SOAS 2013).

GLOSSARY

<i>Khaopuk</i>	seasonal cake made during the New Year festival, also called <i>Khao tam nga</i>
<i>Khao tam nga</i>	see <i>Khaopuk</i>
<i>Khao mun haw</i>	seasonal cake for the Sakkaraja New Year or water festival
<i>Kotsa</i>	see <i>Pang Saum</i>
<i>Naun Kyaung</i>	Practice of temple sleeping, staying overnight in the monastery and practising meditation
<i>Pan taka</i>	see <i>Pu Mauk</i>
<i>Pang Saum</i>	a ceremony of making merit for the late relatives (also <i>kotsa</i> in some areas)
<i>Pimai</i>	New Year
<i>Poi</i>	festival or ceremony
<i>Poi Auk Wa</i>	the festival at the end of rains retreat
<i>Poi Sang-kyan</i>	see <i>Poi saun nam</i>
<i>Poi Sanglong</i>	ordination festival
<i>poi saun nam</i>	water festival, also widely known as “ <i>poi sang-kyan</i> ” derived a from Sanskrit word ‘sankranta’ and the Thai and Lao people call it ‘ <i>songkran</i> ’ while the Burmese call ‘ <i>tha-gyan</i> ’.
<i>Poi tham</i>	a ceremony of honouring the <i>Dhamma</i>
<i>Pu Mauk</i>	Lay Leader for religious ceremonies, also known as <i>Pan Taka</i> , a Burmese loanword
<i>Sanglong</i>	novice-to-be boy
<i>wan sin</i>	precept day, Buddhist holy day
<i>vatta</i>	whirlpool, vicious circle, spinning around in <i>samsara</i> , without being liberated.
<i>zare</i>	Poetry reader/reciter (sometimes composer)

Appendix One

A System of Transcription for Shan Terms in Romanised Scripts

There is no single complete or standard system for Romanised Shan script. In the journal *Contemporary Buddhism* (Special issue: Shan Buddhism, May 2009), a system was offered as a guide to the more common practices in use today.⁴⁹⁹ We tried to improve on existing systems used by other authors, particularly by differentiating aspirated and non-aspirated consonants and by differentiating vowels in more detail and more systematically. The following is an update version after feedback from and consultation with Shan writers. This is not a full transliteration system because it does not represent all five tones, but is a system to represent Shan words as closely as possible in Romanised scripts. Neither a tone mark nor long or short vowel markers are used in this system. Hence, a Romanised Shan word is comprehensible only by glancing at the words next to it, as it is done in the old Shan script system.

Currently, as of April 2012, the Library of Congress is attempting to develop a new Romanisation of Shan script, which system is being tested as part of the project for Revealing Hidden Collections at the Bodleian Libraries of the Oxford University,⁵⁰⁰ on which I am also working.

18 Shan Consonants					
ၵ	ka	ခ	kha	င	nga
ဇ	za ⁵⁰¹	ဆ	sa	ဇ	nya
တ	ta	ထ	tha	န	na

⁴⁹⁹ Crosby, K., Dhammasami, K., Khur-yearn, J. and Skilton, A. 2009. Streams of the Salween: currents and crosscurrents in the study of Shan Buddhism'. In *Contemporary Buddhism*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 1-15.

⁵⁰⁰ See <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/bdlss/itsd>.

⁵⁰¹ Alternative Romanized characters used by other writers for the Shan alphabet ဇ are 'tsa', 'ca' and 'ja'. E.g. *Tsale* (Tannenbaum 1995) and *care* (Terwiel 2003) for the term ဇဇဇ: 'poet-reader' usually found in Shan *lik long* manuscripts of poetic texts.

ပ	pa	ပ/ပှ	pha/fa ⁵⁰²	မ	ma
ယ	ya	ရ	ra	လ	la
ဝ	wa	ှ	ha	က	a

Vowels / particles		Examples
ဝါ / ဝါ	a	ဝတ်. <i>wat</i> ‘temple’, ဝမ်း <i>wan</i> ‘day’, ဝါမ်း <i>wan</i> ‘village’
ိ / ဝိ	i	လိက်; <i>lik</i> ‘text, letter’, သိမ် <i>sin</i> ‘precept’, သီ <i>si</i> ‘colour’
ု / ဝု	u	မုခ်လဝ်; <i>mun zao</i> ‘monk/ abbot’, ရွင်းမူး <i>kaung mu</i> ‘pagoda’
ေ / ဝိ	e ⁵⁰³	လရေး <i>zare</i> ‘poetry-reader’, လိမ် <i>len</i> ‘play’, နီတ်း <i>phet</i> ‘spicy’
ေဝ / ဝိ	ae	မေ; <i>mae</i> ‘mother’, လိင် <i>laeng</i> ‘red’, လိတ်, <i>laet</i> ‘sun shine’
ေ့	aw ⁵⁰⁴	ရှေ့ <i>haw</i> ‘palace’, ပေ့; <i>paw</i> ‘father’
ုဝ်	o ⁵⁰⁵	လုက်; <i>lok</i> ‘world’, ရုသုဝ်, <i>kuso</i> ‘wholesome’, ရှုဝ် <i>ho</i> ‘head’
ိ / ဝိ	ai	ပိ <i>pai</i> ‘walk’ ; ပါး; <i>pai</i> ‘run away’, လွ် <i>zai</i> ‘mind’,
ွိ	oi	ပွဲး; <i>poi</i> , ‘festival’; လွံ <i>loi</i> , ‘mountain’
ွ	au ⁵⁰⁶	ကွမ်း <i>kauk</i> ‘cup’, ဆွမ်း <i>naun</i> ‘sleep’, ထွမ်, <i>thaum</i> ‘listen’
ွ	w	ကျွ, <i>kwa</i> ‘go’, ကွမ် <i>khwan</i> ‘soul’, ကွမ်; <i>kwan</i> ‘smoke’
ုဝိ	ue	လုဝ်; <i>zue</i> ‘name’, နိုမ်; <i>khuen</i> ‘night’, ပိုမ်; <i>puen</i> ‘history’
ုဝိ	uea ⁵⁰⁷	ကွမ် <i>kuea</i> ‘salt’, လိုမ် <i>luean</i> ‘moon’, မိုင်း <i>mueang</i> ‘country’

⁵⁰² These two characters differ according to local accent, i.e. *pha* for southern Shan and *fa* for northern Shan, which is similar to Thai accent. They share the same meaning, e.g. နီး *phai* or နီး *fai* means ‘fire’; ပမ်း *phan* or ပမ်း *fan*, ‘dream’.

⁵⁰³ The vowel ဝိ is written on the top of a consonant and always followed by an ending consonant. We have ေဝ, which is written in front of consonant, which is exactly the same *e* as in Pali, although in Romanised script it is written next to a consonant. *ia* is a Thai form that is equivalent to Shan ေဝ and ဝိ, both represent the same vowel but different pronunciation.

⁵⁰⁴ *aw* is equal to *o* in Pali. Thai also uses *o*. *au* is an alternative form used by some writers. This *aw* is not followed by a consonant.

⁵⁰⁵ *o* is used for ဝု, when it is followed by an ending consonant. *o* is equal to *ua* in the Thai transliteration system. They differ slightly in their pronunciation, but they share the same meaning.

⁵⁰⁶ Some writers *o* and *aw* for *-z*, e.g. *Maehongson*, *Ta Kawng*.

⁵⁰⁷ Some writers also use *oe*, *ur*, *er* for ဝိဝ်. Some use just *o* but its sound will closer to ဝိဝ်(*o*) rather than ဝိဝ်.

The tables below show the g *ka* alphabet in combination with vowels and ending consonants respectively.

က	က	ကိ	ကီ	ကု	ကူ	ကေ	ကော	ကေ	ကိ	ကီ	ကွံ	ကွံ
ka	ka	ki	ki	ku	ku	ke	kae	kaw	kai	kaai	koi	kai

ကန်	ကန်	ကိန်	ကိန်	ကိန်	ကုန်	ကုန်	ကွန်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kak	kak	kik	kek	kaek	kuk	kok	kauk	kuek	kueak
ကတ်	ကတ်	ကိတ်	ကိတ်	ကိတ်	ကုတ်	ကုတ်	ကွတ်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kat	kat	kit	ket	kaet	kut	kot	kaut	kuet	kueat
ကပ်	ကပ်	ကိပ်	ကိပ်	ကိပ်	ကုပ်	ကုပ်	ကွပ်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kap	kap	kip	kep	kaep	kup	kop	kaup	kuep	kueap
ကင်	ကင်	ကိင်	ကိင်	ကိင်	ကုင်	ကုင်	ကွင်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kang	kang	king	keng	kaeng	kung	kong	kaung	kueng	kueang
ကခင်	ကခင်	ကိခင်	ကိခင်	ကိခင်	ကုခင်	ကုခင်	ကွခင်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kan	kan	kin	ken	kaen	kun	kon	kaun	kuen	kuean
ကမ်	ကမ်	ကိမ်	ကိမ်	ကိမ်	ကုပ်	ကုပ်	ကွမ်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kam	kam	kim	kem	kaem	kum	kom	kaum	kuem	kueam
ကလ်	ကလ်				ကုလ်	ကုလ်	ကွလ်	ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kai	kai				kui	kuoi	loi	kuei	koei
ကဝ်	ကဝ်	ကိဝ်	ကိဝ်	ကိဝ်		ကုဝ်		ကိုင်	ကိုင်
kao	kao	kio	keo	kaeo		ko		kue	kuea

Appendix Two

A List of Shan *Lik Long* Manuscripts at Wat Papao, Chiang Mai

Titles in Shan	date
ထမ်,မပတ ပထမတွဲ	1269
သင်,ဂှသုတ်	1271
ပုတ်.ထဝင်,သ	1293
ထမ်,မလင်္ဂပဝတ်.တခေသုတ်	n.d.
ပုတ်.ထဝင်,သ	1293
သုတ်.တပု,တိဂဝ်	1271
ကဗျာ,ဂတဝင်,သ	n.d.
ကဗျာ,ဂတဝင်,သ	1274
ပုတ်.ထဝင်,သ	2495 BE
ကရိမိတေ,ယျ	n.d.
ဝိသုတ်.ထိမင်္ဂကတ်ထဂထျ, မူ,ခိုင်	n.d.
သုတ်သီ,လခါခင်း	1270
ပုတ်.ထဝင်,သ	1258
ကဗျာ,ဂတဝင်,သ	n.d.
သတိပထာခင်း,	1291
သတိပထာခင်း,	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဇ 1 နိဗ္ဗာန်	n.d.
ပုတ်.ထဝင်,သ	1291
ထမ်,မလင်္ဂ.ဂပဝတ်.တခေသုတ်	n.d.
မဂ္ဂ,ပတ်.ထာခင်း	n.d.

ပရမတ်.ထမခင်,လူသူ,	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	1291
ဂထု,ဝတ်.ထု	1281
သတိပတ်.ထာခင်,	1260
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်: 1 နိုင်ခင်	n.d.
မိလိခင်,တပခင်ဂျ	1279
ထု,တုဂထု,	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	n.d.
ပရမတ်.ထမခင်,လူသူ,	1253
ကဇိထမ်,မတ်.ထသင်,ဂှ	1278
ယမဂ	1262
ထမ်,မပတဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	1271
မင်,ဂလျ,ဂခင်,တိ	1291
သတိပထာခင်,	1269
ထမ်,မပတဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
ထု,တုဂထု,	1270
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	n.d.
ကဇိထမ်,မတ်.ထသင်,ဂှ	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	1260
ထမ်,မပတဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
သတိပတ်.ထာခင်,	1270
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်:	n.d.
ထု,တုဂထု,	1262

မဂ္ဂ၊ပတ်.ထာခင်း	n.d.
သူတ်,မူခင်း ပရိတ်	1259
တေ,ဝတူ,တသုတ်;	1260
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ထမ်,မတီ,ပခီ,	1274
လူ,ရတ်.ထခင်း.ရှာပခင်း,တိတ် (ပခင်း,ကသိတ်,ထိလဝတ်.ထု)	1289
ရ၊ယကျေးဇူး,တသုတ်.တသင်,ရှာ	1284
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ကခေ,ကတဝင်,သ	1253
ပုရ်,လုဂိရိယု,ဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
ခခင်း,တခိန်ခု (ပုတ်.ထမဂ္ဂ၊ပတ်,မင်းခခင်း,ရွတ်;တခင်း ပတ်တခင်းလျှ,ရွတ်;ခခင်း)	n.d.
ဇေးထိပဂ်ခိယထမ်,မ	1255
မဂ္ဂ၊ပတ်.ထာခင်း	1277
လိခတ်.ထပရ၊သခီ,	1269
မဂ္ဂ၊ပတ်.သပ	n.d.
ခေးသဂဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
ပရမတ်.ထမခင်း,လုသု,	1296
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ကခိခင်းခသင်,ရှာ	n.d.
သုမေ,ထု,ရသေး	n.d.
ကခေ,ကတဝင်,သ	1275
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.

(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တီမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ကလွင်းဝိလျ,တံတောင်ပေး	1256
ကလွင်းတုန်,ခခတ်.တိယ	1291
ဂိဂိုလျ,ဂိုတ်တ	1251
သုမေ,ထျ,ပျ,ဂုမီ,ဇေေ.	1293
ခင်းမလ်လိဂျ, (ကတုပဂိုဂမ်,မခင်းမဂိုဂျ,)	1260
ထျ,တုဂထျ,	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တီမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တီမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တီမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
တပ်,ခွံ.ကွင်းတမ်, (တပ်,ခမ်းခင်းယီ;သိုင်ဂျေ,)	1298
ဗူ,ဂိုတ်.တ	1276
ဂျ,လိတျ,သ	n.d.
တတြယုတ်တ	1293
သုတ်,မူခင်း ပဂိုတ်	1265
ဂျ,လိတျ,သ	1273
လမ်ပုသီ,တူခင်း; (ဗေယဂုင်,မျ,မင်းသျးလေးပျး)	1277
ဂမ်,မဂျ,လျ,	1251
လခမ်ထပလေးတ	n.d.
မဂျ,ဝမ်း;	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်.ထာခင်း	n.d.
ခိဂြေးထဝတ်ထု	1274
ကလွင်းပေးဂျ,ခေ	1315
ဂုလုဝဂထာတ်;တျေ,ဝတ်ထု	1300

သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဇွန်	1283
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ခေခေ,တခိုင်.ခု	1246
ပိုင်,လုဂိဂိုယု,ဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
လခေဂ	1262
မင်,ဂလု,သုတ်;	1293
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ခေခေ,တခိုင်.ခု	n.d.
လမ်,ပူ,ထိပတိ	1263
ပလု,ပတိဂေးတမီ,	1280
လိခေ,တု,မခေ	1278
သုတ်သဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
မိင်,ခုခေ,မခေယမင်ဂတီ,ပခေ,	1287
ဝိသု,ခု,	1286
မဂု,ပတ်.ထခေ:	1262
သုမေ,ထု,ဂုသေး	1288
မဂု,ဝင်.ဂ	1260
ခေခေ,တခိုင်.ခု	1259
သိတ်,ထီတင်းဂု;	n.d.
တမ်းခေခေ:မဂုဂ်;ခုခေ:တပ်; (လိဂ်;သမိင်:တမ်းခေခေ:လွခေ:တပ်;)	1250
သိတ်,ထီတင်းဂု;	1283
မိင်,ခုခေ,ခေယမင်,ဂမလတီ,ပခေ,	1287
ပဂိုတု,ဂု	n.d.

ကဇိထမ်,မတ်ထသင်,၈၇	1241
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
သုတ်တပျ,တိဝေဝ်း	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
ရ,လိတျ,သ	1251
မဂျေ,သထျ,	n.d.
ဂလျှ,ခေရူးတျ,တထမ်,မလဂိုတီ,ပခီ,	1278
ပျ,လိတ်တိယ	1270
လခေဂ	n.d.
ခတ်တိယဂုင်,မဂျ,ဂဝတို့ထု	n.d.
ဝေ,သခင်,တဂျ,လျ,တဂ	1277
ကတ်ထုပ်ပတိသပ်ပတျ,ခမ်	1280
လမ်ပူဂျ,ကတိုင်ခိပ် (လမ်,ပူ,မင်းရှမ်း)	1293
ပေးထိပန်ခိယထမ်,မ	n.d.
ဂျ,ဇိုဂ်,	1264
(ခါတ်,ယွမ်း-ကမ်,တိမ်ပပ်.)	n.d.
သုဝခင်,ခေသျ,မ	1302
ခင်းသွီးမာဂ်,ပာဂ်. (ခင်းမာဂ်,ပာဂ်.)	n.d.
ကခိလ်လသမ္ပ,ဝ နလ; မင်,ဂလျ,သုတ်;	1263
တုင်,လဗ	1286
ခေ,ဂတ ဝိထူ,ဂပခင်,တိတ ဝေ,သခင်တဂ	n.d.
လတုဂျ,ဂဂ်,ခ	1274

ပုဂံလဝိသျေးထခေတီ,ပခီ,	1296
လင်.သတ်.တခင်,	1269
ရ,လိတ,သ	n.d.
ဝိထူ,ရပခင်,တိတ	1289
ခေ,ရတ ၊ ဝိထူ,ရပခင်,တိတ ၊ ဝေ,သခင်တရ	n.d.
ဝေ,သခင်,တရ,လှ,တဂ	1294
လခင်,တသူ,ရိယ,	1267
သုဝခင်,ခသေ,မ	1286
တုဂမ်မရ,လလှ,တဂ	1300
ပုတုံထု,ခနုသ်သတိ	n.d.
မိဂိုလှ,ရိတ်တ	n.d.
လတုထမ်မသျ,ရ	n.d.
သင်,ဂှသုတ်;	1269
တ,ခေ,တ	1278
ကရိယသင်လှ,သီ,	1261
ကမိထမ်,မ,ဝတ်.ထု	n.d.
ထမ်,မပရ,သခီ,	1298
သိတ်,ထီတင်းဂှ;	1283
ဝိခိင်သယတီ,ရ,တေ,သခေ,	1271
ကြေးပုတ်.ထလင်းကွင်,ပေမခင်,ပိတ်,ပိုင်	n.d.
ထမ်မတီ,ပခီ,	1272
ဂခင်,ထပိတ်,မိုခင်,သီ,ဂိုင်	1272
ဂခင်,တေ,မိခင်းရွင်း	1281
ထမ်မရ,သီ,	n.d.

ကတုထမ်မသျှ၊ရ	1247
တုလဂိုတဂျ၊ခေဝိလ်လျ၊ယိ	n.d.
သင်၊ချ၊ရုဇေး၊သိခီ၊	n.d.
လိခေတ်ထပဂျ၊သခီ၊	1268
ပေးထိပစ်နိယထမ်မ	n.d.
ဂိဂိုလျဂိုတ်တ	1261
လိခေတ်ထပဂျ၊သခီ၊	1296
တီ၊ဂျ၊တေ၊သခေ၊	1266
ပေးထိပစ်နိယထမ်မ	n.d.
ခခင်ထပူရ	n.d.
ဝိပသ်သခေ၊ဂမ်၊မထခင်း	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခေ	1268
လိခေတ်ထပဂျ၊သခီ၊	1259
သင်၊ချ၊ရုပတဇ၊လခီ၊	n.d.
ဂိလေ၊သခင်၊တဂျ၊ခနုပသ်သခေ၊	n.d.
ဂိဂိုလျဂိုတ်တ	1259
ဂိဂိုလျဂိုတ်တ	n.d.
ပတိပတျ၊ပဂျ၊သခေတီ၊ပခီ၊	1296
လခင်၊တဂုင်၊မ၊ရ	1286
ခင်းယသေ၊ထဂျ၊	1294
ခိပ်ယု၊ခေသုတ်၊ ငလ၊ ဓခိင်လ်လသဇေး	1272
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခေ	1311
ဂိဂိုလျဂိုတ်တ မူ၊ခိုင်၊	n.d.
ကသုဇေး၊ဝခေ၊	n.d.

ရမ်းမထာခင်းသမထမော့ဝခော့	1253
ပတိပတျာပရ၊သခေတီ၊ပခီ	1258
သျှ၊သခော့ခိယျာမ	1297
ထမ်မပလုခေတိ ငလး; ကရိယသင်္ဂဟ၊သီ	1291
ကခိခင်းခေသင်ဂှ	n.d.
ထမ်မတီ၊ပခီ၊ မှု၊ခိုင်;	n.d.
ရိဂ္ဂိလုဂ္ဂိတ်တ	1259
ထမ်မတီ၊ပခီ	n.d.
ထမ်မဂုတခေဗူမိ	1291
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုခေ	n.d.
ထမ်မဂုဂ္ဂိတ်တ	1291
သတ်ထမ်မပျာလ	1277
ထမ်မသုဂုတ်ထတီပခီ	1282
ပတိပတ်တိပရ၊သခီ	n.d.
ကခိင်္ဂလသမော့	1297
သီလင်္ဂခင်းထဝိခိင်္ဂလသယ	1256
ပုတ်ထုခေသသတိ မှု၊ခိုင်;	n.d.
ရိဂ္ဂိလုဂ္ဂိတ်တ	1268
သင်ခရုမော့ခီ	1255
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုခေ	n.d.
သင်ဂှသုတ်;	1249
ထမ်မသုဂုတ်ထ	1292
သတ်ထု၊ထမ်မလုဂ္ဂိတ်တ	1288
ရိဂ္ဂိလုဂ္ဂိတ်တ	1296

သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဇွန်	1286
မြေးပုတ်ထလင်းကွင်း,ပေမာခင်,ပိတ်,ပိုင်	n.d.
လှ,တိတုဂ်.ခသင်,ဝေ,ဂ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
လတုထမ်မသျှ	1274
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဇွန်	1262
ပတိပတ်တိပရသခီ	1250
ထမ်မတီပခီ	1253
ကမတ်တတွရပရသခီ	1270
လိခတ်ထပရသခီ	1294
ပုတ်ထလဂိုယာပရမီ	1278
ခင်ပွဲပခင်,သူလှ်,လာခင်း	1318
တျ,ခသင်း,သေ,	1270
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဇွန်	n.d.
တီရတေသခရ	n.d.
ခင်ပွဲပခင်,ကျေးလှ,	1272
ထမ်မကျေးတတ်;	n.d.
ဂမ်မထခင်းဝိပသ်သခရ, မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
မူလလဂိုယာပရသခီ	n.d.
ခင်ပွဲပခင်,သူလှ်,လာခင်း မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
သူတ်,မူခင်း ပရိတ်	n.d.
ပတိပတုပရသခင်တီပခီ	n.d.
ဂိဂိုလရိတ်တ	1276
ဝိခင်သယတီရတေသခရ	1280
ပုတ်.ထုခုသ်သတိ	1271

ဂမ်မထာခင်း	n.d.
တမ်းခါခင်းမိုင်းမခင်းတလေး (သမိုင်းမခင်းတလေး?)	1278
ဖြူးပုတ်ထလင်းကွင်,ပေမခင်း,ပိတ်,ပိုင်	1270
ဂိဂိုလုဂိုတ်တ	1275
ပုတ်ထုခုသ်သတိ	n.d.
ထမ်မပရသခီ	n.d.
တီရတေသခါ	1258
ဂိဂိုလုဂိုတ်တ	1276
ခိပ်,ပု,ခေသုတ်	n.d.
ပတိပတ်တိပရသခီ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
သင်ယေးလခေ	n.d.
ကလွင်းပေးဂျ,ခေ	1277
ကမိခင်းခေသင်ဂှ	n.d.
ဖြူးပုတ်.ထလင်းကွင်,ပေမခင်း,ပိတ်,ပိုင်	n.d.
သင်ယေးလခေ	1269
ထမ်မလုခင်း,ဝတ်ထု မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ဂမ်မထာခင်း	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုခေ	1299
ခခင်းထတီပခီ	1297
ခိပ်ပုခင်း,ကျေးလု,	n.d.
ဂမ်မထာခင်း မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုခေ	n.d.
ဂမ်မထာခင်း	1304
ခိပ်,ပု,ခေသုတ်	1030

တူခင်း;သီရိမဂ္ဂုဇေးထိခမ်း	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုခေ	1301
ပုဂံမီ	1255
သင်,ချ,ဂုဇေး,လခီ,	n.d.
ကုပေးသထ	1267
ထမ်မတီပခီ	1255
ပုတ်ထုခုသ်သတိ	n.d.
ခိပ်ပုခေသုတ် သွင်မူ,	n.d.
သတ်ထု,ထမ်မလဂိုတ်တ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ခိပ်,ပု,ခေသုတ်	n.d.
သီလသမ်မုဂ်ခ	1260
ဇေးထိပဂ်ဒိယထမ်မ	1263
ဂလူခေးတု,တထမ်မလယေးတီပခီ	n.d.
ဖြေးပုတ်.ထလဂ်;ကွင်,ပေမခင်,ပိတ်,ပိုင်	1274
သင်,ချ,ဂုဇေး,လခီ,	1266
ဂိဂိုလဂိုတ်တ	1284
သင်,ချ,ဂုဇေး,လခီ,	n.d.
ကတ်တဂုယ	1307
လိခေတ်ထပဂု,သခီ,	1274
ပုတ်ထုခုသ်သတိ	1274
ခခင်ထပူဂု	1260
သင်ချဂုဇေးလခီ	1251
ပုတ်.ထုခုသ်သတိ	1262
သီလသမ်မုဂ်ချ	n.d.

ပုတ်.ထုဆုသံသတိ	1275
ခခင်ထတီပခီ	1300
သင်,ချ,ရုဖေ,လခီ,	1278
ထိခေတ်ထပဂျ,သခီ,	1278
ထမ်မပဂျသခီ	n.d.
မဂျဝဂ်ခခိတခင်း	n.d.
သုတ်,မူခင်းပိခင်,တီး မင်,ဂလျ,သုတ်;	1295
ခခိပခင်,ကျေးလျ,	1244
ခခိပခင်,ဂူင်းခခင်း	1259
ခခိပုခေသုတ် သွင်မူ,	n.d.
ပတိပတျ,ပဂျ,သခေတီ,ပခီ,	1296
ပတိပတ်တိပဂျသခီ	1272
ပတိပတ်တိတီပခီ မူ,ခခိုင်း;	n.d.
ပုတ်.ထုဆုသံသတိ မူ,ခခိုင်း;	n.d.
သလဂ်ခခေထုတုတီပခီ	n.d.
တီဂျတေသခေ	n.d.
သတ်ထမ်မသင်ဂျ	1295
ခခိပုခေသုတ်	1293
ပိပသံသခေပိခခိလံသယ	1261
ကတ်ထင်ဂိဂမဂ်;	1264
တျ,ခေသဂ်;သေ,	1276
ခခိပုခင်းဂဂ်;လခင်.	1266
ခခိပုခင်,သုဂ်,လခင်း	1297
ပဂ်ဂျ,ပျ,လ ခခင်းသမ်မုထိ	n.d.

ခခင်ထပူဂ	1281
ပွဲးသားသမ်ပင်	1291
တေသခရသင်ဂှ တတိယ (တွခင်းသမ်)	1276
ပုတ်.ထတျ,ခေတီ,ပခီ	n.d.
ဂိဂိထျ,ဂိတ်တ	1293
ထုတ်တုဂ်ခ	1278
သီလလဂ်ခခ	1251
ဂိဂိထျ,ဂိတ်တ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ဂိဂိထျဂိတ်တ	n.d.
ပုတ်.ထုခုသ်သတိ	1262
ထမ်မသျဂဂ်;ခခင်း	1274
ထိခေတ်ထပဂျ,သခီ,	n.d.
ပတ်ပတ်တိပဂျသခီ	n.d.
ပုတ်ထုခုသ်သတိ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ထမ်မသင်ချဂမ္ဂ်,ခခိပ်ခခိတ်	1283
ခခင်ထပူဂ	1272
တီဂျိခခိတ်သယ	2427
ထမ်မဂျေးဂတ်;	n.d.
တျ,ခေသဂ်;သေ,	1274
သတ်ထမ်မသင်ဂျဂ	1297
ဂမ်မထခင်း	n.d.
မဂျေး,သထျ,	1299
သုဂ်;သီလခခင်း	n.d.
မေးထိပဂ်ခိယျသမ်သိပ်းလိတ်း	1297

သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 မူ,	n.d.
ဝိပဿသဇာ	1261
ပုတ်ထု,ခုသ်သတိတီပခီ	n.d.
ကခိလ်လသဇေး နလ; တာင်းဂမ်မထာခင်း	n.d.
ပူဂိုတာတ်;လာတ်;တေ,	1276
ဂထုဝတ်ထု ၊ ယမဂ၊ ပတ်ထာခင်း	1271
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ပလာင်,ဗိုင်းဂွမ် မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
ပိတ်,လိင်္ဂွန်,ယွတ်;	1281
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ သွင်မူ,	n.d.
မဂျ,ပတ်ထာခင်း	1260
ဇေးထိပဂ်ဒီယထမ်မ	1222
ပြမ်မဝိဂျ,ဂတြေးသီ,ယိုင်;	1239
မဂ်ဂဝတ်ထု	1266
ထုတုဂထု	1259
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ	1296
ဝိဇင်ဂ	n.d.
(ယွဂ်းဇာတ်,ဇင်. ကမ်,တိမ်ထူခင်း)	n.d.
ထမ်မသုဇာသိ မူ,ခိုင်;	n.d.
(ယွဂ်းဇာတ်,ဇင်. ကမ်,တိမ်ထူခင်း)	n.d.
ပုဂျုလိဂ	1260
ဝိဇင်ဂ	1260
ထမ်မလဂ်ဂပ်ပဝတ်တခေသုတ်	n.d.
ဇိဂ်ခုခိတခင်း	1263

မွင်,မိလ်သေ,ဂုဇာင်းမလေးလီ,ငလး;လံးဂမ်,ပေး,	1295
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 မူ,	n.d.
ကလွင်းကြေးလိခိခိပ်	n.d.
ထမ်မတေဝ	1260
မဂ္ဂ,ဝမ်း;	n.d.
လူလဝမ်း;	n.d.
ပုဂ်ဂလပလ်ဂုတ်တိ	1259
ပဂမတ်ထထမ်မ 1 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
လိမ်းဂျေငိုခိခိ;တင်းလိမ်းဂှုတ်ထမ်း 2 မူ,ဂိုမ်းဂခိခိ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
ပုဂ္ဂလိဂ 1 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
ဝိဇင်ဂ	1260
ခေင်းဂိခိခိပူ	n.d.
ပဂိုတ်တလဂုသုတ်	1306
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
မဂ္ဂ,ဝမ်း; 3 မတ်.	n.d.
သတိပတ်ထခိခိ,	1290
ယမဂ (တိမ်းဂမ်းပုလိဖွင်း)	1260
ကခိခိလ်ကသဖျေဝ	1256
ပဂိုဂုဂ 2 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
ပုလိတ်တိယ	1262
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပု,ခေ 3 ဖိုခိခိ	n.d.

လမ်ပုလူဂီ	n.d.
ပုလိတ်တိယ	1260
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ပုလိတ်တိယ	1260
တုန်ခလဂီယု (တုန်ဂရလဂီယု)	1293
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
(ယွန်းဗတ်, ဗင်. ကမ်, တီမ်ထူခင်း)	n.d.
ဇေးထိပ်ပန်နီယထမ်မ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 4 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
သုတ်တရှင်ထမ်း	1261
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
သုတ်သီလဗာခင်း	n.d.
ခောင်းဂိခိပ်ပူ	n.d.
ပရိမိတ်တလုဂုသုတ် 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ကခိလ်လသဗျာဝ	1262
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ထမ်မတီပခီ	1242
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ကခရတဝင်, သ	1277
သုတ်တခိပ်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ကခိလ်လသဗျာဝ	1261
တုလ်လပ်ဗ	1254
ကခိထမ်မပတ်ထာခင်း 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.

ရထူဝတ်ထု 1 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 3 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ	n.d.
ပုဂ်ဂလပလ်ဂုတ်တိ 1 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
လခေဂ	1263
သတိပတ်ထာခ်	n.d.
လုလဝဂ်;	1263
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 1 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
(ယွဂ်းခါတ်, ဗင်. ကမ်, တိမ်ထူခ်;)	n.d.
ယမဂ	1259
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 3 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တယုတိဂဝဂ် 2 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 3 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
ကရိုင်တမု 1 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ	1269
ကခိလ်လသဖျဝ 2 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 3 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
လုလဝဂ်;	n.d.
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 2 ဂိခ်	v.d.
တမ်းခေခင်းလဝ်; မခင်းတလေး 1 ဂိခ်	n.d.
(ယွဂ်းခါတ်, ဗင်. ကမ်, တိမ်ထူခ်;)	n.d.
ပုဂ်ဂလပလ်ဂုတ်တိ	1260
သုတ်တခိပ်ယုခ 1 ဖိုခ်	n.d.
ထုတုဂထု	1262

သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 3 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 1 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်သီလခေ	1260
ထုတုဂထု	n.d.
(ယွှန်းဧတ်,ဇင်. ကမ်,တိမ်ထူခေ;)	n.d.
မဂ္ဂဝဂ်;	1260
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ	n.d.
ကခေရတဝင်သ	1248
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 3 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 3 နိုခေ	n.d.
ဂထုဝတ်ထု	1260
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 1 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်တပုတိဂဝဂ် 2 နိုခေ	n.d.
(ယွှန်းဧတ်,ဇင်. ကမ်,တိမ်ထူခေ;)	n.d.
သုတ်တပုတိဂဝဂ် 2 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 5 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုဂုတ်ထတီပခေ	1262
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 4 နိုခေ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပု၊ခေ 3 နိုခေ	n.d.
ထမ်မတေဝ 1 နိုခေ	n.d.
(ယွှန်းဧတ်,ဇင်. ကမ်,တိမ်ထူခေ;)	n.d.
မင်ဂလု,သုတ်;	1219
မုဂ္ဂိုင်းတုဂ် 1 နိုခေ	n.d.
သင်ဂိခေ (သင်ဂိတိ?)	n.d.

သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်	1250
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ကမ္ဘာတစ်ခုလုံး 1 နိဒါန်း	n.d.
ထုတ်ဝေ	1260
မကျေသထုတ်ဝေ	1299
ကမ္ဘာတစ်ခုလုံးပတ်ဝန်းကျင်	1262
ဝိသေသလူ့လူ	1260
သုတ်သီလခန်း	n.d.
ထပ်မံတင်ပြ	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	v.d.
ကမ္ဘာတစ်ခုလုံး	1259
ပရိတ်	1259
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	v.d.
ထပ်မံသင်တန်း	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 1 နိဒါန်း	v.d.
ပရိတ်	n.d.
သုတ်တခိုင်ပုဒ် 3 နိဒါန်း	v.d.
သုတ်တပုဒ်စုံ 2 နိဒါန်း	v.d.
နိဂုံး	n.d.

Appendix Three

Annotated Translation of the *Mahāsatipatthān*

Part Two⁵⁰⁸

The Contemplation of Ideas⁵⁰⁹: The Section of Hindrances⁵¹⁰

[Para. 277.] Now is the periodical time of having a big tree with full of branches, leaves and blossoms that is grown on the island of fire, where different kinds of insects take their refuge under the shade of the big tree. Like the big tree, the dhamma is a shelter for all beings. Like the coolness of a tree-shade, the shelter of the dhamma is peaceful.⁵¹¹ The Contemplation of Thought, such as the thought-with-lust, the thought-with-hatred and the thought-with-delusion etc. has been delivered by the Lord and its commentarial explanation is also completed. So, the Golden Glory has moved to the last section, which is the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Ideas, beginning with the Pali words, ‘*Kathaṅca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati. Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu nīvaranesu.*’ [‘And how, bhikkhus, does a brother, as to ideas, continue to consider ideas? Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother, as to ideas, continues to consider ideas from the point of view of the Five Hindrances’].⁵¹² I shall explain this to the best of my intellectual capacity.

[Para. 278.] You many dear virtuous pupils, who are well disciplined and wish for liberation from the cycle of lustful desire and all kinds of troubles, a monk, who reflects on the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Ideas, should contemplate the Ideas in detail. As a person looking at a tree in detail such as its branches, blooms, leaves, roots and so on, a monk should contemplate the Ideas in detail. Dear lovely sons, the Foundation of

⁵⁰⁸ Part One is the Chapter Three of the main text.

⁵⁰⁹ T. W. Rhys Davids (1977, p. 334) translated the Pali term ‘*dhamma*’ here as ‘ideas’ while other scholars such as Soma Thera (1999, p. 136) translated it as ‘mental objects’ and others such as Maurice Walshe (1995, p. 340) translated it ‘mind objects.’

⁵¹⁰ Pali terms *dhammānupassanā* and *nīvarana* are used for the sub-heading of this section of *MSP*. Amat Long 1968, p. [147].

⁵¹¹ For another meditation text using the imagery of a giant tree for the Dhamma, see Crosby et al. 2012.

⁵¹² Rhys Davids 1977, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, part II, pp. 334-335.

Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Ideas is the path to liberation from the poor state.⁵¹³ Be mindful, all of you! You should meditate day in day out in whatever position you may be, either getting up or sitting. My pupils may still not understand clearly how one should contemplate, watch or reflect on Ideas.

[Para. 279.] One should learn to contemplate the Ideas through the Pali phrase: '*Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu santaṃ vā ajjhattaṃ kāmacchantaṃ atthi me ajjhattaṃ kāmacchantoti pajānāti.*' ['Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother, when within him is sensuous desire, is aware of it, reflecting: 'I have within me sensuous desire.'']⁵¹⁴ [Here is the *nissaya* translation.]

Bhikkhus means dear noble sons. '**As to the Ideas**' (*dhammesu*) refers to the five kinds of hindrances, namely: sensuous desire, hatred, sloth and torpor, flurry and worry, and doubts. These five hindrances are like five lines of fences with thorn plants on them, closing the path to the state of Nibbāna. '**Continue to consider Ideas**' (*Dhammānupassī viharati*) means one should contemplate the aggregate of mental formation and the five kinds of hindrances, namely, desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor, restlessness and brooding and doubt, which lock the gate, preventing ordinary people to reach the state of Nibbāna, like the five steady fences with firmed posts and moats, the gates firmly locked [to prevent enemies entering the city].

[Para. 280.] These five hindrances lead humans and gods to be forgetful in performing wholesome deeds. So, for those who are under the influence of the five hindrances, the path to the state of Nibbāna has been locked. They have to be misery and suffered in the wheel of *saṃsāra*. Dear lovely sons, young and old, all the followers, during this period of the Buddha's teaching, a monk, who is frightened by the danger of *saṃsāra*, should reflect on the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Ideas, with the five hindrances, which are similar to the five lines of fences. He should attempt to find the way for liberation.

[Para. 281.] Dear lovely sons, when sensuous desire or greedy thought is tied with one's head and body, he should notice and say, 'Oh, now the sensuous desire has clearly arisen in my body.' When the sensuous desire has disappeared or is not clearly seen in the body, one should notice and say, 'Now, there is no more sensuous desire in my body.' Thus, one should say like this in mind with mindfulness.

⁵¹³ According to Amat Long, 'poor state' would refer to all conditional and changeable realms such as heaven, human world and hell. Nibbāna is only then the rich state, where there is no more birth and death.

⁵¹⁴ Rhys Davids 1977, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, part II, p. 335.

[Para. 282.] In previous time, there is huge amount of sensuous desire, the greedy mind. The sensuous desire, which was not arisen before too, has now apparently arisen in the mind. It is the sensuous desire, which is fond of lustful sensual pleasure.

[Para. 283.] In such time, one should meditate on the unpleasant senses/objects in concerning with the bodies. Accordingly, the sensuous desire, which has been arising in mind, will be vanished. There are ten kinds of unpleasant senses of the dead body for meditation objects, starting from *uttumātakam*, *vinīlakam*, *vipuppakam* and so on, that one should meditate on and have the right perception with regard to our bodies.

[Para. 284.] The moral consciousness and the great consciousness can momentarily destroy sensuous desire. When one has obtained the *jhāna* consciousness and the sainthood, he will then have completely destroyed the sensuous desire. Having completely destroyed its root, there will be no more sprout growing. So, one should have special knowledge in order to have clear comprehension on this.

[Para. 285.] When anger is arising, being hot temper, like flames of fire, one should take note, 'Oh, now anger is arising in me.' Thus, one should make effort to understand the nature of anger clearly. On the other hand, when anger is disappearing, with no more shouting or crying, one should take note, 'Oh, now there is no more anger in me. I am completely calm with loving-kindness and happy mind. I am neither upset nor worry nor shouting nor crying anymore.'

[Para. 286.] In previous time, the objects of anger and revenge had been moving around. Other people had blamed us long time ago; other people had persecuted us long time ago. But, when we think of those who blamed us, we will get angry again and again. The more we think of them, the more we want revenge for cutting their necks. So, take note on the anger or revenge that the more you think of it, the more it grows up. Thus, one should learn and practise to understand the nature of anger arising in our humans; the more we think of hateful sense of the past, the more we will become hot temper and get angry.

[Para. 287.] Because of meditation of reflection on loving-kindness, even though how much you want to persecute others, your anger will be vanished when you reflect on them with sympathetic mind and loving-kindness. So, one should learn and practise to understand the rise and fall or the in and out of anger. The mind with loving-kindness can destroy anger and lead to happiness and peace.

[Para. 288.] If one reflects on where one should do and where there should be sympathy upon, with cool shower of loving-kindness, anger and revenge can be then momentarily abandoned. The moral consciousness and the great consciousness are the cause for a temporary abandonment of anger and revenge. Thus, one should contemplate on [such Ideas] with mindfulness. In the future, anger will not be arising in him again if one has entered the stage of non-returner, because the knowledge or jhana of non-returner can defeat and destroy the sensuous desire, hatred and other evil-minds. Here too, one should learn and practise to see the nature of mind that accompanied with Ideas.

[Para. 289.] When sloth and torpor, the drowsy and sleepy minds are arising, one should take note, ‘Oh, I am now tired and sleepy; sloth, torpor and drowsiness are arising in our human bodies.’ When sloth and torpor are not present, one is not hold off but energetic and diligent, with a fresh face and attentive looking. At such moment, one should take note, ‘Oh now there is neither sloth nor torpor in me; there is no lazy mind nor am I absent minded; there is no drowsiness nor sleepiness.’ Thus one should meditate with mindfulness while standing up or stepping forward to understand the nature of body.

[Para. 290.] The unwise reflections such as boredom, dullness, lethargy, and sluggishness of the mind are the cause of sloth and torpor. So when the unwise reflections arise, all kinds of work that should be done is not done and what should be completed is not completed, because sloth and torpor are occupying your mind, and you are just wasting your time. Here, sloth and torpor mean the lazy mind, the absent mind, the sluggish mind and the mind that does not want to make wholesome deeds. When one reflects on the necessary things for his living such as food to eat, cloths to wear and gifts for donations and presents, he will make effort and work hard to get those things. The lazy mind, the absent mind, the dull mind and the sluggish mind will then be disappeared from him. Only the thought of having possession is arising in him. So, sloth and torpor vanished and endeavour arose.

[Para. 291.] The moral consciousness and the great consciousness can momentarily destroy the hindrance of sloth and torpor. In the future, when one has attained sainthood and knowledge of jhana, he will have completely destroyed the hindrance of sloth and torpor; it will never arise in him anymore. The Path of *arahant* has destroyed sloth and torpor with root altogether, so there will be no more shoot of plant. Thus, one should learn and practise to see many kinds of cause and effect straightforwardly.

[Para. 292.] When restlessness and brooding, the shaking mind, the wandering mind, the gloomy mind or worried mind have arisen, a meditator should take note, ‘Oh, now I am restless and brooding; my mind is shaking and wandering.’ When the restlessness and brooding disappear, and when there is no worry or anxiety, a meditator should take note, ‘Oh, now there is no restlessness or brooding in me; my mind is not shaking or wandering; I am with mindfulness around me.

[Para. 293.] Because of reflection on many things, we get confused and cannot fully focus on anyone of them. If we reflect on all kinds of things, our minds will be shaking, wandering, exciting, worrying, confusing and regretting. The restlessness is wandering from place to place, visiting all over places in heaven and human world. Because the mind thinks of many kinds of things, such mind is called ‘restlessness and brooding’; it is the shaking mind or wandering mind, traveling around the country day and night. Thus one should learn to understand [the nature of the mind] clearly.

[Para. 294.] When one has obtained the “partial-concentration” and the “full concentration” with only and one object, the shaking mind, the wandering mind, the traveling mind and the exciting mind will then become still, quiet and pure; it is whitely clean like silver; the mind becomes steady.

[Para. 295.] The moral consciousness and the great consciousness can momentarily destroy the restlessness and brooding. In the future, when one has attained the two *jhānas* of non-returner and sainthood, restlessness and brooding will not arise in him anymore, because the *jhānas* of non-returner and sainthood have taken the root of defilement off and there will be no more sprout or shoot growing, since the restlessness and brooding are completely destroyed altogether. So, let one learn and meditate to understand the truth.

[Para. 296.] When doubt or the consciousness of uncertainty has arisen, our mindfulness is in decline and we become careless. At such moment, one should take note, ‘Oh, now there is doubt in my mind, half belief and half disbelief; a suspicion and uncertainty of mind arise in me.’ And, when doubt disappeared and it does not exist in your mind, take note, ‘Oh, I do not have any doubt now.’ Thus, one should meditate to clear up his mind with certainty.

[Para. 297.] Previously, the suspicion on the teachings had been arisen that one was losing his way. When his reflection is not on the right place, the more he reflects, the more

he is far away from obtaining the knowledge of jhana. So, the suspicion of half belief and half disbelief is there and one should meditate to understand it clearly.

[Para. 298.] When reflecting on both the wholesome karma and unwholesome karma and put them into our hearts, the consciousness of doubt will disappear from our minds. Faith, pure consciousness will then arise in us.

[Para. 299.] The moral consciousness and the great consciousness can momentarily destroy the consciousness of doubt, which is the hindrance [to realization of the truth]. In the future, when one has obtained the stage of the Path of Stream Entrance, such consciousness will never arise in him anymore; it is completely destroyed altogether with its root. So, let one meditate day in day out and understand clearly that the path of stream entrance has completely cut off the consciousness of doubt.

[Para. 300.] Here is the interpretation. Remember, dear noble sons, who wish to meet the last Buddha, the Arimetteya. Mindfulness refers to the awareness all around one's body, being aware of things around the body all the time, avoiding absentmindedness. Hindrance refers to the defilements that prevent one to see the door to the Glorious City of the Golden State, where there is no death. There are five kinds of hindrances, namely, the hindrance of sensual desire, the hindrance of hatred or ill-will, the hindrance of sloth and drowsiness, the hindrance of flurry and worry, and the hindrance of doubt. These five hindrances are like great walls blocking all gates of all four sides for the entrance to the city of Nibbāna.

[Para. 301.] 'The hindrance of sensuous desire' (*kāmachanda-nīvarana*) refers to the desire for food, beautiful clothes, enjoyment of life and desire for all kinds of sensual pleasure that one is fond of lustful pleasure. There are five kinds of sensual pleasure, namely, visible form, voice, smell, taste and touch. We are under the influence of these senses and that the more we get the more we want; there is no satisfaction in concerning with sensual pleasure. Therefore, sensual pleasure is one of the five hindrances, blocking or obstructing the way to Nibbāna. Ladies and gentle men, young and old, dear the audience! Here there is something concerning with misconception. There are four kinds of person who would experience insomnia and could not sleep, namely: a woman, a man, a thief and a monk.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁵ The discussion on four kinds of insomnia experienced by the four types of people is found in Cakkinda's *MSN*, indication of Amat Long's wide range of reading. As discussed, many of his readers believe that Amat Long's *MSP* is the translation of *MSN*. This is another evidence that *MSP* is not just a translation from *MSN*. Instead, it is a type of annotated translation or a loose *nissaya* translation by adding further explanation and discussion.

However, the experience of insomnia by the four types of people is quite different from one another.

[Para. 302.] A woman could not sleep well or suffers from insomnia when her mind is attached to or hankers after a handsome man, who has a hell-like good attraction for her eyes. However she has tried to sleep, she could not sleep at all, as she has been thinking of sensual pleasure, such as having sex with a man on a beautifully adorned bed-sheet their bodies rolling one over another. By thinking of such sensual pleasure, she has suffered from insomnia the whole night. A woman would indeed wish to have a handsome man to be her companion and stay with him in the same bedroom for enjoyment of sensual pleasure. Thus, with restlessness, a woman has made defilement grows and spreads far and wide and get connected with the things she is fond of, leading to nowhere but never having satisfaction.

[Para. 303.] A man, too, could not sleep well or suffers from insomnia, when his mind is fixed on or hankers after the beautiful body of a woman with lovely hair. Till late night or about three o'clock in the morning, he could not stop thinking about women with attractive teeth and thinking about making love. The hindrance of sensual pleasure is a delusion of convincing one to fall into the blindness of lustful desire. If we do this every night, we will not be able to see the way to the Everlasting City, Nibbāna. In whatever life you are, you will be indulged with over a thousand gardens, causing more troubles; men and women make love with one another with lustful desire. If we carry on like this, we reflect on the wrong thing; if we reflect on the wrong thing, we do not make any wholesome deed; if we do not make wholesome deed, we will not earn any good result; if we have not earned any good result, it is the hindrance blocking the way to Nibbāna.

[Para. 304.] A thief suffers from insomnia, because he thinks about here and there, where he used to steal other people's properties. When he sleeps, although his body lies on bed, his mind is wandering thinking about this and that with his eyes open throughout the night. So, the said three kinds of people are not doing of any good but setting flames of fire to burn their minds and bodies. A woman's insomnia, a man's insomnia and a thief's insomnia – all of these are the cause of increasing defilements more and more, getting dizzy in the garden of sensual pleasure, and making their minds confused.

[Para. 305.] A monk could not sleep well, too, when his mind is on meditation, contemplating the impermanence of the five aggregates, the suffering of the five aggregates and the non-self of the five aggregates, which are but subject to change and collapse. He also

thinks of his duties regarding the preservation of the teachings of Buddhism and practice of insight meditation;⁵¹⁶ he also reflects on the life cycle of humans and gods in a quiet night, so he could not sleep. He reflects on the ten kinds of scary objects for meditation, namely, the ten different stages of a dead body, which is gradually changed into different forms with different colours; he applies the nature of dead body to all bodies of humans and gods, which are subject to die and disappear. He meditates on such scary objects in order to eradicate the hindrance of sensuous desire.

[Para. 306.] Remember, dear audience, sons and daughters of families that belong to the four companies [of the Buddha]. Please reflect on yourself whether the cause of your insomnia is either a kind of a woman's insomnia or a man's insomnia or a thief's insomnia or a monk's insomnia. So, reflect on yourself with mindfulness. Reflect on yourself and say in mind: 'Oh, now I am suffering from the woman-insomnia; oh, I am now suffering from the man-insomnia; oh, now I am suffering from the thief-insomnia; oh, now I am experiencing the monk-insomnia.' Thus, one should meditate in order to understand and see the nature of insomnia. By understanding this, one then will be able to teach himself and develop his mind.

[Para. 307.] In order to understand the nature of the hindrance of sensuous desire and remove it away from our mind and body, there are six kinds of dhamma here for us to learn. Endeavour (*uggaha*) is one; meditation (*bhāvanā*) is one; safe-guard (*gutta*) is one; moderation of food (*mattaññutā*) is one; having good friends (*sumittatā*) is one; beneficial discussion (*sappāyakathā*) is one. Thus, there are six kinds of dhamma accordingly.

[Para. 308.] "Endeavour" means making effort with unpleasant senses for meditation contemplating your own body. We should reflect on our bodies like this: 'Oh this is the rotten body, the putrid body, the log of lust, the log of defilement or the log of ignorance.' This is how one should meditate and train his mind.

[Para. 309.] "Meditation" means taking the bloated corpse (*uddhumātakaṃ*), the livid corpse (*vinīlakaṃ*), the festering corpse (*vipubbakaṃ*), and the like with the notion of unpleasant sense (*asubha-saññā*) and contemplating them again and again. We should reflect on our bodies and say: 'Oh the brightness of the physical body, which is the beauty of men and women, is actually a group of the five aggregates, which are the logs of flesh and bones with offensive smell, such as bitter, spicy and pungent smell; the flesh is full of worms and

⁵¹⁶ The Pali terms *gantha-dhūra* and *vipassanā-dhūra*, the two duties of monks sometimes split into separate roles for different traditions of monks, are used in the main text of *MSP*.

the skin will become wrinkle when we are getting old. Oh, this body is in fact the nine places of cemetery.’ When we contemplate the hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin etc., we will be able to destroy and reduce our desire for sensual pleasure, which is one of the hindrances.

[Para. 310.] “**Safe-guard**” means to guard well or constrain your faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. Control over your door of senses, such as eyes, ears, nose, mouth, body and mind, lock them tightly and do not let them jump out and wander around.

[Para. 311.] “**Moderation of taking food**” means all the cuisines and sweets are to be consumed with measurement and limitation so that it can help our mind steady and settled in meditation. Do not be greedy but know the measurement while consuming the food; guard your faculties and consume the foods that are easily available.

[Para. 312.] “**Having a good friend**” means keeping company with a virtuous, learned and intelligent person who can give you advice for enjoyment with the unpleasant senses, and take meditation into your heart and take it as your companion in whatever you do, either sitting or standing up.

[Para. 313.] “**Beneficial discussion**” means when one speaks, he gives right and true speeches, such the Buddha’s words and the lawful words, which are all good words that can lead one to Nibbāna; he speaks the words that are suitable for meditation only. By doing like this, the desire for sensual pleasure and the greedy mind will decrease, weak and disappear.

[Para. 314.] Therefore, there is a Pali verse related to the hindrance in the section of the Foundation of Mindfulness for the Contemplation of Ideas: *uggaho bhāvanā guttaṃ, mattaññutā ca sumittā, sppāyakathā chadhammā, kāmacchandappahāyino* [‘Endeavour, meditation, safe-guard, moderation of food, having good friends, beneficial discussion’]⁵¹⁷ — these are the six factors for the elimination of the desire for sensual pleasure. These six kinds of doctrine eliminate greed, hatred and delusion, washing away the dirt and filth from our mind.

[Para. 315.] This is the interpretation of the **hindrance of hatred** (*byāpāda-nīvaraṇa*). It refers to the consciousness that is connected with ill-will. For instance, one is happy to see another’s failure and unhappy to see another’s success because of his jealousy toward others. That is why, it is mentioned in the *Ṭikā-kyaw (Sārattha-dīpanī-ṭikā)*, “*ahovatāyaṃ satto*

⁵¹⁷ The Pali stanza is given here as a reference for the six kinds of dhamma that can destroy the hindrance of sensuous desire.

vinasseyyāti evaṃ mano padoso byāpādo.” [Followed by a Burmese *nissaya* translation, before Amat Long writes his Shan version *nissaya*].⁵¹⁸

[Para. 316.] Here is the *nissaya* translation in Shan. **Ayaṃ satto** means this creature; **vinasseyya** means if the creature is vanished; **aho vata** means very good; **iti evaṃ** means thus; **mano padoso** means having ill-will in one’s mind, wanting others to fail; **byāpādo** means ‘horrendous mind’, the mind that is not willing to see any good for the others and does not like any good of others. When he sees others fighting each other, he interferes in the situation egging one side on to destroy the other. When he hears gossip from someone about unsettlement of others, he is happy and he even wants to get involve the fight. Thus, hatred prevents you from seeing the path to Nibbāna, just as if putting fences of thorns around your body. The wrong perception of our mind makes our hatred grows.

[Para. 317.] Here is the teaching that can eliminate hatred. Remember dear the audience, young and old, all of you. Endeavour (*uggaha*) is one; meditation (*bhāvanā*) is one; neutral perception (*avekkhā*) is one; reflection (*paṭisaṅkhā*) is one; having good friends (*sumittatā*) is one; beneficial discussion (*sappāyakathā*) is one – thus there are six kinds of teaching for the elimination of hatred; I shall now explain the interpretation.

[Para. 318.] “**Endeavour**” means making effort with both definite and indefinite purposes of meditation on loving-kindness day in day out. One has to remember what has been said by the Buddha that we should love and be sympathy on all creatures equally. Do not love one and then hate another. Thus one should take this into his heart.

[Para. 319.] “**Meditation**” means one should meditate and develop his mind on the 508 types of loving-kindness as taught by the Buddha.⁵¹⁹ “May all beings be free from enmity and danger; may they be free from mental suffering; may they be free from physical suffering; may they take care of themselves happily.”⁵²⁰ These kinds of words and the like should be put into heart and we should chant [the formula] day and night.

[Para. 320.] “**Neutral perception**” means keeping your mind at neutral position, straight and still, neither shaking nor taking aside. While sleeping, sleep by the law of the

⁵¹⁸ Next to the Pali quotation, the Burmese *nissaya* for the Pali phrase follows, indicating the Burmese influence on Amat Long’s life and his way of writing. The Shan *nissaya* then follows in the next paragraph.

⁵¹⁹ The 528 types of loving-kindness are mentioned in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*. See also online: <http://www.buddhanet.net/brahmaviharas/bvd010.htm>.

⁵²⁰ A translation from the Pali formula for meditation on loving-kindness: *Sabbe sattā averā hontu, abyāpajjā hontu, anīghā hontu, sukhī attānam pariharantu*. Online: <http://www.buddhanet.net/chant-metta.htm>.

Dhamma and the good deeds for wholesome. Reflect on the law of the Dhamma and say: “Oh in this world, whoever has committed the evil things, he will have to serve and experience its bad result in the future. One cannot help another but oneself. Those who torture me, scold me, shout at me and drive me out will create bad *karma* for themselves. They will get subsequent effects and experience the bad result by themselves. If I torture others too, I will then create my bad *karma* for my future life such that I cannot hide from serving the bad result. If others are moral and practice well, they will be good and noble; if I am moral and practice well, I will also be good and noble. In the case of sin and virtue, no body can do for anyone else; they are in fact constructed by the law of *karma*.” Thus one should meditate on the law of neutral concept and do not let your mind wander.

[Para. 321.] “Reflection” means when we reflect on and look at the annoying senses with neutral concept, we will not be angry but calm down; the dust will be settled and the water becomes clean and pure. Let our minds be with loving-kindness, sympathy, joy and equanimity. Let it be clean like pure water in a well that one can see his image in it.

[Para. 322.] “Having good friends” mean association with good and moral people such as the learned and educated people, who can lead us to the end or solution of problems. When we are angry and our minds are completely black; our mouths and eyes show the signs of irritation, shouting noisily. At such time, our good friends will be there to help us to control our anger.

[Para. 323.] “Beneficial discussion” means when one speaks, he gives right, lovely and true speeches, which are pleasant for ears and not bothering to the listeners. The right words, lovely words and true words are indeed medicine for healing anger and hatred; they are the medicine for curing the convulsion [caused by anger]; the anger will be reduced quickly. However much we are angry with others, if we abide with them and try to talk to them with love, kiss and laugh, they will become our friends and our anger will be disappeared. Our anger will be stopped and going nowhere in whatever situation we may be, sleeping, standing or resting; we feel ashamed to be angry in front of our good friends.

[Para. 324.] A person who does not see the Dhamma will be in confusion and will be in trouble because of his own words. He will say something in front of others and something else at the back of others. So, if the words are not suitable, they are like swords cutting one’s own neck. The unsuitable words are not pleasant to the ears of others; if the words are not suitable to the ears of others, they will be angry with us; if they are angry with us, then we

will be angry with each other; if we are angry with each other, then hot tempers will be arisen among them fighting each other, like boiling water that flows over the mouth of the pot; even husband and wife could make the war of mind or internal enemies, shouting at each other. They would also hold brooms in their hands aiming to hit each other, as they jump and stamp heavily over the floor; they might also hit each other with bowl and pots instead.

[**Para. 325.**] Therefore, it is frightening that anger is arisen very often in our bodies of men and women day and night. In order to get rid of anger, the Lord has given us medicine, namely: Endeavour is one; meditation is one; neutral perception is one; reflection is one; having good friends is one; beneficial discussion is one. So, these are the six decoctions of great medicine. Thus, it is said: *Uggaho bhāvanā vekkhā, paṭisaṅkhā sumittatā, sappāyakathā chadhammā, pyāpātassa pahāyakā* [‘Endeavour, meditation, neutral perception, reflection, having good friends, beneficial discussion—these are the six factors for the elimination of hatred’].⁵²¹ Let princes and princesses remember to consume these medicines with warm water to get *saṃvega*. Please take the dhamma, the medicine for crossing over the moat to reach the City of Peace, which is full of nine kinds of fragrance. Kick away the hindrance of the desire for sensual pleasure and the hindrance of anger. With *uggaha-nimitta* and *patibhāga-nimitta*, raise *jhāna* up to the world of the cloud and fly in the air.

[**Para. 326.**] ‘**The hindrance of sloth and torpor**’ (*thīna-middha-nīvaraṇa*) refers to the lazy mind, the fruitless mind and the mind of unwilling to do because of the delinquency or the inability of another to do that usually making many kinds of excuse with buts and ifs. This is also a hindrance shutting the path to the state of Nibbāna, remaining and sinking long in the moat and one could not push his head up but suffers. How is the path shut? Dear ladies and gentlemen, please listen carefully and reflect on yourself. People with sloth and torpor are lazy for both their own business and that of others, wasting the time by complaining about this and that. For instance, when there is an occasional ceremony of listening to the Dhamma, sloth and torpor will lead us to the drowsiness, sitting against the wall or a post (in the Dhamma hall), complaining about headache or back pain, and cannot sit down still for long.

[**Para. 327.**] On the contrary, when listening to the songs of women or men, who have pleasant voice, we admire such voice for whole night; the two eyes are glancing at each other with happy minds. However much we listen, we never satisfy; we are fond of harsh words

⁵²¹ The Pali stanza is given here as a reference for the six kinds of dhamma that can destroy the hindrance of hatred.

and gossip, growing sensual desire more and more. But, when others ask to go to the monastery, one complains with blinking eyes, “Oh, it is raining and wet, it is not possible to go.” However, when it is the time to go to the farm, he would wear a large hat and rain coat and,⁵²² no matter how heavy the rain is, he will get out of the house and head for cultivation and never complain.

[Para. 328.] When it comes to making good deeds, however, he always prevents it, holds back and blocks the way; thus, he wasted time and has done nothing at all. So, when our conception is wrong, we will fear to face difficulty; when we fear to face difficulty, we feel reluctant and unwilling to do anything; when being reluctant and unwilling to do anything, it becomes sloth and torpor and lazy to work. As a result, one has done nothing and he or she will become useless man or a useless woman. To do a big business of trading, such as selling and buying things, he fears the danger when traveling to quiet or strange places; he would also complain about burning sun, and feel tiredness and sluggishness all the time. To learn and improve knowledge or to search for daily living expenses, he would complain the hot weather of the (other) country, hard to live in, fear of having fever or the likelihood of illness infecting in his body; he fears that he would die in other countries and never see his home again.⁵²³

[Para. 329.] In such way so, when not doing reflection, he will become lazy; when being lazy, he will make no effort; when making no effort, he will waste the time; when wasting the time, he will not rich; when being not rich, he has no chance to learn; when having no chance to learn, he has no knowledge. As a result, he is blind and far away from knowledge. To learn scripture he is shy; to do business he is shy; to make merit he is shy; to go and observe precepts he is shy. But, he is not ashamed that he is lack of knowledge; he is not shy that he has no property for daily living; he is not ashamed that he knows nothing; he is not ashamed that he is immoral, doing bad action. In that way, we are stupid and accumulate bad *karma* to go to hell. He is not conscientious in relation to the Buddha, His teachings and His community of monks.

[Para. 330.] Sloth and torpor! Hurry up and make your effort! Join the Dhamma ceremony and listen to scripture often and develop your mind. There are six kinds of Dhamma that can destroy sloth and torpor, namely: snacks (*mitāhāra*), posture (*iriyā*), light

⁵²² Shan term for large hat is *kup*, which is made of bamboo sheaths, *SED*, 1995, p. 25, and rain court is *tuoi*, which is made of leaves sewed together, *SED* 1995, p. 149.

⁵²³ The author refers ‘the country and hot weather’ to the lowland of Burma proper.

(*āloka*), open-air (*abbhokāsa*), good friend (*sumittatā*), and beneficially discussion (*sappāyakathā*). Let one consume these six doses of medicine day and night, the best medicine for your health.

[Para. 331.] “Snack” means groceries, such as rice, curry and all other foodstuffs, that we should not eat too much. We should eat just as necessary in accordance with the faculties in order to be a support for development of mind so that our minds will be stand still. Any woman or any man, who eats a lot or eats as much as he or she likes, his or her stomach will be full up and distended, but no energy. Instead he or she will become lazy through sloth and torpor; he or she becomes indolent, idle and cannot move his or her body. After having eaten, the stomach is swollen and the body is so heavy. To repeat the Dhamma words, he or she cannot chant the words properly because he or she feels fullness in the stomach; he or she wastes the time lying down on a mat. So, in order to eliminate sloth and torpor, one should consume food at the right measurement, neither too much nor too little, so that it is suitable for meditation; one will not feel lazy or tired when listening to scripture. In doing so, one will see the path to Nibbāna clearly. Thus, let the noble men and women, all the audience, great and small, take this into heart; listen to the Dhamma discussion often, take notes, remember and understand the reality.

[Para. 332.] “Posture” means when standing, getting up, sitting and sleeping, we do reflection on any moment of such position. When one is standing a long time, he should reflect on the standing position and say, “Oh, I am standing a long time and feel aching; I should lie down and meditate to see the nature of Dhamma clearly.” When sleeping a long time, one should reflect on the sleeping position and say, “Oh, I am lying a long time feeling quiet and sleepy; I should get up and sit so that my eyes will be open and my body will get refreshment.” Thus, one should make effort for mental development day and night aiming for the Long Last City. When sitting a long time, one should reflect on the sitting position and say, “Oh, I am now sitting a long time, feeling aches and numbness.” In such moment, one should either get up or stand up or walk, changing one’s posture while meditating. It is good to meditate on one’s current posture constantly.

[Para. 333.] “Light” means different colours of brightness that arise while doing meditation. With the eyes of wisdom, one should reflect on the colours and meditate. This is the way to the City of Deathlessness in the world of flowers. One should work hard to see the path.

[Para. 334.] “**Open-air**” means outdoors or bright places, where is clean and tidy but not messy, and while sleeping, not rolling over and over. Keep our rooms clean and tidy so that it is good for eyesight.

[Para. 335.] “**Having good friends**” means not having companions, who are lazy but looking for the suitable ones; make friendship with those studying Dhamma scriptures and practicing meditation; associate with them day and night and you will become hardworking person like them.

[Para. 336.] “**Beneficial discussion**” means when one speaks he speaks with right words dealing words morality such as the 13 ways of special practice (*dhutaṅga*) in accordance with the Dhamma. He speaks only beneficial words, the words that lead people to the State of Nibbāna of nine room, where is free from old age. Thus, the golden mouth of the Jewell-Star delivered the six kinds of the Dhamma, which are the tools of destroying sloth and torpor. Therefore, the lord indicated the Pali stanza:

mitahāri riyāloko
abbhokāso sumittatā,
sappāyakathā chadhammā,
*thīna-middhappahāyino.*⁵²⁴

[Para. 337.] Here is the interpretation of **the hindrance of flurry or worry**. “Flurry” refers to restlessness of mind, the mind that is traveling in the air scattering here and there. “Worry” refers to the distress and anxiety about the wrong thing that one has done in the past. One reflects on himself and says, “Oh, I was naughty and bad behaved in the past, so I created bad karma and will have to experience its bad result such as being boiled in a hot pot in hell.” In this way, the more he is worry, the more he has created bad *karma*, being a hindrance to see the path to Nibbāna. Therefore, the wise and noble men reflect on their minds with Dhamma to see the reality. If one has done unwholesome deed, no matter how much he/she is worry or distressed about it, it will never be eradicated. When one does not know about it, he will say, “I do not know about it.” Now, as we have learned and known about it, let us train ourselves, our own minds, for entering to the nine levels of the zenith of Nibbāna, the jewellery city.

⁵²⁴ The Pali stanza is given here as a reference for the six kinds of Dhamma that can destroy sloth and torpor.

[Para. 338.] Remember, there are six kinds of Dhamma for the eradication of the hindrance of flurry and worry, namely: hearing (*sutam*), questioning (*pucchā*), knowing discipline (*vinayaññū*), taking refuge to the Buddha (*buddhasevi*), having good friends (*sumittatā*) and beneficial discussion (*sappāyakathā*). These six kinds of Dhamma destroy the hindrance of flurry and worry. Thus, we will see the path to the state of Nibbāna, where is freedom from all kinds of anxiety.

[Para. 339.] “**Hearing**” refers to our knowledge and intelligent in many versions treatises of the Dhamma, knowing that where is right and where is not, where is straightforward and where is complicated. Thus, one should learn to understand clearly as following the way of Buddha-to-be (*bodhisatta*) and noble men.

[Para. 340.] “**Questioning**” means we should ask if we do like this, will we become a noble man or not, will we be progressing or not; whether the way we practise like this is strict or not; whether the way we entertain like this is suitable or not; whether doing like this is right or not. In such situation, it is important to get the right decision. So, when we do not know, in order to know or when we are not clear, in order to be clear, we should ask the wise, intelligent people, who can explain and tell us what is right and correct. We should ask them in details so that we understand clearly.

[Para. 341.] “**Knowing the rules of discipline**” means we should learn to know and be expertise in the five books of discipline (*vinaya piṭaka*). If a monk commit this kind of wrong thing, he will deserve that kind of punishment; if a monk thinks like this, he will be guilty of doing badly (*dukkata*); if a monk speaks like this, he will be guilty of doing what out to be rejected; if a monk practices like this, he will be guilty of ‘thick serious fult’ (*thullaccaya*).⁵²⁵ Thus, one should learn to be sharp and expertise on the rules of the monks.

[Para. 342.] “**Taking refuge to the Buddha**” means one should approach the wise or noble men and asks them what is right and what is not right. If we approach to the wise and noble men, who know the Dhamma, it is like we approach to the feet of the Buddha himself.

[Para. 343.] “**Having good friends**” means our companions who are expert in the Dhamma treatises and know many versions of the rules of discipline. One should approach such good friends and consult what is right and what is not right. We should associate with such good friends to see the right path.

⁵²⁵ For definition of *thullaccaya*, see Wisdomlib- <http://www.wisdomlib.org/definition/thullaccaya/index.html>

[Para. 344.] “**Beneficial discussion**” means speaking the words that will produce good effect or the words that is in accordance with the rules of discipline, speaking about two good results; speaking the words of the Buddha’s Dhamma, which lead us to be rid of the poor lives of humen and gods. Thus, these are the six kinds of Dhamma that can destroy the hindrance of flurry and worry, and consequently one could attain the Peace-City sooner. Therefore, regarding to the hindrance of flurry and worry, the lord has delivered a Pali stanza like this: *sutaṃ pucchā vinayaññū, buddhasevi sumittatā, sappāyakathā chadhammā, uddhaccādipahāyakā.*⁵²⁶ Thus, let the wise and noble men and women take this into hearts and remember what you have listened.

[Para. 345.] Here is the interpretation of the hindrance of doubt. One doubts whether the Buddha is really holy or not, whether the Dhamma is really sacred or not and whether the Sangha is really holy or not. He also doubts whether he will get the good result of doing merit or not, such as giving, observing precepts and doing meditation; he has a mind of half belief and half disbelief. Thus, when one has doubt, his mind is not settled.

[Para. 346.] Remember dear the audience, who are in the ceremony of listening to the script. There are six kinds of methods for the eradication of the hindrance of doubt, namely: hearing (*sutaṃ*) inquiry (*pucchā*), knowing the rules discipline (*vinayaññū*), believing in the Triple Gem (*adhimokkhā*), having good friends (*sumittatā*) and beneficial discussion (*sappāyakathā*). All these six kinds of Dhamma method are delivered as if one is washing and cleansing the dirt.

[Para. 347.] “**Hearing**” means in order to have knowledge of the Dhamma in many treatises, we must take part in the ceremony of listening to the Dhamma as much as possible. When we have heard and see a lot in many versions of the Dhamma treatises, we will be able to investigate, examine and compare them; we will be able to search for the cause and the way for solution.

[Para. 348.] “**Questioning**” means asking the wise and learned people, listening to them and take notes. If we ask the wise and learned people often, our doubts on the meditative words will be clear, for instance, whether the words we remember by heart are correct or not will be clear; whether the passages we know are right or not will be clear and know what is right.

⁵²⁶ The Pali stanza is given here as a reference for the six kinds of Dhamma that can destroy the hindrance of flurry and worry.

[Para. 349.] “Knowing the rules of discipline” means we should learn to know the rules of discipline; knowing what is suitable or not; knowing that by breaking what type of rules, one would be of guilty with what kind of punishment. So, one should learn to understand the rules accordingly.

[Para. 350.] “Believing in the Triple Gem” means believing in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, which is the Triple Gem, day and night. Take the Buddha as a meditation object; take the Dhamma as a meditation object and take the Sangha as a meditation object at all time; wherever you are, think about them over and over again.

[Para. 351.] “Having good friends” means one should find good companions, who have pure and clean belief in him. For instance, a person who believes in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and who always talks about generosity, morality and meditation, is a good person; so we should associate with him.

[Para. 352.] “Beneficial discussion” means when speaking, speaking only about the qualities of the Buddha, the qualities of the Dhamma and the qualities of the Sangha, and enjoying the ceremony of listening to pleasant words scripture; speaking the words that would develop faith, wisdom, knowledge, mindfulness; speaking of Dhamma day and night such as when standing up or sitting down. Thus, there are six kinds of method, which is the holy medicine to cure the convulsions of doubt that one could reopen his eyes; this type of medicine is better than the medicine, which is comparable with silver.

[Para. 353.] Thus, the voice of golden mouth has come out between the sacred teeth: *sutaṃ pucchā vinayaññū, adhimokkhā, sumittatā, sappāyakathā chadhammā, vicikicchā pahāyakā* [‘hearing, questioning, knowing the rule, investigating, having good fiends, and suitable discussion – all these six factors are the tools for clearing one’s doubt’].⁵²⁷ Let all the wise and noble people listen, notice and take it into hearts.

[Para. 354.] I shall explain more so that the audience will understand the nature of the hindrances. I shall explain the nature and characteristics of the five hindrances, namely, the hindrance of sensual pleasure, the hindrance of hatred, the hindrance sloth and torpor, the hindrance of flurry and worry, and the hindrance of doubt. In fact, these hindrances are neither minds nor consciousness; the lord said they actually are the aggregate of conditional things. Therefore, the five kinds of hindrances - namely, the hindrance of sensual pleasure,

⁵²⁷ The Pali stanza is given here as a reference for the six kinds of Dhamma that can destroy the hindrance of flurry and worry.

the hindrance of hatred, the hindrance of sloth and torpor, the hindrance of flurry and worry, and the hindrance of doubt – are the aggregate of volition; they are not minds but mind companion or mental state.

[Para. 355.] Dear ladies and gentlemen, remember that these hindrances are not mind. The desire for sensual pleasure is a mental state of greed; hatred is a mental state of anger; sloth is the mental state of sloth; torpor is the mental state of torpor; flurry is the mental state of flurry; worry is the mental state worry; and doubt is the mental state of doubt. These five mental formations are called the aggregate of volition as mentioned in the nine section of the treatise.⁵²⁸

[Para. 356.] Dear lovely sons, young and old you many pupils! Reflect on the five kinds of hindrances, which are preventing the wholesome deeds of humans and gods, to get sangvega. Reflect on your own bodies being stuck in the five prisons of hindrance. Reflect on the desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor, flurry and worry, and doubt, which are the five fences blocking the path. Reflect on the bodies of others too, from the Dhamma point of view, they are blocked by the five hindrances and the path to Nibbāna. So, they suffer in the prison time and again, and cannot raise their heads to see way out.

[Para. 357.] Again, reflect on both your own bodies and the bodies of others too, all are puzzling going about here and there in the three realms, where there is the nature of becoming form and consciousness. So, meditate on the desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor and the like; try to see that they have the nature of happening in both yourself and others. Again, reflect on the desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor and the like; try to see that have the nature of arising in both yourself and others. Thus, one should reflect on the foundation of mindfulness of reflection on the Ideas in accordance with the Dhamma as preached by the lord.

[Para. 358.] Again, look at the time when the desire for sensual pleasure and the like are broken and disappearing. Again, reflect on the five kinds of hindrance that they have the nature of arising and then disappearing. So, meditate on the foundation of mindfulness for the reflection on the Ideas, that the five hindrances have the nature of change and impermanence.

[Para. 359.] These five truths make humans and gods suffer in the narrow prisons of hindrances. So, one should learn to understand clearly that this kind of truth really exists. A

⁵²⁸ It seems that the author is referring to the nine sections to the *Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha* (The Manual of Abhidhamma).

monk, who meditates on the Ideas, should mindfully reflect on the desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor, such as the moment they are arising or disappearing. In such moment, one should learn to develop his knowledge, wisdom and mindfulness; practise the foundation of mindfulness again and again, hundreds of thousands of times, so mindfulness will be with him.

[Para. 360.] The monk, who reflects on the foundation of mindfulness and frightens the suffering of samsara, will not be influenced by lustful desire, deceit or wrong view; he will not be influenced by greed, hatred and delusion. We adhered to the concept that the five aggregates are our bodies; we missed the opportunity for salvation because we have a wrong view that we are the owners of the five aggregates.

[Para. 361.] A monk, young or old, should not attach to his belonging saying, “this is my property; this is my gold; this is my silver, this is my belonging; my cow, my buffalo, my cloth.” He should be mindful and take note on greed and wrong view. Dear many monks, who are holy, practise well, and wear the skin of the Buddha!⁵²⁹ These are the foundations of mindfulness for the reflection on the Ideas as delivered by the lord and let his pupils remember.

[Para. 362.] The desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor, flurry and worry, and doubt – all these are the logs of impermanence, suffering and selflessness, as they are condition to breaking and vanishing. The person who works hard on meditating the foundation of mindfulness for the reflection on Ideas will say: “Oh, the aggregate of mental formation is impermanent, suffering and selfless.” In doing so, while walking, he will be frightened on his body, which is subject to old age through breathing in and breathing out. Let us rejoice!! *Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu!!*

The Contemplation of Ideas, The Section of the Aggregates

[Para. 363.] Now another thing, the next section, with lovely and beautiful fragrant blossom, one after the other, how significantly the Dhamma words were delivered. Great fame, spreading far and wide, to the whole universe, surrounded by humans and gods, they are pleased and delighted.

⁵²⁹ In metaphor, a monk’s robe is called the Buddha’s skin in Shan Buddhism.

[Para. 364.] In the identification of Ideas, the desire for sensual pleasure, hatred, sloth and torpor etc., which are the hindrances, having been explained with examples, now is the time to explain the five aggregates of attachment. The Golden Glory has delivered like this, “*Puna ca paraṃ bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu. Kathañca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati pañcasu upādānakkhandhesu.*” [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, as to Ideas, continues to consider these from the point of view of the Five Aggregates of Grasping.’]⁵³⁰ I shall now explain with interpretation for a clear comprehension.

[Para. 365.] Dear son-like pupils! Meditate on the five aggregates of clinging to the worldly things so that the foundation of mindfulness of reflection on Ideas will be developed. How should one meditate, contemplate or reflect on the five aggregates? It seems that it is not yet clear to royal pupils. Thus, the Pali words have come for clear comprehension on the identification of Ideas: *idha bhikkhave bhikkhu iti rūpaṃ, iti rūpassa samudayo, iti rūpassa atthaṅgamo* – [‘Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother reflects: ‘Such is material form, such is its genesis, such its passing away’].⁵³¹

[Para. 366.] Dear beloved sons! Contemplate on the 28 types of corporeal body (*rūpa*), which are classified into different groups of composition (*kalapa*). This is the corporeal body, existing through the nature and change of cold or warm climate; this is the cause and actual appearing of the corporeal body. The corporeal body also has the characteristics of arising, making the samsara longer. Also note that the corporeal body has the nature and characteristics of dissolution.

[Para. 367.] Again, contemplate on the aggregate of sensation of five kinds of heavy and light feeling through the body bones. This is the aggregate of sensation; it can feel both pleasant and unpleasant senses; touch and altogether with ignorance and karma are the cause and actual appearing of sensation; the aggregate of sensation has also the nature and characteristics of dissolution. Thus, one should learn to understand the nature of sensation.

[Para. 368.] Again, contemplate on the aggregate of perception, the six kinds of perception. This is the perception; it has the nature and characteristics of noting, for instance, it can note the six senses such as white, yellow or green color; it can also remember pink, red or mixed colors. So, that is the cause and actual appearing of perception; all men and women

⁵³⁰ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 335.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

have such nature and characteristics of perception. The perception also has the nature and characteristics of dissolution. Thus, it is mentioned clearly in the treatise relating to our own bodies and the bodies of others.

[Para. 369.] Again, contemplate on the aggregate of 50 mental formations. The mental formations have the nature and characteristics of repairing or reappearing, so it is said “the suffering of sankhara.” That is the cause and actual appearing of mental formations. The mental formations also have the nature and characteristics of dissolution. Thus, one should learn to understand clearly and realize many things. As a result, one will plan to get rid of suffering.

[Para. 370.] Again, contemplate the aggregate of consciousness; reflect consistently on your mind. The consciousness has the nature and characteristics of knowing the senses, such as yellow, white, black or mixed color, of men or women or whatever. So, that is the cause and actual appearing of consciousness, making life circle of sprout [from the root of a tree], shoot, leaf and blossom.⁵³² The consciousness also has the nature and characteristics of dissolution. Thus, one should learn to see everything inside and outside of the bush (to understand everything about consciousness).

[Para. 371.] Here is the interpretation.⁵³³ Oh, those who wish for liberation, all the audience, please make your effort to study and remember! The golden mouth of the Buddha has delivered the five aggregates, namely, the aggregate of corporeal body, the aggregate of sensation, the aggregate of perception, the aggregate of mental formation and the aggregate of consciousness. Of them, here is the meaning of the aggregate of corporeal body; it has the nature and characteristics of change and impermanence, such as becoming, getting old with grey hairs, bad eyesight, deaf ears and being bent in the back.⁵³⁴ Of the aggregate of corporeal body too, there are three kinds of phenomena, namely, the aggregate of corporeal body itself, the cause of the aggregate of corporeal body and the dissolution of the aggregate of corporeal body. Therefore the sacred Pali is said, “*iti rūpaṃ, iti rūpassa samudayo, iti rūpassa atthaṅgamo*” [‘Such is material form, such is its genesis, such is its passing away’].

⁵³² “Sprout, shoot, leaf and blossom” here is a simile for a process of life such as birth, grow and old.

⁵³³ This sentence indicates that the previous five paragraphs are nissaya translation and now it’s the commentary.

⁵³⁴ The root of the aggregate of corporeal body is mentioned in Pali in the main text: *Rūppati sitena unkena vipallati rūpaṃ rūpassa khandho*.

[Para. 372.] ‘The aggregate of form’ is where the four great elements, namely, the earth element, water element, fire element and air element gather together.⁵³⁵ The four great Essentials, namely the great elements, and of the Derivatives, the vital principle (*jīvita*), the heart-base (*hadaya vatthu*), the femininity and the masculinity are called the aggregate of corporeal body. That is how it was preached by the Lord and it is good to remember. The causes of the aggregate of form are ignorance, lustful desire, karma, edible food and the nature of arising – there are five altogether. The aggregate of corporeal body comes into existence because of the arising of ignorance, lustful desire, karma, edible food and the nature of arising. If there is no nature of arising, there will be no ignorance, lustful desire, karma and edible food. Because of all these five phenomena the aggregate of corporeal body is formed time and again making the life circle long.

[Para. 373.] The causes for the dissolution of the aggregate of form are ignorance, lustful desire, karma, edible food and the nature of disappearing – there are five altogether. Therefore, the aggregate of corporeal body has the nature of arising and vanishing, such as appearing and disappearing or birth and death, making the life circle long; the life is appearing and disappearing while being tortured by ignorance, lustful desire, *karma* and edible food. This aggregate of form of 28 components are the senses for the four kinds of clinging. Therefore it is called the aggregate of corporeal body of clinging. It is the place for the gathering of the four types of clinging; otherwise, it is empty and meaningless.

[Para. 374.] In saying so, meditators contemplate on the nature of form, a combination of the 28 parts, which is impermanent and change. Therefore, the meditators take note in their minds while meditating: “the aggregate of form is impermanent, suffering and selfless.”

[Para. 375.] Again, meditators contemplate on the aggregate of form of 28 components as the senses for clinging, such as the clinging of desire, the clinging of wrong view and so on; these clings come and adhere to the body of 28 senses. The great four elements are like the supports and main parts of a house. It is correct to call them either ‘material’ or ‘sense for clinging’ or ‘the aggregate of form because they have the same nature and characteristics of change. Thus, one should take this into insight to see the truth.

⁵³⁵ Alternative translation of the great four elements: the element of extension, the element of cohesion, the element of heat and the element of motion. Nārada 1987, *A Manual of Abhidhamma* p.324, e-book version from www.buddhanet.net.

Therefore, the golden mouth of the lord said, “the aggregate of form is impermanent, suffering and selfless.”

[Para. 376.] Now the interpretation of ‘**the aggregate of sensation**’. It can feel the good or bad senses, happiness or suffering or neutral one, the three blocks of hell.⁵³⁶ The aggregate of sensation too is classified into three kinds, namely, the aggregate of sensation itself, the cause for the appearance of the aggregate of sensation and the dissolution of the aggregate of sensation. Therefore, it is said by the lord in Pali, “*iti vedanā, iti vedanāya samudayo, iti vedanāya atthaṅgamo.*” [Such and such is sensation, such and such is the arising of sensation and such and such is the disappearance of sensation.]

[Para. 377.] What are the aggregate of sensation? Perhaps it is not clear in mind yet. Here it talks about the three kinds of feeling, five kinds of feeling; six kinds of feeling and nine kinds of feeling. Thus, the account of sensational feeling has come in different ways.

[Para. 378.] The three kinds of feeling are pleasant feeling, painful feeling and neutral feeling. The five kinds of feeling are mental pleasant feeling, mental painful feeling, physical pleasant feeling, physical painful feeling and neutral feeling.

[Para. 379.] The six kinds of feeling are: pleasant worldly feeling, pleasant unworldly feeling, painful worldly feeling, painful unworldly feeling, neutral worldly feeling and neutral unworldly feeling. These feeling can be experience by humans or gods, all same. Here is the way of counting the nine kinds of feeling. When the three kinds of feeling above and the six kinds of feeling above are combined together, then they become the nine kinds of feeling.

[Para. 380.] The causes for the appearance of the aggregate of sensation are ignorance, lustful desire, *karma*, touch and the nature of arising – there are five altogether. And, the causes for the dissolution of the aggregate are ignorance, lustful desire, *karma*, touch and the nature of vanishing – there are five too. When the aggregate of sensation appears, it appears by the cause of ignorance, lustful desire, *karma*, touch and the nature of arising. When the aggregate of sensation disappears too, it disappears because of the dissolution of ignorance, lustful desire, *karma*, touch and the nature of vanishing. So, this is the universal truth of the three realms.

⁵³⁶ *Vedayati sukhaṃ dukkhaṃ tatiññanti vedanaṃ vedanāya vedankkhandho* – the verbal root for the aggregate of sensation mentioned in the main text.

[Para. 381.] Because the aggregate of sensation has the nature and characteristics of arising and vanishing, it is subject to appearing and then disappearing; it is changeable and impermanent. Therefore, it is said, “the aggregate of sensation is impermanent, suffering and selfless.” Again, the aggregate of sensation is the sense for the four kinds of clinging (graspings), namely, sensual desire, false view, adherence to rites and ceremonies, and soul-theory. Consequently, this aggregate of sensation is pushed into the four big oceans (*ogha*), namely, sensual desire, adherence to existence, false views and ignorance. So, one has to swim up and down in the stream of three realms.

[Para. 382.] Sensation can be called either feeling or sense for clinging or the aggregate of sensation. Because of its nature and characteristics of change and impermanent, the golden mouth then said, “The aggregate of sensation is impermanent, suffering and selfless.”

[Para. 383.] Here now the interpretation of ‘**the aggregate of perception.**’ It has the ability of noting the six senses. It can notice the sense of visible object, the sense of sound, the sense of odor, the sense of taste, the sense of touch and the sense of other tangible Ideas. Therefore, it is called the aggregate of perception by name according to its nature. In the aggregate of perception too, it is classified into three phenomena, namely, the aggregate of perception itself, the causes for the appearance of the aggregate of perception and the dissolution of the aggregate of perception. Therefore, it is said in Pali: *iti saññā, iti saññāya samudayo, iti saññāya atthaṅgamo* [‘Such is perception, such is its genesis, such is its passing away’].⁵³⁷

[Para. 384.] What kind of phenomena is called the aggregate of perception? Perhaps this is not clear in mind and it still finds it difficult to understand. There are six kinds of perception, namely, the perception of visible object, the perception of sound, the perception of odor, the perception of taste, the perception of touch and the perception of other Ideas. The perception that can notice and remember a visible object, such as a beautiful or ugly object, is called “the perception of object”; the perception that can notice and remember a sound is called “the perception of sound”; the perception that can notice and remember smell or odor, such as pleasant or unpleasant smell, is called “the perception of odor”; the perception that can notice and remember the taste, such as delicious and unsavory, is called “the perception of taste” indicating about the sweet, sour, salty, bitter and the like of cookeries; the

⁵³⁷ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 335.

perception that can notice and remember a tangible touch, such as the soft touch or the hard touch, is called “the perception of tangible touch”; and the perception that can notice and remember the other Ideas is called “the perception of other Ideas.” These six kinds are called “the aggregate of perception” existing in all bodies of humans and gods.

[Para. 385.] The causes for the appearance of the aggregate of perception are ignorance, lustful desire, *karma*, touch and the nature of arising – there are five altogether. The causes for the dissolution of the aggregate of perception is too almost the same, different only the nature of arising and the nature of vanishing. Thus, the sermon has been delivered on the causes of appearance and disappearance of the aggregate of perception. One should learn to understand clearly and remember it by heart.

[Para. 386.] The aggregate of perception also has the nature of impermanence, being subject to arising, breaking and disappearing. Therefore, the cool water of Dhamma was poured in Pali like this, “the aggregate of perception is impermanent, suffering and selfless.” Again, the aggregate of perception is the sense for clinging. Therefore, it is called “the aggregate of the perception of clinging.” Thus, how the words were composed for the learners to understand the interpretation.

[Para. 387.] Here now the interpretation of ‘**the aggregate of mental formation.**’ It has the nature and characteristics of forming and creating the good and bad life circle of humans and gods, growing the flower bush, its shoots and blossoms.⁵³⁸ Altogether, there are 50 mental formations, which have the nature and characteristics of forming or creating. In the aggregate of mental formation too, it was classified into three phenomena, namely, the aggregate of mental formation itself, the causes for the appearance of mental formation and the causes for the dissolution of mental formation. Therefore, it is said in Pali: *iti saṅkhārā, iti saṅkhāraṇaṃ samudayo, iti saṅkhāraṇaṃ atthaṅgamo* [‘Such is mental formation, such is its genesis, such is its passing away’].⁵³⁹ Thus, the Lord has preached to his many pupils, young and old, in those days of His time.

[Para. 388.] Except feeling and perception, all the 50 mental states are called the aggregate of mental formations. The 50 are the remaining 11 common mental states, 14 immoral mental states, 19 beautiful mental states, 3 mental states of abstinences, 2 illimitable

⁵³⁸ The author uses a flower bush, its shoots and blossoms as a simile of the population of humans and gods, i.e. the bush is similar to parents or old generations and the shoots and blossoms are similar to children or young generations.

⁵³⁹ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 335.

mental states and wisdom. These mental states are called mental formations, growing shoots and leaves in the three realms. The causes for the appearance of the aggregate of mental formations are ignorance, lustful desire, karma, touch and the nature of arising. These five are the root of the beginning of mental formation, which is similar to our shadow standing beside wherever we go.

[Para. 389.] The causes for the dissolution of the aggregate of mental formation are also those things mentioned above, only replacing the nature of arising by the nature of vanishing. Thus, let the wise and intelligent people take these into heart. The aggregate of mental formation too is impermanent; it is begun and vanished, growing more shoots and leaves. Therefore, it is said in Pali, “the aggregate of mental formation is impermanent, suffering and selfless.” Beautiful words composed here are in accordance with the words of the Lord.

[Para. 390.] Again, the aggregate of mental formation is the sense for the four types of clinging day and night. Therefore, it is called the aggregate of mental formation of clinging, as it is grasped by the four clingings and never fulfills one’s satisfaction, willing more and more enjoyment and consequently making life circle longer. The 50 mental states have the nature and characteristics of forming and creating. So, they are called either “mental formation” or “senses of clinging” or “the aggregate of mental formation.” Thus, the golden mouth said, “the aggregate of mental formation of clinging is impermanent, suffering and selfless.”

[Para. 391.] Here now the interpretation of ‘**the aggregate of consciousness.**’ It has the nature and characteristics of knowing different kinds of senses, such as yellow, white objects, according the desire the 89 types of consciousness. The aggregate of consciousness too, similar to the previous aggregate, is classified into three categories, namely, the aggregate of consciousness itself, the causes for the appearance of the aggregate of consciousness and the causes for the dissolution of the aggregate of consciousness. Thus, the lord of dhamma, who is expert in the Tripitaka, has said in Pali: *iti viññānaṃ, iti viññānassa samudayo, iti viññānassa atthaṅgamoti* [‘Such is mental activities, such is its genesis, such is its passing away’].⁵⁴⁰ The Lord has delivered it to his son-like pupils.

[Para. 392.] The phenomena of the aggregate of consciousness are the 81 types of mundane consciousness, making the minds for humans and gods; the 8 types of supra-

⁵⁴⁰ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 335.

mundane consciousness are also called the aggregate of consciousness, but they are not mixed with the minds of humans and gods. The causes for the appearance of the aggregate of consciousness are ignorance, lustful desire, karma, mental properties and the nature of arising – there are five altogether.

[Para. 393.] The causes for the dissolution of the aggregate of consciousness are ignorance, lustful desire, karma, mental properties and the nature of vanishing. The aggregate of consciousness has begun, vanished and begun again and again and suffers because of ignorance, lustful desire, karma, mental properties and the nature of arising and vanishing. The aggregate of consciousness too, as the previous ones, is neither zenith nor permanent. So, it is said in Pali, “the aggregate of consciousness is impermanent, suffering and selfless.” Thus, let the noble men and women take this into heart and remember.

[Para. 394.] Again, the aggregate of consciousness, the 81 mundane consciousnesses, is the sense for four clingings, namely, the clinging of sensual pleasure, false view, adherence to rites and ceremonies, and soul-theory. So, it is called the aggregate of consciousness of clinging. The aggregate of consciousness also has the nature of arising and vanishing. Thus, the golden mouth said, “the aggregate of consciousness of clinging is impermanent, suffering and selfless.”

[Para. 395.] On the whole, when the five aggregates come and combine together and form the bodies of humans and gods, suffering in the circle of life, which is hard to cut off. The aggregate of corporeal body, the aggregate of sensation, the aggregate of perception, the aggregate of mental formation and the aggregate of consciousness – these five aggregates have been explained in details. None of these five aggregates are zenith or permanent but subject to change, vanish and disappear. Therefore, it is said in Pali, “the five aggregates are impermanent, suffering and selfless.” All the five have to experience good and bad things; all humans and gods were born to die and suffer.

[Para. 396.] Again, the five aggregates are the objects for the four clingings, causing humans and gods suffer through their life circle. Therefore, the Lord has given their names as the five aggregates of clinging, which is similar to a rope binding a flag, flying in the nine zeros. Thus, the omniscient, who knows about the three realms, delivered by his golden mouth. As the five aggregates are the objects for the phenomena of clinging, it is said, “the five aggregates of clinging are impermanent, suffering and selfless.” That is how it was described for clear comprehension.

[Para. 397.] *Avijjā taṇhupādānaṃ, kamma hetu catubbidho, etassa rūpakāyassa, ahāro paccayo bhava* - this stanza approves that there are two kinds of causes for the portion of corporeal body (*rūpakāya kothhāsa*), namely, the creating cause (*hetu-hetu*) and the caring cause (*paccaya-hetu*). Ignorance, craving, grasping, and karma – these four are called the creating cause, which are the causes for the appearance of corporeal body. And, the edible food, such as candy, rice, curry, red potato is called the caring cause, which is caring and looking after the corporeal body in order to be healthy.

[Para. 398.] *Janako hetu akkhāto, paccayo anupālako, hetuṅgurassa bījantu, paccayo pathavādayo* – this Pali stanza provides similes for the two causes. It is said that the creating cause is like a seed of plantation, which is planted by people in the earth to become a plant and grows with green leaves. In the same way, the creating cause can make the aggregate of corporeal body. And, the caring cause is like the soil, consisting earth, water, fire and air elements etc. so that the seed and then plant will be fertile and grows faster. Therefore the caring cause is the support for the growth of the corporeal body at anytime, during wet, cold, warm or dry season, supplying with fire, water, earth and air.

[Para. 399.] *Iti ime pañcadhammāhi, hetu paccayā taṃ katā, avijjādayo tayo tattha, matāva upanissayā* – this stanza provides further explanation on the simile for the two causes. The five phenomena - ignorance, craving, karma, grasping and edible food - are the causes for the appearance of the aggregate of corporeal body, which was divided into five branches to become two hands, two legs and a head. Ignorance, craving, grasping – these three are similar to a mother, who takes care of her baby to be healthy and grow up.

[Para. 400.] *Janakaṃ pana kammantu, puttassa hi pitā viya, thati viya kumarassa, ahāro paccayo bhava* – this stanza provides further simile and explanation. The reproductive karma (*janaka karma*), which produces the limbs of the corporeal body, such as ears, eyes, waist, head, feet, mouth, collarbones and the like, is like a father, who provides sperm for pregnancy in the womb, and one has to reborn and start life again and again. The edible food is like a nurse or baby-sitter, who has sweet milk and takes care of a baby.

[Para. 401.] Here is the interpretation. Dear noble men and women! Remember that the seeds, which were spread out and buried in the earth, are crack open when sometimes after they were absorbed the soil and rains. Ignorance, craving, grasping and karma are similar to the seeds; the edible food is like the soil and the rains; the aggregate of corporeal body is like a tree with thick foliage, which is originated from the seed. Therefore, when the

two causes, such as seed and continuous rains for many days, a sprout will then come out from the seed.

[Para. 402.] Women's craving and men's craving have the same nature of itching and longing, searching afar to find a place of throwing the burning lust away. These are the cause of the truth of suffering, the root plant that grows up more and more. It is because of the ignorance that craving, grasping and productive karma come out one by one. As a result, one is puzzling in the sense of form, sound, odor, taste, tangible touch, which are the five kinds of sensual pleasure; husband and wife are crazy with enjoyment of life, pulling one to another and rubbing over each other. Due to the sensual lust of parents, being the cause of the aggregate of corporeal body, the sperm was then transferred into a form of body; thus the woman came to be pregnant and then the baby came out of the womb. At such time, it is fearful, frightening, disgusted and horrible; the baby is rubbed together with blood; the mother is dying suffered.

[Para. 403.] The productive karma is like a father; ignorance, craving and grasping are like a mother. So these two similes are helpful for the explanation of the two causes; a mother is the creating cause and a father is the caring cause; a baby is born by combination of the two causes. Edible food is like a baby-sitter, who feeds sweet milk to the baby. Food is the support for balance of postures and four elements. Sometimes, a baby is carried on the back of a baby-sitter. Also the aggregate of corporeal body is grown up with milk, rice, and caring such sleeping with his/her mother or baby-sitter; it takes years to become a strong person, beginning from learning to walk, sitting and standing up.

[Para. 404.] After the appearance of upaccaya-rupa, santati-rupa appears; after the appearance of santati-rupa, jarata-rupa appears; after the appearance of jarata-rupa, aniccata-rupa, the nature of vanishing, appears, and then it leads one to death, lying in a coffin at a funeral. Thus, we are tortured by birth, old age, decease and death. However, we are not at an end with death, we have to start a new life again due to the cause of ignorance, craving, grasping and productive karma. Therefore, it is said the five aggregates have the nature of arising and vanishing, such as birth and death, experiencing suffering and no progress. Let us rejoice!!

The Contemplation of Ideas, The Section of Sphere (*āyatana*)

[Para. 405.] Now come to the next section of significant Dhamma with pleasant taste. The Lord has delivered the foundation of mindfulness time and again to his pupil monks. Having delivered the aggregate of corporeal body, the aggregate of sensation, the aggregate of perception, the aggregate of mental formation and the aggregate of consciousness, which are the five aggregates, the golden glory is now moving the next section by starting these Pali passages: *Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati chasu ajjhattika-bahiresu āyatanesu. Kathañca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati chasu ajjhattika-bahiresu āyatanesu* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, as to Ideas, continues to consider Ideas from the point of view of the Six Internal and External Spheres of Sense’].⁵⁴¹ There are six kinds of sense-organs and six kinds of sense-objects – all of which shall be explained.

[Para. 406.] Dear pupils, you many who the rules of discipline and practice well! A monk who reflects on the foundation of mindfulness for the identification of Ideas, should reflect on the nature of those objects in the process. Dear love-sons, there are inside-spheres and outside-spheres, which are related to each other, so contemplate on them in order to understand the nature of the foundation of mindfulness for the identification of Ideas. Practice hard to reach your aim in front of your face (instantly).

[Para. 407.] How one should contemplate? Perhaps it is clear to you pupils yet. Thus, It is said in Pali: *Idha bhikkhave bhikhu cakkhuñca pajānāti, rūpeca pajānāti, yañca tadubbhayaṃ padicca upajjati saṃyojanaṃ tañca pajānāti* [‘Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother is aware of the organ of sight, is aware of the objects of sight, and any Fetter which arises on account of them both – of that, too, is he aware’].⁵⁴² These Pali passages explain the nature of the identification of Ideas. Dear lovely noble sons! Contemplate that an eye is existed in the socket of the eye. Also, notice the visible object, such as beautiful or ugly object that you have seen in front of your eyes. Learn to understand the reality and take note on what you see them as they are.

[Para. 408.] When the eye and the visible object come together and see something, fetters arise – such as attachment to sensual pleasure, hatred, pride, false view etc. there are ten fetters altogether – appearing and winding each other. So, of those ten fetters too,

⁵⁴¹ Rhys Davids 1977, p. 336.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

contemplate and take note on which ever one has arisen in your mind. Take note and say, “Oh, this is the fetter of the attachment to sensual pleasure; this is the fetter of hatred; this is the fetter pride; this is the fetter of false view. In this way, one should meditate time and again in order to understand [about the connection between the eye, visible object and fetters] clearly.

[Para. 409.] When reflecting on things in the wrong way, however, it will convince you to attach to the enjoyment of sensual pleasure. Consequently, the fetters, which are not arisen, will be arisen, as ignorance is full in the bodies of men and women; the heat of hell can be burned up at any time. Thus, one should learn to understand the cause of making more fetters; meditate on them and say, “Oh, the attitude of my mind is not a positive one; it is not suppose to be like that; it does not produce any good effect.” Thus, one should learn to understand the nature of mind.

[Para. 410.] But, when reflecting on the danger of the suffering of *samsāra*, one will frighten and disengage with it. Consequently, the fetters, which had been arisen, will be eradicated and disappeared. So, reflecting on the suffering of samsara and the way for liberation from it, one should say, “Oh, the attitude of my mind at this moment is absolutely right, it will produce good effect.” Thus, one should learn to understand the nature of mind.

[Para. 411.] Furthermore, there is dhamma, such as moral consciousness of sense-sphere and form-sphere, can momentarily destroy the fetters of attachment to sensual pleasure, hatred, pride, false view and so on; when these fetters have been destroyed, one will have clear in mind and see things clearly. In the future, in order not to have the fetters again, the four Paths, such as the stream entrance, the once returner etc. can eradicate the fetters together with their roots. Thus, one should learn and keep in mind that the four Paths can eradicate the ten fetters completely.

[Para. 412.] Contemplate that ear is existed in our human bodies and notice it with knowledge of clear comprehension to understand properly. Also, there is a sense of sound, such as the soft voice, which is pleasant to the ears and the cruel and harsh voice. Here one should learn to understand the nature of the sense of sound clearly. When the eye organ and the sense of sound come together, there will be a pleasant or cruel voice. Consequently, fetters arise, such as the fetter of attachment to sensual pleasure, hatred, pride, false view etc. appear due to greed, hatred and delusion. Thus, one should contemplate on the fetters that arose from sound one by one, and try to learn the way of eradicating them.

[Para. 413.] Contemplate on the nose, which is situated in the middle of the eyes, having two holes for the air of breathing-in and breathing-out. One should meditate and notice, “this is the nose” and try to see through the holes of the nose into deep inside. Also, there is ordure, which fond of fragrant or pungent smell. One should meditate and notice, “Oh, this is the ordure” which fond of different kinds of smell. When the nose and odour come together, attachment to sensual pleasure and the like of fetters arise all over the body, making one puzzling like a monkey. Thus, one should meditate to understand the nature of nose and ordor to see the danger of suffering and disengage with it.

[Para. 414.] Contemplate on the tongue, which is like the petal of a lotus blossom, locating in the middle of the throat and oozing with saliva. One should meditate on it and notice, “Oh, this is the tongue”, and try to understand its nature. Also, there is bitter, sour, saltry, astringent and all kinds of taste, which can decide the flavour of food whether it is delicious or not. One should contemplate on it and notice, “Oh, this is the taste” and meditate day and night to understand the nature of taste.

[Para. 415.] When the tongue and the taste come together and meet spicy, salty, sweet, sour or astringent flavour, there the desire for sensual pleasure and the like of fetters arise consistently as if there is a disturbance by the king of death. Anyone of the ten fetters can identify the sour, bitter, astringent and the like of flavour. Thus, one should meditate enthusiastically with knowledge to understand [the nature of tongue and flavour] clearly.

[Para. 416.] Contemplate on our human body and notice, “Oh, this is the body” and try to feel the cold and warm temperature of the body. Also, there is a sense of tangible touch, such as when rubbing and rolling over each other on a thick and beautiful bedsheet. One should notice and say, “Oh, this is the sense of tangible touch” and try to realize it clearly. When the body and the tangible touch come together and meet the soft or hard contact, there a moaning of soft and beautiful face arises. Consequently, the attachment to sensual pleasure and the like of fetters arise in our bodies, and our minds puzzle. At such moment, one should notice the appearance of sensual desire, hatred, pride, false view and the like of fetters and feel frightened and disengaged with them.

[Para. 417.] There is mind inside of our bodies, which enjoy with senses. One should contemplate it and see it clearly. Thre are visible object, sound, ordor, taste etc., which are Ideas. All things coming to our minds are the nature of Ideas. When the mind and the Ideas come to contact, then ten kinds of fetters such as sensual desire arise, torturing us and much

suffer. Thus, one should meditate to understand the cause and effect of fetters leading men and gods to be stucked in a narrow place.

[Para. 418.] When thinking of the improper things, it leads us to daily hell, puzzling our heads like a disturbance by the king of death. In doing so, the fetters, which are not arisen, will be arisen in our bodies. As result, we will be tortured by defilements. Therefore, all men and women are puzzled like monkeys.

[Para. 419.] But, there is a time of thinking of suitable things and the right things, for instance, reflecting on the teaching of the Buddha day and night. In doing so, fetters that have arisen will be eradicated and disappeared, like a person taking a bath washing filter away with clean water.

[Para. 420.] Furthermore, here are phenomena such as moral consciousness of sense-sphere and great moral consciousness of form-sphere, which can destroy fetters momentarily. In the future, in order not to have fetters leading one to troubles again, there are the four Paths, such as the stream entrance, the once returner and so on, which have completely eliminate all kinds of fetter together with roots, leaves and sprouts.

[Para. 421.] Here is the interpretation. Remember ladies and gentlemen who wish for the libration from the mire of suffering. Sphere means there are two types of sphere, namely, internal sphere or sense-organs and outter sphere or sense-objects, which are the bases for the arising of fetters such as sensual desire, hatred etc. growing more and more.

[Para. 422.] There are six types of internal sphere and sense-organs, namely, eye-sphere, ear-sphere, nose-sphere, tongue-sphere, body and mind-sphere. These spheres are hiding inside of the organs. Therefore they are called “internal sphere” (*ajjhattikāyatana*).

[Para. 423.] There are six types of external sphere or sense-objects, namely, visible objects, sound, ordor, taste, tangible object and all mixed and other Ideas. These sphere are from outside of the body. Therefore, they are called “external sphere” (*bahirāyatana*).

[Para. 424.] There are two types of eye-sphere, namely, composite eye (*sasambhāra-cakkhu*) and sensitive part of the eye (*pasāda-cakkhu*).⁵⁴³ Composite eye refers to the round socket our human eye. Sensitive eye refers to the back small oject inside the eyeball, which is as small as the head of body louse. It is just so small, like a little dirt or automic subtle, lying in the shadow of a small man in the eyeball. These two types of eye cannot see any sense or

⁵⁴³ Nārada, 1987, p. 329.

visible object because they are just material, which has the nature of changing; it has no ability to see the six senses.

[Para. 425.] Sensitive material (*pasāda*) means purity and sparkling like jade. When the sensitive part of the eye is pure and clean, the eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāna*) is able to see objects easily. The eye-consciousness then will be able to identify the senses, such as yellow or white, beautiful or ugly, because the eye-consciousness and the sensitive part of the eye are related to one another. If the sensitive eye is broken, the eye-consciousness will be blind and cannot see things clearly.

[Para. 426.] The remaining five sensitive material qualities of ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are similar to the eye, by dividing each of them into two types, namely, composite and sensitive. The composite ear (*sota-pasāda*) means fine short and red hairs in the ear (pinfeather), which similar to the small gold lines rounding the diamond of a finger-ring. The sensitive part of the ear means sound that spreads all over the fine short hairs in the ear. The ear-consciousness then starts from the root the fine short and red hairs of the ear.

[Para. 427.] The “**sensitive part of the nose**” means the tender skin dividing into two sections, like the goat’s feet. The nose-consciousness is then started from the sensitive part of the nose; as a result, it is able to identify the sense of odor, such as pleasant smell or bad smell. Thus, it is the sensitive nose and sense of odor that attracts and convinces our minds for enjoyment of sensual pleasure.

[Para. 428.] The “**sensitive part of the tongue**” starts from the marrow in the throat, which is like a petal of blue lotus; it is split moving around inside the mouth and asking for food. The tongue-consciousness, which can identify the sense of taste, such as sour or sweet, delicious or not delicious, locates in the marrow of the goiter in the throat, with the support of great elements such as air and earth.

[Para. 429.] The “**sensitive part of the body**” refers to all parts of the body, with the exception of hairs, body-hairs, nails and teeth. A drop of oil is spread all over the cotton; in the same way, the sensitive part of body is spread all over the body.

[Para. 430.] The “**mind-sphere**” means the heart-base, which is the place for the mind-element and the mind-consciousness-element. What have said are about the six kinds of internal sphere and their contact with external sphere, which are the six senses, such the eyes see and the ears hear. Consequently, the ten fetters arise by the intention and movement of mind.

[Para. 431.] What are the **ten fetters**? Remember dear the audience, all of you young and old, men and women. The ten are: fetter of attachment to sensual pleasure, the fetter of hatred, the fetter of pride, the fetter of false view, the fetter of doubt, the fetter of attachment to existence, the fetter of adherence to rites and ceremonies, the fetter of envy (jealousy), the fetter of avarice and the fetter of ignorance. Thus, the public audience takes note and remembers them by heart.

[Para. 432.] The “**fetter of attachment to sensual desire**” refers to greed that never gets satisfaction but desires for a young and beautiful life. For instance, one who is attached to sensual desire always desires to enjoy with beautiful object, pleasant sound, nice fragrant and good taste and the like of craving and defilements; [like a bee] sucking blossoms of flowers, his snake-like long tongue is thrusting out.

[Para. 433.] The “**fetter of hatred**” refers to the ill-will that influences on one’s mind. For instance, when one has seen an ugly object or heard unpleasant voice or smelled unpleasant odor or eaten bad flavour or contacted with unpleasant tangible object, he will get angry immediately.

[Para. 434.] The “**fetter of pride**” refers to the person, who is proud and conceited, saying he is better and smarter than anyone others of the whole country; he would also say, “I am holier than others; I am cleverer than others; I know better than others; I have better practice and morality than others.” Thus, his mind is so high that it is almost as high as the sun.

[Para. 435.] The “**fetter of false view**” refers to those who have wrong views against the teachings of the Gotama Buddha; to the truth, they say it is not the truth; to the right teaching, they say it is not the right teaching; to the Buddha’s word, they say it is not the Buddha’s word; to the wholesome deed, they say it is unwholesome deed; to the unwholesome deed, they say it is wholesome deed; to the beneficial deed, they say it is not beneficial deed; to the unbeneficial deed, they say it is beneficial deed. These kinds of people, after they died, will go to the lower level of the hell.

[Para. 436.] The “**fetter of doubt**” means suspecting on the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha; one suspects on his own practice if it is right or not; he also suspects on his act of generosity if it will be fruitful or not; suspecting that the morality in him will bear good result or not. Thus, one lives with suspicion and sticks in the prison of life circle.

[Para. 437.] The “**fetter of adherence to rites and ceremonies**” refers to the buffalo-like practice, pork-like practice, dog-like practice, duck-like practice, chicken-like practice and so on, wishing for good life of human and god. Although one practices like cow, pork and dog, he seems wish for reaching the city of Nibbāna. Instead, he will suffer and go to underneath because of his improper practice.

[Para. 438.] The “**fetter of attachment to existence**” refers to the person who is delighted for being born as a human or god and never reaches his satisfaction. On the one hand, he does not want to die and loose his present life. And on the other hand, he wishes for a new life again in the future and never reaches his satisfaction. Thus, it is called “the fetter of attachment to existence” binding men and gods to be confined in the prison of dirty mire.

[Para. 439.] The “**fetter of envy**” refers to the person who wishes to see other people’s failure and downfall. When he sees others are beautiful, having pleasant voice, rich, wise and honour, he feels jealous of them; he is not happy with them at all. When he sees other people loving each other, he is crooked, hates them and does not want to see them having a happy life. This kind of person has jealousy in mind or the fetter of envy, being karma and circle of *samsāra*, going to hell too long to see the way for libration. In the next life, he will be reborn as an ugly person becuasue of his jealousy. In whatever life he may be reborn, he will have an ugly face and he will be hated by others; he will have no friend; no one wants to love him; whatever word he says it is not pleasant to the ears of others.

[Para. 440.] The “**fetter of avarice**” refers to the stingy person who does not want spend anything either for himself or others; he just want collect more and more properties so he has big and heavy business belonging of the *samsāra*. The unwillingness of spending for oneself or donation is the nature of the fetter of avarice, a big rope binding all beings with samsara. Thus, they cannot find the way to Nibbāna, because the mind of avarice makes their minds and bodies heavy. He has no faith where it should be; he has not done meriterious deed, where it should be done. Thus, the big rope of the fetter of avarice bines him so he cannot go anywhere but confining in the burning prison.

[Para. 441.] The “**fetter of ignorance**” refers to the consciousness of delusion, which is fogetful and lack of knowedge, forgetting about the sacred qualities [of the triple gem]. Greedy, htred and delusion – all are ignorance, ignoing the front and ignoing the back. Thus, they are the big ropes binding round our bodies, pulling us to the state of rebirth again and again, appearing here and there in the three realms of human, god and hell.

[Para. 442.] What are the phenomena that can destroy the fetters? They are explained here for those who wish for the liberation from suffering. If one has attained the Four Paths, namely, the path of stream entrance, the path of once returner, the path of none returner and the the path of arahant. These four paths are like swords that cut off all branches together with the root of the tree of fetters so that it cannot grow up again anymore.

[Para. 443.] When one has attained the Path of Stream Entrance, the fetter of false view, the fetter of doubt, the fetter of adherence to rites and ceremonies, the fetter of envy and the fetter of avarice are completely eradicated and they will never arise again. Those who have not yet attained the Path of Stream Entrance, all men and gods, will have to be reborn here and there as the ten fetters arise, disappear and arise again, as they can be destroyed only momentarily.

[Para. 444.] However, the Four Paths can completely destroy all leaves and branches together with roots of the Fetters. Thus, it is said in Pali: *ditṭhi vicikicchā sīlappadaparāmāsa issā macchhariya bhedassa tāva pañcavidhassa saṃyojanassa sotāpattimaggena āyatim anuppādo hoti.*⁵⁴⁴ [‘The path of stream- winning or the first stage of awakening is the reason for final cessation of the five fetters of speculative theory, doubt, rites and ceremonies, envy, and avarice. The path of stream- winning or the first stage of awakening is the reason for final cessation of the five fetters of speculative theory, doubt, rites and ceremonies, envy, and avarice.’]⁵⁴⁵

[Para. 445.] The fetter of attachment to sensual desire and the fetter of hatred – these two fetters have been making a great strategy of war and fought us. So, we are puzzled in the smoke of the two fetters. Only when we have attained the Path of Once Returner, the two fetters will be destroyed. Even though the Path of Once Returner cannot destroy the fetters of attachment to sensual pleasure and the fetter of hatred completely, they will become very weak and not strong any more. Thus, it is said in Pali: *kāmarāga-padigha-saṃyojana dvāyassa olārikassa sakadāgāmmimaggena āyatim anuppādo hoti* [‘The path of once- returning or the second stage of awakening is the reason for the final cessation of sensuality and resentment of a gross kind’].⁵⁴⁶ The two fetters of attachment to sensual pleasure and

⁵⁴⁴ MSV, in SV, p. 785; Cakkinda 1873, p. 86-87.

⁵⁴⁵ Translation from Soma Thera 1999, p. 149.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid.

hatred are wounded and they are in dying condition; although the root is still there, it cannot grow up any more.

[Para. 446.] If one has attained the Path of None Returner, he will have completely destroyed the two fetters of attachment to sensual pleasure and hatred together with root. They will never be grown again any more. Thus, the golden mouth has delivered: *kāmarāga-padigha-saṃyojanassa dvāyassa anusahagatassa anāgāmmaggena āyatiṃ anuppādo hoti* [‘The residuum of these two fetters [i.e. sensual pleasure and hatred] finally ceases by reason of the statement of the path of never- returning, the third stage of awakening.’]⁵⁴⁷

[Para. 447.] The remaining fetters, namely, the fetters of pride, the fetter of attachment to existence and the fetter of ignorance – these three fetters will be completely eradicated together with root when one has attained the Path of Arahant. All the phenomena, such as the fetter of pride, the fetter of attachment to existence and the fetter of ignorance and the like of 1,500 defilements, which are the seeds of existence, will be eradicated and disappeared; there are no more dirty color or pungent smell. On the contrary, it is tasteless like a knead telinga potato (မုန့်ခူဝံး).

[Para. 448.] By attaining the Nibbāna of Void (*suññatā*), the Nibbāna with out Sign (*animitta*) and the Nibbāna of Freedom from Longing (*appanihita*), all foe will be ceased; there will be calm and peaceful, reaching beyond the five levels of Brahma realms; all kinds of worry and anxiety will be vanished, reaching the zenith of great city, where there is deathless and no seeds of sensual pleasure. Thus, the golden mouth of the Lord has delivered this teaching: *mana-bhavarāga-vijjāsaṃyojanattāyassa arahattamaggena āyatiṃ anuppādo hoti* [‘The fact which makes the fetter of pride, of the desire to go on existing, and of ignorance to cease finally in the future is the path of final purification, arahantship, the fourth state of awakening.’]⁵⁴⁸

[Para. 449.] Ladies and gentlemen, who missed the chance for reaching the highest city! Remember that attachment to sensual desire and the like of ten fetters are similar to the ropes that tie all living beings. Ladies and gentlemen, young and old, who missed the Path to Nirvana! We suffer because greed, hatred and delusion are the beginners or the roots. We are puzzled by the pollution of toxic flowers in the thousands of gardens. Because of the fetter of

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

attachment to sensual desire, we have been wandering around in the waves of samsara and missed many occasions of good opportunity.

[Para. 450.] Oh south islanders who are suffered by the burning flames! It is the fetter of attachment to sensual desire that persuades and pushes men into the grave of suffering. Ladies and gentlemen, we were defeated because of our ill-will mind that led us walking on the wrong way. It is the fetter of hatred accompanied with the twelve immoral consciousness that led us walking on the wrong way.

[Para. 451.] Ladies and Gentlemen, who missed the chance for the zenith and now gather in the ceremony of listening to the scripts! Remember that our sangkhara has been so long because of the fetters of false view, doubt and adherence to rites and ceremonies, which led to live and practise like a pig rolling over the dirty mire. We failed to achieve liberation because we thought of ourselves high; it is the fetter of pride that led us to have wrong attitude and miss the Path for the liberation of Nibbāna. And, it is ignorance that led us to be in darkness; we cannot identify which one is good and which one is bad; we are stubborn like a buffalo and dim like a pig or dull like a dog; we are like a blind man living in a cave at the time of heavy rain and the night of no moon.

[Para. 452.] Ladies and Gentlemen, who are living in the island of suffering! There is a stingy mind, which is stickier than the milky juice of the aspen-leaved peepul. The fetter of avarice, which has the nature of being unwilling to spend anything for oneself or others, that has tied living being steadfastly making them miss the chance of achieving the Long Last City. Here we talk about the Identification of Ideas, the section of Sphere, which is now in complete. Let the wise and noble men and women take note and meditate on them in order to see the Path for the liberation from all kinds of troubles. Let us rejoice!!

Then Contemplation of Ideas: The Section of the Factors of Enlightenment

[Para. 453.] Now another technique, while the flower plant is being blown by cool wind, the blossoms of pleasant fragrance are being gathered and sucked by bees. In the same way, men and gods are fed by the taste of Dhamma to see the Path clearly. All the internal sphere and external sphere has been explained with full interpretation. Next, the Golden Glory has delivered the seven factors of enlightenment beginning with Pali phrases like this: *Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati sattasu bojjhaṅgesu. kathaṅca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati sattasu bojjhaṅgesu*

[‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, as to ideas, continues to consider ideas, with respect to the Seven Factors of Enlightenment. And how does he do this?’.⁵⁴⁹]

[Para. 454.] Dear monks who are well disciplined and work hard for liberation from all kinds of troubles and the foe of samsara! A monk should contemplate on the foundation of mindfulness for the identification of Ideas. Dear monks! A monk should contemplate the seven factors of enlightenment. How one should contemplate on them? Perhaps, you pupils are not clear yet. Thus, in order to understand them clearly, the Pali words for the clarification on the seven factors begin like this: *idha bhikkhave bhikkhu santam va ajjhataṃ sati sambojjhaṅgaṃ atthi me ajjhataṃ satisambojjhaṅgoti pajānāti*. [‘Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother, if there be present to him subjectively mindfulness as a factor of enlightenment is aware that it is present.’]⁵⁵⁰

[Para. 455.] During the period of 5000 years of the teaching of the Buddha, a monk should practise hard on meditation for his own benefit. He should contemplate on the seven factors of enlightenment. For instance, when mindfulness arises in him, he notices, “Mindfulness is now arisen in me” and try to see the nature of mindfulness clearly. When mindfulness is not in him, he notices, “Now mindfulness is not in my body; I am very forgetful; my mind is full of ignorance and delusion.” In this way, one should practise to see the arising and disappearing of mindfulness clearly.

[Para. 456.] When one has selected the right and suitable objects for meditation, mindfulness which is not yet arisen will be arisen in him. Then he will reflect on the qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, on which he has never reflected before. Thus, mindfulness arises and benefits him.

[Para. 457.] When one has obtained the knowledge of arahant, mindfulness which has already arisen will be developed day and night, and it will not disappear from him anymore.

[Para. 458.] When the knowledge of investigation of the truth (*dhamma-vijaya*) is arisen in him, he notices, “the knowledge of investigation of the truth is now arisen in me” and tries to see its nature. When the knowledge of investigation of the truth is not arisen in him, he notices, “the knowledge of investigation of the truth is not in me; that is why, I am confused on the Dhamma.” Thus, one should practise to understand clearly.

⁵⁴⁹ Rhys Davids 1977, vol. II, p. 336.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

[Para. 459.] When effort is clearly arisen in him, he notices, “Now effort is arisen in me” and try to see the time it appears and disappears. When effort is not arisen in him, he notices, “Now there is no effort in me; I feel lazy; I am not happy nor enjoyable; I have not done the good deed that should be done; I just wasted the time.” Thus, one should meditate to understand the nature of effort.

[Para. 460.] When rapture is arisen in him, being delighted with treple gem, keeping the Buddha and the Dhamma in mind, he notices “Oh now in my body, rapture is arisen” and try to see its nature of arising clearly. When rapture is not arisen in him, no delight nor joy even when thinking of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, he notices, “Now there is no rapture in me; whatever goodness I come across, I feel no joy.”

[Para. 461.] When quietude is arisen in him, feeling cool and peaceful like a blowing of cool wind, he notices, “Oh now the quietude is arisen in my body” and tries to realise the condition of his body. When the body and mind is not calm, he notices, “Oh now quietude is not in me; my mind is wandering around.” Thus, one should learn all the movement of the mind.

[Para. 462.] When contemplating on only one object with full concentration, he notices “Oh now concentration is arisen in me” and tries to see its nature clearly. When contemplating on many objects as the mind is wandering around, he notices, “Oh now concentration is not in me; that is why my mind is unsettled, thinking about many things, traveling here and there.” Thus, one should learn and notice all the movement of mind.

[Para. 463.] When equanimity is arisen, neither sad nor happy, with settling mind, he notices “Oh, now equanimity is arisen in me” and tries to see its nature clearly. When equanimity is not arisen yet and the mind is not settled, he notices, “Oh now equanimity is not arisen in me; my mind is not settle but going round and round like a *luoi*.⁵⁵¹

[Para. 464.] By reflecting on suitable objects, with the shower of cooling loving-kindness, anyone of the seven factors of enlightenment, which is not arisen will arise in the body and consequently one will enjoy experiencing the truth.

[Para. 465.] By attaining the Path of Arahant, the seven factors of enlightenment, which were already arisen will be grown and developed. As a result, one is on the way to the

⁵⁵¹ *Luoi* (လူဝါ) is a type of traditional mortar for pounding rice.

Fruition. Thus, in order to attain the Path of Arahant, one should practise hard on the seven factors of enlightenment and try to see their nature clearly.

[Para. 466.] Dear the audience, all of you, young and old, ladies and gentlemen! Remember that there are seven factors of enlightenment, namely, mindfulness, investigation of truth, effort, rapture, quietude, concentration and equanimity. The root of words for the factor of enlightenment is mentioned in Pali: *bodhiyā aṅgo bojjhaṅgo*, literally meaning the factors of realizing the truth. Thus, it is how the omniscient has delivered in accordance with the nature of the truth.

[Para. 467.] The essence of the seven factors is mindfulness, wisdom, effort, joy, quietude, concentration and equanimity, exactly seven altogether. The phenomena that are enable to develop the seven factors of enlightenment. I shall compose and explain one by one.

[Para. 468.] **What are the phenomena that help to build up mindfulness?** If some one asks or wishes to understand in details, here there are four kinds of phenomena that help to build up mindfulness, namely: Mindfulness with clear comprehension, the avoiding of person with confused minds, association with persons who keep mindfulness ready for application, inclination towards mindfulness.⁵⁵²

[Para. 469.] **‘Mindfulness with clear comprehension’** refers to the clear comprehension of mindfulness on any kind of body movement, for instance, when looking straightforward, looking backward, glancing, sucking, biting, swallowing, drinking, eating or licking. One has to be aware of every movement of the body and think of the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, which will bear good result.

[Para. 470.] **‘The avoiding of persons with confused minds’** means staying away from careless people who are absentminded. Thus, one should not make friendship with such a person but stay away from him, as instructed by the Lord.

[Para. 471.] **‘Association with persons who keep mindfulness ready for application’** refers to the person who always reflects on gratitudes. To be successful in life,

⁵⁵² Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP: abhikkantādi-sati-sampajañña, muṭṭhasati-puggala-parivajjanatā, upaṭṭhitassati-puggala-sevanatā and tadathimuttatā*, which are found in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta Vaṇṇanā* in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (1971, vol. III, p. 786). These Pali texts are not mentioned in Cakkinda’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhā Sutta Nissaya*, main source of Amat Long’s *Mahāsatipaṭṭhān*, another evidence of Amat Long’s wide reading for his work on the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. Cakkinda does mention the passage but in Burmese both in prose and poetry, the later of which is quoted in *MSP*. Cakkinda 1873, p. 90; Amat Long 1968, p. 233. Translation from Soma Thera 1999, p. 152.

we should make friendship with such person, consult with him and ask him for advice, and learn from him about cause and effect.

[Para. 472.] ‘Inclination towards mindfulness’ refers to our intentional mind. In order to have mindfulness in us, we should push our mind to reflect on the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha; even our mind does not wish to do, we should push ourselves to do it gradually so that mindfulness will arise in our bodies. Thus, regarding to the phenomena that help to develop mindfulness, there is a verse in Burmese: *Thati-thampazin, amye-shin-ywe, gyin-hle-mutta, hmiya-thati-hma, thimutta-hu, le-hpya-thati-bwa-kyaung-dee*.⁵⁵³

[Para. 473.] What are the phenomena that help to build up knowledge for investigation of the truth? Perhaps it is not clear to the mind of dim people who are uncertain on it. Here there are seven kinds of phenomena that can help to build up knowledge of investigation of the truth, namely: Inquiring about the aggregates and so forth; the purification of the basis (namely, the cleaning of the body, clothes and so forth); imparting evenness to the (five spiritual) controlling faculties; avoiding the ignorant; associating with the wise; reflecting on the profound difference of the hard- to- perceive processes of the aggregates, modes (or elements), sense- bases and so forth; and the inclining (sloping, bending) towards the development of the enlightenment factor of the investigation of mental objects – there are seven altogether.⁵⁵⁴

[Para. 474.] ‘Inquiring about the aggregates and so forth’ means asking the wise or learned people about the Dhamma we do not know. For instance, the aggregates, the spheres, the elements etc. what we do not know, in order to know or what are not clear in mind, in order to be clear, we should ask the wise or learned people again and again. Take notes and remember what they explain.

[Para. 475.] ‘The purification of the basis (namely, the cleaning of the body, clothes and so forth)’ refers to internal objects and external objects that should not be mixed and complicated. So, one should choose suitable objects either from internal objects or

⁵⁵³ Amat Long quotation of Burmese poetic words as found in *MSN* (Cakkinda 1873, p. 90). Meaning and interpretation are the same as above paragraphs.

⁵⁵⁴ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *paripuccha-kathā, vatthuisada-kiriya, indriya-samatta-padipadana, dupaññā-puggala-parivajjanatā, paññavanta-puggala-sevanatā, gambhīra-ñānācariya-paccavekkhana and tadathi-muttatā*, which are found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 786-787; the English translation is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 153.

external objects; do not engage with immoralities in order to see the way for the deathless city, where is clean and good for eyesight.

[Para. 476.] ‘Imparting evenness to the (five spiritual) controlling faculties’ refers to the balance of the five faculties, namely, effort, wisdom, faith, mindfulness and concentration. There is a saying [in Burmese]: *thaddha hlun hlyn gun hte, piencya hlun hlyn syun hte, viriya hlun hlyn pyun hte, thamadhi hlun hlyn dun hte.*⁵⁵⁵ The five faculties can be divided into two sets, with mindfulness on both sets. Faith and wisdom are balanced by mindfulness; effort and concentration also are balanced by mindfulness. Therefore, both knowledge and belief can be developed with the presence of mindfulness; both effort and concentration can be developed with the presence of mindfulness.

[Para. 477.] ‘Avoiding the ignorant’ means staying away from foolish people who are not clear what is wholesome and what is not; do not associate with people who do not know about themselves such as people who speak or laugh carelessly. Do not consult or discuss them [on your business].

[Para. 478.] ‘Associating with the wise’ means association with the wise and learned people who heard and saw a lot and are rich of knowledge in the Dhamma treatises, such as light or heavy consonants that fit with the golden mouth of the Lord. Thus, one should associate with the wise and learned people and listen to what preach in order to understand the law of cause and effect clearly.

[Para. 479.] ‘Reflecting on the profound difference of the hard- to- perceive processes of the aggregates, modes (or elements), sense- bases and so forth’ means reflection on the aggregates, sphere, elements etc., which are hardly understandable. As these phenomena are profound and difficult to understand, in order to understand them clearly, one should reflect with wisdom on the deep phenomena of the Buddha’s teachings.

[Para. 480.] ‘Inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of the investigation of mental objects’ refers intention that one should have for the development of investigation of the truth. For instance, one should have intention at any time, such as when standing up or sitting down, one should push his mind to intentionally investigate the truth. Therefore, for the development of the knowledge of investigation of the truth, Cakkindabhi Sīri Saddhammadhaja Rājādhirājaguru, the poetic scholar, has composed

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

[in Burmese]: *hpan-hpan-mye-mu, vatthu-zin-ze, indre-mya, palako-kyin, hsin-kyin-net-hla, vimutta-hu, nyana-bwa-kyauung khu-nit-dee*.⁵⁵⁶ Thus, it is concluded in Burmese.

[Para. 481.] What are the phenomena that can help to build up effort? I shall compose here for a clere comprehension. Here there are eleven kinds of phenomena that can help to build up effort, namely: Reflection on the fearfulness of states- of- woe [apāya bhaya]; the seeing of the benefits of energy; reflection on the path to be trodden; the honoring of alms, reflection on the greatness of the heritage; the reflection on the greatness of the Master; reflection on the greatness of race; reflection on the greatness of fellows in the holy life; the avoiding of lazy folk; the associating with folk who have begun to exert; and the inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of energy – there are eleven altogether.⁵⁵⁷

[Para. 482.] ‘Reflection on the fearfulness of states- of- woe [apāya bhaya]’ means reflection on the foe of samsara, such as the four levels of hells, which are the cities of crows and dogs. When thinking of the next life, one will fear of being reborn as a hungry ghot or animal or reborn in hell. Consequently, he will work hard practising the way of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, learning the technique of meditation and finding the way for holy places and libration from *samsāra*.

[Para. 483.] ‘The seeing of the benefits of energy’ means understanding the nature of law of cause and effect, such as good result from wholesome deed that one will surely get in the next life. One would reflect on his work and say: “Oh, what I am doing is a wholesome work that will bear good fruition and will lead me to libration from suffering.” In reflecting so, he will work hard to develop his generosity, morality and meditation and enjoy with his work.

[Para. 484.] ‘Reflection on the path to be trodden’ means reflection on the period of the teaching of the Buddha which is bright for 5000 years. One should reflect on it and say: “Oh I was born as a human during the period of the teaching of the Buddha, which is the period that the bodhi-satta and noble men accumulate their merits from wholesome deeds, such as generosity, morality and meditation paving the way straight to the city of deathlessness. Having this opportunity of being reborn during the time of the teaching of the

⁵⁵⁶ Cakkinda 1873, p. 90. Meaning and interpretation are the same as the passage in paragraph no. 473 above.

⁵⁵⁷ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *apāya-bhaya-paccavekkhanatā, anisaṃsa-dassavitā, gamanavithi-paccavekkhanatā, piṇḍapātapacayanatā, dayajja-mahatta-paccavekkhanatā, satthu-mahatta-paccavekkhanatā, jatimahatta-paccavekkhanā, sabyacari-mahatta-paccavekkhanatā, kusita-puggala-parivajjanatā, āraddha-viriya-puggala-sevanatā* and *tadathi-muttatā*, which are found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 789; the English translation is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 159.

Buddha, I should meditate on the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha; I should follow the way of noble people; I should earn the seven kinds of noble properties.” Thus, one should keep this in mind and remember.

[Para. 485.] ‘The honoring of alms’ means in order to be able to study hard on the treatises of the teachings of the Buddha, such as to remember it by heart or to learn its interpretation etc. one should have enough food for energy.

[Para. 486.] ‘Reflection on the greatness of the heritage’ means reflection of the seven noble properties, namely, faith, morality, knowledge, giving, wisdom, moral fearness and moral shameness. Men and women who are born of great sperm should search for the seven kinds of noble properties and regard them as their heritages. Further more, think of the monk’s belongings, such as robe, almsbowl etc. are also the property of the Buddha, the noble properties that one should take them as meditation objects and think of them day and night.

[Para. 487.] ‘The reflection on the greatness of the Master’ means reflection on the Buddha as the greatest person who is the master of the three realms. The Buddha loves all beings, humans and gods, others and us; he wants us to reach the city of *asaṅkhata-dhātu*. To be fully enlightened, the Buddha had to fulfill perfection for four *asaṅkheya* and ten thousand *kappa* of times, because he loves all beings, all of us, who missed the chance to see the Path to Nibbāna. So, one should reflect on the loving-kindness of the Buddha and say: “Oh, I will refrain from doing unwhosome things; instead, I will pay attention to reflection on the nine qualities of the Buddha, which are the objects or the doors for the entrance to Nibbāna, which is the other side of shore, the zenith and long last city, where is free from suffering.

[Para. 488.] ‘Reflection on the greatness of race’ refers to the lineage of the Buddha, such as monks and novices. One should reflect on them and say: “Oh, monks and novices are the holy lineage of the Buddha, who are carrying the noble teachings and practices of Emmerald Star. I will follow them and practise hard so that I will become holy.

[Para. 489.] ‘Reflection on the greatness of fellows in the holy life’ refers to our friends or companions who practise tirelessly on insight meditation as monthly routine. One should reflect on such of his friends and say: “Oh, my friend is now holy; he follows the teachings of Lord Gotama, studying the texts and practise hard; I shall work hard like him.”

[Para. 490.] ‘The avoiding of lazy folk’ means staying away from slothful and lazy people, who always complain about work. One should not associate with such sluggish people who are far away from the Path and Fruition.

[Para. 491.] ‘The associating with folk who have begun to exert’ living with he person, who practise hard on concentrated meditation and insight meditation; everyday, he works with the teachings of the Buddha aiming for getting rid of craving. On the occasion of making merit or observing precepts he is an enthusiastic person. We should follow such a kind of enthusiastic person.

[Para. 492.] ‘The inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of energy’ refers to the intention that can help to build up our effort. We should drive our minds to get out of sloth and laziness; wake up our minds and, with intention, meditate on the qualities of Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha.

[Para. 493.] Any monk who reflects on such things mentioned above will be able to build up effort that will lead him to librate from suffering of nice holes. Thus, the interpretation of three factors of enlightenment, namely, mindfulness, investigation of the truth and effort is fully explained. Therefore, dear the audience who are gathering in the ceremony of listening to scripts, it is said [in Burmese]: *bae-hpe-hsin-khyn, myn-de-akyo, lan-yo-laik-ya, pinda-paccaya, dayajja-hu, satthu-myat-bhi, jati-mahatta, sabyammacari, mami-hlu-pyinn, mitin-araddha, thi-mutta-hu, lon-la-bwa-kyaung-se-dit-dee.*⁵⁵⁸ Let all the audience take note and remember by heart.

[Para. 494.] What are the phenomena that can help to build up rapture? Someone who is not clear in his mind may raise up such a question. Here there are eleven kinds of phenomena that can help to build up rapture, namely: recollection of the Buddha, recollection of the Dhamma, recollection of the Sangha, recollection of virtue, of liberality, of the shining ones [*devas*], and the recollection of peace [*upasama*], the avoiding of bad people, association with good people, reflection on the discourses inspiring confidence, and the inclination towards joy – there are eleven altogether.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁸ Cakkinda 1873, p. 91. Meaning and interpretation are the same as those in the paragraph no. 418 above.

⁵⁵⁹ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP: Buddhānussati, dhammānussati, saṅghānussati, sīlānussati, cāgānussati, devatānussati, lukha-puggala-vajjanatā, siniddha-puggala-sevanatā, pasādaniya-suttanta-paccavekkhanatā* and *tadathi-muttatā*, which are found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 792-793; the English translations of this passage is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 163.

[Para. 495.] ‘Recollection of the Buddha’ means reflection on the qualities of the Buddha, who is fully enlightened. The Buddha is the unthinkable one, the master of the world; he taught men and gods and guided them the way to the Peace City. His qualities surpass all else.

[Para. 496.] ‘Recollection of the Dhamma’ means reflection on the qualities of the Dhamma, of which has 84,000 sections. The words of the Buddha excel the words of our parents, because they guide us to find liberation from the suffering of *samsāra* and reach the highest happiness.

[Para. 497.] ‘Recollection of the Saṅgha’ means reflection on the qualities of the Saṅgha, the noble disciples of the Buddha, particularly the 80 arahants of the Buddha’s time, who have special qualities. These noble disciples also guided some certain beings, who have fulfilled certain level of perfection, to the country of the Path and Fruition.

[Para. 498.] ‘Recollection of virtue’ means reflection on our morality such as the precepts that we have observed for the purpose of reaching the highest city where is free from danger. When reflecting on the wholesome action that we did before and the good results of good karma, such as observing the five, eight or ten precepts, rapture or joy will arise in us like the blossoms of beautiful lotus.

[Para. 499.] ‘Recollection of liberality’ means reflection on things that you had given away to others. Giving away means doing charitable work, such as giving something to others and all kinds of donation.

[Para. 500.] ‘Recollection of the shining ones [*devas*]’ means reflection on prince-gods and princess-gods who have better life and keep their words, living in the six different levels of heavens. There are also Indras and Brahmas, who have full faith. One should reflect on them and say: “I will make merit for the benefit of my life in the future.”

[Para. 501.] ‘Recollection of peace [*upasama*]’ means reflection on Nibbāna where is free from all kinds of craving, such as devoiding all conditioned things, freeing from all signs of conditioned things and freeing from longing craving and so on. Nirvana is the uppermost city, the happy and peaceful place; it is completely free from all eleven kinds of fire so there is no flame nor burning at all. On the contrary, it is always fresh and bright.

[Para. 502.] ‘Avoiding of bad people’ means reflection on the person who has no faith but a cunning mind. Such a person has no faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the

Sangha. He has not done any wholesome work that should be done; he has not accumulated any merit that he should have done. So, one should avoid such people and not associate with them, as they can lead us in the wrong direction.

[Para. 503.] ‘Association with good people’ means reflection on the people who have faith in the qualities of the triple gem and know their gratitudes and glories, which are praise worthy. Our bodies too in order to be fulfilled with faith, we should associate with those who have faith and consult with them what is right and wrong.

[Para. 504.] ‘Reflection on the discourses inspiring confidence’ means reflection on the discourses of teachings that came from the golden mouth of the Buddha. Here, let one keep faith and devotion in the discourses, read them often, listen to them often, reflect on them often and enjoy with them.

[Para. 505.] ‘The inclination towards joy’ means the intentional mind. In order to have rapture or rejoice in our mind, one should drive his mind to the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha; one should reflect on them and think of them day and night.

[Para. 506.] What have mentioned are the eleven kinds of phenomena that can help to build up rapture and rejoice of praising the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, to whom men and gods worship. If rapture is developed, then there will be more result of wholesome deed. In order to understand and remember the causes for the development of rapture, it is composed in verse [in Burmese]: *saddhānussati, gyin-bhi-lukha, siniddhasya, pasada-sut, adhimut-hu, mayut-piti sae-dit-dee*.⁵⁶⁰ Thus, let the audience take notes and remember.

[Para. 507.] What are the phenomena that can help to build up quietude? I shall now explain it in details. Here, there are seven kinds of phenomena that can help to build up quietude, namely: The resorting to fine food, comfortable weather, and comfortable postures; judgment according to the middle way; the avoiding of people who are physically restless; the association with people who are physically calm and the inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of calm – there are seven altogether.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶⁰ Amat Long’s reference to Cakkinda 1873, p. 91; their meaning and interpretation are the same as in the paragraphs above.

⁵⁶¹ Pali terms used in the main text of MSP: *panīta-bhojana-sevanatā, utu-sukha-sevanatā, iriyāpatha-sukha-sevanatā, majjhata-payokatā, sāratta-kāya-puggala-parivajjanatā, passaddha-kāya-puggala-sevanatā* and *tadathi-muttatā*, as found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 793-794; the English translation is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 164.

[Para. 508.] **‘The resorting to fine food’** means consuming healthy and energetic food. Having had such suitable food, our bodies will get refresh, and consequently quietude will be appear in our bodies.

[Para. 509.] **‘Comfortable weather’** means living with suitable climate, which is neither too hot nor too cold. Such climate can help one to build up quietude.

[Para. 510.] **‘Comfortable postures’** means balancing the four postures, namely, standing up, sitting, lying and walking. If these four are in balance, one will be happy and relax; if he is happy and relax, quietude will be appeared in him. If the four postures are not in balance, he will not be happy nor relax; if he is not happy nor relax, he will be frustrated and there will be no quietude in him. Thus, when one can live and work with the balance of four postures, he will have a peaceful body and quietude of mind.

[Para. 511.] **‘Judgment according to the middle way’** means reflection on one’s own karma being the middle or neutral way. For instance, one should reflect on his own karma and say: “Oh, the law of karma is my real property; it is the law of karma that makes me happy or sad, good or bad.” In this way, one should meditate on all beings, men and gods, who are influenced by the law of karma.

[Para. 512.] **‘Avoiding of people who are physically restless’** means staying away from the cruel person who likes torturing others, blaming others and scolding others. Such kind of people can create troubles to others. Do not associate with such kind of people who could lead you doing the wrong thing.

[Para. 513.] **‘Association with people who are physically calm’** means the person who has peaceful mind and body. In order to have such mind and body, we should associate with such kind of people who can help us to build up a peaceful mind and body.

[Para. 514.] **‘The inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of calm’** means intention. When one does not have a peaceful mind and body, he should drive himself to develop his mind to be calm and peaceful. Thus, the seven phenomena mentioned above are helpful to build up quietude. It is said [in Burmese]: *bhojin-hmun-myat, lyauk-bat-utu, sukha-iriya, majja-payoga, sarattha-gyin, syn-asarat, thi-mut-mat-dee, pasad-bwa-kyauung khu-nit-dee*.⁵⁶² Let the audience take notes and remember.

⁵⁶² Amat Long’s reference to Cakkinda 1873, p. 91; their meaning and interpretation are the same as in the paragraphs above.

[Para. 515.] What are the phenomena that can help to build up concentration? I shall compose here for a clear comprehension. Here, there are eleven kinds of phenomena, namely: Purification of the basis; the imparting of evenness to the spiritual controlling faculties; skill in taking up the sign of the object of meditation; the inciting of the mind on occasion, the restraining of the mind on occasion, the gladdening of the mind on occasion and the regarding of the mind without interfering on occasion; the avoiding of people who are not collected in mind; association with people who are collected in mind; reflection on the absorptions and the emancipations; and the inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of concentration – there are eleven altogether. I shall explain them one by one.⁵⁶³

[Para. 516.] ‘Purification of the basis’ means keeping the internal objects and the external objects clean and fresh. Both internal and external objects are clean and brightly white like the spider’s web and there is nothing to be blamed.

[Para. 517.] ‘Imparting of evenness to the spiritual controlling faculties’ means keeping the balance between belief and wisdom, and between effort and concentration. One should meditate by keeping that balance in mind. Do not let belief go beyond wisdom and do not let wisdom go beyond belief; do not let effort go beyond concentration and do not let concentration go beyond effort. Thus, it is important to keep the balance, so that the mind will be calm and stand still.

[Para. 518.] ‘Skill in taking up the sign of the object of meditation’ means expending on different types of signs for meditation, such as the proximate concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and ecstatic concentration (*appanā-samadhi*), and so on.

[Para. 519.] ‘Inciting of the mind on occasion’ means when effort is diminished, one is lazy to make merit. So, when laziness arises, one should reflect on it and try to get out of it, wake up the mind by investigation, effort, rejoice and the like of factors so that effort and enthusiasm will arise again.

⁵⁶³ Pali terms used in the main text of *MSP*: *vatthu-visada-kiriyatā*, *indariya-samatta-padipadanatā*, *nimitta-kusalatā*, *samaye-cittassa-pakkanhanatā*, *samaye-cittassa-niggahanatā*, *samaye-samapasamsanatā*, *samaye-avajjapekkhanatā*, *asamahita-puggala-parivajjanatā*, *samahita-puggala-sevanatā*, *jhāna-vimokkha-paccavekkhanā* and *tadathi-muttatā*, as found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 794; the English translation is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 165.

[Para. 520.] **‘Restraining of the mind on occasion’** means when one works very hard but with restless and wandering mind. So, when one working very hard and needs to control his mind, he should try with mindfulness.

[Para. 521.] **‘Gladdening of the mind on occasion’** means when the body is not calm and the mind is not still, one will suffer and worry. At such time, he should take the factors of enlightenment such as mindfulness, investigation of truth, rapture and so on and reflect on the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, generosity, morality, meditation, and try to cheer up yourself.

[Para. 522.] **‘Regarding of the mind without interfering on occasion’** means meditation on the neutralization and peace of mind. One should not have great emotion whether he feels happy or sad.

[Para. 523.] **‘Avoiding of people who are not collected in mind’** means staying away from the person who has restless mind. One should not associate with those who do not have calm and concentrated mind.

[Para. 524.] **‘Association with people who are collected in mind’** means association with those who have calm and concentrated mind. One should also try to have calm and concentrated mind like him and associate with him day and night.

[Para. 525.] **‘Reflection on the absorptions and the emancipations’** means reflection on the different types of *jhāna*, such as *pātaka-jhāna* (trans) and *samahita-jhāna* (trans), which lead one to be free from suffering and all kinds of troubles. One should also reflect on initial application, sustained application, joy, happiness and one-pointedness, which lead one to the peaceful city.

[Para. 526.] **‘The inclination towards the development of the enlightenment factor of concentration’** means intentional mind. One should have enthusiasm and intentional mind so that the peace of mind will always be in him.

[Para. 527.] The above mentioned are the phenomena that can help one build up his concentration that will grow with leaves and blossoms more and more. For those who do not know, in order to know, and for those who are not clear, in order to be clear, they should listen to the scripts repeatedly and ask the wise and learned people repeatedly, so that they will get clear comprehension on the method of concentration. Regarding this concentration, Cakkindabhi-sīrisaddhamma-dhaja-mahā-dhammarājā-dhirāja-guru has composed a verse [in

Burmese] to conclude the interpretation of concentration: *vatthu-zin-ze, indre-mya-swa, lien-ma-nimitta, paggaha-niggaham, sampahamsa, upekkha-nin, pyan-lwin-thu-gyin, dee-gyi-syin-ma, jhana-vimok, thi-mut lyauk di, pui-myauk-thi-ti-sae-dit-dee*.⁵⁶⁴ Let men and women take notes and remember what the lord has delivered.

[Para. 528.] What are the phenomena that can help one build up his mind of equanimity? I shall now explain the last one of the seven factor of enlightenment. Here, there are five kinds of phenomena that can help one build up his mind of equanimity, namely: The detached attitude towards beings; the detached attitude towards things; the avoiding of persons who are egotistical in regard to living beings and things; association with people who are neutral (impartial) in regard to living beings and things; and the inclination for developing the enlightenment factor of equanimity – there are five altogether, mentioned in the treatise.⁵⁶⁵

[Para. 529.] ‘The detached attitude towards beings’ means reflection on the law of *karma*. One should meditate on the law of *karma* and say: “Oh, all beings have only wholesome action and unwholesome action as their real properties, heritages, relatives or refuge; all men and women, humen and gods, cannot avoid but have to face both good and bad experiences. According to ‘ultimate reality,’⁵⁶⁶ there is no being, no woman, no man but there is only a group of 32 portions, which becomes aggregates. All the 32 portions, starting from hair, body-hairs etc. are low and impure things. They came into existence because of the law of karma, mind, climate and edible food, and they are but no self and useless. What you like and long for, such as beautiful lady and handsome man, are in fact full of hairs, body-hairs, nails, saliva, undigested food, intestine, bones and so on.

[Para. 530.] ‘The detached attitude towards things’ means all the accessories, such as clothes, which are subject to be torn soon and will not be new again. They have the nature of change and transform into torning and tattering; they are not the way we want. So, all the accessories are but conditioned things. They are useful when they new but we cannot hold on them to be in the same condition. Therefore all conditioned things in this world are but impermanent and beyond our control, *anattā*.

⁵⁶⁴ Amat Long’s quotation of souce in *MSN* (Cakkinda 1873, p. 92.).

⁵⁶⁵ Pali terms use in the main text of *MSP*: *satta-majjhata, saṅkhāra-majjhata, satta-saṅkhāra-kelayana-puggala-parivajjanata, satta-saṅkhāra-majjhata-puggala-sevanata* and *tadathi-muttata*, as found in the *MSV* in *SV* 1971, vol. III, p. 795-796; the English translation is from Soma Thera 1999, p. 167.

⁵⁶⁶ This is the term for Pali word ‘Paramattha’ and it refers to the way things are interpreted according to the Abhidhamma, taking the fundamental Buddhist teachings to their logical conclusion.

[Para. 531.] The Pali term **Anaddha** is derived from *na + addha*, meaning momentary, of brief duration, to be vanished soon, worn out soon, damaged soon, broken soon, and lifeless soon. All are in fact subject to change. All beings and conditional phenomena are but the grounds of unsatisfactoriness. All and everything in this world are impermanent and hence ownerless (*asāmika*) and no-self (*anattā*); nothing can be control, either oneself nor others.

[Para. 532.] ‘**Avoiding of persons who are egotistical in regard to living beings and things**’ means staying away from people who are greedy and fond of worldly things. One should make friend or associate with such people.

[Para. 533.] ‘**Association with people who are neutral (impartial) in regard to living beings and things**’ means association with people who understand the lives on humans and gods, which are but conditional; he reflects on all being and say: “Oh, to all beings living in the conditional world, I do not love nor hate any one; instead, I will keep the balance of mind toward them.” Thus, one should associate with such kind of people, and consequently, our knowledge and wisdom will grow.

[Para. 534.] ‘**The inclination for developing the enlightenment factor of equanimity**’ means intentional mind that one should have for the development of equanimity. One should reflect on the nature of all beings and other conditioned things and keep his neutral perception toward them.

[Para. 535.] What have mentioned above are the phenomena that can help one build up equanimity in his body, which will benefit him in the long run. Any one who reflects on the suffering of samsara should learn the seven factors of enlightenment and develop his mind day and night. Regarding to the phenomena for the development of equanimity, Cakkindabhi Sriri Saddhamma has composed a verse [in Burmese]: *kammasaka, nisatta-phyn, kamajjha, asamika, anatta-phyn, sangkhara-majjha, sangkhara-sat, chit-dat-thu-gyin, lit-lyu-syin-ma, vimutta-hu, majjha-bwa-kyaung-nga-ba-dee*.⁵⁶⁷ Let the audience, all noble men and women, take notes and remember.

[Para. 536.] Mindfulness, investigation of the truth etc. which are the seven factors of enlightenment were taught by the Lord. When all these seven factors in a human body, he will be bright like a full moon. Mindfulness, investigation of truth, effort, rapture, quietude, concentration and equanimity – these seven factors have been noticed. And, now it is the time

⁵⁶⁷ Amat Long’s quotation to Cakkinda’s *MSN*, 1873, p. 93.

for a verse of conclusion [in Burmese]: *sati-dhamma, vijaya-hnin, viriya-piti, passaddhi-hu, samadhu-pekha, khu-nit-hpya-dwin, anga-bodhi-phit-tha-dee*.⁵⁶⁸ Let the audience take notes and remember.

[Para. 537.] Remember that altogether there are 56 kinds of phenomena that can help to develop the seven factors of enlightenment. There are 4 phenomena for the development of mindfulness; 5 phenomena for the development of equanimity; 7 phenomena for the development of investigation of truth; 7 phenomena for the development of quietude; 9 phenomena for the development of effort; 11 phenomena for the development of rapture; and also 11 phenomena for the development of concentration. So there are 56 phenomena of the taste of truth as mentioned by the Lord. Thus, being 56 phenomena for the development of the seven factors of enlightenment, there is a verse [in Burmese] for the conclusion: *bodhia-anga, khu-nit-hpya-dwin, kyaung-kya-nyan-bhi, sati-catu, pien-cu-pekha, vijaya-pasat, bwa-mat-satta, viriya-piti, samadhi-ga, bwa-bhi-sae-dit-ci-byin-dee*.⁵⁶⁹ Thus, this is the conclusion and let every one takes note and learn to understand the truth. Let us rejoice!!!

The Contemplation of Ideas: The Section on the Noble Truth

[Para. 538.] Now another way and another section! Naturally, the movement of the eyes is searching for something to see and here the ears are yearning for hearing the teachings of the Lord Buddha whose fame is spread far and wide. The extension of commentary on the treatise of the Foundation of Mindfulness is still growing with fresh leaves and the blossoms stretching apart.

[Para. 539.] The seven factors of enlightenment starting from mindfulness, investigation of truth, etc. have been fully explained like showers of refreshing rain pouring everywhere over the region. Now, the Golden Glory has delivered the teaching of the Four Noble Truths, which is the final section of the Identification of Ideas. He started the section with these Pali phrases: *Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati catusu ariyasaccesu. Kathañca pana bhikkhave bhikkhu dhammesu dhammānupassī viharati catusu ariyasaccesu* [‘And moreover, bhikkhus, a brother, as to ideas, continues to

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.

consider ideas from the point of view of the Four Aryan Truths. And how does he do this?'].⁵⁷⁰

[Para. 540.] Monks, you many who are disenchanted with the life-cycle of *samsara*. Any monk who reflects on the Foundation of Mindfulness of the Identification of Ideas should contemplate the Four Noble Truths, namely, suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path to the cessation of suffering. How one should contemplate the Fourth Noble Truths? Perhaps, this is not clear to your minds yet.

[Para. 541.] Here are the Pali phrases for one to understand the Four Noble Truths: *idha bhikkhave bhikkhu idaṃ dukkhanti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Ayaṃ dukkhasamudayoti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Ayaṃ dukkhanirodhoti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāmiṭ-padipadāti yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti* [‘Herein, O bhikkhus, a brother at the thought: ‘This is ill!’ is aware of it as it really is; -- at the thought: ‘This is the coming to be of Ill!’ is aware of it as it really is;-- at the thought: ‘This is the cessation of Ill!’ is aware of it as it really is ;-- at the thought: ‘This is the way leading to the cessation of Ill!’ is aware of it as it really it.’].⁵⁷¹ [Here is the interpretation.] Monks! A monk knows well that there is suffering; he knows well that there is the cause of suffering; he knows well that there is the cessation of suffering. He knows well that there is the practice, which is the path to the cessation of suffering.

[Para. 542.] What is the noble truth of suffering? Monks who wish for the peaceful city of Nibbāna! Here is the Pali phrases for the interpretation of suffering: *Katamañca bhikkhave dukkham ariyasaccaṃ jātipi dukkhā jarāpi dukkhā maranampi dukkhaā sokaparideva-dukka-domanassupāyassāpi dukkhā. Appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho. Yampicchaṃ na labhati, tampi dukkhaṃ. Samkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.*⁵⁷² [‘And what, bhikkhus, is the Aryan truth [regarding] Ill? Birth is painful, old age is painful, death is painful, grief, lamentation, suffering, misery and despair are painful, painful is it to have accompanied with the unloved one, painful is it not to have accompanied with the loved one, painful is it not to get what is wished for, in a word, the Five Groups that arise from Grasping are connected with pain.’]⁵⁷³

⁵⁷⁰ Translation from Rhys Davids 1977, vol. II, p. 337.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid. Elsewhere I have translated Dukkha, here ‘ill’, as suffering.

⁵⁷² MSS in DN, Vol. II, (PTS 1966, p. 305). The phrases ‘*Appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho*’ are excluded in the PTS (1966) version but included here as they are in the main text of MSP and MSN.

⁵⁷³ Translation from Rhys Davids 1977, vol. II, p. 337-338.

[Para. 543.] One has been suffering since he started a life in the womb (*jātipi dukkhā*); he has to live with burning heat in a narrow place between the intestines.

[Para. 544.] One is suffering from losing his youth and getting old (*jārāpi dukkhā*), such as having thick-ear or dull of hearing, bad eyesight, broken teeth, grey hairs, that one cannot get rid of but every one has to face such circumstances of suffering.

[Para. 545.] One is suffering as he has to leave his life and body when death comes to him (*maranampi dukkham*). So, nobody, whether human or god, can avoid the suffering of death. Each must face it.

[Para. 546.] One is suffering when his relative or member of a family has died, experiencing the painful suffering of grieving (*sokaparideva-dukkha-domanassupāyassāpi dukkhā*).

[Para. 547.] One is suffering because he has to live with the ones he does not love; day and night he hardly stands by such difficult situation (*appiyehi sampayogo dukkho*).

[Para. 548.] One is suffering because he has to stay away from the one he loves; it is a burning suffering inside for loving each other but being away from one another, that one wants to hang himself (*piyehi vippayogo dukkho*).

[Para. 549.] One is suffering because he does not get what he wants (*Yampicchaṃ na labhati, tampi dukkham*).

[Para. 550.] In brief, the five aggregates of clinging are suffering (*Samkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā*); it applies to all the lives of humans and gods, leading us up and down, like a wheel, turning round and round.

[Para. 551.] Monks! Son-like pupils who wish for the liberation of Nibbāna, the everlasting city! What are the characteristics of birth. Different types of beings have different way of conception for birth; some are conceived on a tree; some are conceived in a blossom of flower; some are conceived in a fruit and some are conceived in a womb. However, precisely, there are four kinds of pregnancy for the birth of all being—namely, womb-born beings (*jalābuja*), egg-born beings (*aṇḍaja*), moisture-born beings (*samsedaja*) and beings having spontaneous birth (*opapādika*).⁵⁷⁴ Of them, the foetuses of those womb-born beings and egg-born beings have to be conceived in the wombs of human and animals such as dog and crow. The pregnancy for the moisture-born beings has to be conceived on a tree or in

⁵⁷⁴ For the English terms for the four kinds of birth, I follow Nārada 1956, p. 355.

the water. Insects and mosquitoes belong to this type of conception. For the moisture-born beings and the beings having spontaneous birth, when a life has died, it will be immediately reborn as a form of living being. Some living beings have only one aggregate; some have four aggregates and some have five aggregates. When the aggregates were formed, the material quality of life came into existence, and then the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind and Ideas are formed step by step. Monks! These are about the process of birth, the suffering that all beings cannot avoid but have to face the burning suffering of conception and birth.

[Para. 552.] Monks! Dear sons who are the lineage of the noble disciples! What are the characteristics of old age? All living beings are but subject to old age, getting bad eyesight and losing energy; all beings living in the three realms are the same in this respect. The signs of old age are that one finds it hard to stand up but easy to sit down; his body is heavy when walking; he also has deaf ears and bad eyesights; he will have back pain and have to walk with walking-stick; his skin will be wrinkled with different colors; his/her mouth will be without teeth and that he/she is called uncle or unt; he will have grey hairs; the time of his death is getting closer every day; the consciousness and material for the quality of life is weakened day by day; his sensitive faculties such as eyes, ears etc. are in the state of decline. Monks! You many who are disengaged with and frightened by the army of craving! The above mentioned are called 'old age' that nobody likes or wants to have but everybody, humans and gods, has to face the suffering of old age.

[Para. 553.] Monks! Dear sons of young and old who are well disciplined! What are the characteristics of death? All living beings are subject to die; when his karma is finished, he then will face the death. All living beings have to face the same being reborn here and there in the three realms. The life of a living being has died when the faculty of the quality of life has ceased; when the aggregate of consciousness is pulled off, there is no more breath in the throat; when the death has come, one's body is icy and people put it into the coffin; the death body will be thrown away in the midst of the wood and it will be putrid, decomposed, and destroyed into many parts and scattered all over the place. Monks! You many who practise hard and wish for the attainment of Nibbāna! These are the characteristics of death that all living beings cannot get rid off; the burning suffering is spread every human and god.

[Para. 554.] Monks, you many who are son-like pupils and well disciplined! What are the characteristics of sorrow, which is burning suffering like the flame of fire? Sorrow is arisen when a relative or member of a family, such as son or nephew, has died. The suffering of sorrow is like flame burning inside of the body. When the suffering of sorrow has arisen,

one cannot eat nor sleep because his mind is burned all the time. In fact, there is no heat that is comparable to the heat of burning mind. It is burning everywhere, back and front and all over the body. When sorrow has arisen, one can do nothing but feel confused while looking at the world with eyes opening wide. So, these are sorrow that burns humans and gods time and time again.

[Para. 555.] Monks, you son-like pupils of young and old! What are the characteristics of lamentation, which is unberably burning? Lamentation is arisen when a relative or member of family, such as parents, has died and passed away; those who left behind will moan and cry and speak of him on many things, saying: “my son! my nephew! my jade! my gold! Now you are died! Where are you now? Oh, although you are rich of money but poor of life! The king of death has taken you away! You the great, the lucky one, the one who loves your slaves!” Thus, it is how one is moaning saying such and such words for the departed one. Parents would moan for their departed son: “Dear beloved son who are the jade of your parents! You are young and clever! You died and left your parents!” When parents died too, their children are shocked and cry unconsciously. Monks, you many who are well disciplined seaching for the state of Nibbāna, these are the suffering of lamantation, the burning mind that we cannot avoid but have to experience.

[Para. 556.] Monks, son-like pupils who practise well and aim for the libration of Nibbana, the everlasting city! What are the characterisitics of pain? Here it refers to physical suffering, which is arisen from contact and such suffering is like unmeltable iron existing in our bodies. Monks, you many who are well disciplined! These are about the physical suffering.

[Para. 557.] Monks, noble sons, you pupils of young and old! What are the characteristics of grief, making the heart hurt and burned? It refers to mental suffering, making one dim by the influence of delusion; his mind is upset and feels hot like fire; such hot temper and unpleasant feeling torture one’s mind in many ways that one experiences suffering in mind again and again. Monk, you many who are disengaged with the life circle of *saṃsāra* and wish for the Peace City! These are the mental suffering feeling hot in mind and throat.

[Para. 558.] Monks, noble sons of young and old! What are the characteristics of despair, making one hurt mentally. When a relative or member of family, such as son, nephew, husband, wife, parents etc., has died, it is grievances; they cannot help each other to

prevent from death. This suffering has made all living beings agonized and puzzled. Wherever this suffering has arisen, at any family or any man or woman, there will be like a live-hell, that the victim of the suffering will be tired and exhausted; all, young and old, are puzzled by ignorance; thus, they forget themselves; so they cry for the departed relative who is being carried away from home; they cannot speak any word rather than crying. Monks, you many who wish for liberation from all kinds of suffering! These are the characteristics of despair that all humans and gods have to experience.

[Para. 559.] Monks, noble sons who wear the yellow robes! What are the characteristics of suffering that a man or woman has to suffer when he/she has to live or associate with the ones he/she does not love? All men and gods, who are wandering in the three worlds,⁵⁷⁵ are engaged with the six senses, which can create danger both inside and outside of the body. For instance, when one comes across with the unpleasant visible object or unpleasant sound or unpleasant odor or unpleasant taste or unpleasant touch, he/she will be upset and suffer mentally; he/she does not want to see the object nor want to hear the sound nor fond of it at all. Those who do not love each other will be annoyed and upset whenever they meet. They will find fault with one another; even though one tries to do the right thing, another will not see it as the right one; on the contrary, they will find fault with one another, blame each other, oppose each other, and do no good for one and another; they want to see the failure of one another, and try to destroy the business of their opposite side. The above mentioned are about those people who do not like each other but have to live or associate with each other. Even though they do not want to see each other they have to live together; they have to live together desolately; life is confused and miserable, the annoyance of the king of death. Furthermore, a man for instance has to share things with a woman that all accessories such as water pot, rice steamer, cup, blanket, iPhone, etc. that he does not want to share and spend together but has to do and share with her.

[Para. 560.] He does not want to see her or hear her voice; he does not like her behaviour at all; he does not want her nor want to give love to her. On the contrary, when they meet, they want to quarrel and fight each other. Monks, you many who practise meditation! The above mentioned are about the suffering that two people who do not like each other but have to live together.

⁵⁷⁵ The three worlds are: 1. The world of living creatures (*satta-loka*), 2. The world of morally responsible beings (*saṅkhāra-loka*), and 3. The visible world (*okāsa-loka*). PED s.v. 'Loka'.

[Para. 561.] Monks, noble sons of young and old who are gathering here! What are the characteristics of suffering that one has to stay away from his beloved ones? There are humans and gods in the three worlds (*satta, saṅkhara and okāsa*) who cannot avoid experiencing this kind of suffering. The suffering begins with pleasant sensations such as visible objects, sound, odour, taste, tangible touch etc. which arise from greed and craving. So, starting from the five or six senses, which originated from greed and craving, their the desire for beautiful objects, pleasant voice etc. has arisen and consequently one craves such pleasant things day and night.

[Para. 562.] There are those who we love, such mother, father, brother, friends and relatives. There are also those whom we like, admire and want them. Furthermore, there are delicious food and groceries. These are about those who love each other, wish good for one and another, such as success in life and safety from all kinds of danger. However, some who like each other have to watch each other only but do not have chance to live together; some have to live far away from each other and miss each other. Monks, you many who are the lineage of Sakya! These are all about the suffering of those who love each other but have stay away from each other.

[Para. 563.] Monks, who are from the real seed of Sakya! What are the characteristics of the suffering of wishing for what one cannot get? Who create this agony of suffering day and night? All living being cannot get rid of the suffering of birth, old age, decease and death.

[Para. 564.] There are four kinds of pregnancy, namely, womb-born beings (*jalābuca*), egg-born beings (*aṇḍaca*), moisture-born beings (*saṃsedaca*) and beings having spontaneous birth (*opapādika*).⁵⁷⁶ One would make a wish: “Oh, it will be very good if I am not conceived in any kind of the four pregnancies.”

[Para. 565.] There are signs of old age, such as grey hairs, blind eyes, broken teeth, bad shape of body etc. which is the nature of karma that one cannot avoid. One would make a wish: “Oh, it will be very good if my hairs are not grey, my eyes not blind, teeth not broken, body-shape not change, skins not wrinkled, but be smart, eat delicious food, sleep well and have a happy mind.” No matter how much he makes wish, he cannot avoid from having grey hairs, bling eyes, broken teeth, deformed body and wrinkled skin.

[Para. 566.] There are 96 kinds of disease that, when they torture us, we can hardly tolerate. When one is ill, he has to lie on bed and moan about the pain while his relatives

⁵⁷⁶ For the English terms for the four kinds of birth, I follow Nārada 1956, p. 355.

worry about him and cry looking after him. One would make a wish: “Oh, it will be very good if I am healthy through all the year, always fit and having good form all the time; having no any kind of disease at all but smart and strong!” Although one makes wishes all the time, he cannot avoid disease caused by the elements of earth or air.

[Para. 567.] All beings, men and gods, are alive with the nature of impermanence. One would make a wish: “Oh, it will be very good if I do not die but live happily all the time and death does not come to punish me.” Even though one makes wish like this, he cannot avoid going to cemetery. All men and women have to face the same.

[Para. 568.] Regarding sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and anguish, one would make a wish: “Oh, it will be very good if I can live happily, my son is not die, my husband not die, my wife not die; I do not have to experience grief from losing my relatives.” Even though one makes a wish, he cannot avoid from crying, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and anguish; those things will come to us and burn like fire.

[Para. 569.] All living beings live among birth, old age, disease and death, the four things that are the nature of karma. Even one would say: “Oh, I do not want to be reborn, be old, ill or die, he cannot avoid them. Therefore, it is the suffering of wishing for what one cannot get. He is gloomy and miserable for not getting what he wants.

[Para. 570.] Monks, you many of young and old! In brief, the five aggregates of clinging is suffering. All men and gods have to start life in many kinds of form, flat or round, and experience suffering.

[Para. 571.] What are the five aggregates of clinging? They are the aggregate of corporeality, the aggregate of feeling, the aggregate perception, the aggregate of mental formation and the aggregate of consciousness. All of them are subject to suffering. Therefore, they are called the suffering of the five aggregates of clinging.

[Para. 572.] Monks, what I have explained is the noble truth of suffering, that men and gods have to experience in their many lives. Thus, the Golden Mouth of the Golden Glory has delivered about the Truth of Suffering from the beginning to the end.

[Para. 573.] The lord has explained everything from the beginning to the sixteen steps of explanation [on the Truth]. The explanation and interpretation of the Foundation of Mindfulness of Identification on Body, the Foundation of Mindfulness of Identification on Sensation, the Foundation of Mindfulness of Identification on Mind and the Foundation of

Mindfulness of Identification on Ideas have been thoroughly explained. Having listened to the discourse of the Foundation of Mindfulness, all the 30,000 disciple-monks were frightened and disengaged with their putrid bodies, which are full of intestines. So, having drunk the water of Dhamma, they were so joyful and happy, and they cut off the pendent flower of sensual pleasure that the whole bush of flower dried.

[Para. 574.] Having eradicated wrong view, doubt, clinging to rituals and the like of 1,500 defilements, the disciple-monks were enlightened and pure. So, they were only to be going forward and upward to the stages of the Path and Fruition, crossing over all kinds of trouble and suffering. They had their dangerous and gloomy minds kept in cool condition, and they pressed the heads of greed, hatred and delusion. So, their minds were bright and clear. Therefore, all of them were joyful and delighted as they enjoyed with shower of *dhamma* pouring all over their bodies and minds.

[Para. 575.] Looking at the lives of big and small beings having different kinds of pregnancy and born in different planes of existence, namely, the plane of sensus sphere, the plane of form sphere and the plane of formless sphere. From the beginning, their lives have to be associated blood, which is dirty and unclean. Having seen it, one should experience *samvega* and disenchantment with worldly things, which are subject to impermanence and suffering, such that he has to change his life. So, when he reflects on them, he should regard them as a heap of excrement and like one who has the hairs of his skin bristle up in fear. Look at the human world, heaven and brahma world, all beings are full of skin, blood and bones that are frightening things and from which one must disengage. Thus, the 30,000 noble disciples of the Lord were awoken up and washed their faces and contemplated on the five aggregates as they were fed by delicious taste of the *dhamma*.

[Para. 576.] Here we talk about the time when the Lord was living in the country of Kuru and spreading out the seed for the plant of Nibbāna. The Lord preached the Four Foundation of Mindfulness to his disciples, who wore yellow robes, in a hall of a monastery. I then selected the facts and composed them in poetry. They are the Foundation of Mindfulness on the Identification of Body, the Foundation of Mindfulness on the Identification of Sensation, the Foundation of Mindfulness on the Identification of Mind and the Foundation of Mindfulness on the Identification of Ideas. The commentaries on the sixteen steps of explanation on the Truth have not been composed as a huge amount of blank paper will be needed for that.

[Para. 577.] In this section, we have discussed and analysed the significance of the Noble Truth of Suffering. The Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering has not been in discussion nor the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering nor the Noble Truth of the Path to the Cessation of Suffering, because I am afraid that the text will be too long and it might be boring for some and might be confusing for those who are not matured in the Dhamma. So, I, Sobhinna by name, also known as Zare Mueang Naung, who won the title “Nyana-vajirupamaa-sutaavudha-saddaa-kosalla” have decided that it is right to stop here. Let the wise, scholars and noble men, who are listening to the scriptures, take note and remember.

[Para. 578.] Now the Sakkarāja era is one thousand two hundred and thirty seven (1237). The last day of seventh lunar month has gone and it is not yet reaching the sixth day of the eighth lunar month, which is the day I have completed this treatise. It is the time when the sun is rising, about six o’clock, in the morning. It is Wednesday, the fifth day of the eighth lunar month, which is the day I have completed the treatise of the Foundation of Mindfulness. So, I shall now stop writing the nice sentences. Let all noble men and women take notes into heart and listen to the scripts every week. Let us rejoice!

Appendix Four

Formula of Chanting in Shan Script for Temple Sleepers to Recite before leaving the temple to return home and Khuva Boonchum's formula of chanting for sharing merit. See related discussions in Chapter Two.

ရွာမ်းလူင်းရွှင်း

မိုင်းတူးဖူးဖူးခမ်း၊ သိခင်ပီတ်၊ ချးတေသိမ်းမိတ်၊ ပိ.ခင်းလှိုင်

လင်.ကချာ၊ ရင်ခွံ မုခင်ခမ်းကြေးတြေးသုမ်၊ မုင်းမ့်ဂူမ်၊ ရခင်း

သိခင်ပီတ်၊ ရေးကမ်၊ ဖေး သိခင်ဂူးရေးကမ်၊ ဝါင်း

သိခင်သိုင်သွင်မင်းမင်းကွခင်ဂျ၊ ခေး

ခေးမိုင်းလင်.ပိ.လေး ချးတေခမ်း၊ ကပ်ပိခင်၊ သိခင်ဂူးခိုခင်းမိုင်း ချးကျေး။

ရွာမ်းလိင်၊ ငမေဂုသုင်၊ ခွင်ခူးတူးပေးသိခင်ထမ်းဝုခင်းလုမ်.

ဂုသုင်၊ မီးတီးခင်း၊ မီးယ့်၊ မီးခမ်ဂုမ်းချးဩ၊ တဂျ၊ လီးသင်းပု၊ ရမီ၊ မူးလိသိခင်ခမ်း၊ ဖေး၊ တင်းသိုင်တင်းလူင်ခေ.
လိမ်ဗီလိမ်သင် လိမ်သတ်းလိမ်ဂုခင်း ဝေခေယျသတ်တဂျ ခင်းထက်ဂေလေ ကခခင်တထက်ဂေလေ တင်းသိုင်
ခိခင်းတေး၊ ဂူမ်ဂူမ်လုမ်းလုမ်း သုထု ကခေမေတခေ လီးဂုင်.ဂုသုင်၊ ဖွခင်းလီ ဗီင်၊ ပိင်းဂခင်သိုင်သိုင်၊ သေခမ်းလူလ်း
တခေး။ သုထု သုထု သုထု (သမ်ခမ်း)

တျ၊ ခမ်ျတ်၊ သီ၊ လမ်ျတ်၊ ဖေး၊ ဝခေ၊ မျတ်၊ ဂုမ်းလင်၊ ချး တင်းသိုင်တင်းလူင် ယျ၊ တူဂ်းဂူင်းတူဂ်းဂါ၊ ဗီဂိမ်ကမ်၊ လီး
ဂူခင်းဂိမ်ကမ်၊ လီး သတ်.တဂျ၊ ဂိမ်ကမ်၊ လီး ယွခင်းဗေဂ်၊ ဗေင်ပိ. ခင်းမဂ်၊ ဂူပ်လှိုင်ဂုမ်းချး တေး၊ တပ်.ဂွတ်၊
တီးယွတ်၊ သိုဝ်းသျ၊ ကမတျ၊ ခိပ်.ပု၊ ခေ တီးဂတ်းယိခင် သေခမ်းလူလ်းတျ၊ ခေး။ ။ သုထု သုထု သုထု

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