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Cātumā Sutta

The Discourse at Cātumā | M 67/1:456-462

Theme: Four dangers that renunciants must overcome

Translated by Piya Tan ©2006, 2010

1 Sutta summary and highlights**1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY**

[§§1-2] The Cātumā Sutta relates how the Buddha takes a group of noisy monks to task, and his warning against four dangers to newly ordained monks (*navaka*). The Sutta opens with 500 visiting (*āgantuka*) monks, led by the chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, arriving in the myrobalan¹ grove outside the Sakya village of Cātumā, to see the Buddha.

[§3] The visiting monks, exchanging greetings with the resident monks, preparing their quarters, and putting away their bowls and outer robes, are rather noisy, like a fishermen’s commotion.

[§§4-5] On the Buddha’s instruction, Ānanda summons them and they are rebuked and dismissed by the Buddha.

[§6] The Sakyas of Cātumā, seeing the monks, out of compassion for them, beseech the Buddha to recall them.

[§7] They compare the novice monks to “young seedlings,” who, not receiving any water, would be destroyed; and to “a young calf,” who without its mother, would similarly be at a great disadvantage, and pleading with the Buddha to show his compassion to the sangha as he has done before.

[§§8-9] Brahmā Sahampati, too, intercedes, echoing the two parables, adding that the Buddha should show his compassion to the sangha as he has done before.

[§§10-12a] The Buddha, responding to their pleas, recall the monks.

[§12b] Then he questions Sāriputta on what he thinks of the situation, and the latter replies that the Buddha could now rest easy. However, the Buddha, wishing to highlight the significance of the occasion, “stops” Sāriputta.

[§13] Moggallāna, on the other hand, when similarly asked by the Buddha, replies that while the Buddha deserves a good rest, Sāriputta and he himself would look after the sangha. The Buddha agrees, but adds that he (the Buddha), too, would look after the sangha. [1.2]

[§§14-15] For the rest of the Sutta, the Buddha speaks on how he himself or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would look after the sangha, that is, by warning it of the four fears or dangers (*bhaya*), by way of the four parables, that a newly ordained monk would face, and as such should well avoid. Briefly, **the four parables** are as follows:

[§16] “The fear of waves” (*ūmi, bhaya*) is the monk’s *anger and despair*, arising from his dislike for the training in full awareness, that is, in sense-restraint and mindfulness, so that he returns to the lay life.

[§17] “The fear of crocodiles” (*kumbhīla, bhaya*) is the monk’s *desire for food* (or becoming a monk for the sake of food), so that he dislikes the monastic rules and restrictions regarding food and meals, and as a result returns to the lay life.

[§18] “The fear of whirlpools” (*āvatta, bhaya*) refers to the monk’s being unmindful in body and speech (such as socializing with the laity), and seeing lay people enjoying *sensual pleasures*, he misses them and so returns to the lay life.

[§19] “The fear of river dolphins” (*susukā, bhaya*) refers to the monk’s being unmindful in body and speech (especially in public places), and seeing *attractive women* (a euphemism for sexuality), he is unable to restrain his mind, so that he returns to the lay life.

[§20] In each case, the monk, being unmindful, fondly recalls his erstwhile layman laxity and pleasures, misses them, and so fails in his monastic training by returning to the lay life.

¹ *Āmalakī* (V 1:30; M 1:456; J 5:12), the emblic myrobalan, *Phyllanthus emblica*; also called *āmalaka* (V 1:201, 278, 2:149; S 1:150; A 5:170; Sn p125; J 4:363, 5:380; Tha 938; Miln 11; DhA 1:319; VvA 7). Local names: Hindi *āmla*; Sinh *nelli*; Thai *makkham pom* (มะขามป้อม).

1.2 COMPARATIVE STUDY. The Cātumā Sutta has a Chinese parallel in the Ekottara Āgama and in an individual translation.² The Cātumā Sutta and its Chinese parallels report that a large group of monks, led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna, have come to visit the Buddha and, on arrival are very noisy. According to the Pali version, the Buddha asks Ānanda to summon the monks to his presence and, when they come, he dismisses them, that they should not stay with him [§4-5]. In the two Chinese discourses, the Buddha does not even summon the monks, but simply tells Ānanda that the monks are not be allowed to stay.³

The three versions agree that a group of Sakyas and also Brahma intercede on behalf of the monks. According to the Cātumā Sutta, in order to reconcile the Buddha with the monks the Sakyas give two parables, after which Brahma repeats them [§9]. These parables—those of the young seedlings and of the young calf—show that the newly ordained monks need the Buddha’s personal attention.

The same two parables recur in the Ekottara Āgama version, which however states that the Sakyas use only the parable of the seedlings in need of water, while the parable of the young calf longing for its mother is given by Brahma, so that the Buddha recalls the monks.⁴ “In fact,” notes Analayo, “if the Sakyas had already delivered both parables, there would be little reason for Brahma to intervene and just repeat what had already been said.” (2006:253)

Noting some similarities between **the Cātumā Sutta** and **the Piṇḍolya Sutta** [5.2], **Analayo** observes that

The circumstance according to the Saṃyutta Nikāya discourse these two similes occurred to the Buddha while being in seclusion suggests that he might perhaps have remembered them from the time when he first came across them in relation to the events depicted in the Cātumā Sutta. In this case, the events described in the Cātumā Sutta should precede the events described in the Saṃyutta Nikāya discourse. According to an explanation given in the Milindapañha, however, even when these two similes were delivered for the first time, they were not new to the Buddha, since due to his omniscience he knew them already.⁵ (2006:253)

The Buddha, after hearing the parables, recalls the monks [§10-11]. The Commentary explains that Moggallāna sees Brahma’s intercession with his divine eye, and through his telepathy knows that the intercession is successful (MA 3:175). The individual translation similarly says that Moggallāna learns of all this through his divine eye.⁶ According to the Ekottara Āgama, however, the Buddha only looks at Ānanda, who understands what this means and straightway informs Sāriputta that the monks are allowed to return.⁷

The Cātumā Sutta and its Chinese parallels record that once Sāriputta and Moggallāna return, the Buddha asks them to say what they have thought when he has dismissed the monks. According to the Pali and the Ekottara Āgama accounts, while Sāriputta wants to follow the Buddha’s example and remain at

² The parallels are EĀ 45.2 = T2.770c-771c and T137 = T2.860a-861a, both of which agree with M 67 on the location. According to the Taisho ed, T137 was tr by Kāng Mèngxiáng (康孟詳) sometime btw 25 & 220 CE, and is entitled “Sāriputra and Maudgalyayāna visits Cātumā,” 舍利弗摩訶目連遊四衢. It is referred to in Mahā.prajñā-pāramitā Śāstra in T1509 = T25.242c1. See Analayo 2006: 252.

³ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.770c23 & T137 @ T2.860b3.

⁴ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771a8+17. T137 @ T2.860b28 only reports that the Sakyas give a parable, which describes water that quickly flows down a ravine.

⁵ Miln 209. “This attempt to harmonize the events depicted in [M] 67 with the belief in the Buddha’s omniscience appears somewhat forced, since the account given in the discourse suggests these two parables to have been new to the Buddha, as they appear to be instrumental in convincing him to allow the monks to return.” (Analayo 2006:253 n158)

⁶ T137 @ T2.860c8.

⁷ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771a20. In **Bodhi Rāja,kumāra S** (M 85), too, the Buddha merely looks at Ānanda and he understands, and at once responds (M 85.7/2:92 f).

ease, Moggallāna is aware of the need to look after the monks. The Cātumā Sutta and its Ekottara Āgama parallel agree that the Buddha censures Sāriputta and praises Moggallāna's attitude.⁸

The Cātumā Sutta continues with an exposition on the four dangers to be expected for a monk newly gone forth, an exposition that recurs as a discourse on its own in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, that is, as **the Ūmi Bhaya Sutta**.⁹ The Ekottara Āgama version instead continues by contrasting nine qualities conducive to decline with nine qualities that lead to growth,¹⁰ followed by a set of verses on the need to overcome birth, old age and death through right conduct and diligence.

The Ekottara Āgama version ends by saying that on account of this sutta, over sixty monks become arhats.¹¹ The individual translation says this too, adding that countless monks attain streamwinning at the end of the discourse. The individual translation differs from the Ekottara Āgama version in saying that all that is required for leading the monks to realization is a single verse spoken by the Buddha.¹²

2 The question of “leading” the sangha

2.1 MEANING OF PARIHARATI. Translating *pariharati* as “to lead (the sangha)” seems to fit the Cātumā Sutta context, or does it? This is what we will examine in this section. But let us first define our terms. First and foremost, *pariharati* (both in Pali and Sanskrit) does *not* have the sense of “to lead.” The Pali-English Dictionary (PED) comprehensively lists the senses of *pariharati* as follows:

Pariharati [*pari* + √HR, “to take”]

1 to take care of, to attend to (acc), shelter, protect, keep up, preserve, look after (V 1:42, 2:188; D 2:100 (*saṅgham*); D 2:14 *gabbham kucchinā*; M 1:124, 459; S 3:1; A 3:123; J 1:52 *kucchiyā*, 143, 170; Miln 392, 410 *attānam*, 418; SnA 78; DhA 2:232 *aggim*, v1 *paricarati*, which is the usual; PvA 63 *kucchiyā*, 177. Cp BHS *pariharati* in same meaning, eg Avads 1.193, 205.

2 to carry about (D 2:19 *aṅkena*; M I.83; Sn 440 *muñjam parihare*, 1 sg pres med; SnA 390 takes it as *parihareyya*; Miln 418 *ālakam* ~.

3 (intransitive) to move round, go round, circle, revolve (M 1:328; A 1:277 *candima, suriyā* ~; cp A 5:59) = Vism 205; J 1:395, 4:378, 6:519; DA 1:85; PvA 204.

4 to conceal (V 3:52 *suṅkam*).

5 to set out, take up, put forward, propose, only in the phrase (Comy style) *uttān' atthāni padāni* ~ to take up the words in more explicit meaning (SnA 178, 419, 437, 462).

[See also n *parihāra*.]

PED (standardized; meaning of √HR added)¹³

⁸ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771b6: “Don’t let such thoughts arise,” 莫生此念. The individual tr seems to reverse the roles of the two monks, since according to T137 @ T2860c20+28, the Buddha praises Sāriputta and advises Moggallāna against the type of thoughts he has been entertaining on this occasion.

⁹ A minor difference, noted by Analayo, between the two Pali versions is that when describing a monk who goes out begging, **Cātumā S** (M 67/1:461,25 & 462,7) describes that he does not guard body and speech, whereas according to **Ūmi Bhaya S** (A 4.122/2:125,14 & 126,1), he also does not guard the mind, *arakkhitena cittena*. Here A 4.122 seems to offer a more complete presentation, since the problem treated in both versions is that the monk’s mind was overwhelmed by sensual desire. (Analayo 2006:234 n164)

¹⁰ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771b19. The 9 things leading to growth are frequenting good friends, practising proper conduct, enjoying seclusion, being free from illness, having few possessions, being without attachment in regard to requisites, being energetic, understanding the meaning of what one hears and being keen on listening to the Dharma. (Analayo 2006:254 n165)

¹¹ EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771c15.

¹² The verse in T137 @ T2.861a2 reads “use faith to cross the flood, with diligence as boat, the noble truth relieves from **dukkha* and miseries, wisdom is the ultimate crossing over,” 以信渡流汜，無放逸為船，聖諦濟苦患，智慧究竟渡. This is reminiscent of a verse in **Ālavaka S** (S 10.12/1:214,26; Sn 184, with *taratī* mc), which reads: “By faith one crosses the flood, | by diligence the sea, | through energy one overcomes suffering, | through wisdom one is purified,” *saddhāya tarati ogham, appamādena aṇṇavam, viriyena dukkham acceti, paññāya parisujjhati*.

¹³ On *pariharissāma* (1 pl fut), see §13n.

It is clear from the PED and other Pali and Sanskrit dictionaries that *pariharati* does not have the sense of “he leads.” But, perhaps, we could argue that the translators might have used too “free” a translation. We will examine this in the rest of this section.

2.2 APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS. When the Buddha asks Moggallāna how he feels about the affair of the noisy novice monks, the latter replies that while the Buddha deserves a good rest, Sāriputta and he himself would look after the sangha. The Buddha agrees, but adds that he (the Buddha), too, would look after the sangha [§13].

In other important appearances of the word *pariharati* or its other grammatical forms, we find various major translators have rendered it as “lead (the sangha),” “leader of the sangha,” and the like. We see such translations in these texts:

- (1) **the Vinaya account** (V 1:188) of Devadatta’s request to the aged Buddha that he hands over the sangha to him (Devadatta)¹⁴ [2.3];
- (2) **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16.2.25b), where the Buddha declares that no one “leads” the sangha, but that it is the Dharma that is our only refuge¹⁵ [2.4];
- (3) **the Cātumā Sutta** (M 67.13), where the Buddha declares that either the chief disciples or he himself would “lead” the sangha¹⁶ [§13]; and
- (4) **the (Bhagavā) Gilāna Sutta** (S 47.9), which is essentially identical with (2).¹⁷

I B Horner (1957) has, for example, translated *pariharissāmi* as “(I) will lead” in these two passages:

(1) **The Vinaya (Cv 7.1-4 = V 2:188)**¹⁸
“It is I [Devadatta] who *will lead* the Order of monks.”

“I, Devadatta, would not hand over (*na nissajjeyyam*) the order of monks even to Sāriputta and Moggallāna. How then could I to you...?” (V:H 5:264)

(3) **Cātumā Sutta (M 67.13)**

“I [Moggallāna] and the venerable Sāriputta *will now lead* the Order of monks.” (M:H 2:132)

The contradiction between these two passages is apparently due to translating *pariharissāmi* as “I will lead.” This is not a *textual* problem, but a *translation* problem: the translator has mistranslated a key word.

In the Vinaya account, it is clear that Devadatta wants to take over the sangha from the Buddha, but he expresses his desire indirectly or euphemistically, using the word *pariharissāmi*, “I will look after” the sangha. In fact, translating it this way brings out even a more sinister side of Devadatta, that he is a cunning political strategist (as seen in some of the Pali texts).¹⁹

Again, compare these two passages translated by **T W Rhys Davids** (1910) and **Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi** (1995, 2001):

(2) **Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16.2.25b)**
“Surely, Ānanda, should there be any one who harbours the thought, ‘It is I who *will lead* the brotherhood,’ or, ‘The Order is dependent upon me,’ it is he who should

(3) **Cātumā Sutta (M 67.13)**

“The Blessed One will now abide inactive ... Now the venerable Sāriputta and I *shall lead* the Sangha of bhikkhus.”
“Good, good, Moggallāna! Either I shall lay

¹⁴ **Vinaya** (V 2:188) tr: TW Rhys Davids & H Oldenberg (1885, V:O 3:238); IB Horner (1952, V:H 5:264).

¹⁵ **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.25b/2:100) tr: TW Rhys Davids (1910, 4th ed 1959, D:RD 2:107); Sis Vajirā & F Story, *Last Days of the Buddha* (1964, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>).

¹⁶ **Cātumā S** (M 67.13) tr: IB Horner (1957, M:H 2:132); Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi (1995, 2001, M:ÑB 562).

¹⁷ S 47.9/5:152-154.

¹⁸ Also at DhA 1.12.12b/1:138 f: this comy account gives a full account of Devadatta’s last days. There, **EW Burlingame** (DhA:B) translates the key passage (Devadatta’s request to take over the sangha) as “I will direct the Congregation of Monks; commut the Congregation of Monks to my hands.” (*Buddhist Legends*, 1921 1:235).

¹⁹ For a broader view, see **Devadatta** = SD 71.4.

lead the Sangha of bhikkhus or else Sāriputta and Moggallāna shall lead it.” (M:ÑB 562) down instructions.” (D:RD 2:107)

In the **Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta**, the Buddha is presented as declaring that he would *not* lead the sangha, *nor* would he appoint anyone to do so. But in **Cātumā Sutta**, he is presented as saying the exact opposite—in the above *translations*. But when we translate *pariharissāmi* as “will take care of,” “will look after,” or something similar, the passages’ senses are very clear without any contradiction. See the same two passages with the new translations:

(2) Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16.2.25b)

“Surely, Ānanda, if there were anyone who thinks: ‘I shall take care of [look after] the sangha,’ or that ‘The sangha shall refer to me,’ then let them make some statement about the sangha.

But, Ānanda, it does not occur to the Tathāgata to think, ‘I shall take care of the Sangha,’ that ‘the sangha should refer to me.’
(SD 9, emphases added)

(3) Cātumā Sutta (M 67.13)

“Sadhu, sadhu, Moggallāna! For, either I, Moggallāna, would look after the sangha of monks, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would.”
(SD 34.7, emphasis added)

The above Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta passage (D 16.2.22-26) also appears as a close parallel in the **(Bhagavā) Gilāna Sutta** (S 47.9),²⁰ where the two major translations reflect a similar tone of *the leadership* of the sangha rather than “taking care” of it, thus:

(4) (Bhagavā) Gilāna Sutta (S 47.9)

F L Woodward, *The Book of the Kindred Sayings* (1930):

If, Ānanda, anyone think I will carry on the Order of monks, or: The Order of monks is under my directions,—let such an one make some pronouncement concerning the Order of monks.

It never occurs thus to the Tathāgata, Ānanda: I will carry on the Order, or: The Order of monks is under my direction.
(S:W 5:132, original emphases)

Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (2000):

If, Ānanda, anyone things, “I will take charge of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha,” or “The Bhikkhu Saṅgha is under my direction,” it is he who should make some pronouncement concerning the Bhikkhu Saṅgha.

But, Ānanda, it does not occur to the Tathāgata, “I will take charge of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha,” or “The Bhikkhu Saṅgha is under my direction,”....
(S:B 1637, emphases added)

Even here, however, there seems to be an *apparent* contradiction, as *pariharissāmi* is here used both in the passages of the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) and the Cātumā Sutta (M 67). However, it is clear that the word, *pariharissāmi*, has many senses, and *has a different meaning in each passage*. However, we can, and need, to tease out the meaning from their respective contexts. It is clear from the **Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** context that *parihassāmi* has an extended sense of “I will lead,” while in the **Cātumā Sutta** passage, it has a normal sense of “I will look after.”

In the two **Saṃyutta** passage translations, Woodward’s rendition is more free than Bodhi’s. Both, however, try unnecessarily to force the sense of “I will lead” onto *pariharissāmi*. It is true that the context clearly suggests that Devadatta actually plans to take over the sangha, but the Buddha declares that no one should *lead* the sangha. In other words, the sangha is not a political or worldly organization or set-up.

²⁰ S 47.9/5: 152-54.

The Buddha is also stressing the point that he has never regarded himself as the “leader” of the sangha. And now, in his last days, he has no plans to appoint a successor either. A closer look at how Devadatta uses the word *pariharissāmi* will give us a good idea how to translate it, and this is what we shall now turn to.

2.3 DEVADATTA’S REQUEST TO “LEAD” THE SANGHA

2.3.1 The Buddha rejects Devadatta’s request. We have noted that *pariharati* does not have the sense of “to lead” [2.2], but is it possible to translate it *freely* so in the Vinaya account of Devadatta’s request to take over the sangha from the Buddha (V 2:188), as I B Horner has done?²¹

The Vinaya (in probably a post-Buddha account) relates how Devadatta approaches the aging Buddha and asks the Buddha to hand over (*nissajjeti*) the sangha to him. He is recorded there as saying:

“Bhante, the Blessed One is now old, aged, great in years, his journey done, reached the sum of his days. Let the Blessed One now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now. May the Blessed One hand over the sangha to me. ‘I will lead’ (*pariharissāmi*) the sangha of monks.

*Jiṇṇo dāni, bhante, bhagavā vuḍḍho mahallako addha, gato vayo, anuppatto. Appossukko dāni, bhante, bhagavā diṭṭha, dhamma, sukha, vihāraṃ anuyutto viharatu. Mamaṃ bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ nissajjatu. Ahaṃ bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ **pariharissāmi** ti.* (Cv 7.3.1 = V 2:188)²²

The Buddha, the Vinaya says, retorts that he would not hand over (*na nissajjeyyāmi*) the sangha even to Sāriputta and Moggallāna (V 2:188).²³ [2.3.2]

2.3.2 Devadatta’s euphemism. And yet, in the Cātumā Sutta [§13], the Buddha is recorded as saying:

“Sadhu, sadhu, Moggallāna! For, either I, Moggallāna, “will/shall lead” [would take care of]²⁴ (*parihareyyāmi*) the sangha of monks, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would.”

*Sādhu sādhu, moggallāna. Ahaṃ vā hi, moggallāna, bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ **parihareyyāmi** sāriputta, moggallānā vā ti.* (M 67.13/1:459) = SD 34.7

This passage seems to contradict the Buddha’s reply to Devadatta’s request to take over the sangha [2.3.1]. Indeed, there is this apparent contradiction if we translate *parihareyyāmi* as “would lead,” as I B Horner (1957)²⁵ has done, and followed by Nāṇamoli & Bodhi (1995, 2001).²⁶ Is this translation correct?

From the context, we can tease out the hint that Devadatta’s ambition is indeed to “lead” the sangha (in political terms), as he uses the word *nissajjatu* (“hand over”), that is, he wants the Buddha to “hand over” the sangha to him, so that he could “take care” (*pariharāmi*) of it. It is obvious here that *pariharāmi* is used by Devadatta as a **euphemism**, which is common amongst politicians!

Having said that, let us now look at our translation of Devadatta’s words again, thus:

“May the Blessed One hand over the sangha to me. I will **‘take care of’** (*pariharissāmi*) the sangha of monks.” (Cv 7.3.1 = V 2:188) [2.3.1]

This sentence clearly brings out what Devadatta has in mind. We can remove the quote marks, too, without affecting the intended meaning of the sentence. From the passage’s context, we know that Devadatta

²¹ See I B Horner (1952), V:H 5:264.

²² In **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16), the Buddha himself uses the first sentence to describe his old age (D 16.2.25b/-2:100) = SD 9.

²³ See V:H 5:264 & M:H 2:132 n1 & Intro xxvii. See further **Devadatta** = SD 71.4.

²⁴ The words within quotes reflects how the two translators have rendered it, while the parentheses is what I propose to be the correct tr.

²⁵ Horner actually renders it as “will lead” (1957, M:H 2:132).

²⁶ Nāṇamoli & Bodhi render it as “shall lead” (1st ed 1995; 2nd ed 2005:562).

plans to *lead* the sangha, and as such, we need not, indeed, should not, forcibly or too freely translate *pariharissāmi* as “I will lead.” Once we translate *pariharati* and its various forms as “takes care (of), etc.,” there is no more contradiction with the Buddha’s statement to Moggallāna in the Cātumā Sutta [§13]. [3.3.2]

2.4 NO ONE LEADS THE SANGHA, BUT IT IS NOT LEADERLESS

2.4.1 No one leads the sangha. The future tense of *pariharati* (“he takes care of”), that is, *pariharissāmi* (“I will take care of”), is found in **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), where the Buddha declares that neither he himself nor anyone else is or should be the “leader” of the sangha, and that we (both monastics and the lay) should only take “the Dharma as refuge.”²⁷

If there is anyone who thinks: “I shall look after the sangha” (*aham bhikkhu, saṅgham pariharissāmi ti*), that “The sangha should refer to me” (*mam ’uddesiko bhikkhu, saṅgho ti*), then let him make some statement about the sangha.

But, Ānanda, it does not occur to the Tathāgata, to think, “I shall take care of the sangha,” that “The sangha should refer to me.” So why should the Tathāgata make a statement about the sangha? (D 16.2.25b/2:100) = SD 9

In all the major translations of **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), that is, where the Buddha declares that no one “leads” the sangha, *pariharissāmi* has been translated as “will lead,” or the like.²⁸ Even Walshe’s rendition of “take charge of” (D:W 245) suggests his uncertainty of the word.

2.4.2 The sangha is not leaderless. From the three passages [2.2], it is clear that the Buddha’s instruction is that the sangha should not be led by any single person. Power in a single person tends to corrupt that person. Yet the sangha is not without a leader. That leader or guide is the Dharma-Vinaya: the Dharma is the spiritual constitution and the Vinaya is the legal code of the sangha. While the Vinaya regulates a monastic’s external being (bodily acts and speech), the Dharma regulates and cultivates the inner being (the mind), leading to spiritual liberation.

The Buddha begins his awakened life and closes his ministry with the same message: the Dharma is the one and only refuge. In **the Gārava Sutta** (S 6.2), the Buddha, immediately after his awakening, seeking someone worthy of being venerated as a teacher, finds none, but nevertheless regards the Dharma as his “teacher,” worthy of the deepest respect. “Respect” means to accept someone or something *just as it is*, and to act accordingly: *the Dharma is the highest truth*, realizing which we are liberated from the world.²⁹

The Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) records that the Buddha, after telling Ānanda that the sangha has no personal or political leader [2.4.1], goes on to declare the true *leadership* of the sangha, thus:

Therefore, Ānanda, dwell with yourself as an island, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.³⁰
(D 16.2.26/2:100) = SD 9; also D 16.6.1/2:153; S 6.2/1:140

Immediately after that, the Buddha explains that this refers to the practice of the four focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), that is, body-based, feeling-based, mind-based and reality-based meditations.³¹ In

²⁷ D 16.2.26/2:100 = SD 9.

²⁸ **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.25b/2:100) tr: TW Rhys Davids (1910, 4th ed 1959, D:RD 2:107, “will lead”); Sister Vajirā & F Story, *Last Days of the Buddha* (1964, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>, “should lead”).

²⁹ S 6.2/1:138-140 = SD 12.3.

³⁰ *Tasmā-t-ih ’Ānanda atta, dīpā viharatha atta, saraṇā anañña, saraṇā, dhamma, dīpā dhamma, saraṇā anañña, -saraṇā* (D 16.2.26/2:100 = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 47.14/5:164): many of them at different venues and to different interlocutors. On the tr of *dīpā* here as “island” or as “lamp” & discussion, see **D 16 @ SD 9 Intro (6a)**.

³¹ D 16.2.26/2:100 = SD 9. See also **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10) = SD 13.3.

other words, the sangha exists on account of the Dharma, and should be guided by it. The only way to keep the Dharma as an effective presence in our lives is to *live* it, and what better way to do so than to *meditate* and be guided by inner joy and peace.

The Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta (M 108), a post-Buddha discourse, recounts how Vassa, kāra, chief minister of Magadha, finds it hard to believe that the sangha can carry on and grow without a leader. Ānanda assures him, “But we are not without a refuge, brahmin. We *are* with refuge, brahmin. The Dharma is our refuge!” The Sangha is not governed by a single person or by personal judgements, but by the Dharma-Vinaya laid down by the Buddha.³²

The three refuges of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, in other words, rests on the Dharma, which *is* also the Dharma personified as the Buddha. In real practice, we simply get down to the root and essence of the teaching. These barest essentials are *oneself and the Dharma*. **Matthew Dillon**, in his remarkable comparative study of the last days of Socrates and the Buddha, “Dialogues with Death,” remarks: “However much support may be offered by teacher and community, it all comes down to you and the Truth” (2000: 547)

3 The Buddha in the Cātumā Sutta

3.1 THE BUDDHA’S DISMISSAL OF THE NOISY MONKS

3.1.1 Are they erstwhile followers of Sañjaya? The Cātumā Sutta is unique in that it has a very noisy opening:

At that time, some five hundred monks led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna arrived at Cātuma to see the Blessed One.

Now these visiting monks were exchanging greetings with the resident monks, while lodgings were being arranged, and bowls and robes were being put away—there was a loud noise, a din.

[§2]

These 500 monks are very excited about meeting their colleagues and the Buddha, but have yet to know the monastic decorum. The reason for this becomes clear when we are told later that these monks are “newly ordained” (*navaka*) [§7b].

How the monks address one another here also gives us an important clue to the Sutta background. On meeting the noisy monks, Ānanda addresses them as “venerables” (*āyasmante*) (as instructed by the Buddha). If they were senior monks, Ānanda would have addressed them as “bhante,” but they are not. Yet the monks themselves reply to Ānanda, addressing him as “avuso,” taking him as an equal (the vocative is also used for a junior monk) [§4a].

What is even more interesting is that the monks also address Moggallāna (and presumably Sāriputta, too) as “avuso.” In other words, they are probably *monastic equals*, that is, they are ordained at the same time (that is, in a common mass ordination, or on the same day). We know from the Vinaya and commentarial accounts, that when Sāriputta and Moggallāna left Sañjaya to join the sangha, 250 erstwhile followers of Sañjaya, followed them, too [5.1.2]. Actually a total of 500 followers of Sañjaya followed the two disciples to see them off, but 250 of them turned back, while the other 250 followed them.³³ As such, these 500 monks could *not* be the erstwhile follower as of Sañjaya.³⁴

The point remains, however, that noisy monks are newly ordained, and as such are not aware of monastic decorum. The question remains, too, why the two chief disciples do not exhort them to be quiet. There are at least two possible answers here. The first is that, the two, being arhats, are untroubled by the new monks’ conduct. Secondly, and more importantly, there were no monastic rules (at least in relation to such conduct). Nevertheless, the Buddha rightly sees it as the right occasion to set things right by teaching the new monks (and future generations) a lesson.

³² M 108/3:7-15 & SD 33.5 Intro (2).

³³ V 1:39-44; Ap 1:24 f; J 1:85; DhA 1:90-95; SnA 1:326 ff; Mvst 3:63. See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004: ch 5.12-13.

³⁴ On the 250 monks, see also **Dīgha, nakha S** (M 74) @ SD 16.1 (6.2).

In due course, with the evolution of monastic rules for monastic ordained through sangha acts, the early Buddhist order became well known for its peacefulness, so that it is the common perception of others that they “good folks (who) are fond of quiet; they are taught to be quiet and speak in praise of quiet.”³⁵ Obviously, the Cātumā Sutta is a sutta relating to a situation after the first 20 years (after which those who have not attained any level of sainthood are allow to be ordained by a sangha fiat), whose purpose is instruct the newly ordained in some basic monastic decorum and the duties of elder monastics. [4.2.2, 4.5].

3.1.2 Is the Buddha “angry” at the noisy monks?

3.1.2.1 THE 4 PARABLES. The Cātumā Sutta, in fact, inspired two dilemmas in **the Milinda,pañha**, the first of which opens by quoting **the Dhaniya Sutta**: “I am without anger, gone is mental barrenness” (Sn 19). Just as the great earth shows neither anger nor satisfaction should anyone fall onto it, just as the great ocean does not associate with a corpse but quickly casts it ashore, showing neither anger nor satisfaction, even so, the Buddhas are beyond approval and repugnance (*anunaya-p,paṭigha,vipamutta*). It is out of desire for their welfare that the Buddha dismisses the monks (that is, as a skilful means) (Miln 186-188). In short, the Buddha knows no anger, as he is awakened.

Of **the four parables** [§§14-20], the first, that of *the waves*, warns against the fear or danger of “anger and despair.” As such, it is clear here that the Buddha speaks against anger, and *as he speaks so he acts* (*yathā,vādi tathā,kārī*).³⁶ The Buddha’s gentle disapproval of Sāriputta is like a father admonishing his eldest son. It is spiritual friendship,³⁷ a relationship that the Buddha himself poetically describes as a “clay-pot friendship,” an expression found in **the Mahā Suññatā Sutta** (M 122) in connection with Ānanda, where the buddha says to him:

“I shall not treat you as the potter treats the raw damp clay. Repeatedly restraining you, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. Repeatedly admonishing you, I shall speak to you, Ānanda. The sound core will stand the test.”
(M 3:118; cf Gandhāra Jātaka, J 406/3:368)

3.1.2.2 THE BUDDHA’S FEELING. **The Saḷ-āyatana Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 137) gives is a key teaching in our understanding of the Buddha’s feeling (and by extension, those of the arhats, too). There, the Buddha states that there are three qualities that “a noble one (*ariya*) cultivates, which make him a teacher worthy of instructing the masses.”³⁸ These qualities are **the three foundations of mindfulness** (*ti satipaṭ-thāna*), that is, to say, the Teacher teaches the Dharma out of compassion,

- (1) his disciples do *not* listen to him, “As such, the Tathagata [thus come] is not pleased, but although not feeling pleased, *he dwells untroubled, mindful and fully aware*,”³⁹
- (2) *some* of his disciples listen to him, “As such, the Tathagata is pleased, but although feeling pleased, *he dwells untroubled*,⁴⁰ *mindful and fully aware*,”
- (3) his disciples *listen* to him, “As such, the Tathagata is pleased, but although feeling pleased, *he dwells untroubled, mindful and fully aware*.”
(M 137.21-24/3:222) = SD 29.5

³⁵ *Appa,sadda,kāmā kho pan’ete āyasmanto, appa,sadda,vinīṭā appa,saddassa vaqṇṇa,vādino*: **Udumbarika Sīha,nāda S** (D 25.3/3:37, 6/3:39 sg); **Sandaka S** (M 76.4/1:514), **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77.4/2:2 sg), **Samāṇa Muṇḍika S** (M 78.3/2:23), **Cūḷa Sakul’udāyi S** (M 79.4/2:30 sg); **Kiṃ Diṭṭhika S** (A 10.93.2/5:185), **Vajjiya Māhita S** (A 10.94.2/5:190). Only M 67 first reading has *ete*, while the others omit it (or use *te*).

³⁶ D 2:224, 229; Sn 357; It 122.

³⁷ See **Spiritual friendship** = SD 8.1.

³⁸ *Yad-ariyo sevamāno satthā gaṇam-anusāsitum-arahaṭi ti*.

³⁹ *Tatra, bhikkhave, tathāgato na ceva anattamano hoti, na ca anattamanataṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, anavassuto ca viharati sato sampajāno*. Here, “untroubled,” *anavassuta*, means not overcome by repulsion (*paṭigha*) (MA 5:27).

⁴⁰ Here, “untroubled,” *anavassuta*, means “not overcome by lust” (*rāga*) (MA 5:27).

Since the Buddha speaks in reference to “the Tathāgata,” the word *ariya*, must also refer to him here. In other words, the Buddha is referring to himself. For the Buddha, therefore, it is *natural* that he would feel or “emotionally” respond according to the situation, good or bad, but he is *unaffected* by any of such responses in karmic terms. That is to say, *no greed, hate or delusion* arises on him in such situations, or in any other.⁴¹

3.1.2.3 *PASĀDETUM*. Those who are really *disturbed*, or better, *moved*, by the noisy monk’s position and the Buddha’s response are actually the Sakyas and Mahā Brahmā. They initiate a “reconciliation” by saying, “...let the venerables be seated. Perhaps, we would be able to reconcile (*pasādetum*) them with the Blessed One” [§6].

Pasādetum is the infinitive⁴² form of *pasādeti*, “he renders calm, appease, makes peaceful, reconcile, gladden, inclines one’s heart (*cittam*) towards (loc),”⁴³ which is in turn a causative verb of *pasādati*, “he feel clear, serene, tranquil; he is content, satisfied, pleased, glad; he takes pleasure in; he has faith in, believes in, is converted.”⁴⁴

The noun form is *pasāda*, “clearness, brightness; joy, satisfaction, good mind, virtue; faith; repose, composure, serenity; the faculty of the senses.” This is a polysemic term which refers firstly to a *person’s* conduct and demeanour, that is, one that should joyfully calm, composed and mindful. Secondly, such a demeanour inspires faith in *others*. Thirdly, it refers to a *mutual* feeling that spiritual friends naturally feel for one another, one of mutual joy and admiration.⁴⁵

On account of the new monks’ unmindful conduct, they do not inspire joyful faith in the Buddha who knows that they have not yet internalized proper monastic conduct. They may have faith in the Buddha (enough to visit him), but this is not wise faith (*avecca, pasāda*). On this account, they are “not in touch” with the teacher, and to quicken the learning and healing, the Buddha simply dismisses them, well knowing that this is the beginning of the rehabilitation process. That the laity and divinity are also drawn into the reconciliation process only expedites it, and show the beautiful fellowship of the three worlds: the monastic, the lay and the divine.

The teaching is clearly intended for all Dharma teachers, ordained or lay (and the divine, too, we might presume). No matter how their pupils or audience respond to their teachings, Dharma teachers should remain “untroubled, mindful and fully aware,” whether they are pleased or not. If we are able to do this, then—as long as that mindfulness lasts—we would, like the Buddha and the arhats, not be affected by the circumstances, but to do what should be done next.⁴⁶

3.2 THE BUDDHA’S FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE TWO PARABLES. The Cātumā Sutta has another puzzle: Does the Buddha *know* (have foreknowledge) of the two parables, that is, of the young seedlings and of the young calf, used by the Sakyas and by Brahma [§§7cd, 9cd], and why does he dismiss the monks? If the Buddha does not know these parables, then he would not be omniscient; but if he knows them but still dismisses the monks, then he must be lacking in compassion.

This dilemma is discussed in **the Milinda, pañha** (Miln 209-211), where Nāgasena resolves it using other parables, the main one of which is this:

PARABLE OF THE HUSBAND’S WEALTH. As, sire, a woman propitiates, pleases and conciliates her husband by means of wealth that belongs to her husband himself, and the husband approves;

⁴¹ See further **How the saints feel** = SD 55.6.

⁴² On the infinite (*tum paccaya*), see A K Warder, *Introduction to Pali Grammar*, 2nd ed, 1974:134 f.

⁴³ D 1:110, 139; A 1:149; A 5:71; Pv 2.9.42 (*cittam*); Miln 210; PvA 50, 123.

⁴⁴ D 3:239 f passim, 278 passim; M 1:186, 189, 320, 435, 2:262-264 passim, 3:104-112 passim, 173 f; S 1:5*; A 1:207-211 passim, 2:37, 166 f passim, 3:190, 245-248 passim, 256, 4:62 passim, 235, 237, 438-448; It 43; Sn 434; Pv 21.47 f/303 f/35; Tha 706; Ap 2:410 f passim; J 1:309 (×2), 2:235, 6:25 (×3).

⁴⁵ Such as that btw Sāriputta and Moggallāna, see **Ghaṭa S** (S 21.3/2:275-277) = SD 38.12.

⁴⁶ For related teaching, on a simpler level, on how prevent the mind from being affected by the body, see: **Naku-la, pitā S** (S 22.1/3:1-5) = SD 5.4; **Salla’tthena S** (S 36.6/4:207-210) = SD 5.5.

even so, sire, the Sākyas of Cātumā and Brahmā Sahampati propitiated, pleased and conciliated the Tathāgata with the very similes that had already been known by him. (Miln 210)

The Sutta’s commentary alludes to the Buddha’s warning on the four fears or dangers (*bhaya*), that is, against anger and despair, gluttony, sense-pleasures, and women [§§14-19]. The Commentary says that if a monk has overcome these four fears, then, crossing over the currents of craving (*taṇhā,sota*), he is able to reach the far shore that is nirvana (MA 3:177). It is clear, therefore, that such a person, an arhat (like the Buddha himself) is released from anger and despair, etc, showing that Nāgasena’s argument is correct.⁴⁷ [3.1.2]

The Sutta commentary closes by noting that the teaching given in the Cātumā Sutta is for “individuals who need guidance” (*neyya,puggala*) (MA 3:178).⁴⁸ In other words, they are those whose *faculty of faith* is stronger than their wisdom, and as such, needs some kind of hands-on instruction with the assistance of a teacher. This is an example of “other-help” in the sense that the teacher (here, the Buddha), initiates an action that leads to the students’ own self-realization. Such students must of course have the karmic potential to benefit from such an approach.

3.3 LANGUAGE AND MEANING IN THE CĀTUMĀ SUTTA

3.3.1 The Buddha’s mode of self-reference. Another interesting feature of **the Cātumā Sutta** is that the Buddha uncharacteristically addresses himself as *ahaṃ*, instead of the standard *tathāgata*:

“Good, Moggallāna, good! Either I (*ahaṃ*) would look after the Sangha, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would.” [§13]

But, firstly, why does the Buddha, as a rule, use *the third-person mode of self-reference*? The best reason must surely be that, as a fully self-awakened Buddha, he has fully abandoned the notions of self and self-identity: he is simply “one thus come” (*tathāgata*).

The Buddha has transcended categorizing thoughts and things, so that he has no problem seeing things as they really are. Like a pre-school child (around two years old) who *refers* to himself objectively usually by his name or how he is called by others,⁴⁹ so does the Buddha. However, unlike a child, the Buddha does not have any latent tendency, especially that of self-identity.⁵⁰ Referring to oneself reflexively as “I” is learned through social conditioning, but the cost of such a conditioning is that we tend to objectify oneself as “I” in relation to “others.”⁵¹

I B Horner does not see the fact that the Buddha addresses himself as “I,” “me” and so on, in the conventional way, as a problem, because “even a Buddha uses the conventional parlance of the world.”⁵² She is alluding to what the Buddha says in **the Dīgha,nakha Sutta** (M 74) regarding an arhat, that “he uses speech that is spoken and current in the world without being attached to it.”⁵³

⁴⁷ For a related dilemma, see Miln 186-188.

⁴⁸ The 4 types of persons in terms of how fast they learn the Dharma are: (1) the intuitive or quick learner (*ugghaṭṭitaññū*); (2) the diffuse learner, one who learns after a detailed treatment, the intellectual (*vipacit’aññū*); (3) the guidable, one who needs tutoring (*neyya*); and (4) the slow learner, “one who merely knows the word of the text (but not the meaning or usage)” (*pada,parama*) (A 2:135; Pug 41). See also MA 5:60.

⁴⁹ Child psychologist and minders have observed that children around this age usually address themselves by their name (“Cailong wants to go for a walk”), or objectively in terms of what they are (“I am two years old,”) what they have (“I have a book”), their habits (“I like Sesame Street”), and so on. See Candida Peterson, *Looking Forward Through the Lifespan* (3rd ed), 1993:237.

⁵⁰ See **Mahā Mālīnkya,putta S** (M 64.3/1:432 f) = SD 21.10. Comy says that a baby does not know the difference between its own body and those of others (MA 3:267).

⁵¹ See William Waldron, “The sixth sense,” *Insight Journal* summer 2010:26-28.

⁵² M:H 2:xxix; see also M:ÑB 1277 n737.

⁵³ *Yaṅ ca loke vuttam voharati aparāmasam* (M 74.13/1:500) = SD 16.1.

The Dīgha, nakha Sutta commentary quotes a verse (the first of two) from **the Arahanta Sutta** (S 1.5) which says that an arhat may use the words “I” and “mine” without giving rise to conceit, or misconceiving them as referring to an eternal self (MA 3:208). The two verses of the Arahanta Sutta are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>62 A monk who has become an arhat
might say thus, “I speak,” or
he is skillful, knowing the world’s way</p> | <p>with influxes destroyed, bearer of the last body,
he might speak thus, “They speak to me,”
he would use them only as mere expressions.</p> |
| <p>64 There are no knots for one who has
abandoned conceit,
the wise has transcended the conceived,
He is skillful, knowing the world’s way;</p> | <p>whose knots of conceit are all scattered away;
(but) he might speak thus, “They speak to me.”
he would use them only as mere expressions.
(S 1.25/1:14) = SD 68.4</p> |

Similarly, in **the Potṭhapāda Sutta** (D 9), the Buddha speaks of himself as using words merely as a skillful means:

For, Citta, these are merely common names, common expressions, common usages, common designations in the world that the Tathāgata [Thus Come] uses without attachment to them.
(D 9.53/1:202) = SD 7.14

In other words, the Buddha, as a rule, avoids reflexive references of “I” versus “others,” but sometimes uses these pronouns where they fit the context. However, it is also possible that the sutta reciters or redactors had used such reflexive constructions where they wished to make a point. In such cases, these texts are probably late.

3.3.2 Contradiction in meaning? The problem remains, however, whether the Buddha’s statement—“Either I shall lead the Saṅgha, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna shall lead it.” (M 1:459)—*contradicts in meaning* what the age Buddha asserts in his rebuke of Devadatta regarding his proposal to take over the saṅgha from him [2.3]:

Devadatta, I would not hand over the saṅgha even to Sāriputta and Moggallāna. How then could I hand it over to you, a wretched one, to be rejected like spittle?
(V 2:188; quoted at DhA 1:139 f; cf M 1:393)

Horner, in her Translator’s Introduction, proposes this insightful solution to the problem:

Is it possible that at that time he [the Buddha] thought his chief disciples too old? He himself, according to Devadatta, was approaching the end of his life, although there may have been about eight years still to run before the *parinibbāna*. Sāriputta however seems to have been well and active at the time of this episode as he was sent to Rājagaha to carry out an Act of Information against Devadatta....

On the other hand, it is not impossible that **the Vinaya-bhāṇakas and the Majjhima-bhāṇakas** [Sāriputta’s school, DA 15] followed somewhat different traditions concerning the possible leadership of the Order, the former holding that only Gotama could lead, and for that reason they attribute the formulation of practically every one of the Vinaya rules to him; and the latter holding that others also could look after the Order, as our M[ajjhima] context suggests, and as is borne out to some extent by the Discourses given by disciples and of which Gotama is recorded to have approved. However, this is a point that could only be substantiated by further research.

Again, is it possible, and perhaps it is even probable, that the episodes recorded in M 1:459 and V 2:188 refer to different Saṅghas. For saṅgha is not necessarily a comprehensive word for the whole Order of monks, and which indeed S Dutt [*Early Buddhist Monachism*] thinks was

known as the Saṅgha of the four quarters. It can also refer, and does often refer to this Order or that, each regarded as part of the whole and bound by the same rules and regulations, but marked off from one another by virtue of the residence of monks within this *sīmā* (boundary) or that. If this is so, then Sāriputta and Moggallāna might well have been regarded as the right disciples to be in charge of some particular Saṅgha, but not necessarily of another; and, accepting this hypothesis, the apparent contradiction between M 1:459 and V 2:188 would be resolved.

(M:H 2:xxvii f; emphases added; standardized)

Later, in her Introduction, Horner comments on the accuracy of Pali terminology, thus:

Pali is a most precise instrument in many ways, and I believe that where a certain term is used it is for some definite reason and has something definite to convey. It is for us to “swelter at the task” [Dh 276] of regaining the wonderful precision of language the teachers and *bhāṇakas* of old knew so well how to employ. (M:H 2:xxix)

4 Sāriputta and Moggallāna in the Cātumā Sutta

4.1 WHY DOES THE BUDDHA DISAPPROVE OF SĀRIPUTTA? According to the Majjhima Commentary on the Cātumā Sutta, Sāriputta fails in his duty (*bhāra, bhāva*), that is, that of looking after (*parihartti*) the newly ordained monks. Moggallāna, however, answers the Buddha’s question correctly, that “the venerable Sāriputta and I would look after the sangha,” and is commended by the Buddha for that (MA 3:176). There are two or three other occasions in the Canon where Buddha disapproves of Sāriputta’s actions.

The first, which we have noted, is in the Cātumā Sutta [§12]. The other occasion for the Buddha’s disapproving of Sāriputta is found in **the Dhānañjāni Sutta** (M 97), when he teaches the dying brahmin Dhānañjāni only what establishes him “in the lesser, the Brahma-world” (*hīne brahmaloke*) and then departs, “when there was still more to be done” (*sati uttara, karaṇīye*), that is to say, Dhānañjāni could have been instructed so as to gain the supramundane path and even awakening.

Sāriputta explains to the Buddha that “brahmins are devoted to the brahma-world,” hinting that, in such cases, they lack the potential to be reborn or attain any higher. The Sutta closes with the Buddha simply telling Sāriputta that Dhānañjāni has indeed been reborn in the brahma-world.⁵⁴ From the Buddha’s earlier statement, we are told that “there was still more to be done” for the dying brahmin, but as in the case of the young goldsmith (DhA 20.9) [see below], it is likely that Sāriputta does not know this, and hence only teaches the brahmin how to practise the divine abodes. Only the Buddha has the comprehensive knowledge of the right teaching for each individual in terms of his or her spiritual potential.

Hence, we see that even the Buddha himself teaches the way to the Brahma-world when his listener lacks any higher spiritual potential, as in the case of the youth Subha Todeyya,putta (M 2:207 f) in **the Subha Sutta** (M 99).⁵⁵

The Commentarial stories contain other accounts of the Buddha’s disapproving of Sāriputta, for example:

- **Tipallatha Mīga Jātaka** (Intro) (J 16/1:161 f) The Buddha questions Sāriputta regarding why the novice Rāhula is not being provided with proper quarters for the night.
- **Suvaṇṇa, kāra-t,thera Vatthu** (DhA 20.9/3: 425-429) Sāriputta instructs his pupil, an erstwhile young goldsmith, to meditate on the bodily impurities, which does not work; the Buddha advises that he actually needs to do red kasina meditation.

⁵⁴ M 97.38/2:195 = SD 4.9; cf M:H 2:xxix f & 378 n2.

⁵⁵ M 99.24/2:207 = SD 38.6.

In the former case (J 16), Sāriputta is simply unaware of the situation, which is only a minor problem (not a question of moral virtue or wrong view) without any karmic significance. In the latter case (DhA 20.9), only the Buddha has the supreme wisdom to be able to fathom which meditation method would actually work for the ex-goldsmith.

So why does the Buddha disapprove of Sāriputta in the Cātumā Sutta and the Dhānañjāni Sutta? In the case of the Dhānañjāni Sutta, Sāriputta has indeed done the right thing, but he could have done better in making an effort to instruct the dying brahmin some higher Dharma leading to at least say streamwinning. Similarly, in the Cātumā Sutta, Sāriputta should not have merely thought of the Buddha (which is not wrong in itself), but should have thought of the sangha under his charge (that is, the noisy monks). In other words, the Buddha is simply making a statement that *something better could be done*, and Sāriputta is the occasion for this, so that *we* could benefit from such valuable lessons.

4.2 SĀRIPUTTA’S “IGNORANCE”

4.2.1 What Sāriputta does not say. Now let us examine another problem posed by the same passage in the Cātumā Sutta, that is, the Buddha’s disapproval of Sāriputta for giving a “wrong answer” [§§-12b-13]. The Majjhima Commentary explains that the Buddha disapproves of Sāriputta because he does not know his task (*bhāra, bhāva*) to the sangha, but praises Moggallāna because he knows that their task is to “look after” (*pariharati*) the sangha, especially after being dismissed by the Buddha (MA 3:176).

Reading only the words gives us a “literal” or word sense of the account. We need to be *insightful*—to see into or behind—the words of the *text*, that is, to understand the context of the event and so tease out its meaning. In other words, what is really going on here? What is Sāriputta trying to say? Why does the Buddha praise Moggallāna?

In other words, what is Sāriputta *not* saying? Let us look at the passage more closely:

“What did you, Sāriputta, think when the sangha of monks was dismissed by me?”

“Bhante, it occurred to me, thus:

“The sangha of monks has been dismissed by the Blessed One. The Blessed One will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now.⁵⁶ I, too, will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now.”

“Now wait, Sāriputta; wait, Sāriputta! Let not such a thought ever arise again to you, Sāriputta!”⁵⁷ (M 67.12/1:459) = SD 34.7

From the passage (especially the line, “**The Blessed One will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now**”), we can see Sāriputta’s characteristic *love and compassion* for the Buddha. Since the monks have been dismissed, they are no more a bother to the Buddha who can now retire in peace.

Sāriputta’s sentence, “**I, too, will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now,**” reflects *his own relief*. Since Sāriputta is apparently untroubled by the noisy monks himself, he, too, can now retire (as he has received no other instruction from the Buddha). As such, there is no “ignorance” on Sāriputta’s part whatsoever here: it is his compassion to everyone involved.

4.2.2 The meaning of Sāriputta’s reply. His reply to the Buddha should not be taken as his not caring for the sangha (which would be against his nature). Rather, he *unconditionally* accepts the monks, noise and all. We might even add that the Buddha very well knows this, too. However, the Buddha, in his great wisdom and penchant for skillful means, sees this as a valuable occasion for a Dharma lesson that will strengthen the sangha [2.4]. While Sāriputta looks at the present situation and deals with it, the Bud-

⁵⁶ *Apposukko dāni bhagavā diṭṭha, dhamma, sukha, vihāraṃ anuyutto viharissati*. The same sentence, in imperative mode, is spoken by Devadatta to the Buddha at V 2:188. See **Devadatta** = SD 71.4.

⁵⁷ Ce Ee Se *Āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, na kho te sāriputta puna pi eva, rūpaṃ cittaṃ upādetabbam*; Be WT *Āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, dittha, dhamma, sukhavihāraṃ ’ti* = “Come now, Sāriputta; come now, Sāriputta! Be one who dwells unconcerned, dwelling at ease here and now!” EĀ 45.2 = T2.771b6: “Don’t let such thoughts arise,” 莫生此念.

dha envisions the event on a broader perspective so that the future of the sangha, a community of truly spiritual individuals, will be assured for our benefit even today. [3.1.1, 4.5]

4.3 SĀRIPUTTA’S COMPASSION. Although Sāriputta is declared the foremost of the monks who have “great wisdom” (A 1:23), his compassion, too, is proverbial, as attested in such texts as the following:

- **Devadaha Sutta** (S 22.2) — The Buddha praises Sāriputta for being “wise, and a helper of the monks.”⁵⁸
- **(Arahatta) Anuruddha Sutta** (A 3.128) — Sāriputta insightfully instructs Anuruddha on the real problem in the latter’s meditation, leading to the latter’s awakening.⁵⁹
- **Rādha Thera Vatthu** (V 1:54 f; DhA 6.1/2:104-108; ThaA 2:12 f) — When the poor brahmin Rādha and monastery hand has difficulty finding a monk to ordain him, Sāriputta recalls receiving a ladleful of rice from him. Out of gratitude, Sāriputta ordains him.⁶⁰
- **Sampāsadanīya Sutta** (D 28) — Sāriputta’s lion-roar on the Buddha as the greatest teacher.⁶¹
- **Vinaya** (V 3:9-10) — Sāriputta requests the Buddha to introduce the Pāṭimokkha for the sake of the longevity of the Teaching.

The **(Pacchā,bhūma,gāmikā) Devadaha Sutta** (S 22.2) records the Buddha as declaring, “Sāriputta is wise, bhikkhus, one who helps his fellows in the holy life.”⁶² The Sutta commentary explains this as meaning that Sāriputta is a helper (*anuggahaka*) in giving both material help (*āmisānuggaha*) and spiritual help (*dhammānuggaha*) (SA 2:256). It then gives a lengthy account of how Sāriputta helps his fellow monastics.

By way of “**material help**” (*āmisānuggaha*), the Commentary says, Sāriputta does not go on alms-round in the early morning as the other monks do. Instead, when they have all left, he walks around the entire monastery grounds, and wherever he sees an unswept place, he sweeps it; wherever refuse has not been cleared, he clears it; and he arranges furniture in good order. In this way, if non-Buddhist ascetics should visit the monastery, they would not see any disorderliness and show no contempt of the monks.

Then he goes to the infirmary, and having consoled the indisposed, he asks them about their needs. If he needs to get any medicine, he brings along some young novices and obtains the medicine through the almsround or from some appropriate sources. When the medicine has been obtained, he gives them to the novices, saying, “Caring for the sick has been praised by the Teacher. Go now, good people (*sappurisa*), and be heedful!” After that, he would go on his almsround or take his meal at a supporter’s house.

When he goes on a journey, he does not walk at the head of the procession, shod with sandals and umbrella in hand, thinking: “I am the chief disciple.” Instead, he would let the novices take his bowl and robe, asking them to go on ahead with the others, while he himself first attends to the very old, the very young and the indisposed, making them apply oil to any sores on their bodies. Only later in the day or on the next day, he leaves together with them.

Due to this caring maternal predisposition, Sāriputta often arrives late at his destination. On one occasion he arrives so late that he is unable to find proper quarters and has to spend the night sitting under a

⁵⁸ More fully, **(Pacchā,bhūma,gāmikā) Devadaha S** (S 22/3:5) = SD 46.2. See Piya Tan 2004: ch 5.23; Nyana-ponika & Hecker 1997:21-25.

⁵⁹ A 3.128/1:281-283 = SD 19.4.

⁶⁰ Comy accounts on **Sāriputta’s** gratitude, humility, compassion and wisdom incl the foll: his gratitude to Sañjaya (AA 1:159 f; DhA 1.8/1:93-97; ThaA 3:94 f; Ap 1:15 ff; cf V 1:39 ff); his gratitude to Assaji (SnA 1:328; DhA 26.9/4:150 f); he thanks a novice for pointing out that his robe need to be properly adjusted (SA 1:123; ThaA 3:103; Miln 397); he is not offended by another monk’s slight (DhA 7.6/2:178-182) = SD 28.2b.

⁶¹ D 26/3:99-116 = SD 14.14.

⁶² *Sāriputto, bhikkhave, paṇḍito, bhikkhūnaṃ anuggāhako sa, brahmacārīnaṃ ’ti* (S 22.2/3:5-9) = SD 46.2.

tent made from robes (SA 2:256 f).⁶³ Seeing this, the Buddha assembles the monks and relates **the Tittira Jātaka** (J 37), the story of the elephant, the monkey and the partridge who, after deciding which of them is the eldest, live together showing respect for the most senior. Then he lays down the rule that “lodgings should be allocated according to seniority” (V 2:160 f).

From such accounts (and many others, canonical and commentarial), we have a very good idea of Sāriputta’s personality. Caring for others, especially the sangha, in other words, is his second nature, that is to say, it is the first thought that arises to him when it comes to the sangha. This is the “**Dharma help**” (*dhammānuggaha*) that he naturally gives to the sangha, and often enough, working harmoniously with Moggallāna [4.5]. We can now surely understand Sāriputta’s answer to the Buddha in the Cātumā Sutta [§12b].

4.4 WHY DOES THE BUDDHA PRAISE MOGGALLĀNA? The Cātumā Sutta is unique in the sense that it records the only occasion when the Buddha, as it were, “preferred Moggallāna’s attitude in a certain matter to that of Sāriputta.”⁶⁴ This is merely a manner of speaking (*pariyāya*): the reality is that Buddhas and arhats do not have any preference (*nāti*), but act according to the true nature of things. Instead of celebrating the fact that the sangha has been reconciled, the Buddha sees the occasion as *a significant opportunity for Dharma teaching*: to point out the dangers that would weaken the sangha. In knowing these dangers and preventing them, the sangha is as such strengthened and perpetuated.

What exactly is the Buddha praising in Moggallāna? Let us examine the passage more closely. When the Buddha asks Moggallāna what he thinks when the sangha is dismissed, he replies:

“The sangha of monks has been dismissed by the Blessed One. The Blessed One now dwells unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now; but the venerable Sāriputta and I will now look after the sangha monks.”⁶⁵

“Sadhu, sadhu, Moggallāna! For, either I, Moggallāna, would look after the sangha of monks, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would.”⁶⁶

Notice what is said and not said. Like Sāriputta, Moggallāna, too, feels that the Buddha need not be concerned with monastic discipline, but his own answer is that *both Sāriputta and he* would see to it. The Buddha’s reply is interesting: while praising Moggallāna for his reply, the Buddha actually corrects him by adding that he himself, too, would “take care” of the sangha. Of course, the Buddha *has* to say this so that he would not be misconstrued by others (including us) to be a cult leader who leisurely sits back while others do the legwork. Furthermore, Moggallāna would be disrespecting the Buddha to presume that the Buddha, too, *should* look after the sangha. It goes without saying that this is what Buddhas do as long as they live, and both the great disciples leave this unsaid. The Buddha, on the other hand, is simply restating what his personal task is, reassuring the chief disciples that they are not alone in their task.

4.5 SĀRIPUTTA AND MOGGALLĀNA WORKING TOGETHER. In **the Eka,putta Sutta** (S 17.23) the Buddha declares that a female lay-disciple should inspire her only son to take either Citta the householder or Hatthaka of Ālavaka as a role model; and if he were to go forth as a monk, he should take either Sāriputta or Moggallāna as a role model.⁶⁷ **The Sacca Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 141) tells us about the roles of the

⁶³ See also Piya Tan 2004: ch 5.23; Nyanaponika & Hecker 1997:21-25.

⁶⁴ Nyanaponika & Hecker 1997:88.

⁶⁵ *Apposukko dāni bhagavā diṭṭha,dhamma,sukha,viḥāraṃ anuyutto viharissati, ahañ ca dāni āyasmā ca sārīputto bhikkhu,saṅghaṃ pariharissāma ti*. The verb *pariharissāma* (1 pl fut), from *pariharati*, “takes care (of), shelter, protect” (V 1:42, 2:188; D 2:100 (*saṅghaṃ* ~), 2:14 (*gabbhaṃ kucchinā* ~); M 1:124, 459; S 3:1; A 3:123; J 1:52 (*kucchiyā* ~), 143, 170; Miln 392, 410 (*attānaṃ* ~), 418; SnA 78; PvA 63): for other senses, see PED. See Intro (2).

⁶⁶ *Sādhu sādhu, moggallāna. Ahaṃ vā hi, moggallāna, bhikkhu,saṅghaṃ parihareyyaṃ sārīputta,moggallānā vā ti*. See (2.2.2), on Devadatta.

⁶⁷ S 17.23/2:235 f = SD 82.2.

chief disciples in the spiritual progress of the early disciples. While Sāriputta is like a mother who brings forth streamwinners, Moggallāna is like a wet nurse who nurtures them right up to arhathood.⁶⁸

According to the Sutta's commentary, Sāriputta trains his pupils *until he knows they have attained the fruit of streamwinning*, and then lets them develop the higher paths on their own, and takes on a new batch of pupils. Moggallāna, on other hand, continues to train his pupils *until they have attained arhathood*.⁶⁹

The chief disciples, each wise and compassionate in his own way, are clearly adept at their tasks of looking after the sangha. They do not presume to tell the Buddha, their teacher, what to do. After all, it must have occurred to Sāriputta when asked by the Buddha, “What did you, Sāriputta, think when the sangha of monks was dismissed by me?” [§12] that the Buddha is not asking about what *his own* task is.⁷⁰

A similar thought must have occurred to Moggallāna, too, that is, not to insubordinate the teacher. However, after the Buddha verbally restrains Sāriputta (it is not really a rebuke), Moggallāna perspicaciously knows that the Buddha has a lesson in mind, and so follows through by answering what is expected of him. Hence, he answers that either Sāriputta or he himself would look after the sangha.

In a subtle, yet important, way the Buddha is explaining, albeit briefly and intuitively, to the whole sangha his rationale for dismissing the noisy monks. The Buddha is giving them a lesson by way of a skillful means.⁷¹ Of course, the Buddha could have given the noisy monks a nice, lengthy discourse, were they not too excited, like Bāhiya Dāruḥīriya on his first meeting the Buddha,⁷² or like Kisā Gotamī when she comes to the Buddha with her dead baby's body but in denial of its death.⁷³

In all such circumstances, the Buddha would first mentally prepare the person so that his mind is calm, joyful and ready, as attested in this stock passage:

Then the Blessed One gave ⟨the listener⟩ **a progressive talk**—that is to say, he spoke
on giving (*dāna*),
on moral virtue (*sīla*) and
on the heavens (*sagga*);
and explained the danger, the vanity and disadvantages of sense-pleasure (*kām'ādīnava*),
and the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamm'ānisaṃsa*).

When the Blessed One knew that the ⟨the audience's⟩ **mind was prepared, pliant, free from obstacles, elevated and lucid**, then he explained to him the teaching peculiar to the Buddhas,⁷⁴ that is to say, suffering, its arising, its cessation, and the path.

(V 1:15, 2:156, 192; D 1:110, 148, 2:41; M 1:379; A 3:184, 4:186, 209; U 49)⁷⁵

Since the noisy monks are not lay people, the Buddha does not give them the above progressive talk (specially given to lay people). Instead, the Buddha gives the monks a situational teaching, so to speak, *a teaching in action*: they are dismissed, with the words, “Go, bhikshus, I dismiss you! You should not stay

⁶⁸ M 141.5/3:248 = SD 11.11. See Nyanaponika & Hecker 1997:83-88.

⁶⁹ MA 5:63; cf SA 2:256 f.

⁷⁰ Cf the dialogue btw the Buddha and the weaver's daughter of Āḷavī (Dh 174; DhA 13.7/3:170-176; Miln 350,13); see also Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004 ch 3.3.

⁷¹ See **Skillful means** = SD 30.8

⁷² In the case of Bāhiya Dāruḥīriya, as recorded in **the (Jhāna) Bāhiya Sutta** (U 1.10), the Buddha gently turns down his request for a teaching. The Sutta does not tell us how long this takes, but by his third request, the Buddha deems him calm enough to listen to the Dharma, leading to his arhathood. (U 1.10/6-9) = SD 33.7.

⁷³ Similarly, in the case of **Kisā Gotamī**, blind with the grief and denial of the death of her only child, preventing her from understanding or accepting any Dharma teaching, is asked by the Buddha to look for a handful of mustard seeds “from a house where no one has died.” At the end of her long and tiring walk, Gotamī realizes the liberating truth. (See **Kisā Gotamī** = SD 43.2; **Miracles** = SD 27.5a (8.6.3); **Skillful means** = SD 30.8 (3.4.1.1).

⁷⁴ “The teaching peculiar to the Buddhas,” *Buddhānaṃ sāmukkaṃsikaṃ desanā*.

⁷⁵ See **Skillful means** = SD 30.8 (3.4.2.1).

near me.”⁷⁶ So begins the training: the Buddha’s unspoken message is that there must be some level of meaningful silence before the teacher. Hence, the Buddha replies with just what he *means*: silence!

In censuring and training the noisy monks of Cātumā, the Buddha is also reminding us of a minimal standard for monastic life: there must be at least some sensible external silence in preparation for the practice for inner silence. Hence, the Buddha, in training these monks, are also teaching us down through the ages.

5 Related suttas

5.1 YASOJA SUTTA (U 3.3)

5.1.1 Sāriputta’s compassion. The opening sections of the Cātumā Sutta [§§1-5] are identical with those of the **Yasoja Sutta** (U 3.3), where Yasoja leads 500 monks, but there (in the latter) the Buddha is in Sāvathī⁷⁷ [5.3]. In the Cātumā Sutta, the monks are newly ordained [§7b], and probably young, too (*kula,putta*, MA 3:172)—for which reason they are chaperoned by Sāriputta and Moggallāna.

In the Yasoja Sutta, however, the monks, led by Yasoja, decide that the Buddha would only rejoice in them if they win the goal of the holy life, that is, arhathood. The rest of the Sutta records how the monks take up residence on the Vaggu,mudā river banks, and within the rains-retreat itself, they all become arhats. When the rains-retreat is over, they once again go before the Buddha, who is meditating, and they, too, meditate with him. At the end of the sitting, the Buddha utters an udana, rejoicing in them.⁷⁸

Unlike Yasoja, who brings his group of monks to reside on the Vaggu,mudā river bank for the rains-retreat, during which time they attain arhathood, we are not told what Sāriputta does with his group of monks, except that they have to leave, that is, until the intercessions of the Sakyas [§7] and of Brahmā Sahampati [§§8-9]. We also learn that they are newly-ordained monks (that is, less than five rains old) [§7b].

The commentarial explanation that Sāriputta suffers a “lapse in his duty” towards the newly-ordained monks is highly uncharacteristic of him if we go by his track record in the Canon and Commentaries [4.3 + 5]. This explanation is even more unlikely as this account is found in the Majjhima Nikāya, preserved by the Majjhima reciters, who belonged to Sāriputta’s lineage. Would they have preserved a story of dispraise regarding their own teacher?⁷⁹

Sāriputta’s reply to the Buddha’s question about what he thinks when the Buddha dismisses the monks is interesting because it reflects Sāriputta’s compassion [4.2.1]. Perhaps, the Majjhima reciters had introduced this episode to reflect Sāriputta’s compassionate side. However, it is highly unlikely that they did so out of political aspiration to promote their own teacher as the future sangha leader since both the chief disciples predeceased the Buddha himself.

5.1.2 Who are the noisy monks? Earlier on, it has already been stated that the 500 new monks could not have been the erstwhile pupils of Sañjaya who follow the chief disciples [3.1.1]. There is almost no clues at all as to who these noisy newly ordained monks are. The Sutta says locates the event near **Cātumā**, a village in Sakya country. The Commentaries say that the Buddha visits Kapilavatthu with 20,000 monks during the first year of the ministry.⁸⁰ These newly ordained monks could not have been a

⁷⁶ Or, “You should not remain here.” *Gacchatha, bhikkhave, paṇāmemi vo, na vo mama santike vatthabban’ti*. All MSS & Comy, incl U 3.3, read *vatthabbaṃ*, which Comy treat as an alt grammatical form of *vasitabbaṃ* (UA 181). A few MSS have *vattabbaṃ*, “should be,” as in *nissāya te vattabban’ti* (“You should remain in tutelage,” V 2:8).

⁷⁷ U 3.3.1-10/24 f = SD 28.9c.

⁷⁸ U 3.3.11-27/25-27 = SD 28.9c.

⁷⁹ This is *lectio difficilior potior* (Latin, “the more difficult reading is the stronger”), where the difficult reading is the more likely. In textual criticism, where different MSS or texts conflict on a particular word or account, this principle suggests that the more unusual one is more likely to be the original. The presupposition is that redactors or scribes would more often replace odd words and difficult sayings with more familiar and less controversial ones, than vice versa.

⁸⁰ Tha 527-536; AA 1:300; J 1:87; DhA 1:115-118; ThaA 2:221. Kapilavatthu, the Sakya capital, is some 60 yojanas (672 km = 420 mi) from Rājagaha, a distance that takes 2 months for the Buddha.

part of this huge congregation because Sāriputta and Moggallāna are ordained only in the second year of the ministry [5.4.2.1].

Very likely, the chief disciples and the 500 new monks visit the Buddha at Cātumā soon after they have joined the sangha, and soon after both the chief disciples have become arhats. It is unlikely that they are visiting the Buddha the first time to ask for ordination, as they are addressed as “bhikshus” or monks from the start [§2]. The newly ordained monks, yet unawakened, are likely to have been excited to meet other fellow monks. Hence, their being noisy.

As for the chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, being new to the sangha, could they still uncertain of their duties? As we have noted, this is unlikely. As arhats, they are clearly mindful and compassionate so that they are never troubled by the conduct of others. Moreover, it is clearly a time when no monastic rules regarding such external decorum have been instituted yet [3.1.1].

The Buddha, however, seeing the significance of the occasion and wishing to further the training of the unawakened monks, and also to remind the chief disciples of their duty to the sangha, uses a skillful means to instruct them [4.2]. Hence, they are dismissed, and when they are recalled, the Buddha gives them various instructions.

5.2 PIṄḌOLYA SUTTA (S 22.80). The two parables of the Cātumā Sutta—those of the young seedlings [§§7c, 9c] and the young calf [§§7d, 9d]—are also used by the Buddha in **the Piṅḍolya Sutta (S 3.80)** where he similarly dismisses some young monks in Nigrodha’s Park at Kapilavatthu: they have been noisily quarrelling over the distribution of gifts (SA 2:297). In his solitary meditation, the Buddha reflects that the newly ordained monks are like young calves that need their mothers and like young seedlings that need water.

Then the Buddha summons the novice monks to “come to him, *singly or in pairs, in a timid manner*” (*eka, dvīhikāya sārājja, mana, rūpā*), rebuke them, and then counsel them on the true purpose of renunciation (S 3:91-94). The Commentary explains this action—calling them up singly or in pairs—as to induce them to show reverence and become tractable (SA 2:300).

The Cātumā Sutta, like the Piṅḍolya Sutta, comprises materials that are found elsewhere in the Pali suttas.⁸¹ Similarly, both suttas evoke a sentiment reflective of *an organized and settled monastic system* that has built on the older passages elsewhere, to warn newly ordained monks of the dangers to their holy life.

Both these suttas represent the Buddha as having “helped the sangha of monks before” [§§7e, 9e]. Like the Piṅḍolya Sutta narrative, the Cātumā Sutta, too, is very much a reprise of Brahmā’s inviting the Buddha to teach.⁸² Either Sutta could have borrowed from the other, but more likely—because of their different developments, they both have been based on different ancient sources or urtexts.⁸³

5.3 ŪMI BHAYA SUTTA (A 4.122)

5.3.1 The four water parables. The Cātumā Sutta teaching on the four fears or dangers (*bhaya*) to newly ordained monks [§§14-20] is also found verbatim in **the Ūmi Bhaya Sutta (A 4.122)**.⁸⁴ These four water parables are about the four fears or dangers especially to a young monastic, and their referents are as follows:

(1) the fear [danger] of waves	(<i>ūmi, bhaya</i>)	anger and despair;
(2) the fear [danger] of crocodiles	(<i>kumbhīla, bhaya</i>)	gluttony;
(3) the fear [danger] of whirlpools	(<i>āvaṭṭa, bhaya</i>)	the five cords of sense-pleasure;
(4) the fear [danger] of river dolphins	(<i>susukā, bhaya</i>)	(the lust for) women.

These four dangers (*bhaya*, or “fears”) are also mentioned in **the Vibhaṅga** and **the Milinda, pañha**.⁸⁵

⁸¹ S 3.80 = SD 28.9a Intro (1.2; 3.6).

⁸² V 1:4 = M 1:169 = S 1:136; D 2:37: see **Why the Buddha “hesitated” to teach** = SD 12.1.

⁸³ See **Piṅḍolya S (S 22.80)** = SD 28.9a Intro (1.2; 3.6.3). See also Analayo 2006:253 n156.

⁸⁴ A 4.122/2:123-126 = SD 47.9.

⁸⁵ Vbh 376; Miln 196 (in a long list of *bhayāni*).

The Commentary summarily explains that the Buddha gives this teaching to show the four fears in his teaching, and that those who overcome them would remain in it (MA 3:176). Clearly, this is too broad a statement as the teaching here applies only to monks: if they overcome these four fears or dangers, they would continue in the holy life. As for the laity, the four fears should remind them of the true purpose of renunciation (that is, to attain spiritual liberation here and now) and not to hinder or distract a monastic in spiritual training.

The Samudda Sutta 1 (S 35.228) applies these similes to the five senses in a single parable, that is, “the eye that is an ocean with its waves, whirlpools, crocodiles and demons.”⁸⁶ **The Nadī,sota Sutta** (It 109) gives three very similar parables, related to a river (*nadī*), “with its waves, its whirlpools, its crocodiles, its monsters” (*sa,ūmi s’āvaṭṭa gaha,rakkhasa*). Besides other helpful imageries, it explains “waves” (*ūmi*) as *anger*; “whirlpools” (*āvaṭṭa*), the five cords of sense-pleasure; “crocodiles and demons” (*gāha,-rakkhasa*, as a dvandva) refers to women (as distractions and dangers to celibate monks).⁸⁷

Similarly, **the Rāga Sutta 2** (It 69) gives water-related parables: “the ocean with its surging waves, whirlpools, crocodiles and demons,”⁸⁸ which parallel the four figures of the Cātumā Sutta. Its Commentary (perhaps influenced by the Nadī,sota Sutta and Cātumā Sutta parables), apparently take *ūmi* and *vīci* as synonyms, explains them as “disturbed water,” which refers to *anger*; the whirlpools (*āvaṭṭa*), the five cords of sense-pleasures; the crocodiles and demons, that is, women (as distractions and dangers to celibate monks) (ItA 37 f). Similar figures are found in **the Dāru-k,khandha Sutta 1** (S 35.241).⁸⁹

5.3.2 (1) The fear of waves. In the water parables of the Cātumā Sutta, *waves* (*ūmi*) represent anger and despair (*kodh’upāyāsa*, or “the despair that is anger”), arising from one’s frustration on account of restrictions in food and meal-times. The unhappy monk recalling how he used to freely eat what and when he likes, becomes angry and frustrated, and leaves the sangha. [§16]

The (Nīvaraṇā) Saṅgāra Sutta (S 46.55), too, has a water parable for *anger*, that is, that of water boiling over a hot blaze.⁹⁰ The common theme here is that of water disturbed by waves and ripples, so that we cannot see through it; hence, the frustration. Only when the boiling stops, can we see through the water; when it is cool, we can drink it and slake our thirst.

The Vammika Sutta (M 23), too, refers to “anger and despair,” but uses a toad (*uddhu,māyika*) as its figure.⁹¹ The toad here, according to the Critical Pali Dictionary (CPD), is a “bloating frog,” the size of a finger-nail swelling to the size of a wood-apple⁹² when irritated, and thus becoming the helpless prey of birds; as such, it is used as a symbol of gradually worsening wrath.⁹³

5.3.3 (2) The fear of crocodiles. *Kumbhīla*, “crocodile,” is defined as “crocodile (of the Ganges)” both by the Pali-English Dictionary (PED) and the Sanskrit-English Dictionary (SED, *sv kumbhīra*). It is one of those obscure loanwords in Pali whose etymology is unknown. Its synonym, *suṃsumāra*—Sanskrit, *śiśumāra*, literally meaning “child-killer”—is more common.⁹⁴ The place-name *suṃsumāra,giri*, “crocodile hill,” is well known.⁹⁵ It is possible that while *kumbhīla* refers specifically to the Ganges crocodile, and *suṃsu.māra* to the freshwater crocodiles.

⁸⁶ *Cakkhu,samuddam sa,ūmim s’āvaṭṭam sa,gāham sa,rakkhasam* (S 35.228/4:157) = SD 52.9.

⁸⁷ It 109/4.1.10/113-115 = SD 52.11.

⁸⁸ *Samuddam sa,ūmim sa,vīcim s’āvaṭṭam sa,gāham sa,rakkhasam*, It 69/2.3.10/57 = SD 52.10.

⁸⁹ S 35.241/4:179-181 = SD 28.5.

⁹⁰ S 46.55/5:121-126 = SD 3.12.

⁹¹ M 23.38/1:144 = SD 28.13.

⁹² *Feronia acidissima* L. Its fruit is about 5-9 cm (1.9-3.5 in). Javanese *kawis* or *kawista*; Lao *mafīt*; Malay *geling-gai*, *belinggai*; Myanmar *thibin*; Sinh *divul*; Tamil *vilam palam*; Thai *makhwit* (northern *mafīt*); Vietnam *cân thang*.

⁹³ M 1:142, 144; MA 2:128, 132; VvA 218.

⁹⁴ S 4:198 (in the parable of the 6 animals); Thī 241, ThaA 204; J 2:158 f; Vism 446; SnA 207; DhA 3:194.

⁹⁵ Eg *Suṃsumāra,giri*, the capital of Bhagga country, where the Buddha spends his 8th rains retreat. The town is so called because it is said that when it was being built, a crocodile (*suṃsumāra*) made a noise in a nearby lake.⁹⁵ The Buddha visits the Bhagga country several times (eg V 2:127, 4:115, 198; A 2:61, 4:65.).

The word *kumbhīla* by itself is rare, appearing only a couple of times in the Commentaries.⁹⁶ It is more common as the compound, *kumbhīla,bhaya*, “the fear (or danger) of crocodiles,” as it appears in the Cātumā Sutta (M 67), the Ūmi Bhaya Sutta (A 4:122), the Mahā Niddesa (in a list of fearful things), the Vibhaṅga and the Commentaries, all in connection with the water parables of the four fears.⁹⁷

The Cātumā Sutta, like the other texts and commentaries, explain “the fear of crocodiles” as gluttony [§17]. A monk who thinks too much about food is a bad monk who would surely fail in his training. Apparently, the parable of the four fears are famous enough, or at least the parable of the fear of crocodiles is, as it is invoked in **the Sumedhā Therī,gāthā**: “Remember the fears of crocodiles” (*sara kumbhīla,bhayāni ca*, Thī 502). **The Kiṭṭā,giri Sutta** (M 70) is one of the few discourses that centre around gluttony.⁹⁸

5.3.4 (3) The fear of whirlpools. In the Cātumā Sutta, whirlpools (*āvatta*) is one of the four fears or dangers to a newly ordained monk, and is said to represent “the five cords of sense-pleasure” (*pañca kāma,guna*), namely, form, sound, smell, taste, and touch that are taken as pleasurable⁹⁹ [§18]. The whirlpool is a water imagery, where there is the parable of the four floods (*ogha*), a name for the influxes (*āsa-va*), that is, the floods of sense-desire (*kām’ogha*), of (the desire for) existence (*bhav’ogha*), of views (*diṭṭh’ogha*), and of ignorance (*āvijj’ogha*).¹⁰⁰

A whirlpool in a flood is more dangerous than the flood itself as it sucks and drowns those caught in the currents. But the power of the whirlpool comes from the flood itself, that is, the volume and power of the moving waters. A fuller imagery of the whirlpool is found in the parable of the log, as explained in **the Dāru-k,khandha Sutta** (S 35.241), where the Buddha declares:¹⁰¹

If, bhikshus, that log of wood,	[our body-mind]
does not land on this bank,	[the 6 internal sense-faculties]
does not land on the far shore,	[the 6 external sense-objects]
does not sink midstream,	[lust and desire]
does not get caught on a sandbank,	[the “I am” conceit]
is not seized [hauled up] by humans,	[socializing with lay people]
is not seized [hauled up] by non-humans,	[living the holy life for sake of heavenly life]
<u>is not seized by a whirlpool</u> ,	[the five cords of sense-pleasure]
be not rotten [will not rot] internally,	[not immoral and deceitful]
then, bhikshus, that log of wood would tend towards the ocean, slant towards the ocean, slope towards the ocean.	
What is the reason for that?	
Because, bhikshus, the Ganges river current tends towards the ocean, slants towards the ocean, slopes towards the ocean.	

(S 35.241.3/4:180 f) = SD 28.5

The ocean here represents “nirvana.” Just as the whole terrain naturally tends towards the ocean, even so, “right view tends towards nirvana, slants towards nirvana, slopes towards nirvana.” (id)

While the fuller imagery of the parable of the log relates to the whole holy life, the four water parables (including that of the whirlpool) warn the newly ordained of the immediate dangers they should stay clear from. If a monastic steers clear of all these dangers, his holy life is plain sailing.

⁹⁶ DhA 1:201; CA 228, 229 (twice, once as voc); J 2:279 (twice, once as voc). *Kumbhīla* as cpds are more common in Comys.

⁹⁷ M 67:459,31, 460,1+20; A 4.122/2:123,16+22, 124,11, 145,6+8; Nm 2:371; Vbh 376; NmA 2:396; VbhA 502.

⁹⁸ M 70/1:473-481 = SD 11.1.

⁹⁹ See **Mahā Dukkha-k,khandha S** (M 13.7/1:85) = SD 28.5 (a detailed treatment); **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26.13/1:173) = SD 1.11 (a study in connection with meditation).

¹⁰⁰ See **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2) = SD 30.3 Intro (1.3.2).

¹⁰¹ During first reading, omit the whole set of parentheses on the right, and read to the end. Then read with the parentheses right to the end

5.3.5 (4) The fear of river dolphins. The fourth of the water parables, warning the newly ordained against *susukā*, refers to “women” [§18]. Translators, however, are not agreed on the meaning of *susukā*, variously translated as follows: “fierce fishes” (M:B 2:132, 134; Miln:H 283), “sea-monsters” (A:W 2:-127), and “sharks” (M:ÑB 563), usually without any explanation. Moreover, none of these translations are attested by any Pali dictionary, all of which (except perhaps for R C Childers’ Dictionary of Pali Language, DPL) seem to be uncertain of the word.

The DPL, PED & BHSD (*śusukā*) all define it as “alligator.”¹⁰² But we already have *kumbhīla*, “crocodile” as the second danger.¹⁰³ The Commentary on **the Baka Brahmā Sutta** (S 6.4) relates how an angry naga assumes the form of a fierce *susukāra* to frighten off some revellers on the river (SA 1:211). The Commentaries and Subcommentaries take it as a “fierce fish,”¹⁰⁴ which might have influenced the above definitions.

The DPL adds that it is the “Gangetic porpoise” (attested by SED: *śisukā*), and “a kind of aquatic animal.” We can take *susu + ka* as an onomatopoeia, “making a hissing sound,” which aptly describes dolphins. The *susukā*, as such, is probably the Gangetic dolphin (*Platanista gangetica gangetica*), that is, a river dolphin.

Another important clue to the likely meaning of *susukā* is found in the Sutta itself, which says that the fear of the *susukā* refers to a monastic’s attraction to “women” (*mātu, gāma*) [§19]. Putting it all together, it surely refers to “river dolphin” (which is close to Childer’s definition, “Gangetic porpoise”).

The ancient Indian Buddhists clearly regarded these watery creatures as having an enticing beauty, the counterpart in western mythology would be the sirens.¹⁰⁵ They are said to be seductive water-beings who lure nearby sailors with their enchanting music and voices so that they shipwreck on their island’s rocky coast. In 1917, Franz Kafka wrote in *The Silence of the Sirens*,

Now the Sirens have a still more fatal weapon than their song, namely their silence. And though admittedly such a thing never happened, it is still conceivable that someone might possibly have escaped from their singing; but from their silence certainly never.¹⁰⁶ (Kafka 1917)

Since a monastic has taken up the rules of celibacy, to be drawn to others, women or men, in a physical manner, is *a prelude to sexuality*, which, being a fully bodily action, distracts the mind from its goals of letting the body go for a total experience of disembodied bliss called dhyana. Furthermore, one who has tasted dhyanic bliss is no more enticed in the slightest by physical pleasure.¹⁰⁷

In a number of discourses, such as **the Udakūpama Sutta** (A 7.15), the arhat (also called “brahmin”) is one who stands on high ground.¹⁰⁸ The water parables of the Udakūpama Sutta are very insightful in their representation of spiritual development and liberation, thus:

Simile

- (1) One who once submerges, remains submerged
- (2) One, having emerged, then submerges

Referents

- the one of habitual wrong view.
the spiritually uncommitted.

¹⁰² Cf Nc 470 ad Sn 37, gives the 4 fears but has *suṃsumāra*, “crocodile” in place of *susukā*.

¹⁰³ For differences btw crocodile and alligator, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crocodylia>.

¹⁰⁴ *Caṇḍa, maccha*, MA 3:176; AA 3:123; NmA 396; VbhA 502; AAT 3:123; *susukādi, caṇḍa, maccham*, MAT: Be 2:80; cf *susū = caṇḍa, macchā*, J 5:256). In Ardhamaṅgadhī, *śusū = śisū*, as in *śusūmāra = śisūmāra* (P *suṃsumāra*) (Pischel 1981 §117). Cf Se *suṃsukā* (v1 Nm 2:371).

¹⁰⁵ See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siren>.

¹⁰⁶ Orig German: Nun haben aber die Sirenen eine noch schrecklichere Waffe als den Gesang, nämlich ihr Schweigen. Es ist zwar nicht geschehen, aber vielleicht denkbar, daß sich jemand vor ihrem Gesang gerettet hätte, vor ihrem Schweigen gewiß nicht.

¹⁰⁷ See **Cūḷa-k, khandha S** (M 14.4/1:91) = SD 4.7; **Sexuality** = SD 31.7 (5.1)..

¹⁰⁸ See: **Dāmali S** (S 2.5/1:48), **Āsivisōpama S** (S 35.238.9/4:178), **Anusota S** (A 4.5/2:5), **Udakūpama S** (A 7.-15.8-9/4:13f = Pug 7.1/71 f) = SD 28.6. For more similar metaphors, see **Dāru-k, khandha S 1** (S 35.241/4:179-181) [5.3.4].

- | | |
|---|---|
| (3) One, having emerged, then remains so | the good worldling. |
| (4) One, having emerged, observes, looks around | the mindful Buddhist (streamwinner). |
| (5) One, having emerged, swims across | the assertive Buddhist (once-returner). |
| (6) One, having emerged, gains firm ground | the accomplished Buddhist (non-returner). |
| (7) One, having emerged, is one who has crossed over and stands on dry ground | the consummate saint (arhat). |
- (A 7.15/4:11-13) = (Pug 7.1/71 f)

5.4 SOME DIFFICULTIES

5.4.1 Is the Cātumā Sutta a composite? We have noted here that the Cātumā Sutta has *at least three important parallels* [5.1-3]. These parallels or overlappings can be tabulated as follows:

<u>CĀTUMA SUTTA</u>	<u>PARALLELS</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
M 67.1-5	Yasoja Sutta (U 3.3)	A group 500 monks are dismissed by the Buddha.
M 67.6-9	Piṇḍolya Sutta (S 22.80)	The parables of the young seedlings and the calf.
M 67.10-13	(No parallel)	(The Buddha recalls the sangha.)
M 67.14-20	Ūmi Bhaya Sutta (A 4.122)	The 4 water parables.

It can be seen from this table that only §§10-13 (the Buddha recalling the monks) is unique to the Cātumā Sutta. The rest of the Sutta can be found often verbatim in other suttas.

It is possible that the Majjhima Reciters combined **the Yasoja Sutta** (U 3.3), **the Piṇḍolya Sutta** (S 3.80) and **the Ūmi Sutta** (A 4.122), changed the location and interpolated the episode of the Buddha's disapproval and his recalling of the sangha. Of course, the opposite is possible too, that is, the Yasoja Sutta, the Piṇḍolya Sutta or the Ūmi Sutta were extracted from the Cātumā Sutta to become independent suttas. But this is less likely to happen, as generally suttas are more likely to be expanded on rather than truncated. A third possibility is that all these suttas draw from a common ancient source.

5.4.2 Anachronisms

5.4.2.1 SĀRIPUTTA AND MOGGALLĀNA. The Cātumā Sutta is a historically problematic text in terms of anachronisms.¹⁰⁹ If the noisy new monks were followers of Sāriputta and Moggallāna, then at that time, the two monks, being newly ordained themselves, should at least be streamwinners.¹¹⁰ The Vinaya records the Buddha as having ordained the two disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, during the second year of the ministry.¹¹¹

Sāriputta's awakening as an arhat, within only two weeks of his ordination,¹¹² is recorded in **the Dīgha, nakha Sutta** (M 74),¹¹³ while Moggallāna's arhathood, taking only a week,¹¹⁴ is mentioned in connection with **the Kolita Sutta** (S 21.1).¹¹⁵ It is only upon awakening that Moggallāna attains his status of being the foremost in psychic powers.¹¹⁶

The Majjhima Commentary however records that Moggallāna could see with his divine eye (clairvoyance) that Brahma's intercession is successful (MA 3:175), and informs the monks that they are allowed

¹⁰⁹ An anachronism is an inconsistency in chronology, esp a misplacing of persons, events, objects, or customs in regard to each other in time. This is however generally acceptable in art (such as Leonardo da Vinci's in his *The Last Supper* (1498) depicts oranges, which we brought to Europe only in the 15th cent; in literature (such as Shakespeare's portraying Brutus' plotting to assassinate Caesar (44 BCE), being interrupted by the striking of the clock, *Julius Caesar* 2.2.192). For other egs, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anachronism>. If a text's purpose is exhortative or didactic, then, as a rule, an anachronism is not an issue at all.

¹¹⁰ On the two chief disciples's attaining streamwinning, see Mv 1:23 @ V 1:39 f. See *Upāya* = SD 30.8 (2.2.6.4). On streamwinners, see **Entering the stream** = SD 3.3.

¹¹¹ Mv 1:23-24 @ V 1:39-44. See *Upāya* = SD 30.8 (2.2.6.1).

¹¹² **Sāriputta Moggallāna S 1** (A 4.167/2:154 f) = SD 46.16; also V 1:42; DhA 1:96.

¹¹³ M 74.14/ 1:501 f & SD 16.1 (4). For full details, see **Anupada S** (M 111/3:25-29) = SD 56.4.

¹¹⁴ **Sāriputta Moggallāna S 2** (A 4.168/2:155) = SD 46.17; also V 1:42; DhA 1:96.

¹¹⁵ S 21.1/2:273 f = SD 24.12b; SA 2:233.

¹¹⁶ A 1.14.1/1:23.

to return [§11]. If this were the case then, the 500 newly ordained monks could not have been the followers of the two chief disciples [3.1.1].

5.4.2.2 ĀNANDA. Ānanda's presence and conduct in the Cātumā Sutta give us a few more clues to the timing of the Sutta. Ānanda is said to have ordained with Anuruddha, Bhaddiya, Bhagu, Kimbila, Deva, datta, and their barber, Upāli, at the Anupiya mango grove during the second year of the Buddha's ministry.¹¹⁷ However, the Sutta presents Ānanda as a close aide of the Buddha, even his personal attendant, whom the Buddha consults, asking his about the noisiness.

We know that Ānanda is the Buddha's personal attendant only during the last 25 years of the Buddha's ministry. Hence, it is unlikely that Ānanda would have been present, or be so close to the Buddha if it is at the time when the two chief disciples just joined the order [3.1.1]. We can safely locate the Cātumā Sutta sometime during the last 25 years of the Buddha's ministry.

We have a few more clues as to the lateness of the Sutta. It is very rare that the Buddha ever censures Sāriputta in the suttas [§12b], though we have more such accounts in the Commentaries.¹¹⁸ Moreover, the Sutta also presents Brahma as interceding on the noisy monks' behalf [§§8-9]. In fact, his role is almost redundant, as he merely echoes the pleas and parables of the Sakyas [§6-7]. Surely the presence of Brahma here is to stress the gravity of the situation—that newly ordained monks, especially young brahmins, should be mindful of their decorum.

In fact, we must surmise that the highlight of the Cātumā Sutta is actually “the four fears” [§§14-20]. They are powerful reminders to the newly ordained monks, and to all monastics, of the difficulties, yet vitality, of their training, and to persevere. Indeed, if we consider such admonitions and the instruction on “taking care” of the sangha, we can also surmise that the Cātumā Sutta must refer to a time when the sangha is well established and crowded, that is, late in the Buddha's life, perhaps near his parinirvane, or even after that. In other words, the Sutta was put together as a lesson for unawakened monastics to keep to their training.

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The Discourse at Cātumā

M 67/1:456-462

Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in a myrobalan grove¹¹⁹ near Cātumā.¹²⁰

I. THE CASE OF THE NOISY MONKS

500 monks visit the Buddha¹²¹

2 At that time, some five hundred monks led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna¹²² arrived at Cātumā to see the Blessed One.

¹¹⁷ V 2:180-183; AA 1:191; DhA 1:133, 4:127; Mvst 3:177-182.

¹¹⁸ In fact, there seems to be only two occasions: (1) **Cātumā S** (M 67) the Buddha reproaches him for not answering correctly regarding the matter of “looking after” the sangha (M 67.12b/1:459) & SD 34.7 (4.1); and (2) **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97), where the Buddha gently reproaches him for not assisting the dying Dhānañjāni to be reborn only in the lowly Brahma world when he has the potential for higher spiritual attainment (M 97.38/2:195 f & SD 4.9 (4). [4.1])

¹¹⁹ *Āmalakīvana*. On the myrobalan, see Intro (1.1)n.

¹²⁰ A Sakya village (MA 3:172; DA 3:993) with an assembly hall.

¹²¹ This whole section [§§1-5] is identical with the opening of **Yasoja S** (U 3.3), where the group of monks is led by Yasoja (*yasoja, pamukha*), and the Buddha is in Sāvathī (U 3.3.1-4/24) = SD 28.9c.

Now these visiting monks were exchanging greetings with the resident monks, while lodgings were being arranged, and bowls and robes were being put away—there was a loud noise, a din.

3 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Ānanda,

“What is that loud noise, Ānanda, that din? It seems to me like a fishermen’s commotion over fish!”¹²³

“They, bhante, are some five hundred monks, led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna, who have arrived in Cātuma to see the Blessed One. The visiting monks are exchanging greetings with the resident monks, while lodgings were being prepared, and bowls and robes were being put away—that was the loud noise, the din.”

The Buddha dismisses the monks

4a “In that case, Ānanda, summon those monks with these words of mine [in my name], thus:

‘The teacher summons the venerables.’”

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda replied to the Blessed One, and approached the monks. Having approached the monks, he said this:

‘The teacher summons the venerables.’”

“Yes, avuso,” the monks [457] replied to the venerable Ānanda and approached the Blessed One.

Having approached the Blessed One, they saluted him and sat down at one side.

4b While they were sitting thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to them,

“What is that loud noise, bhikkhus, that din? It seems to me like a fishermen’s commotion over fish!”

“That, bhante, is the visiting monks exchanging greetings with the resident monks, while lodgings were being arranged, and bowls and robes were being put away—that was the loud noise, the din.”¹²⁴

5 “Go, bhikkhus, I dismiss you! You should not stay near me.”¹²⁵

“Yes, bhante,” the monks replied to the Blessed One. Having risen from their seats, they saluted the Blessed One, and, keeping their right side to him, departed.

Having packed up their lodgings, taking their bowls and robes, they departed.¹²⁶

¹²² *Sāriputta, moggallāna, pamukhāni pañca, mattāni bhikkhu, satāni*. The omission of any mode of address, such as *āyasmā*, is simply a grammatical structure, ie the use of the cpd, *sāriputta, moggallāna, pamukha*; cf *buddha, pamukha*, “with the Buddha at the head” (Pv 30.8/459a/56). Below, both of them are addressed accordingly as *āyasmā* [§11, 12a etc].

¹²³ *Ke pan’ete, ānanda, uccā, saddā mahā, saddā, kevattā maññe maccha, vilope’ti* Comys give two explanations: (1) the public gather around an area where fishermen have set up baskets full of fish, and make din or commotion, asking to buy a fish or a string of fish, complaining, “You gave him a big fish, but a small one to me!” and so on; (2) the fishermen hauling fish with their nets, create a din or commotion, shouting at fishes that went into the net or do not enter it, it is caught or not caught, and so on (MA 3:173; UA 181, the 2 examples in reverse order).

¹²⁴ Although the speaker’s name is not mentioned, it must have been Sāriputta, the seniormost of the monks in that group.

¹²⁵ Or, “You should not remain here.” *Gacchatha, bhikkhave, pañāmemi vo, na vo mama santike vatthabban’ti*. All MSS & Comy, incl U 3.3, read *vatthabban*, which Comy treat as an alt grammatical form of *vasitabban* (UA 181). A few MSS have *vattabban*, “should be,” as in *nissāya te vattabban’ti* (“You should remain in tutelage,” V 2:8).

¹²⁶ *Uṭṭhāy’āsanā bhagavantam abhivādetvā padakkhiṇam katvā senāsanam samsāmetvā patta, cīvaram ādāya pakkamimsu*. **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80), too, records the Buddha as dismissing the order of monks (ie newly ordained monks) “for a particular reason” (S 22.80.2/3:91) = SD 28.9a.

II. THE TWO PARABLES

The Sakyas intercede¹²⁷

6 Now, at that time, the Sakyas of Cātumā were assembled in their assembly hall for some business. The Sakyas of Cātumā saw the monks coming from afar. Seeing them, they approached the monks and said this to them: “Where are you venerables going?”

“Avuso, the sangha of monks has been dismissed by the Blessed One.”

“In that case, let the venerables be seated. Perhaps, we would be able to reconcile them with the Blessed One.”¹²⁸

“Yes, avuso,” the monks agreed with the Sakyas of Cātumā.

7a Then the Sakyas of Cātumā approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the Sakyas of Cātumā said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, may the Blessed One rejoice in the sangha of monks! Bhante, may the Blessed One welcome the sangha of monks!”¹²⁹

Bhante, just as the Blessed One has helped the sangha of monks in the past, even so, may the Blessed One help the sangha of monks now.

7b There are monks here who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya [Teaching and Discipline]. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.¹³⁰

7c PARABLE OF THE YOUNG SEEDLINGS.¹³¹ Just as when **young seedlings** do not get water, might become otherwise, might change,

even so, there are monks here [458] who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.¹³²

7d PARABLE OF THE YOUNG CALF. Just as when **a young calf** does not see its mother, might become otherwise, might change,

even so, there are monks here who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.¹³³

7e Bhante, may the Blessed One rejoice in the sangha of monks! Bhante, may the Blessed One welcome the sangha of monks!

Bhante, just as the Blessed One has helped the sangha of monks in the past, even so, may the Blessed One help the sangha of monks now.”¹³⁴

¹²⁷ This and the next section [§§6-9] are very close to the first half of **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80.1-15/3:91 f) = SD 28.9a.

¹²⁸ *Appeva nāma mayaṃ sakkuṇeyyāma bhagavantam pasādetun’ti.*

¹²⁹ *Abhinandatu, bhante, bhagavā bhikkhu, saṅgham; abhivadatu, bhante, bhagavā bhikkhu, saṅgham.*

¹³⁰ *Tesam bhagavantam dassanāya alabhantānam siyā aññathattam, siyā vipariṇāmo.* As at **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80.5/3:91) = SD 28.9a. ‘Becoming otherwise,’ *aññathatta*: see **Laṭukikôpama S** (M 66): *ahu-d-eva aññathattm ahu domanassam*, “I was truly upset...truly saddened” (M 66.6bc/1:448) = SD 28.11; **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80.6ab/3:91) = SD 28.9a. See foll 3 nn.

¹³¹ Both these parables are found in **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80. in reverse sequence), where they occur to the Buddha himself and are then repeated by Brahmā (S 22.80.6/3:91) = SD 28.9a. However, there is no mention of any other intercessory party. There, Buddha, hearing these similes, forgives and recalls the monks. See Intro (5.2) above. See also **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80) @ SD 28.9a (1.2).

¹³² Comy explains that when they (the seedlings) do not get watered during watering time, *they become otherwise*, ie, they shrivel up, and *they change*, ie, they dry up, becoming straw. (MA 3:175)

¹³³ Comy explains that when a young calf is deprived of milk, *it becomes otherwise*, ie, it withers and weakens away, and *it changes*, ie, it languishes and dies (from malnutrition or hunger) (MA 3:175). On even an innocent infant (*taruṇa*) having latent tendencies, see **Mahā Māluṅkyāputta S** (M 64.3/1:432 f) = SD 21.10.

¹³⁴ See Intro (3.2). See also **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80) @ SD 28.9a (1.2).

Brahma Saham,pati intercedes

8 Then Brahmā Saham,pati,¹³⁵ having known with his own mind the reflection in the Blessed One’s mind, just as a strong man might stretch his arm out or bend it back, Brahmā Sahampati disappeared from the brahma world and reappeared before the Blessed One.

Then Brahmā Sahampati, having arranged his upper robe on one shoulder, knelt down on his right knee on the ground, raised his palms lotus-wise towards the Blessed One, and said this to him:¹³⁶

9a “Bhante, may the Blessed One rejoice in the sangha of monks! Bhante, may the Blessed One welcome the sangha of monks!”¹³⁷

Bhante, just as the Blessed One has helped the sangha of monks in the past, even so, may the Blessed One help the sangha of monks now.

9b There are monks here who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.¹³⁸

9c PARABLE OF THE YOUNG SEEDLINGS. Just as when young seedlings do not get water, might become otherwise, might change,

even so, there are monks here who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.

9d PARABLE OF THE YOUNG CALF. Just as when a young calf does not see its mother, might become otherwise, might change,

even so, there are monks here who are newly ordained, not long gone forth, only recently come to this Dharma-Vinaya. If they do not see the Blessed One, they might become otherwise, they might change.

9e Bhante, may the Blessed One rejoice in the sangha of monks! Bhante, may the Blessed One welcome the sangha of monks!

Bhante, just as the Blessed One has helped the sangha of monks in the past, [459] even so, may the Blessed One help the sangha of monks now.”¹³⁹

The Buddha recalls the Sangha

10 With the parable of the seedlings and the parable of the young calf, the Sakyas of Cātumā and Brahmā Sahampati were able to reconcile them with the Blessed One.

11 Then the venerable Mahā Moggallāna¹⁴⁰ addressed the monks:

“Arise, avuso, take your bowls and robes! The Blessed One is reconciled with you by the Sakyas of Cātumā and Brahmā Sahampati, with the parable of the seedlings and the parable of the young calf!”

12a “Yes, avuso!”¹⁴¹ the monks replied to the venerable Mahā Moggallāna. Rising from their seats and taking bowl and robe, they approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side.

¹³⁵ **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26) records how brahma Sahampati entreats the Buddha to teach the Dharma (M 26.-20/1:168 f) = SD 1.11.

¹³⁶ Brahma Sahampati’s intercession is mentioned at **Miln 209 f**, discussing the Buddha’s omniscience: Did the Buddha know the 2 similes (if not he is not omniscient), and why did he dismiss the monks (if he did, he would lack compassion): see Intro (3.2).

¹³⁷ *Abhinandatu, bhante, bhagavā bhikkhu,saṅgham; abhivadatu, bhante, bhagavā bhikkhu,saṅgham.*

¹³⁸ *Tesaṃ bhagavantam dassanāya alabhantānaṃ siyā aññathattaṃ, siyā vipariṇāmo.*

¹³⁹ See Intro (5.2). See also **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80) @ SD 28.9a (1.2).

¹⁴⁰ Comy explains that Moggallāna sees Brahma’s intercession with his divine eye, and through his telepathy knows that the intercession is successful (MA 3:175). The individual Chin tr similarly says that Moggallāna learns of all this through his divine eye (T137 @ T2.860c8). According to the Ekottara Āgama, however, the Buddha only looks at Ānanda, who understands what this means and straightway informs Sāriputta that the monks are allowed to return (EĀ 45.2 @ T2.771a20). In **Bodhi Rāja,kumāra S** (M 85), too, the Buddha merely looks at Ānanda and he understands, and at once responds (M 85.7/2:92 f).

¹⁴¹ Note that the monks also address the chief disciples as *avuso*, which means that they are either equals in monastic age. It is possible that these “noisy monks” are the 250 followers of Sāriputta and 250 followers of Moggallāna, all of whom followed the two when they leave their erstwhile Sañjaya to join the order: V 1:39-44; Ap 1:24 f; J 1:-85; DhA 1:90-95; SnA 1:326 ff; Mvst 3:63. See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004: ch 5.12-13.

III. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ELDERS

Taking care of the Sangha

12b As they were sitting thus at one side, the Blessed One addressed **the venerable Sāriputta**:

“What did you, Sāriputta, think when the sangha of monks was dismissed by me?”

“Bhante, it occurred to me, thus:

“The sangha of monks has been dismissed by the Blessed One. The Blessed One will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now.¹⁴² I, too, will now dwell unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now.”

“Now, wait, Sāriputta; wait, Sāriputta! Let not such a thought ever arise again to you, Sāriputta!”¹⁴³

13 Then the Blessed One addressed the venerable Mahā Moggallāna:

“What did you, Moggallāna, think when the sangha of monks was dismissed by me?”

“Bhante, it occurred to me, thus:

“The sangha of monks has been dismissed by the Blessed One. The Blessed One now dwells unconcerned, devoted to dwelling at ease here and now; but the venerable Sāriputta and I will now look after the sangha of monks.”¹⁴⁴

“Sadhu, sadhu, Moggallāna! For, either I, Moggallāna, would look after the sangha of monks, or Sāriputta and Moggallāna would.”¹⁴⁵

IV. DANGERS TO NEW MONKS

The four fears or dangers¹⁴⁶

14 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks,

“Bhikshus, these four fears [dangers] are to be expected by those who go down into the waters.

What are the four? They are¹⁴⁷

the fear [danger] of waves	(<i>ūmi, bhaya</i>),
the fear [danger] of crocodiles	(<i>kumbhīla, bhaya</i>), ¹⁴⁸
the fear [danger] of whirlpools	(<i>āvatta, bhaya</i>), and
the fear [danger] of river dolphins	(<i>susukā, bhaya</i>).

These, bhikshus, are the four fears [dangers] to be expected by those who go down into the waters.

15 Even so, bhikshus, there are these four fears to be expected by certain individuals who have left the household life for homelessness in this Dharma-Vinaya [Teaching and Discipline]. **[460]**

¹⁴² *Appossukko dāni bhagavā dittha, dhamma, sukha, vihāraṃ amuyutto viharissati.* Sāriputta is being compassionate here, thinking of the Buddha’s wellbeing [4.3]. The same sentence, in imperative mode, is spoken by Deva, datta to the Buddha at **V 2:188**. See **Devadatta** = SD 71.4.

¹⁴³ Ce Ee Se *Āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, na kho te sāriputta puna pi eva, rūpaṃ cittaṃ uppādetabbam*; Be WT only has *Āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, āgamehi tvaṃ, sāriputta, dittha, dhamma, sukhavihāraṃ* ’ti = “Come now, Sāriputta; come now, Sāriputta! Be one who dwells unconcerned, dwelling at ease here and now!” EĀ 45.2 = T2.771b6: “Don’t let such thoughts arise,” 莫生此念. See Intro (2.2; 3.3).

¹⁴⁴ *Appossukko dāni bhagavā dittha, dhamma, sukha, vihāraṃ amuyutto viharissati, ahañ ca dāni āyasmā ca sāriputto bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ pariharissāma ti.* The verb **pariharissāma** (1 pl fut), from *pariharati*, “takes care (of), shelter, protect” (V 1:42, 2:188; D 2:100 (*saṅghaṃ* ~), 2:14 (*gabbhaṃ kucchina* ~); M 1:124, 459; S 3:1; A 3:123; J 1:-52 (*kucchiyā* ~), 143, 170; Miln 392, 410 (*attānaṃ* ~), 418; SnA 78; PvA 63): for other senses, see PED. See Intro (2).

¹⁴⁵ *Sādhu sādhu, moggallāna. Ahañ vā hi, moggallāna, bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ parihareyyaṃ sāriputta, moggallānā vā ti.* See Intro (2.3.2), on Devadatta.

¹⁴⁶ This whole section recurs almost verbatim (but with important differences) at **Ūmi Bhaya S** (A 4.122/2:123-126) = SD 47.9. See Intro (5.3).

¹⁴⁷ On these 4 water parables, see Intro (5.3.5).

¹⁴⁸ Invoked in **Sumedhā Thī**: *sara kumbhīla, bhayāni ca*, “remember the fears of crocodiles” (Thī 502).

What are the four?

They are the fear of waves, the fear of crocodiles, the fear of whirlpools, and the fear of river dolphins.

(1) The fear of waves (*ūmi bhaya*)

16a (1) And what, bhikshus, is **the fear [danger] of waves**?

Here, bhikshus, a certain son of family goes forth out of faith from the household life into homelessness, thinking,

‘I am beset by birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, bodily pains, mental pains and despair; beset by suffering; overcome by suffering. Perhaps an ending of this whole mass of suffering could be known.’

16b Then, fellow renunciants, colleagues in the holy life¹⁴⁹ advise and instruct him, thus:¹⁵⁰

‘You should move forward this way.

You should walk back [step back] this way.

You should look forward this way.

You should look around this way.

You should bend down this way.

You should stretch up this way.

You should carry your upper robe, outer robe and bowl this way.’

16c It occurs to him, thus:

‘Formerly, while in our household state, we advised and instructed others. But (now) these who seem like but sons, like but grandsons to us, think that they would advise and instruct us!’

He gives up the training and returns to the lower life.¹⁵¹

This, bhikshus, is called one who, out of the fear of *waves*, has given up the training and returned to the lower life.

‘The fear of waves,’ indeed, bhikshus, this is a name for *anger and despair*.¹⁵²

(2) The fear of crocodiles (*kumbhīla bhaya*)

17a (2) And what, bhikshus, is the fear [danger] of crocodiles?

Here, bhikshus, a certain son of family goes forth out of faith from the household life into homelessness, thinking,

‘I am immersed in birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, bodily pains, mental pains and despair; immersed in suffering; overcome by suffering. Perhaps an ending of this whole mass of suffering could be known.’

17b Then, fellow renunciants, colleagues in the holy life advise and instruct him, thus:

‘This can be eaten by you;

this should not be eaten¹⁵³ by you.

¹⁴⁹ “Fellow renunciants, colleagues in the holy life,” *pabbajitāṃ samānaṃ sa, brahma.cārī*, ie, those who have renounced at the same time (*samāna*) as him, residing in the same community.

¹⁵⁰ *Tam enaṃ tathā pabbajitāṃ samānaṃ sa, brahma.cārī ovaḍanti anusāsanti*. Here it refers to the training in full awareness (*sampajañña*): see *Satipaṭṭhāna S* (M 10.8/1:57) = SD 13.3.

¹⁵¹ *So sikkhaṃ paccakkhāya hīnāy’āvattati*. Cf S 2:50, 4:103; Nm 147. **Ūmi Bhaya S** (A 4.122) adds, *So kupito anattamano* [for *antamano*]..., “angry and offended, he gives up the training and returns to the low life” (A 4.122.3/-2:124). “Returns...to the lower life,” *hīnāy’āvattati*, lit “turns to the low,” ie gives up orders, returns to secular life (D 3:49-51; M 1:460-462, 2:258; S 2:231, 271; A 1:147, 2:124-126, 3:4, 90 f, 96 f, 393-398, 5:318; Miln 247 f; Pug 66 f); also *hīnāya āvattati* (V 1:17; S 2:231, 4:191; U 21; A 3:393 f; M 1:460; Sn p92); Pug 66; *hīnāya vattati* id, J 1:276; *hīnāy’āvatta*, “one who returns to the world” (M 1:460, 462; S 2:50, 4:103; Ndm 147).

¹⁵² *Ūmi, bhayan ti kho, bhikkhave, kodh’upāyāsassa’etaṃ adhivacanaṃ*. **Vammika S** (M 23) uses a toad (*uddhu, māyika*) as its figure for “anger and despair” (*kodh’upāyāsa*) (M 23.38/1:144) = SD 28.13. See Intro (5.3.2). Cf “anger and upset” (*kopa appaccaya*) which are called a monastic’ “blemishes” (*aṅgaṇa*): see **Anaṅgaṇa S** (M 5.9/1:26) = SD 37.7.

¹⁵³ “Should not be eaten,” *na khāditabbam* refers to eating solid or “hard” food, which needs some grinding or chewing (like rice, fish, vegetables, etc) taken as a main meal; *bhuñjitabba*, “that which should be consumed” (next

This can be consumed by you;	this should not be consumed by you.
This can be tasted by you;	this cannot be tasted by you.
This can be drunk by you;	this cannot be drunk by you.
You should eat what is allowable;	you should not eat what is not allowable.
You should consume what is allowable;	you should not consume what is not allowable.
You should taste what is allowable;	you should not taste what is not allowable.
You should drink what is allowable;	you should not drink what is not allowable.
You should eat at the right time;	you should not eat at the wrong time. ¹⁵⁴
You should consume at the right time;	you should not consume at the wrong time.
You should taste at the right time;	you should not taste at the wrong time.
You should drink at the right time;	you should not drink at the wrong time. [461]

17c It occurs to him, thus:

‘Formerly, while in our household state,
 we ate what we wished,
 we consumed what we wished,
 we tasted what we wished,
 we drank what we wished,
 we ate what was allowable,
 we consumed what was allowable,
 we tasted what was allowable,
 we drank what was allowable,
 we ate at the right time,
 we consumed at the right time,
 we tasted at the right time,
 we drank at the right time,

we did not eat what we did not wish, too;
 we did not consume what we did not wish, too;
 we did not taste what we did not wish, too;
 we did not drink what we did not wish, too;
 we ate what was not allowable, too;
 we consumed what was not allowable, too;
 we tasted what was not allowable, too;
 we drank what was not allowable, too;
 we ate at the wrong time, too;
 we consumed at the wrong time, too;
 we tasted at the wrong time, too;
 we drank at the wrong time.

17d Now, when faithful householders¹⁵⁵ give us exquisite food, hard and soft, during the day at the wrong time [outside the right time], it seems as if they have gagged¹⁵⁶ us!’

He gives up the training and returns to the lower life.

This, bhikshus, is called one who, out of the fear [danger] of *crocodiles*, has given up the training and returned to the lower life.

‘The fear of crocodiles,’ indeed, bhikshus, this is a name for *belly-filling* [gluttony].¹⁵⁷

(3) The fear of whirlpools (*āvatta bhaya*)

18a (3) And what, bhikshus, is the fear [danger] of whirlpools?

Here, bhikshus, a certain son of family goes forth out of faith from the household life into homelessness, thinking,

line) refers to “soft food (no chewing needed) are made of any of the 5 kinds of food: boiled rice, porridge, barley-meal, fish, or meat (V 4:83), the last two being well cooked; *sāyitabba*, “that which should be tasted,” incl ghee, fresh butter, oil, etc (DA 3:927). When they appear together as a set, usu tr as “food, hard and soft” (*khādanīyam bhojanīyam*, D 2:127; Sn p110; Miln 9, 11; J 1:90, 235, 3:127). SED defs *bhojanīya* as “food (esp what is not masticated, as opp to *khādanīya*).

¹⁵⁴ “At the right [proper] time,” *kālena*; “at the wrong time,” *vikālena*, from *vikāla* (“outside the time”). The proper time for meals for monastics is from dawn to noon (natural time), outside of which only liquids may be taken. Where available, during such times, milk products (like cheese), too, may be taken when necessary (basically, to ward off tiredness or prevent illness).

¹⁵⁵ *Gaha, patikā* is a synecdoche ref to a class of people, viz the householders, who are individually ref to as *gaha, pati*, “householder.” We could tr *gaha, patika* (sg) as “one of the householder class.”

¹⁵⁶ *Mukh’āvaram karonti*, lit “they make a covering over the mouth,” or, alt, “muzzled up our mouths.”

¹⁵⁷ *Kumbhīla, bhayan’ ti kho, bhikkhave, odarikattass’ etam adhvācanam*. Cf “fear of gluttony” (*odarikatta, bhaya*), ie, “through doing what should not be done so as to fill one’s belly” (ThīA 291). See Intro (5.3.3). On this 4th fear, see eg **Kīṭṭā, giri S** (M 70/1:473-481) = SD 11.1.

‘I am immersed in birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, bodily pains, mental pains and despair; immersed in suffering; overcome by suffering. Perhaps an ending of this whole mass of suffering could be known.’

18b Then, as one gone forth, having dressed himself in the morning, taking bowl and robe, he enters a village or market-town for alms.

With body unguarded, with speech unguarded,¹⁵⁸ with mindfulness unestablished, with faculties unrestrained, there he sees a householder or a householder’s son endowed and replete with the five cords of sense-pleasures, revelling in them.¹⁵⁹

18c It occurs to him, thus:

‘Formerly, while in our household state, we were endowed and replete with the five cords of sense-pleasures, revelling in them.

Now, my family has wealth. I can enjoy my wealth as well as make merit.’

He gives up the training and returns to the lower life.

This, bhikshus, is called one who, out of the fear [danger] of *whirlpools*, has given up the training and returned to the lower life.

‘The fear of whirlpools,’ indeed, bhikshus, this is a name for *the five cords of sense-pleasure*.

(4) The fear of river dolphins (*susukā bhaya*)

19a (4) And what, bhikshus, is the fear [danger] of river dolphins?¹⁶⁰

Here, bhikshus, a certain son of family goes forth out of faith from the household life into homelessness, thinking,

‘I am immersed in birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, bodily pains, mental pains and despair; immersed in suffering; overcome by suffering. Perhaps an ending of this whole mass of suffering could be known.’

19b Then, as one gone forth, having dressed himself in the morning, taking bowl and robe, he enters a village or market-town for alms.

With body unguarded, with speech unguarded, with mindfulness unestablished, with faculties unrestrained, there he sees a woman, scantily clothed, scantily dressed.

19c Having seen that woman scantily clothed, scantily dressed, lust corrupts his mind.¹⁶¹

On account of his mind being corrupted by lust, he gives up the training and returns to the lower life.

This, bhikshus, is called one who, out of the fear [danger] of *river dolphins*, has given up the training and returned to the lower life.

‘The fear of river dolphins,’ indeed, bhikshus, this is a name for *women*.¹⁶²

Conclusion

20 These, bhikshus are the four fears to be expected by certain individuals who have left the household life for homelessness in this Dharma-Vinaya [Teaching and Discipline].

The Blessed One said this. The monks joyfully approved of the Blessed One’s word.

— evaṃ —

¹⁵⁸ The whole sentence: *Arakkhiten’eva kāyena arakkhitāya vācāya anupaṭṭhitāya satiyā asaṃvutehi indriyehi so tattha passati gaha,patiṃ vā gaha,pati,puttaṃ vā pañcahi kāma,guṇehi samappitaṃ samaṅgī,bhūtaṃ paricāraya-mānaṃ. Ūmi Bhaya S* (A 4.122) here adds *arakkhiteṇa cittaṇa*, “unguarded in mind” (A 4.122.5/2.125).

¹⁵⁹ “Replete with...revelling in them,” *pañcahi kāmaguṇehi samappitaṃ samaṅgī,bhūtaṃ paricārayamānaṃ*. See VbhA 2494/506. *Pañca kāma,guṇa*, “the five cords of sense-pleasure,” viz, form, sound, smell, taste, touch that are taken as pleasurable (M 1:85, 173).

¹⁶⁰ On “river dolphins,” see §14 above.

¹⁶¹ As at **Verambā S** (S 17.9.5/2:231), **Bilāra S** (S 20.10.9/2:271); **Yodh’ājīva S 2** (A 5.76.8/3:95).

¹⁶² For further details, see Intro (5.3.5).

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