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* * * * *

akkharaṃ ekamekaṃ ca buddharūpasamaṃ siyā |
tasmā hi paṇḍito poso rakkheyya piṭakattayaṃ |

caturāsīti saḥassāni sambuddhā parimāṇakā |
ṭhītā nāma bhavissanti tiṭṭhante piṭakattaye |

Every single letter of the Dhamma is equal to an image of the Buddha:
Therefore a wise person should preserve the Tipiṭaka.

In the Dhamma of the Buddha there are 84,000 teachings,
Therefore, where there is a Tipiṭaka there are 84,000 Buddhas.

SĪHANĀDA — THE LION'S ROAR

OR WHAT THE BUDDHA WAS SUPPOSED TO BE WILLING TO DEFEND IN DEBATE¹

Joy Manné

In the Dīgha (D), Majjhima (M), Saṃyutta (S) and Aṅguttara (A) Nikāyas the Buddha is frequently compared to a lion, and like a lion is said to roar. His roar takes place under conditions which the texts relate to the debate situation. His roar has content. His monks, although not compared to lions, may also utter a lion's roar. They are encouraged to roar on one particular subject specified by the Buddha. They may also roar on their own initiative, although it is only of Sariputta's 'lion's roar' that the texts contain a record. Suttas may themselves have the term *sihanāda*, 'lion's roar', in their titles. An examination of the notion of the 'lion's roar' shows the imaginative and creative way its reciters (*bhāṇakas*) treated the Buddha's message within the context of their society, relating it to its customs and traditions.

1. *The Buddha's 'lion's roar'*.

The simile in which the Buddha is compared to a lion occurs frequently in the Sutta Piṭaka. Occasionally the comparison is simple — the Buddha simply is a lion:

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- (1) 'Like a lion lonely faring . . .'
- ²
- .

'Lo, what a lion is the worshipful recluse Gotama! 'Tis by his lion's nature that he endures, mindful and discerning, the pains that have arisen in his body, keen and sharp, acute, distressing and unwelcome, and that he is not cast down'³.

'You are a lion . . .'⁴.

'He is the Lord Buddha — he is an incomparable lion . . .'⁵.

In these simple comparisons the Buddha is referred to by the epithet 'Buddha' or 'Samaṇa Gotama'.

The comparison between the Buddha and a lion, however, is most usually expressed in the formula:

- (2) 'The lion, monks, the king of the beasts, comes out of his lair in the evening. After coming out of his lair, he yawns. After yawning, he surveys the four quarters. After surveying the four quarters, he roars his lion's roar three times. After roaring his lion's roar three times, he goes hunting'
- ⁶
- .

The simile is explained in this way,

- (3) "'Lion", monks, is a metaphorical expression for the Tathāgata, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One. And it is in his lion's roar that the Tathāgata teaches Dhamma in the assembly'
- ⁷
- .

In this simile the Buddha is invariably referred to by the epithet 'Tathāgata'. The emphasis in this formula is on the utterance that

2 S I 16; tr. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, *Kindred Sayings* (KS) I 25.

3 S I 28; tr. *ibid.*, I 38.

4 Sutta Nipāta (Sn) 546 = 572.

5 It. 123.

6 A II 33 = III 121 = V 32 = S II 84.

7 A III 122 = V 33.

the lion/Tathāgata makes. The simile (formula 3) continues:

- (3A) 'Just so, monks, when a Tathāgata arises in the world, an Arahant, a Perfectly Enlightened One, One who has knowledge and (right) conduct, One who has attained bliss, One who knows the world, the unsurpassed Trainer of men, Teacher of devas and mankind, a Buddha, an Exalted One. He teaches Dhamma: . . .'
- ⁸
- .

On one occasion it is the way that the Buddha teaches that is emphasised: the carefulness with which the Buddha teaches Dhamma is compared to the carefulness with which the lion strikes his blow while hunting⁹. On a different occasion it is the effect of the Buddha's Teaching that is emphasised: the effect that the Buddha's Teaching has on devas is compared with the effect that the sound of the lion's roar has on brute creatures: in both cases causing fear, agitation and trembling¹⁰. Most usually, however, what is emphasised is **what** the Buddha, the Tathāgata, roars. The Tathāgata's lion's roar has **content**, and its content varies in the different suttas that contain the simile.

There are two particular formulas that introduce the content. One of these is that of formula (3A) above where the Buddha is simply said to teach Dhamma. The other is,

- (4) 'There are these [ten] Tathāgata-[powers] that belong to the Tathāgata. Endowed with these [powers], the Tathāgata claims as his own
- ¹¹
- the bull's place (the position of the leader); he roars his lion's roar in the assemblies; he sets in

8 A II 33, etc. This formula exists also independently of the lion simile (formula 3).

9 A III 121.

10 A II 33.

11 Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit Dictionary*, s.v. *prajñā*.

motion the wheel of Dhamma¹².

The words I have placed in square brackets change according to the context¹³.

The emphasis in the formula, as in (3) above, is that the Tathāgata's lion's roar is uttered in assemblies. When the Tathāgata does this, he takes the position of leader, like a bull. By uttering his lion's roar in assemblies the Tathāgata propagates his Teaching and sets in motion the wheel of Dhamma.

Various groups of assemblies are referred to in this literature. The Mahā-Sīhanāda Sutta (M 12) refers to eight assemblies: the assembly of nobles, of brahmins, of householders, of recluses, the retinues of the four great regents, the gods of the Thirty-three, the Māras and the Brahmās¹⁴. As it is a *sīhanāda* sutta we may perhaps infer from it that these are the assemblies intended in the 'lion's roar' situation. In any case we may deduce from this that the 'lion's roar' is a particular type of utterance to be proclaimed in public where particular prestigious groups gather, and indeed the Kassapa-Sīhanāda Sutta¹⁵ confirms that this is the case. From the rules that this sutta provides for satisfying the assembly it is clear that a 'lion's roar' is a challenge. In a sudden insert in this sutta, which gives no indication why the Buddha felt called upon to vindicate himself at that particular moment and in that particular situation, the Buddha enumerates and refutes potential criticisms that he suggests might be made against him by recluses

12 A III 9, V 33; Vibhāṣa (Vhb) 318.

13 The subjects of confidence (*vesarajjāni*) of formula (11) are introduced by this formula.

14 M I 72.

15 D 8 [I 175]. Suttas with *sīhanāda* in their titles are discussed in section 3 below.

of divers schools. These potential criticisms are that, although he utters his lions' roar, i.e. issues his challenge¹⁶:

- (5) 1. 'he does this in empty places, and not in public'¹⁷ ;
2. 'he issues his challenge in assemblies, but he does it without confidence'¹⁸ ;
3. 'he challenges with confidence . . . but people do not ask him questions'¹⁹ ;
4. 'people ask him questions, but he does not answer'²⁰ ;
5. 'he answers their question, . . . but he does not win over their minds with his exposition'²¹ ;
6. 'he wins over their minds with his exposition, . . .but they do not find him worth hearing'²² ;
7. 'they find him worth hearing but after they have heard him they are not convinced'²³ ;
8. 'having heard him, they are convinced, . . . but the faithful make no sign of their belief'²⁴ ;

16 *sīha-nādaṃ nadati*, 'utters his lion's roar', 'makes his assertion', 'issues his challenge'. See Nathan Katz, *Buddhist Images of Human Perfection: The Arahant of the Sutta Piṭaka compared with the Bodhisattva and the Mahā-siddha* (Delhi 1982) 29ff, for further usages of this expression.

17 D I 175.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 *sotabbaṃ c'assa maññanti . . . na ca kho sutvā pasīdanti*, *ibid.* *Pasīdati* 'a mental attitude which unites deep feeling, intellectual appreciation and satisfied clarification of thought and attraction towards the teacher'. K.N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London 1963, New Delhi 1989) § 655.

24 *Ibid.* Presumably this means that they utter no acceptance formula, provide no meals for the bhikkhus, etc.

9. 'the faithful give the sign of their belief, . . . but they do not follow the path to the Truth (Nibbāna)²⁵ ;

10. 'they follow the Path, . . . but they do not succeed'²⁶.

These are clearly important accusations and the Buddha's refutation of them is categorical. He asserts that in fact exactly the opposite is the case.

The Buddha refutes further potential accusations regarding his conduct when challenged in a different debate sutta (A I 187). Sarabha, a wanderer, who had recently stopped being a follower of the Buddha is claiming that he left the Buddha's teaching for the very reason that he understood it²⁷. This controversial utterance is reported to the Buddha who seeks out Sarabha and challenges him. The Buddha asks Sarabha whether the report is true, and how Sarabha has understood the Dhamma²⁸. Sarabha remains silent throughout this inquisition 'confused, dejected, hanging his head, downcast, cowed down'²⁹. The Buddha then makes three assertions about himself. He asserts that anyone challenging him with regard to the following: (1) his claim to be fully enlightened³⁰, (2) his claim to be free of intoxicants³¹, and (3)

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 A I 185.

28 The second question is put twice. The situation here is very similar to that described by M. Witzel in 'The case of the shattered head' (*Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 13-14, 1987), pp. 363-415, although it does not include this threat. This may be because the challenge is directed against a *paribbājaka*. It is worth noting that in the Buddhist texts this threat is directed solely against brahmins.

29 A I 186.

30 *sammāsambuddha*.

31 *khīṇāsava*.

his claim that his Teaching leads a practitioner to the complete destruction of suffering³², would end up in the same pitiable condition as Sarabha. The sutta continues, 'Then the Exalted One, having thrice uttered his lion's roar . . . departed . . .'³³.

The situations discussed above show that the context in which the Tathāgata utters his lion's roar is a debate³⁴. They also show that it is as Tathāgata that Gotama makes the claims upon which he is willing to be challenged in public³⁵. The Tathāgata's lion's roar is a particular type of challenge. It is an assertion that the Buddha is willing to defend in public and this also accounts for the fact that it is uttered three times³⁶.

What are those points that the Buddha was willing to defend in public? Three of them are given above: (1) that he was fully enlightened, (2) that he was free from intoxicants, and (3) that his Teaching leads a practitioner to the complete destruction of suffering³⁷.

32 A I 187.

33 *Ibid.*, tr. Woodward, *Gradual Sayings* (GS) I 169f.

34 See Joy Manné, 'Categories of Sutta in the Pāli Nikāyas and their implications for our appreciation of the Buddhist Teaching and Literature', *Journal of the Pali Text Society* XV, 1990, 29-87. See also Witzel, *op. cit.*

35 Further, the study of debate techniques in Joy Manné, 'The Dīgha Nikāya Debates: debating practices at the time of the Buddha' (*Buddhist Studies Review* 9, 2, 1992, pp. 117-36) shows that the Buddha regularly used his Tathāgata status to support his arguments in debates.

36 M. Hara, in his article 'Mittabi' ['Three Times'], *Bukkyo kyori no kenkyū, Tamura Yoshida hakase kanreki kinen ronshū* (Tokyo 1982, pp.527-43), shows that in Indian philosophy and literature 'doing an action three times means that it must be intentional and that one is therefore held responsible for the action'. I am extremely grateful to Dr Tom Tillemans for providing a translation of this article, from which this quotation is taken.

37 A I 187.

We have already met the two formulas that introduce the contents of the Tathāgata's lion's roar, (3 and 3A) together, and (4). Each of these formulas introduces a different type of content. The contents of (3 and 3A) comprise the Teaching that the Tathāgata roars; the contents of (4) comprise the Tathāgata's qualities. Of these two formulas (the combination of (3 and 3A) is the least frequently used.

The aspects of the Teaching that are placed within (3 and 3A) are:

(6) 'This is the body, this is the arising of the body, this is the ceasing of the body³⁸. This is feeling . . . , perception . . . , creative acts³⁹ . . . , this is consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, this is the ceasing of consciousness'⁴⁰.

and

(7) 'This is individuality: this is the origin of individuality, this is the cessation of individuality, this is the path leading to the cessation of individuality'⁴¹.

The ensuing remarks by the devas, identical in each of these suttas, show that they understand this to be a Teaching about impermanence: ' . . . We know, indeed, sirs, that we are impermanent, changing, not to last, taken in by individuality'⁴².

The qualities of the Tathāgata that warrant a lion's roar are comprised either in a statement about the Tathāgata's powers (*balāni*), or in a statement about the subject concerning which he has complete confidence in himself (*vesārajjāni*) introduced as in formula (4).

The powers the Tathāgata is willing to claim for himself in the assemblies are enumerated variously as ten, six or five. The ten powers are:

- (8) i. 'that the Tathagāta knows, as it really is, causal occasion (of a thing) as such, and what is not causal occasion as such'⁴³,
- ii. 'the fruit of actions past, future and present, both in their causal occasion and the conditions'⁴⁴,
- iii. 'the directions whatsoever of each practice'⁴⁵,
- iv. 'the world as it really is, in its divers shapes and forms'⁴⁶,
- v. 'the divers characters of beings'⁴⁷,
- vi. 'the state of the faculties of other beings'⁴⁸,
- vii. 'the defilement, the purification, and the emergence of attainments in meditation (*jhāna*), liberation (*vimokha*) and concentration (*samādhi*)'⁴⁹,
- viii. 'The Tathāgata can recall his many states of existence, thus: One birth, two births, three births and so on . . . up to an hundred thousand births; likewise many evolutions

38 See Rune Johansson, *The Dynamic Psychology of Early Buddhism*, London and Malmö 1979, pp.29-34.

39 Johansson's translation of *saṅkhārā*, *ibid.*, pp. 125ff.

40 S III 85.

41 *iti sakkāyo iti sakkāyasamudayo iti sakkāyanirodho iti sakkāyanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ti*. A II 33. *sakkāya* is defined to be the five 'groups of grasping' *pañca upādānakkhandhā*, which are *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, *viññāṇa*. M I 299.

42 S III 85; tr. Woodward, KS III 71.

43 A V 33; tr. Woodward, GS V 24. Explained at Dhammasangaṇi (Dhs) 1337.

44 *Ibid.*; tr. *ibid.* Cf. *Middle Length Sayings* (MLS) I 93f.

45 *Ibid.*; tr. *ibid.*

46 *anekadhātunādhātu-lokaṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānati*. A V 33f; tr. *ibid.*

47 A V 34; tr. *ibid.*

48 *parasattānaṃ parapuggalānaṃ indriyaparopariyattaṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānati*. *Ibid.*; tr. *ibid.*

49 A V 34.

- of aeons, many dissolutions of aeons, many evolutions and dissolutions of aeons, (remembering): At that time I had such a name, was of such a family, of such complexion, was thus supported, thus and thus experienced pleasure and suffering, had such and such a lifespan. Passing away from that existence, I arose in another state of existence. And there, I had such a name, was of such a family. . . . Passing away from that existence, I arose here⁵⁰,
- ix. 'The Tathāgata with divine vision, purified and surpassing that of men, sees the deceasing and rising up again of beings, both low and exalted, beautiful or ugly, gone to a state of bliss or a bad state according to their deeds. He knows beings thus: these beings, sirs, who are given to the practice of wrong conduct in body, word and thought, who criticise the noble ones, who are of wrong view and who acquire for themselves the fruits of their wrong view, having passed away arise after death in a state of loss, a bad state, a state of lower existence, a state of destruction, those beings, sirs, who are given to the practice of right conduct in body, word and thought, who do not criticise the noble ones, who are of right view and who acquire for themselves the fruits of their right view, having passed away arise after death in a state of bliss, in the heavenly world⁵¹,
- x. 'The Tathāgata, through destroying the intoxicants, having seen for himself in this very lifetime, through his own higher knowledge, the release of the mind and the release through wisdom that is free from intoxicants,

50 A V 34f.

51 A V 35f.

remains in that attainment⁵².

This list of ten is supported in the Vibhaṅga where it occurs in identical form with the exception of the ninth *bala* which is expressed simply:

- (9) ix. '[The Tathāgata] knows as it really is the rebecoming of beings⁵³.

In the commentarial section that follows this list, however, the exposition comprises the full text of the ninth *bala* as given in the list of ten above⁵⁴. When six powers are enumerated these are Nos 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of the list of ten⁵⁵. The five powers are made up of a quite different list:

- (10) 'The powers of faith, modesty, conscience (shrinking back from doing wrong), energy and wisdom⁵⁶.

The four subjects of confidence (*vesārajjāni*) that the Tathāgata is willing to proclaim in the assemblies are expressed in the form of a denial. The Buddha says, 'I do not behold the ground on which a recluse or a brahmin or a deva or a Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world will legitimately reprove me'⁵⁷. These potential charges are:

- (11) i. 'These dhammas are not enlightened in you, although you claim to be fully enlightened⁵⁸,

52 A V 36. The reference for the whole attestation is A V 32-6; cf. M 12 [I 69-71]. Translation taken from Woodward, GS V 23ff as indicated. Otherwise I have used my own.

53 Vbh 318.

54 Vbh 343.

55 A III 417ff.

56 *saddhā-balaṃ, hiri-, ottappa-, viriya-, paññābalaṃ*. A II 9.

57 *Ibid.*

58 A II 9.

- ii. 'These intoxicants are not destroyed in you, although you claim to be free from intoxicants'⁵⁹,
- iii. 'There is no impediment for one who follows the dhammas that you have called the dhammas that cause impediment'⁶⁰,
- iv. 'The Dhamma that you teach purportedly for this reason does not lead to the complete destruction of all suffering for the practitioner'⁶¹.

Because the Tathāgata sees no legitimate ground upon which he may be reproved, he is peaceful, fearless, convinced⁶² concerning potential charges that may be made against him.

Two suttas in S (II 27 = Nos. 21, 28 = No.22) open with the formula (4), adapting it so as to include both the ten powers (*balāni*) and the four confidences (*vesārajjāni*). Instead, however, of listing these as we have seen them above, these suttas follow the opening formula with the Dependent Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). These suttas begin with (4) above⁶³, and continue:

- (12) 'Thus, "this" being, "that" becomes, from the arising of this, that arises; this not being; that becomes not; from the ceasing of this, that ceases. That is to say, conditioned by ignorance, activities come to pass, conditioned by activities consciousness comes to pass, and so on: such is the uprising of this entire mass of Ill. But from the utter fading out and cessation of ignorance, activities cease, from the ceasing of activities consciousness ceases, and so on: such is the ceasing

59 *Ibid.*

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.* (A II 8f = M I 71f).

62 A II 8f = M I 71f.

63 In full in No.21, indicated in brief in No.22.

of this entire mass of Ill'⁶⁴.

It is difficult to see how the phrases quoted in these suttas comprised of (4) and (12) above contain ten powers (*balāni*) and four confidences (*vesārajjāni*). This indicates some confusion in the handing down of the tradition.

The above suggests that there were a number of points that the Buddha was willing to defend in public. (There was also a list of questions he refused to defend either in public or in private, the well-known unexplained (*avyākata*) questions.) The question is whether these points have some particular importance in the Buddha's Teaching and should be regarded as its most important features, or alternatively, whether these points are more relevant to the debate procedures, topics and requirements of the time, being permissible or required subjects in the context of the discussion between contemporary religious movements⁶⁵. With regard to their importance as aspects of the Teaching, the problem is that records remaining to us in this literature of topics that come within the category of 'lion's roar' subjects are so meagre that it is difficult to have any confidence in them, comprising as they do only the arising and ceasing of the five *khandhas*, formula (6) and the arising and ceasing of 'individuality' (*sakkāya*), formula (7). With regard to the qualities of the Tathāgata, on the other hand, there are relatively many examples of lists of these, even though they are not always mutually consistent. This evidence suggests that it was primarily those qualities and capacities that the Buddha claimed for himself personally as Tathāgata, and that he would defend in public, that comprised the content of the Buddha's lion's roar, and that the

64 S II 27f.

65 See Witzel, *op. cit.*

inclusion of the elements of the Teaching as material for a lion's roar is spurious.

2. *The monks' 'lion's roar'*.

The debate suttas, reflecting the debate tradition, show how important the requirement was to assert and defend one's religious knowledge. Two suttas suggest that it was so important that the Buddha instructed his monks regarding which aspects of his Teaching they were rightly (*sammā*) allowed to proclaim in the form of a lion's roar, and also how to defend them. In the *Cūḷasihanāda Sutta*⁶⁶ and in A II 238, § 239, the Buddha specifically permits the monks to make a certain claim in the form of a lion's roar:

- (13) 'In this teaching, monks, the recluse is to be found, also the second, third and fourth (class) of recluse. Void of such recluses are the systems of those who teach contrary views. Thus, monks, do ye rightly roar the lion's roar. . .'⁶⁷

In M II he teaches them the argument for its defence.

Although these two suttas have this assertion in common they differ completely with regard to content. The A sutta defines the four *samaṇas* in its subsequent verses as the 'Stream-Enterer' (*sotāpanna*), the 'Once-Returner' (*sakadāgāmin*), the 'Non-Returner' (*opapātika*, lit. 'born by spontaneous generation'), and 'one who, having destroyed the intoxicants, lives in the attainment of having experienced for himself through his own higher knowledge in this very life the release of the mind, the release through wisdom that is free from intoxicants'⁶⁸. The M sutta, which may

be categorised as a sermon, teaches the monks how to refute, in debate, practitioners who hold various contrary views⁶⁹. The points made in this sutta have no relation to the definitions with which it starts out and which it has in common with the A sutta. The points on which others making the same claim may be refuted are divided into two: one concerns aspects of the Teaching, the other concerns lines of attack against the position of the opponents. The first point is that the Buddhist monks make this claim having seen for themselves four things: that they have (i) confidence in their Teacher and (ii) in their Dhamma, (iii) that they fulfil the moral requirements (*sīla*), and (iv) that they have good relations with their fellow monks and their lay supporters. The second, a line of attack to be used in case the opponents should make exactly the same claims about their relationship with their leader and co-practitioners, comprises various challenges regarding the nature of their goal. After these first two paragraphs the sutta becomes a debate with potential opponents⁷⁰ against the views of becoming and annihilation⁷¹, and the four kinds of grasping (*upādāna*)⁷². The Buddha sums up by saying that the holders of wrong views cannot fulfil the first group of conditions above, because they are wrongly taught by a teacher who is not completely enlightened. The sutta contains various expositions of the Teaching rather than instructions in refutation.

It is difficult to see how these points support the challenge, the *sīhanāda*, at the beginning of this sutta. In fact the common beginning and separate development of this pair of suttas suggests

66 M II. See below, section 3, for a discussion of suttas called *sīhanāda*.

67 A II 238, § 238 = M II, I 63; tr. Woodward, GS II 242.

68 The text omits *paññavimuttim* which belongs in this formula.

69 See Manné (1990): 25.

70 See *ibid.*: 23.

71 M I 64.

72 M I 66.

that in the M sutta the Buddha's original defence of his position either never existed or has been lost. There is no evidence that a monk ever defended this aspect of the Teaching in a debate, but then the suttas are primarily about the Buddha and only occasionally about individual monks.

The right to utter a lion's roar is not limited to the Tathāgata, or to those situations where the Buddha permits his monks to proclaim certain subjects in this way. A monk may also utter a 'lion's roar' on his own initiative. In the Nikāyas this monk is always Sāriputta.

In an upsurge of faith, Sāriputta proclaims to the Buddha, 'Lord, such is the faith I have in the Exalted One — *Bhagavā*, that (I know) there has not been, will not be and is not found today any samaṇa or brāhmaṇa who is better than the Exalted One, or has more higher knowledge with respect to the Highest Enlightenment'⁷³. The Buddha acknowledges Sāriputta's remark, 'This speech you have uttered, Sāriputta, is noble, bull-like. A lion's roar, seized with certainty, is uttered'⁷⁴. Thus the Buddha himself categorises this utterance as a 'lion's roar'. The Buddha immediately challenges Sāriputta on his capacity to make such a remark, forcing him to admit that he has not known all past Buddhas, does not know all future Buddhas, and does not even know the present Buddha to the required extent to be able to support his claim. Sāriputta, however, is not daunted. He asserts that he can support his claim, which he has made because he has

73 D 28, III 99. Cf. D II 82f = S V 159, both of which only include (14) below. S V 159 includes the Buddha's final injunction (see below) that this text should regularly be recited to converts (monks, nuns and lay-followers).

74 D III 95; tr. T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha* (DB) III 95.

seen in accordance with Dhamma⁷⁵, arguing through the use of a simile that he has seen what is important.

The content of Sāriputta's defence of his lion's roar is a lengthy itemisation of what all the Buddhas, past, present and future, have achieved. The details, in as brief a form as possible, are:

- (14) i. 'That all Buddhas, "after they have abandoned the five hindrances and after they have weakened corruptions of the mind by means of wisdom, being possessed (then) of hearts well established in the four exercises for setting up mindfulness and having thoroughly developed the seven constituents of knowledge, have wholly awakened (or will wholly awaken) to the uttermost awakening"⁷⁶.
- ii. 'That on one occasion when he came to the Buddha to hear Dhamma, the Buddha taught it in such a way that Sāriputta attained perfection in one particular dhamma, namely, faith in the Teacher⁷⁷.
- iii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the skilful dhammas is unsurpassable by any samaṇa or brāhmaṇa, these skilful dhammas being the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, the Four Right Exertions, the Four Bases of Psychic Power, the Five Controlling Principles, the Five Powers, the Seven Constituents of Knowledge, and the Noble Eightfold Path. In this connection, a bhikkhu, having destroyed the intoxicants, lives in the attainment of having experienced for himself through his own higher knowledge in this very life the release of the mind, the

75 *dhammanvayo vidito*. D III 100.

76 D III 101.

77 D III 102.

- release through wisdom that is free from intoxicants⁷⁸.
- iv. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the description of the sphere of perception⁷⁹ is unsurpassable.
 - v. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to conception⁸⁰ (gestation and birth) is unsurpassable. (The text here shows that conception, gestation and the quality of the birth of the foetus are meant.)
 - vi. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the ability of mind-reading⁸¹ is unsurpassable.
 - vii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the attainment of seeing⁸² is unsurpassable. (The text here describes four levels of attainment with regard to meditation on the body.)
 - viii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the typology of people⁸³ is unsurpassable. (The text here describes seven characteristic ways of attaining release, *vimutti*).
 - ix. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the (qualities of) concentration of the mind⁸⁴ is unsurpassable. (The text here describes the seven constituents of knowledge, *satta bojjhaṅgā*).
 - x. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to modes of progress⁸⁵ is unsurpassable.
 - xi. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to conduct in conversation⁸⁶ is unsurpassable.

78 *Ibid.*79 *āyatana-paññatti*. D III 102.80 *gabbāvakkanti*. *ibid.*81 *ādesana-vidhā*. D III 103.82 *dassana-samāpatti*. D III 104.83 *puggala-paññatti*. D III 105.84 *padhāna*. D III 106.85 *paṭipadā*. *ibid.*

- xii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the ethical conduct of man⁸⁷ is unsurpassable.
- xiii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the variety (of the results) of instruction⁸⁸ is unsurpassable. (The text here describes the Buddha's knowledge with regard to the stage an individual will reach on receiving a particular (form of) instruction.)
- xiv. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to knowledge concerning the (stage of) release of other people⁸⁹ is unsurpassable.
- xv. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to eternalism⁹⁰ is unsurpassable.
- xvi. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the knowledge that enables the remembrance of former life-times⁹¹ is unsurpassable.
- xvii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to the knowledge regarding the decease and rebirth of beings⁹² is unsurpassable.
- xviii. 'That the Buddha's teaching with regard to varieties of supernormal power⁹³ (i.e. the noble and the ignoble) is unsurpassable.
- xix. 'That with regard to the varieties of supernormal power⁹⁴

86 *bhassa-samācāra*. *ibid.*87 *purisa-sīla-samācāra*. *ibid.*88 *anusāsana-vidhā*. D III 107.89 *para-puggala-vimutti-ñāṇa*. D III 108.90 *sassata-vādesu*. *ibid.*91 *pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa*. D III 110.92 *sattānaṃ cutūpapāta-ñāṇa*. D III 111.93 *iddhi-vidhā*. D III 112.94 *iddhi-vidhā*. D III 113.

the Buddha is unsurpassable. There is nothing *hē* does not know⁹⁵, and no other *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* knows it better.

- xx. 'That the Buddha has achieved whatever can be achieved by a faithful clansman who is steadfast and has aroused his energies, by a man's capacity to bear burdens, (his) endeavour, energy and steadfastness'⁹⁶ — The text here specifies that the Buddha is not attached to what is low nor to asceticism, and that he can attain the four *jhānas* at will.

Sāriputta concludes his argument by saying that he has heard from the Buddha himself that there have been equal Buddhas in former times and that there will again be Buddhas equal to himself, but that it is impossible for two equal Buddhas to exist at the same time.

The qualities attributed to the Buddha as *Bhagavā* in Sāriputta's lion's roar bear remarkably little resemblance to the points claimed by the Buddha, in the name of *Tathāgata*, to be his powers and confidences. Only in points (xiv), (xvi) and (xvii) of quote (14) is there any correspondance and this is with the list of quote (8) above, regarding points (vii), (viii) and (ix) respectively.

I have argued⁹⁷ that the collection of suttas now known as *Dīgha Nikāya* was originally a collection of suttas grouped together through their effectiveness in gaining converts and lay support (and that for that reason it is entertaining). The ending of this sutta shows clearly its propaganda purposes. After Sāriputta has finished, a monk, Udāyin, remarks that the *Tathāgata* will not proclaim himself, although any other ascetic who had even one of those qualities would boast about it. The Buddha, also speaking

95 *asesaṃ abhijānāti*. *ibid.*

96 *Ibid.*

97 Manné (1990): 4.

about himself as *Tathāgata*, agrees with this rather emphatically, and then instructs Sāriputta to give this discourse frequently to those among the followers, monks, nuns, lay-men and -women, who feel doubt and hesitation concerning the *Tathāgata*⁹⁸. In this way the Buddha specifically approved this as a list of his qualities which may be taught to followers. I think it is significant that he imposes this limit, i.e. that he does not acknowledge this as a list which is to be defended before a general public⁹⁹.

There is another occasion when Sāriputta roars his lion's roar¹⁰⁰. Here a monk goes to the Buddha and accuses Sāriputta of an offence. The Buddha sends for Sāriputta. Ānanda and Mahā Moggalāna immediately call all the monks, telling them to come because 'Sāriputta is about to roar his lion's roar in the presence of the Buddha'¹⁰¹. Clearly they expect a theatrical occasion. Sāriputta defends himself against the accusation. He agrees that someone who is not mindful of the body's action¹⁰² might have done such a thing, but as for himself, 'his heart is like the earth, abundant, extensive, boundless, without hatred, doing no harm'¹⁰³ and, moreover, he is 'filled with horror, loathing and disgust at his foul body'¹⁰⁴, and he carries it around like a dripping bowl of fat¹⁰⁵. The accusing monk immediately begs Sāriputta's pardon. The Buddha reprimands him, and then says to Sāriputta, 'Forgive this

98 D III 115f = S V 161.

99 Cf. by comparison A II 238, (13) above.

100 A IV 238.

101 A IV 374.

102 *Ibid.*

103 A IV 375.

104 A IV 377; tr. Woodward, GS IV 251.

105 A IV 377.

foolish man, before his head splits into seven pieces¹⁰⁶.

A further lion's roar is attributed to Sāriputta in the Saṃyutta Nikaya¹⁰⁷. Here a monk reports to the Buddha that Sāriputta has claimed arahantship. The Buddha summons Sāriputta and challenges him. Sāriputta is able to answer all the Buddha's questions satisfactorily and the Buddha leaves the scene. Sāriputta then proclaims to the bhikkhu that, although it took him a while to find his answer to the Buddha's first challenge, once he had found his wits, he could have gone on answering for several nights¹⁰⁸. This proclamation is reported to the Buddha by one of the monks, Kaḷārakkhattiya, who as his name shows is a noble (*khattiya*), and who may therefore have had some knowledge of debate conventions. It is this monk who gives the utterance the designation 'Sāriputta's lion's roar'¹⁰⁹ although the expression 'lion's roar' itself does not appear in Sāriputta's utterance. The Buddha supports Sāriputta's claim, using the same terms as Sāriputta did in his proclamation: 'If I were to question Sāriputta on this matter differently, with different words (or) differently according to a different method, Sāriputta would explain this matter to me, differently, with different words (or) differently according to a different method'¹¹⁰.

This so-called 'lion's roar' is qualitatively different from Sāri-

106 *khama Sāriputta imassa moghapurisassa, purāssa tath' eva sattadhā muddhā phalissatīti*. A IV 378. See Witzel, *op. cit.*, regarding this threat. The threat is surprising here as the accusing monk was neither questioning nor being questioned by Sāriputta although he may be taken to have challenged him, albeit behind his back.

107 S II 50-5.

108 S II 54.

109 S II 55, § 46.

110 S II 56.

putta's previous one in several important ways. In the first place it is not a proclamation of the Buddha's qualities: it is Sāriputta's demonstration of his own understanding of the Teaching. Secondly, and most importantly, this utterance is not termed a 'lion's roar' by the Buddha, but only by a monk. The monk uses this terminology in his report to the Buddha and the latter uses different terminology in his answer. On the previous occasion it was the Buddha who gave the name 'lion's roar' to Sāriputta's utterance. Here the text specifically attributes different terminology to him. In this literature prone to repetition, the absence of repetition where it could be expected must be regarded as significant. Instead of the repetition, the Buddha describes Sāriputta as someone who has 'well-mastered the sphere of religion'¹¹¹.

Sāriputta is attributed with three different types of lions' roar. Two of these can be regarded as genuine, the criterion for genuineness being that the texts have the Buddha himself so designate the utterance. These are (i) when the 'lion's roar' took place in debate circumstances in praise of the Buddha (D 28); and (ii) when the 'lion's roar' took place in defence of, and asserting the quality of his own mental state (A IV 238). The third, i.e. the final example in this section cannot be accepted as a true 'lion's roar' as, according to the text, the Buddha did not give it this title. In none of these is the location a public assembly, but rather these are private lion's roars made only before the Sangha of monks.

There is one occasion in each of the Thera- and Therī-gāthā when a monk utters his 'lion's roar',

111 *Ibid.*

- (15) 175. 'Come, Nandaka, let us go into the presence of the preceptor. We shall roar the lion's roar face to face with the best of the Buddhas.
 176. We have now attained that goal for which, with compassion for us, the sage made us go forth — the annihilation of all fetters'¹¹².
- (16) 331. '... The Buddha's teaching has been done.
 332. Allow me, noble lady; I wish to go to Sāvattthi: I shall roar a lion's roar in the presence of the excellent Buddha'¹¹³.

The reason for these 'lion's roars', as the texts show, is that the disciple has attained the final goal and wishes to announce this to, and perhaps have it confirmed by, the Buddha. This may be evidence of a custom or a tendency to proclaim this degree of personal attainment publicly in the presence of the Buddha. As, however, only two examples are attested, one in Theragāthā, one in Therīgāthā, it is impossible to be certain of this. These instances could be also be cases of poetic licence

A monk might also be described as a 'lion's roarer'. In a list that gives the highest qualities of various monks, the monk Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja is called chief of the disciples who are lion's roarers¹¹⁴. There is no sutta passage which tells us what he roared¹¹⁵.

Whereas the Buddha's lion's roar is a public event governed by what we may imagine were the debate rules of the time, the monk's lion's roars, insofar as we can tell from the small number

112 Tr. K.R. Norman, *Elders Verses* (EV) 12.

113 Tr. Norman, EV II.34.

114 A I 23.

115 G.P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, s.v. Piṇḍola-Bhāradvāja.

that remain to us in this literature, were private events, assertions in front of the Teacher and the Sangha and not open to public challenge.

3. *Suttas with sīhanāda* in their titles.

There are three suttas with *sīhanāda* in their title, i.e. *sīhanāda* suttas, in D: Kassapa-sīhanāda Sutta (No.8), Udumbarikā-sīhanāda Sutta (No.25), and Cakkavatti-sīhanāda Sutta (No.26); two in M: Cūḷa-sīhanāda Sutta (No.11) and Mahā-sīhanāda Sutta (No.12), which gives this name to the vagga¹¹⁶, and a Sīhanāda Vagga in A IV 373-96.

The M *sīhanāda* suttas are both suttas with debate elements. The Cūḷa-sīhanāda Sutta is a sermon in which the Buddha teaches his monks debate techniques; in the Mahā-sīhanāda Sutta he refutes a challenge Sunakkhatta is reported to have made against him. The D *sīhanāda* suttas are more diverse. Two concern challenges: in the Kassapa-sīhanāda Sutta, Kassapa challenges the Buddha on the theme of asceticism, and the Buddha refutes this challenge, while the Udumbarikā-sīhanāda Sutta concerns a challenge made against the Buddha by Nigrodha in Queen Udumbarikā's Park. It is, however, hard to see what the common element is in the shared name regarding the third, the Cakkavatti-sīhanāda Sutta, which is a tale about good rulership. The Sīhanāda Vagga of the A gets its name from its first sutta, which is the lion's roar by Sāriputta in which he proclaims his own attainments.

In their diversity the relationship between the names of *sīhanāda* suttas and their content reflects that of the contents of the various *sīhanādas*. Both challenges and proclamations of

116 See I.B. Horner, *Middle Length Sayings* (MLS) I xiv.

attainments are found. Probably the Cakkavatti-sihanāda Sutta should be regarded as falling into the latter category. It is the proclamation of the attainments and qualities of the best ruler.

4. *The 'lion's roar' and the debate tradition*

In the Pāli Nikāyas the term *sīhanāda* — 'the lion's roar' — is used for various types of expressions. When the Tathāgata's lion's roar is referred to we are close to the Vedic religious speech contest or Debate which Witzel has described in his article. When the 'lion's roar' is attributed to a disciple, we find that it is his own claim to attainments. Both the Tathāgata's 'lion's roar' and that of a disciple are utterances which the speaker is willing to defend in public, the former in front of a large public of the world, the latter in front of the smaller public of the monks. It seems then that the Buddhists have adapted the Vedic tradition of challenges in debate to their own purposes, using their own terminology — *sīhanāda* — and generalising it to include a monk's public assertion of his achievements. Suttas with *sīhanāda* in their title generally confirm this usage. As we do not usually know how and when a sutta got its title, only limited weight can be attached to this last point.

5. *Conclusions.*

I said in the introduction that a study of the notion of the 'lion's roar' showed the inventive and creative way the reciters conveyed the Buddha's message, relating its content to the customs and traditions of their society. In fact it provides a variety of examples of their way of going about their task.

First a word about the reciters.

Recounting those aspects of daily life one had shared with the Buddha to one's fellow practitioners, passing on to them the content of the discourses one had heard — that is to say, one's

own understanding of his Teaching, telling what one had seen, heard and experienced while one was with the Teacher, all that certainly began as early as Buddhism itself did. The first converts and earliest monks would obviously talk to each other about the Buddha and the Teaching, and keep each other informed about what had happened during, for example, an absence due to an almsround or a meditation retreat. What had happened would include what had been taught, who the Buddha had talked to in particular, who came to see him, what advice he gave, and so forth. As the community grew and spread this was essentially its way to keep in touch and up to date. Some people love to recount, to narrate stories, to share their experiences, to tell. Probably those who told about the Buddha and the Teaching especially well were invited to do so again and again and became known as good reciters. Telling skilfully requires invention and the texts are indeed full of literary inventions created by very skilful raconteurs.

The early reciters told about true events, events in which they had participated as observers and witnesses. Although we cannot know whether the accounts of the debates in D contain any actual words that the Buddha spoke, the style of debating they attribute to him is consistent and differentiated from that attributed to other debaters, and they are true to the Vedic debate tradition¹¹⁷. The early reciters also passed on the experiences of others that had been told to them. In telling a tale there are always modifications depending on the character and interests of the teller.

The early reciters created similes. A simile that compares the Buddha to a lion is hardly surprising. The comparison between a

117 See Manné (1990) and (1992).

great man and a lion exists in other Indian texts¹¹⁸. It exists too in our language¹¹⁹, and doubtless in many other languages which have inherited the idea that the lion is the king of the beasts. Lions roar, so the Buddha roars too. The early reciters attributed the epithet 'lion' to the Buddha, expanded the comparison to describe the likenesses and included the detail of the (lion's) 'roar'. The evidence (to be considered in detail below) suggests that it was the existence of this simile which inspired the reciters to attribute a content to, or to invent a content for the Buddha's lion's roar.

Having set the scene, so to speak, with regard to the early reciters, we can now show how our investigation of the texts about the lion's roar supports these ideas.

First of all there is the invention of situating the Buddha's lion's roar within a tradition of debate. The term 'lion's roar' is not connected with the Vedic debate tradition. It occurs neither in the Upaniṣads nor in the Brāhmaṇas. As the Buddhist texts can be so faithful and so accurate in their representation of the Vedic tradition¹²⁰, we can conclude from this that the term 'lion's roar' for a challenge is an invention of the Buddhist reciters. We can further conclude that it was part of this invention fictitiously to situate the lion's roar challenge within the debate tradition. Some details placed within the Buddha's lion's roar probably authentically belong to the Vedic debate tradition: the Buddha's refutation of a potential challenge to his capacities as a debater may be among these¹²¹, though I specify that I mean that these

118 See Monier-Williams, s.v. *siṃha* for many examples.

119 We have the expressions 'a lion among men', 'the strength of a lion', etc.

120 See Witzel, *op. cit.*; Manné (1990), (1992).

121 Formula (4). See also Manne (1992).

represent the demands of the tradition on a debater and not that the Buddha himself uttered these very phrases. There is no way we can establish as a fact which phrases the Buddha ever uttered. Other details have to be accounted for differently.

I have argued that the early reciters spontaneously created similes, and with them, in this example of the lion's roar, frameworks within which they could present their accounts. With regard to the aspects of the Teaching that come within the 'lion's roar' and the powers and confidences of the Tathāgata, I think that here we see redactors using such a framework inventively. The framework is that of the simile that compares the Buddha to a lion and attributes content to his roar. The existence of this framework, and the illogicality (why these particular aspects?) of the examples that remain to us of the Teachings placed within it, suggest the likelihood that many other aspects of the Teaching were also placed within it but those cited here are the only ones that have come down to us in these texts. With regard to the qualities of the Tathāgata that are placed within this framework, these are not particularly coherent, those in quote (8) comprising adaptations of other formulas, especially that of paras. 40-94 of the Sāmaññaphala Sutta, those in quote (11) perhaps based upon a challenge that was once made against the Buddha and of which no record remains in these texts.

Having invented the attribution of a lion's roar to the Buddha, the redactors generalised this invention to include monks as well. With regard to the monk's lion's roars, the permission to the monks to make a 'lion's roar' about the four types of samaṇa is an example of textual muddle¹²². Probably Sāriputta's great im-

122 See Manné (1990): 41

portance attracted to him also the attribution of various lion's roars. One of Sāriputta's lion's roars is a piece of pure propaganda, while the other two form part of dramatic stories. The anomaly between these lion's roars, two being designated as such by the Buddha while the third does not possess such purported authorisation may reflect the different tendencies on the part of the reciters regarding what they would or would not put into a lion's roar. The examples in the Thera- and Therī-gāthā are clearly poetry, as is the attribution of the epithet 'lion's roarer' to a monk.

A simile is invented, a lion's roar is created for the Buddha, and then for the monks. The next step is to impose this invention on suttas (the inclusion of the term *sīhanāda* in their titles may reflect late ideas in which suttas were particularly important). Thus is tradition created!

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ABHIDHAMMA STUDIES

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DEATH AS MEDITATION SUBJECT IN THE THERAVĀDA TRADITION

Mathieu Boisvert

In 1986, headlines such as 'U.S. Buddhist monk meditates on decaying corpses'¹ and 'Corpses remind me of nature of Samsara'² were on the front page of Sinhalese newspapers. The articles were describing the peculiar meditation practice of an American monk named Alokadhamma. Three years after his ordination, Bhikkhu Alokadhamma had become famous throughout the island of Sri Lanka because he resided in a cave in the company of two decomposing bodies placed in a glass cage, with four other bodies laid outside. These reports became the impetus for the attempt to answer the question that this paper is revolving around: what is the place and the role of the meditation on death within the contemporary Theravāda Buddhist tradition?

Alokadhamma's practice was most probably derived from the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, where the Buddha describes the nine types of charnel-ground meditation. In order to clarify this unusual practice, however, the position as put forth in Theravāda literature first needs to be investigated. This will clarify the boundaries of the two major meditation practices centred on death, i.e. *asubha-bhāvanā* and *maraṇasati*. Secondly, in an attempt to conceptualise the contemporary practice, I will allude to eleven qualitative interviews that I conducted with Buddhist monks and with a *dasa sil mātāvo* in Sri Lanka during May 1993; it is important to em-

1 Dharmasiri Gamage, 'U.S. Buddhist monks meditates on decaying corpses', *The Sunday Observer*, Colombo, 2 November 1986.

2 *Id.*, 'Corpses remind me of nature of Samsara', *op. cit.*, 9 November 1986.