NISRAYA AND DHUTANGA
IN BUDDHIST TRADITION

—JAYETITA GANGULY

At the outset, it is said that Gautama Buddha (circa 563 B.C.-486 B.C.) adopted many ideas from contemporary sects or from their predecessors and modified them in a manner to be consistent with his Doctrine (saddharma) and the principles of his organization (sangha). For example, the Nisraya (ascetic way of life) refers to the four resources of a monk’s life, viz. begging for alms, wearing clothes collected from rubbish heaps, living under trees and using natural drugs as medicines and urine. In other words, a general layout of asceticism.

Asceticism in India has a legacy since the pre-Vedic period. Some rigorous but widespread practices of asceticism have been the characteristic feature of Indian culture. The main idea behind the conception of asceticism is deliverance from samsara, the continuous cycle of birth and death and its consequent pain and suffering. For a chronological study of the Indian culture, some evidence may be cited.

TRACES OF ASCETICISM IN THE PRE-BUDDHIST PERIOD

The beginnings of these ascetic practices and their gradual development till their adoption into the Buddhist organization in the form of Nisraya and Dhutanga may be traced out.

(1) Among the remains of the Indus Valley Civilization excavated at Mohenjo-daro, the figure of a three-headed person seated in a meditating posture has been excavated. Is it not a clue to the existence of asceticism and Yogic practices in the pre-Vedic period? It is probable that the concept of a Yati had already originated there. Yati may be derived from the root yat(to strive) or yam(to restrain, to subdue, to control). Yati in the sense of a striving person bears affinity with the concept of arvmana in Buddhism.

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17
During the Vedic period (circa 1500 B.C. downwards), the asrama (hermitage) could grow for ascetic practices. The word 'tapas' (equivalent to asceticism) in its technical sense occurs in the tenth mandala of the Rg Veda among the later hymns.

In the Upanisads, the renunciation of worldly pleasures has been regarded essential for the purification of one's mind. (Chandogya up. 6.5) Tapas here has also been associated with the third asrama (Vanaprastha) and the subsequent way of life Sannyasa (caturthasrama) of the anchorite in the forest.

Evidently the introduction of this kind of ascetic practices was nothing new to Buddhism. These were already prevalent among the contemporary sects such as the Jaina's, the Ajivikas, etc.

ETYMOLOGY

Nisayya (P. Nissaya) corresponds in meaning to Sanskrit asraya, "to sit or, or that on which anything depends." Nissayam Karoti in Pali means to rely on, to take one's stand in Nisaya in the Virayapitaka refers to the four resources of life on which a monk depends. In addition to this, Nisaya has also been used in the sense of tutelage. Chinese "yi chih" for Nisaya suggests "to depend and rest upon."

Tib. reads gnas-pa (gnas-sam-rten-pa (Mvy. 820) and alternatively rten-pa. According to the Tibetan lexicons, the usage of gnas-pa may be slightly distinguished from that of rten-pa. "Rten-pa" in addition refers to the religious exercise of a monk confirming to monastic discipline.

Moreover, Nisaya in the sense of tutelage does not appear irrelevant when a novice learns how to lead a way of life for sanctification from an elderly monk. That means a "saddhivinirvaka" being attached to as "upajjaya", becomes conversant with the right way of life as taught by the Buddha.

Dhutanga. Etymologically Pall "Dhuranga" or dhutaguna (merits attained by cleansing may be derived from the dhu (meaning to wash, clean, purify, sprinkle). It refers to "a set of practices leading to the state of or appropriate to a dhuta, that is to a scrupulous person or "percept
by which the passions are shaken or quelled. The Chinese commentaries elaborate with an analogy of shaking off dust from clothes by fluttering; it may be added here that the two avaranas, viz., klesa and jneya could be removed by dust of the dhutanga practices. Its Tibetan rendering of sbyor-ba'i yon-tar for dhuta-guna or dhutangas (Mvy. 1127) refers to the virtue for the purification of the mind. Edgerton (Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary) gives dhuta-guna as "the qualities of a purified man," not only for purification and attainment but also seven-fold aims are pointed out in the dhuta-guna-Nirdesa edited by Sapati.

FOUR NISKRAYAS

As discussed above, the four Nisrayas (Nissrayas) as enumerated in the Pali Vinayapitaka of the Theravadins are: 1. Pindiyalopahojananam - literally suggests pinda - a lump of food and alopa - a piece, a bit of food, morel, esp. bits of food fathored by bhikkhus. "Pindiyalo-pahojananam" is the general practice of collecting cooked food offered by the householders to the monks in course of their daily begging rounds (pindaya sarati) asod-kosas (Tib.) suggests "to be verily satisfied as desired" as in the phrase "sod-pa-ki-lie-thag-par-lo-nu-su-spyod pa,", Tibetan "asod-kosas" implies satisfaction of the service offered by a householder with respect to a monk. In the Patimokkha sutas and the Vinayavastu, occasional references of ungermanly behavior regarding the acceptance of provision in a monastery or outside tends to monastic indiscipline. The monks used to go on their begging rounds after their morning service in the forenoon. It is interesting to note that the monks belonging to the Theravada tradition in India, Sri Lanka, Burma and S.E. Asia, eagerly observe the rules. However, relaxations may also be observed among the monks related to the Non-Theravada tradition. Different traditions have also been preserved regarding the conception of meat-eating in Buddhism. One who observes the rule of "pindiyalopahojananam" is known as "pindaparicchayam." 2. Pasukulacivarasa suggests "the robes made of rags collected from a dust-heaps", preferably from cemeteries. The word "civaras" generally do not refer to the clothes donated by householders. In the early stage, Gautama instructed the use of "civara" as that was prevalent among the other contemporary ascetics. However, the Buddha allowed certain relaxations to this rule in course of time so that the lay devotees (upasakas) could avail
the privilege of donating yellow robes to the venerable monks in order to achieve merit (punya) for donation (dana). Despite that, those who strictly observe the practice of "pamukulacivara" are called as pamukulika.

3. Rukkhamulasenasanam 4. "literally means "having one's seat at the foot of a tree" for meditative practices as a recluse. A monk had to dwell under a tree and was not permitted to stay under a roof. The Buddha later declared that this rule was sanctioned by him for eight months of the year as the monks had to spend the remaining four months of the year as "rainy season retreat". The monks were thus permitted to spend these four months in residences because it was inconvenient to travel during the rainy season. One who observes the practice of "Rukkhamulasenasanam" is known as "rukhamulika". At a later stage the Buddha also permitted the monks to live in the Vibha, Addhayoga, Hamliya, Pasada, and Gaha. Vidhusekhara Sastri has rightly pointed out (Patimokkha, introduction, pp 29-30) that the Buddhists were the first to introduce the custom of the monks living in such buildings and the Suttavibhaṅga etc. also refer to the monks residing in "tinakuta" (straw-huts) in large numbers.

4. Putimuttabhesajam 5. - pre-supposes that a monk observing the "Nissaya" should depend on natural medicines for health management by using faeces, urine, etc. Formerly Gautama Buddha was declared as a master physician (bhiksa) and subsequently he was extolled as "Phaṭasena-patimuttabhesajam" of (Mr 1404) celestial embodiment. It may be added that the Buddha later approved the use of ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses etc. as medicines.6 The use of various other kinds of medicines was gradually sanctioned by the Buddha thereafter for the monks.7

It is thus evident that Sakyaputra Gautama had given preference to the early Indian ascetic way of life with respect to a recluse. As and when his organization (sangha) spread he had no alternative but to allow certain relaxations regarding the rules according to the need and propriety of his organization.8 The four nistayyas thus remained no longer obligatory and that left room for some discretion within his organization under the leadership of Davaṭa in the later days of Sakyaputra Gautama's personal life.9

By comparing the different versions of the Vinaya preserved in Chinese it may be revealed that according
to the Mahasanghika Vinaya\textsuperscript{24}, the Buddha enjoined that
the four Nisrayas should be expounded to the newly
ordained monks before expounding the precepts to them
whereas the Dharma-guptaka\textsuperscript{25} and the Mahisasaka\textsuperscript{26} Vinayas
hold that the Buddha enjoined the monks first to expound
the precepts and later the Nisrayas to the newly ordained
monks. However, it is agreed upon by all the Vinayas that
the newly ordained monks from different communities experi-
enced difficulties at the outset in observing the Nisrayas.
The Sarvastivada and Mulasarvastivadins Vinayas make no
mention of the Nisrayas.

Dhutangas In addition to the four Nisrayas, the prac-
tice of the dhutangas (dhutangunas) was also prevalent
in Sakyaputra Gautama's organization. P.V. Bapat has right-
ly pointed out that the inclusion of the dhutangas among
the norms of the Buddhist monastic way of life was made
in its earliest days since the lifetime of the Buddha and
later developed to its present form\textsuperscript{27}. The thirteen practices
may be condensed into eight (as shown in Visuddhimagga
and Vimuktiimagga).

Enumeration of the Dhutangas The Dhutangas or dhutan-
gunas have been enumerated for the first time in the Mīlam-
Panha and their detailed exposition is found in the Visud-
dhamagga, subsequent non-canonical texts. The thirteen dhu-
tangas\textsuperscript{28} as enumerated in the Visuddhamagga have been given
below:

1. Pamsukulikakāgam - Same as Nisraya 2
2. Tecivariikakāgam - Not to have more than three robes
suggesting the usage of three chivara after Sasampada
3. Pindapatikakāgam - Same as Nisraya 1
4. Sapadanacarikakāgam\textsuperscript{29} - to go for begging consecutively
from house to house.
5. Ekamaniikakāgam - to have one's meal at one sitting
6. Pattiplordikakāgam - to have only one bowl and take
whatever is offered in it.
7. Khalspacchebhattikakāgam - Not to take any food after
finishing one's meal.
8. Aranikkakāgam - to dwell only in forests
9. Rukkhasulikakāgam - Same as Nisraya 3
10. Abhobkasikakāgam - to live in an open space
11. Somanikakāgam - to live in a cemetery
12. Yathasantaathikakāgam - to use whatever bed or seat
is allotted to one
13. Ne-atijikkangam - to refrain from lying down and keep sitting.

It is evident that the ascetic practices (dutangas and nisrayas) were prescribed by the Buddha for those enterprising persons who had abandoned the pleasures of worldly life in search of the supreme good in accordance with the mental efficacy and physical endurance of an individual. The Buddhist mendicants were expected to adhere to these practices as far as possible during their career as a monk. The followers of each of these dutangas are classified into three grades (ukkattho, samukkhattho, muduko) and the followers belong to the grade according to the severity with which they observe the practices. P.V. Bapat further observes that although the dutangas were not so highly valued in the earliest days of Buddhism, they continued to gain importance in course of time. More over, the mere observance of the practices with an impure mind was considered to be totally futile. A table comparing the four Nissayas with the thirteen Dutangas as enumerated in the Visuddhimagga (and Visuttimagga in Chinese) are given below (the corresponding nos. of the dutangas in the other traditions have also been appended for ready reference).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nissaya</th>
<th>Dutanga</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. rindapatahojanag</td>
<td>No.3 (Pindapatikkangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dh.No.1 Mvy No.4, Dds No.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.6(Pattapindikangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dds No.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.7(Khalupacehabhattikkangam)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dh.No.3 (Mvy No.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.4 (Sapadaanarikkangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dds No.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.5 (Ekaanikkangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dh.No.7 Mvy No.5 Dds No.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pamsakalaclivaram</td>
<td>No.1 (Pamsuulkikangam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dh.No.11, Mvy No.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dds No.7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.2 (Teclivarikangam)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dh.No.2 Mvy No.2, Dds No.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22
3. Rukkhamulasasenasam
   No.9 (Rukkhamulikangam)
   Dh.No.6 Mvy No.8 Dds No.10
   Others related to the above
   No.6 (Aramikangam)
   Dh.No.8 Mvy No.7, Dds No.1
   No.10 (Abbhokasikangam)
   Dh.No.7 Mvy No.9 Dds.No.11
   No.11 (Sosanikangam)
   Dh.No.10 Mvy No.10 Dds No.9
   No.12 (Yathasanthakikangam)
   Dh.No.5 Mvy No.12
   No.13 (Nesajjikangam)
   Dh.No.4 Mvy, No.1, Dds No.12

4. Putimutabbhesajjam

Not related to Nissayas:
   Mvy No.3 & Dh No.12 Namatika (wearing felt)
   Dds No.6 Vikalabhojanavara (eating at improper time)
   (Here Mvy stands for Mahavyutpati, Dh for Dharma-
   sangraha), Dds for Dvadasa Dhuta-Sutra)

The elaboration of the dhatangas as shown above may be traced in the Patimokkha and canonical texts. For example, Dhatanga No.4 (sapadan-acarikangam) corresponds to Sekhiya rule No.33 in the Patimokkha and dhatanga No.7 (khaupaccha-bhattikangam) may be compared to Pacittiya rule No.37 regarding vikalabhojanam in the Patimokkha.

It may also be noted that Nisraya No.4 (Putimuttabhemesjjam) finds no place in the dhatangas. This leaves room to suggest that in course of time the repulsive onno-

The number as twelve.

To sum up, it may be seen that thirteen dhatangas have been enumerated in the Visuddhimagga by Buddhaghotha, and the Chinese text of the Visuttimagga 30 , whereas the Mahavyutpati, the Dharmasangraha 31 , and the Dvadasa-dhuta-sutra 32 record the number as twelve.
It is evident from the above that experiences in livelihood among the monks had been a source of concern in Buddhist monasticism since its inception. Three stages in the growth of the Sangha may be traced out in this respect: i) Ascetic stage (avasaka) when Gautama Buddha advised his monks to lead the life of an ascetic in the true sense of the word i.e. to abide by the four Nisrayas. The items of the dhatangas which are common to all the traditions probably developed during this period.

ii) Growth of the aramas and viharas (Aramika)

A trend of transformation from ascetic to vihara or aramika life left room to relax to a certain extent some rigid rules prescribed in the Nisrayas. Some of the dhatangas were probably taken into account at this stage.

iii) Post-schismatic stage (Bhikku Nikayottare)

During the later life of the Buddha a tendency developed towards schism in the Sangha. Subsequent to the schism in the Sangha, the items of the dhatangas varied in the different traditions. For example, the practice of namatika (wearing felt) has been included in the Mahavuttpatti and the Dharmasangrana which omit the practice of sapadanacharika (moving from house to house). The practice of yahasanatarika33 is not included in the Dvadasa-dhuta-sutra which is substituted by vikalabhoja-navera. It may be surmised from the above that each tradition derived its material from some common source and variations in the details were introduced according to the characteristics of the particular tradition such as where the school originated from etc.

Notes
1. R.P. Chanda - Survival of the Pre-Historic Civilization of the Indus Valley (MAS 141, 1929 p.33)
2. Rg Veda X, 154, iv (Pitr tapasvatoyam tascidevapi gacchatat)
3. Acaranga sutra Ch.6 Dhuya-Ajhayana
5. Skt Nisayya Ch. Ti Chih Tib. Rten Pa gnas pa
Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms - Soothill and
Holdes pp 249

6. Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms - C.S.
Upasak (Abbrev. D.E.B.M.T.) p. 122 ff

7. Pali-English Dictionary - Rhys Davids & Stede under
Dhutanga. Reference to dhuta in the sense of "clear-
sees" may also be found in Pacittiya Nalanda Edition,
Pali Publication Board. 1958 p. 192 etc

8. A Dictionary of the Pali Language - R.C. Childers
under Dhutanga and Dhutangam.

9. The Chinese translation "T'ou T'ou" suggests "clean-
sing with water" whereas the fifteenth chapter of
the Mahayana Commentary reads-
Ju Yi Tou Chien Neng Ch'ü Chen
Kou Hsu Tai Tzu Hang meng She tan Che
(Fo Xue Ta Tzu Tien by Ting Fu Peo pg 2710)
Trans - Like shaking off dust from one's clothes,
cultivating those practices helps to remove lust.

10. Vismuktimarga Dhutangasāra-Kirdesa by P.V. Bapat
Asia Publishing House, London, 1964 (University of
Leh) critically analyzes the Tibetan text with an
Introduction (pp 2-3)

Bapat points out that the Vismuktimarga available in
Chinese (Manjío 452 & Taiho 783, Vol XVII), Tibetan
Kanjur Mao-Shu F17a3-149a3 and the Visuddhimagga
of Buddhaghosa is Pali bear some afflity.

The seven objects have been enumerated in Tibetan as -

1) hdoc pa-chuṅ-brtug-dan (aipocchah Mvy 2370);
2) Chog-bes-pa-rād-dan (Sentustih Mvy 2216)
3) yo-byad buṅg-lus pa ־nas pa dan (Sanlekh Mvy 7012)
4) Brton hgrus rtsam pa dar (viriyarambhā Mvy 963, 1938)
5) Dgaṅ-sla brtug dan (subharata, Mvy 2377)

25
vi) rig-pa-gnas-pa-ñid dan. ( pratimamvid Mvy 197-200)
vii) Yons-su-zan-pa-rab-tu-god-par-hgyur-zin

13. Bhikkhu princinkas - Vipassakhara Sastri Sekhiya rules No. 27-56
14. The History of Buddhist Thought - E.J.Thomas, pp 24-25
15. Skt. Pamsukulam Tib. Phyang Dar Khrod Ch. Sao Shih Lin Pen Sao Mvy 8672
16. Skt. Vrksam-nulam Tib. Sin Druh Ch. Shu Xia Mvy 8670
17. Skt Pati-mukta-bhaisalyam Tib. Sman Zakus (Bkus) Te Bor Pe Ch. Chi Yi Yao Yi Yao Mvy 8673
Dharmaguptaka Vinaya Taliso Vol 22 pp 869-11-3
Wahissaka Vinaya Taliso Vol 21 pp 1247-6-3
pindiyaopabhojanam nissaya pabbajja, tattha te yava-
jivam ussaho karaniyo; atirekalabho—sanghabhattam, uddesabhuddam, ninitanam, vahakhabhattam, pakkham, uposathikam patipadiham. Pamsukulavaram nissaya pabbajja, tattha te yavajivam ussaho karaniyo; atirekalabho—
hom. kappasikan, koseyyum, kambalam. sanam, bangam, Rukkhamulasenasnam nissaya pabbajja, tattha te yavajivam ussaho karaniyo; atirekalabho—viharo,
addhayoga, paśada hamstham, guha. Putimuttabsaṣajam
nissaya pabhajja, sattha te yavajīvam unsaho kareṇyo:
atiṃkalabhō-seppi, navantaṃ, telam, madhu, phanitam
ti."

21. Cullavagga Ch VII, Sangabhedaśāndhaka
Ch. Sarvastivada Vinaya Tašho Vol 23 pp 265a⁻¹² b⁻⁹
Dharmaguptaka Vinaya Tašho Vol 22 pp 909b⁻¹⁸
Mahisasaka Vinaya Tašho Vol 22 pp 164b⁻¹⁴
Mahasanghika Vinaya Tašho Vol 22 pp 142c⁻¹²
443a⁻₂⁸
Mulassarvastivada Vinaya Tašho Vol 23 pp 202c⁻¹³
⁻²⁸

22. Tašho Vol 22 pp 413c⁻¹² ⁴¹⁴c⁻⁷
23. Tašho Vol 22 pp 811b⁻¹² ⁸⁻¹
24. Tašho Vol 22 pp 112b⁻¹⁹ ¹⁻¹⁶

25. Indian Historical Quarterly Vol. 13, No. 1-4, 1937
Rasat. P.V. Duttangas pp 94.

Mvy 1127
Tib. Shyane Pał Yon tan Bu gnis miṅ la Ch.
Hsu Hsi Shih Ehr Kung Te Miṅ hao
Mvy 1128 Pamsukīkah Tib. Phyag Dar Khrod Pa
Ch. Cho Na Yi Cho Pi Ne
Mvy 1129 Skt. Traclivarikah 1130 Skt. Nam (n)
Tib. Chos gos gsum Tib. Nphyiṅ Pa Po
Ch. Tan Sam I
Mvy 1130 Skt. Nam(n)Tibah
Tib. Npyiṅ Pa Po
Ch. Chon Na Tso Chih Sh Lang Yi chu Ḫuili
So Yi
Mvy 1131 Skt. Paṭṇaspatikah Tib. Beod Sūmpe Pa
Ch. Chi Shih, Tal, Ti Chi, Chang Heiṅ
Chi Shih
27
Mvy 1132 Skt. Akāsasati
Tib. Stag gcig Pa, Ch. Rih Yi Chi Rih Yi, Shih Yi Tsuo Shih

Mvy 1133 Skt. Khalu Pancad bhaktikah Tib. Zas phyis mi len pa Ch. Wu Shih Hon Chi, Chung Hsu Pu Yin Chins

Mvy 1134 Skt Aranyakah Tib. Dgon Pa Pa Ch. Chi Ching, Chu Chi Ching Chu

Mvy 1135 Skt Vrikṣa-mulikah Tib. Sih druhs Pa Ch. Tsuo Sup Hsia, Shu Hsia

Mvy 1136 Skt Abhyasakasakah Tib. Bla gab Med Pa, Ch. Lu Ti Lu Tsuo

Mvy 1137 Skt Smasaniakah Tib. Dur Khrod Pa Ch. Chung Chen Tsuo, Chung Chien

Mvy 1138 Skt Naisadikah Tib. Cog Pu Pa Ch. Tsuo Pu Wo, Tan Tsuo Pu Wo

Mvy 1139 Skt Yatha-samstarikah Tib. Gah Zi tehin Pao Ch. Zi Ran Ru Shang, Chung Chi Shih

27. Comp. Visuddhimagga IX. 32. sadvare pasa pattam visajjeth.


29. Indian Historical Quarterly Vol 13, No.1-4, 1937 Hapet, P. V. Dhotangas pp 45-46

31. The Dharma-Sangraha.
An ancient collection of Buddhist Technical terms
by Kanjiu Kasawara published by Oxford at the
Clarendon Press, 1885 pp 13 No. LXIII dvadasa dho
zagamah.

32. Menfio No.412 Fo Shue Shih Erh Tou. Two Ching
Buddhabhisheka dvadasa dhuta-sutra. Translated
by Gunsohara of the earlier Sung Dynasty A.D.
420-479. Chinese text available in Taisho Vol 17
No. 783 pp 720-722

33. P.V. Bapat, interprets Yathasamevarika as living
in a place as found which may not agree with its
derivation from the root sir meaning "to spread
over" Mahavyutpatti Tlb. gshi-z1 Bahin-pao. Ch.
Ziran ru-shang chang dhi-shih. Dharma-sangraha edited
by Kanjiu Kasawara (Oxford 1885) includes yathasa-
meetrika while Bapat refers to its omission. (Visuk-
timarga Dhutagama Nirdesa P.V. Bapat Introduction
pp xxi), Bapat probably consulted the Chinese ver-
sion of the Dharma-sangraha and not its original
Sanskrit version. However, Buddhaghosa's Visuddhi-
magga (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Ed. by Kosambi
Part 1, 1940, pp 52 gives the sense of contentment
with what one gets (yam landhartenas sant yathasam-
thatiko yati) as pointed out by Bapat.