The Tham Vessantara-jAtaka

A critical study of the Vessantara-jAtaka and its influence on Kengtung Buddhism, Eastern Shan State, Burma

(With English Translation)

Ven. Sengpan Pannyaawamsa

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Postgraduate Institute of PAl and Buddhist Studies (University of Kelaniya)

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Abstract

JAtakas, the former birth stories of the Buddha, are a living cultural force in Sri Lanka, Burma (now Myanmar) and Thailand. The Vessantara-jAtaka is probably the most influential. Its influence on various cultural aspects of those countries has been explored by a number of scholars who have studied vernacular languages. However, there is another Vessantara-jAtaka in Tai-Khun, a dialect closely linked to Thai, Laotian and Lanna, which has exerted a great influence on Buddhist culture, for centuries in Kengtung, Shan State, Burma, developing its own unique features. So far, no scholarly attention has been paid to it due to the language barrier and the closed door policy of the country.

This Thesis is, therefore, an attempt to give not just a general picture of the influence of the JAtakas, particularly of the Vessantara-jAtaka in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand; but it is also an effort to explore the Buddhist culture in the eastern part of Shan State, the Union of Burma by combining a textual study and some limited anthropological observation in Kengtung, the capital of Eastern Shan State.

Of the Kengtung cultural festivals of the year, the recitation of the Vessantara-jAtaka can be considered the most important. A large part of this thesis is therefore devoted to analysing of the Vessantara-jAtaka, known as the Tham Vessantara-jAtaka in Kengtung and its influence on aspects of Buddhism there to demonstrate that the Tham Vessantara-jAtaka is still a living cultural force and has played a great role in helping people understand the Buddha’s teaching.
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<td>A</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Th. VJ</td>
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<td>VJ</td>
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<td>VJs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPPN</td>
<td>Dictionary of PAi Proper Names</td>
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<td>PTS</td>
<td>PAi Text Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>MKL</td>
<td>MahÅChÅ Kham Laung</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTHON</td>
<td>Cha Thusa Bgayana</td>
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<tr>
<td>VJ-MPJRD</td>
<td>Vesantara-jataka Mai-pai jae-reau-deang (Lan-Na)</td>
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Part One

Chapter One

Introduction

A JAtaka is a story about a birth: this is usually taken as a story about the Buddha’s earlier births. Before attaining Buddha-hood, the Bodhisatta, “the aspirant for Buddha-hood”, has to pass through many births assuming different bodily forms, sometimes that of different species. In all these Buddha Gotama practised the Dhamma most sincerely; he overcame all difficulties, achieved victory over his adversary and finally attained the supreme status of the Fully-Enlightened One. The Vessantara-JAtaka, hereafter abbreviated as VJ, which forms our main study, is the last and longest birth story of the Bodhisatta before he was born Prince Siddhatha. In this life, he practised DAna PArami, the perfection of generosity. PAramitas, perfections, the essential factors for attainment of the Buddha-hood, which he had been practising for many lives, reach their fruition only in this Vessantara life.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the existing impact of the JAtakas in general and that of the Vessantara-JAtaka in particular on Buddhist countries such as Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. I shall demonstrate that the cultural practice of the VJ is a living cultural force in those countries. Special attention is, however, given to the development and impact of the VJ on an area in the eastern part of Burma, called Kengtung. Here

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1 For more explanations of the term “JAtaka”, see Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Vol. VI, pp. 2-3.
3 Meiland, Buddhist Values in the PAli JAtakas with particular reference to the theme of renunciation, p. 203.
Kengtung, the name of the capital city of a principedom, is used to refer nominally to a people, who call themselves Tai-khun, and all the areas they have lived in for centuries in the Eastern part of the Shan State, bordering Thailand, Laos and China. We shall return to the *VJ* of Kengtung shortly.

The most striking birth stories of the Buddha and most honoured, not only by Thai Buddhists⁴ but also Burmese, Laotians and Tai, are those in which he develops the superior qualities. Such existences are the last ten, known as *Dasajātī*. I will limit my study to Burmese⁵ and Thai⁶ which have closer relationship with Kengtung. In Burma, they are known as *Zat Taw Kyi Zee Bhoi*. Thai and Burmese summarize the names of the *Bodhisattas*, the Buddha to be, during these stages with the mnemonic formula as follows:

**In Thai**

Te Cha Su Ne Ma Phū Cha Nā Wi We

Te - stands for Temi……..(Temiya.)

Cha - stands for Chānok……(Janaka.)

Su - stands for Suvannasām. (Suvannasāma.)

Ne - stands for Nemirāt…….(Nemirāja.)

Ma - stands for Mahosot…….(Mahosadha.)

Phū - stands for Phūrithat…… (Bhūridatta.)

Cha: - stands for Chanthakuman...(Chandakumara.)

Nā - stands for Nārot........... (Nārada.)

Wi - stands for Withū..............(Vidhūra.)

We - stands for Wesandon.........(Vessantara.)

In Burmese

စိုက် ဝတ် ဝေါင် စုံစွာ (Te Ja Su Ne Ma BU Ca Na Vi Ve),

Te - stands for Temi or MUga-pakkha-jAtaka,7

Ja -stands for J anaka, MahAjanaka-jAtaka,8

Su - stands for SuvaBBasAmA, SAmA-jAtaka,9

Ne - stands for Nimi-jAtaka,10

Ma - stands for MahosadhA or KhADahAla-jAtaka,11

BU -stands for BhUridatta-jAtaka,12

Cam -stands for CandakumAra or VidhUrappADita-jAtaka,13

NA - stands for NA rada , or MahAnAradakassapa-jAtaka;14

Wi - stands for VidhUrappADita-jAtaka,15 and

We - stands for Vessantara-jAtaka.16

7 jAtaka No. 538.
8 jAtaka No.539.
9 jAtaka No. 540.
10 jAtaka No.541.
11 jAtaka No.542.
12 jAtaka No. 543.
13 jAtaka No. 544.
14 jAtaka No. 545.
15 jAtaka No. 546.
16 jAtaka No. 547.
There are similarities in this formula for the mnemonics of the ten Jātakas but differences only in their ways of spelling and pronunciation. These ten Jātakas are understood to be the moral parables of the Ten Pāramitas, perfections.

Te - Temiya-jātaka = Nikkhama (Renunciation)
Ja - Janaka-jātaka = Viriya (Effort)
Su - Suvannasāma-jātaka = Mettā (Loving kindness)
Ne - Nemi-jātaka = Adhiṭṭhāna (Determination)
Ma - Mahosadha-jātaka = Paṭtā (Wisdom)
Bhū - Bhūridatta-jātaka = Sīla (Morality)
Ca - Candakumāra-jātaka = Khanti (Patience)
Nā - Nārada-jātaka = Upekkhā (Equanimity)
Vi - Vidhūra-jātaka = Sacca (Truth)
Ve - Vessantara-jātaka = Dāna (Generosity)

Let me summarize the ten most popular Jātakas, in each of which the Bodhisatta is traditionally believed to practise each of the ten perfections.

In the first birth of these Jātakas, Temiya-jātaka, the Bodhisatta appears as a prince who avoids being called to the throne and pretends to be dumb. He does not want to be a king because he had been one in his previous existences and it always made him reborn in the inferior regions thereafter. All kinds of attempts were made to make him speak, but in vain. At last, he was led to be buried alive. He seized the moment to speak
and gave *Dhamma* talks to his family and relatives. Therefore, his life was out of
danger.

In the *Jātaka* concerning the Bodhisatta’s second life, *Janaka-Jātaka*, he is the
son of a monarch killed in a war against a younger brother, and is born in exile. He
makes a resolution to return to his native land when he was grown up in order to inherit
his patrimony. To accomplish this objective, he sets out with his company to the sea;
however, the ship is wrecked on the way and he is the only one who saves his life by
swimming. Through hardship, he, at last, reaches the land of his father and becomes the
king.

In the third *Jātaka*, *Suvaṃbasama-Jātaka*, he is born of blind parents, leading an
ascetic life. He looks after their wants, kindly provides them with food and speaks
sweetly to them. Accompanied by a pet deer, he is in the habit of drawing water for the
household. One day he is nearly killed by an arrow shot by a king who was out hunting.

The fourth *Jātaka*, *Nemi-Jātaka*, deals with his life as the teacher Nemirāja, the
king who is given a guided tour of heaven and hell. He visits both regions, but there is
no mention of him finding either of them more interesting.

The fifth *Jātaka*, *Mahosadha-Jātaka*, concerns his birth as a wise counsellor and
judge at the court of a great king at war with a neighbouring monarch. He advised that a
tunnel should be dug reaching as far as the enemy’s country, which, through these means, was subdued.

In the sixth *Jātaka*, *Bhūridatta-jātaka*, he is a Nāga king who comes on earth to practise *Śīla*, precepts. One day he has the misfortune to be captured by a snake charmer who leads him about on show. He obeys the charmer as he wants and remains until his younger brother and sister come in search of him. The former is in human form and the latter in the form of a frog. By their power they deceive the cruel showman and thus gain freedom for the pious obedient king.

In the seventh *Jātaka*, *Chandakumāra-jātaka*, he is born as prince Chandakumāra, the son of a great king. He has been appointed to preside over the royal judgment hall and to see that justice is administered. The chief judge is angry with him because he has less opportunity to practise pickings from the parties in litigation. As a result, he waits for an occasion to get rid of the prince. He finds it at last. The king, having dreamed that he had toured through the heavenly regions sends for a chief judge to find some means to enable him to see the real heaven. Seeing the opportunity to carry out his evil plan against the prince, the judge replies that his plan is an enormous feast to the gods of the heaven. In order to carry out the enormous feast, the royal son and a number of inmates of the royal palace should be immolated. The foolish king gives his consent and the prince Chandakumāra is on the point of falling a victim when some courtiers reveal the plot to the king and have the wicked judge convicted and put to
death. But Prince Chandakumāra, leaving no hostility towards the culprit, intervenes and obtains his release.

In the eighth birth, Nemi-Ataka, the Bodhisatta is a king who gives away all he had in alms and then, leaving the throne, goes to the forest where he lived as a hermit. Although he has nothing left in his hands to be given away, he holds a firm determination to continue practising almsgiving. Fearing that he would mutilate himself and give in alms his very limbs, the Deva deity brings him a handful of gold pieces for distribution to those who need his help.

In the ninth birth, Vidhūra-Ataka, the Bodhisatta is born as Vidhūrapandita. He is popular and wise and acts as a teacher and adviser to the king. The fame of his wisdom and learning becomes so widespread that all the kings of the earth approach him for moral advice. Then the queen of Nāgas, desiring to possess Vidhūra’s heart, sends out an official on earth with express commands to gain it. The queen’s mission win the Vidhūra’s king by gambling at dice. Vidhūrapandita is put to death to get his real heart but it is not an easy task. As a matter of fact, he remains unhurt after all the murderous attacks are made upon him. Instead of being angry with his would-be killer, he teaches him morality. In this way he is sent back with the burden of a failure upon his ethics, but less bad Kamma.

In all the above mentioned characters the Bodhisatta performed highly meritorious deeds and devoted himself to the perfect exercise of virtue, thereby
fulfilling the highest degree of some one or other of the Pāramitās.\textsuperscript{17} However it is only in the tenth birth that he preserved the superior degrees of the other nine Pāramitās, which are inevitable conditions for the attainment of Buddha-hood and the constituents of Buddha-hood itself.

In the tenth Jātaka, Vessantara-jātaka, being born as Vessantara, he typifies man reaching the zenith of his evolutionary march towards moral and intellectual perfection and fits to cross the last gap that separates him from Buddha-hood. This last birth before he was reborn in Tusitā is called Great Birth. The mother was to recount this particular birth shortly after attaining Buddha-hood, when he paid a visit to his parents and relatives who were so proud of themselves by birth, that they thought of not paying respect to the Buddha. On that occasion, the Buddha caused miraculous rain upon him in the midst of the assembly, as it did on a similar occasion in his former birth as Prince Vessantara. He related the story of that birth, telling the excellent virtues and profound piety of the Prince. It is said that at seven different times, the Buddha appealed to the earth to bear evidence to the truth of his words and each time the earth responded in assenting vibrations.\textsuperscript{18} This had a highly striking effect on all beholders. It seems that in commemoration of this famous event the practice of holding public rehearsals of the ‘Great Birth’ story or the VJ, has been maintained up to the present day. Thus reading and expounding of the VJ, with its commentary or A Thakatha became a regular practice

\textsuperscript{17} The Pāramitās are each a ternary combination consisting of three grades of progressive excellence, the sub-ordinary, the ordinary and the superlative. If thus subdivided, they are called thirty Pāramitās qualifying for Buddha-ship. They are the result of all good deeds performed during numerous births. The ten Pāramitās are explained in the text and commentary of the Cāriya-piṭaka, a book composed after Buddha’s death to show in what deeds and in which birth the Great Teacher acquired each of the said Pāramitās.

\textsuperscript{18} Gerini, The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony, p. 96.
and formed the object of annual assemblies of Buddhists, for instance in Thailand since early times.\textsuperscript{19} It has become the foremost major ceremony of merit-making.\textsuperscript{20} This kind of festivity takes place in Laos too. The main Buddhist festival of the year in these countries is centred on its recitation.

The \textit{Vessantara-jātaka} is one of the most interesting amongst the five hundred and fifty of the former birth stories of the Buddha. It recounts his birth, in the form of a virtuous prince named Vessantara. The importance which Buddhists attach to his tale is easily understood. It gives a forcible picture of the life of a being that, having reached the height of moral and intellectual development, has become the perfect embodiment of every perfection required for the attainment of transcendental knowledge or Buddhahood.

Prince Vessantara had practised the ten principal virtues and realized the ten perfections, which the Buddha had to fulfil in many lives. According to the tradition, as a result of this acquirement he was reborn in the Tusitā heaven and from there he descended to be reborn in the human world and lived his last life on earth as a perfect Buddha.

The Buddha in his former existences is represented in these \textit{Jātaka} stories as a being still very far from perfection. He is inevitably subject to \textit{Kammic} law and struggles along the endless chain of continued existence. In this chain of existence, he

\textsuperscript{19} Gerini, \textit{The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony}, p. 96.
\textsuperscript{20} Gombrich, \textit{The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara}, xliii.
has to be reborn not only as a human and a god, but also as a member of inferior species. As a man, he had been repeatedly king, courtier, Brāhma, ascetic, teacher, prince, nobleman, merchant, slave, potter, outcaste, elephant driver, carpenter, etc. He was sometimes at the height of power, at others in the most helpless condition; now at the steps of a throne, in a moment in the dust of a high road; sometimes virtuous, sometimes wicked and debased. As a supernatural being, many times he was Brāhma, Indra (Sakka), a tree god, and once a Deva. As a member of inferior species, he was elephant, tiger, monkey, dog, bird, snake, fish, frog, etc. However the hardships and punishments experienced through all the stages of life proved to be highly beneficial to the path leading to happiness, which he ultimately attained at the end of his mortal career.

The JAtaka texts in PĀḷi in six volumes (London, 1877-96) together with its commentaries were edited by Fausbøll and indexed by Dines Andersen. The Burmese version of the JAtaka PĀḷi edited at the ChaThāNaNgAyana was published in 1960 by the Burmese Religious Ministry Affairs, Yangon, into Vol. I and Vol. II. This version, ChaThāNaNgAyana, together with the entire PĀḷi canon, is now available on CD ROM version 3. The disc is freely distributed by Vipassana Research Institute, Dhammagiri, Igatpuri, India.\(^ {21} \)

As to the translations, Rhys Davids, the founder of the PĀḷi Text Society, translated into English some JAtakas, known as JAtaka Tales. A translation of selected JAtaka tales by Francis and Thomas and the translation of the JAtakas under the

\(^ {21}\) See www.tipitaka.org.
editorship of Cowell into six volumes with an index are also available. There has been a recent translation of the VJ by Cone and Gombrich, *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara* (Oxford, 1977) and by Sarah Shaw, *Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta* (Penguin, 2006). As Gombrich points out the VJ translated in his book is not only the oldest surviving but also the longest and fullest literary version known, and it is preserved in PAlī.\(^\text{22}\) It has been translated into many languages, PAlī, Sanskrit, Singhalese, Burmese, Thai, Laos, Chinese, Tibetan, English, Mongolian,\(^\text{23}\) Sogdian and French.\(^\text{24}\) The VJ in different languages and versions, as has already been mentioned above, basically originates from the Buddhist canon, *Tipiṭaka*. The essence and the length of the story are similar in each culture.

Over the years the *JAtakas* have been studied by scholars. Winternitz has done a study of *JAtaka-gAṭhA* and *JAtaka commentary*, Gokuldas, *Significance and Importance of JAtakas* and KhemapAlī, has studied *The Critical Edition of the VessantaradiPānī*. Swearer\(^\text{25}\) and Steven\(^\text{26}\) contributed on discussion of the VJ. Skilling, a PAlī and Sanskrit scholar and a researcher of Southeast Asian Buddhism did research about *JAtaka and PaGga-jAtaka in South-East Asia*, which was published in the Journal of the PAlī Text Society Vol. xxviii. Feer examined the *JAtakas* under the title of *Studies of the Jatakas, Analytical and Critical*. Regarding the influence of the *JAtaka* on Sri Lankan literature, Jayatilaka has done some study in-depth under the title of *JAtaka Sahityaya saha Vessantara, “JAtaka literature and the Vessantara.”* Harischandra has carried out

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\(^\text{22}\) Gombrich, *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara*, xvi.

\(^\text{23}\) See Poppe, *The Mongolian version of VessantarajAtaka*. Unfortunately I cannot read Mongolian so I have no means to verify as to whether it is similar to the other versions or different. I found this in the British Library, London.

\(^\text{24}\) See Benveniste, *VessantarajAtaka* in French Version.


research on psychological aspects of the *JAtakas* and made use of them to cure mental patients in Sri Lanka, where they have proved to be effective. Saimong, a native of Kengtung and a Cambridge University graduate, has published some works on Kengtung culture. Peltier has published a few books on Kengtung literature, including some local Buddhist tales.

The *VJ* is made popular over the centuries through ritual recitation in the vernacular languages, a subject which has become the interest of some scholars. For example, on the ritual recitation of the *VJ* and its influence on different aspects of Thai culture, Gerini has carried out an extensive study under the title, *The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony*. Anuman and Brereton have conducted a far-reaching survey of the recitation traditions of the *Phra Malai* (Maleyya), a legendary arahant, who has strengthened the belief in the power of reciting the *VJ* and performing its related rituals. Pha Yaum Yong has done critical and comparative studies of the *VJ* in four different parts of Thailand: Northern, Southern, Eastern (Isarn) and Central (Bangkok).

An area that has not been covered, however, is the development of the *VJ*, its annual recitation ceremony and its influence on Theravada Buddhism in Kengtung, eastern Shan State, Burma. This process of the development of the *VJ* in Kengtung is

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28 Peltier has carried out a few works on Kengtung culture and literature, such as *Tai-Khun Literature* which was published by Duang Kamol, Chiangmai in 1987; *Kalasa Krua Dauk* is one of the series of Tai-Khun classical novels and is about the adventures of a young polygamous setThi who in the end will reign over two kingdoms; *Suijavabu-Woe Lung* is one of the popular *JAtakas* among Tai-Khun. Peltier, *Suijavabu*, p. 241. *Chao Bun Hlong* is one of the numerous Tai-Khun classical novels. It is usually read during Buddhist lent to the faithful gathered in the temple. The popular belief is that listening to this kind of novel earns merits which act upon their present and future. Peltier, *Chao Bun Hlong*, p. 157.
29 Anuman has carried out the detail of the recitation of the *VJ* in Thailand. See *Thet MahACChA*.
30 Brereton did her doctoral research on the legend of *Phra Malai*, the driven force for the recitation of *VJ*. For more detail, see *Thai Tellings of Phra Malai*. 
believed to have taken place over the centuries. It is the aim of this thesis to examine the
*VJ’s* developments and its influence on Kengtung Buddhism.

The Kengtung *VJ* is so well known to the people in Kengtung that it may be
considered as their *Tipiṭaka*. The vernacular version of the *VJ* in Kengtung is popularly
known as “*Tham Vessantara-jātaka* or *Th. VJ*. The word “*Tham*” derives from the word
“*Dhamma*”, here taken to mean the teaching of the Buddha. The *Th. VJ* consists of
many stories. It encompasses not only the *VJ* but also many parts of the *Tipiṭaka* such
as: *Pāramiita*, about 30 kinds of perfections, *Uṭhassa*, on anxiety, *Lokavatthu*, about
the welfare of the world, *Suttanta-piṭaka*, the teaching of the Buddha, *Vinaya-piṭaka*,
disciplines of monks and *Abhidhamma-piṭakas*, systematic philosophical teachings of
the Buddha, *Pathama Mālai*, about MĀleyya Thera’s visiting the hells, *Dutiya Mālai*,
about MĀleyya Thera’s visiting heavens, *Vessantara gāthās*, one thousand PĀli stanzas,
13 sections of the *VJ* in Tai-Khun, the good results for Vesan (as Prince Vessantara is
locally known), the positive rewards of the past actions of Vessantara and the negative
Kammic results of the past actions of Vessantara.

So, the *Th. VJ* has developed to acquire unique features of its own in Kengtung.
Indeed, it has outgrown its origin. For many people in Kengtung, the *Th. VJ* is
considered the original words of the Buddha, as noted, representing the entire teaching.
This perception owes itself to the fact that many elements from different *nikāyas* have
been incorporated into it. Economically, the ritual recitation of the *Th. VJ* has also
become the most expensive form of merit-making, held annually throughout Kengtung.
Despite having captured the hearts and minds of Tai-Khun people for many centuries, the *Th. VJ* has not been given the attention it deserves for the scholarly community. There has been no study of the enormous influence of this tale on many aspects of social, political and communal life. This is partly due to the difficulty by scholars of getting access into the original language, Tai-Khun, a dialect closely linked to that of Lanna in Northern Thailand. The *VJ* in Kengtung is in Tai-Khun script and dialect, which is one of the many dialects of Tai. The Tai of which Shan is a branch has not only many dialects but also different scripts. The inaccessibility to the *VJ* in Kengtung is partly due also to the closed door policy practised for many decades by the government in Burma. Until fifteen years ago, even a foreign tourist was not allowed to visit Kengtung, let alone a researcher.

If there was little attention from the scholars outside, there has been a lack of study on the part of the local scholars as well: there has never been in the local language any critical study of the *Th. VJ*; nor has there been a translation of it; to this day, there is only one printed version in the form of manuscript; this version was printed in Maesai, Thailand as recently as 2000. This study is therefore the first piece of research on the *Th. VJ* that explores all the linguistic layers of the story: PAlî, Tai-Khun, Tai or Shan, Burmese and Thai.

Buddhism in Kengtung has a long history. *The Kengtung State Chronicle* has it that the traditional recitation of the *Th. VJ* goes back to the ninth century i.e. 816, (1454 AD) or even earlier. BrayA Sridhamma CulAmaBi MahArAja, one of the Kengtung’s great
rulers, along with one hundred members of the royal family, was ordained at the ordination hall of Wat SAhalarattArAm in Kentugn. At the end of rains-retreat, BrayA Sridhamma CulAmaBi MahArAja offered Kathina MahAdAna, the great robe-offering ceremony every year. He himself always observed the eight precepts every new moon and full moon and spent nights in the monastery hall on the holy days. He performed the DAna of the MahApAng Dhamma31 at the homage hall of Wat SAhalarattArAm.32 Here the DAna of the MahApAng Dhamma means an elaborate and perhaps the most expensive form of DAna of the recitation of the VJ.

Upon entering into the SAasanA the great monarch ritually donated Kengtung State to the Triple Gem on the day of ordination which was redeemed later on. After a period of two months of monastic training in the monk-hood, he left the Order, with his faith in the Buddha increased, and donated forty thousand silver coins and four thousand gold coins to the SaNgha.33 Then a sapling of MahAbodhi tree was brought from Sri Lanka to Kengtung and planted in the compound of Wat SAhalarattArAm. Kengtung Buddhism was well radiant during this time so that the neighbouring kingdoms such as Sipsongbanna (of the present China), Lu, Laem, MongkA, Mongban, Mongpo, Mongmaen and Mongting, KungmA came down to receive Buddhism from the SaNgharaja of Kengtung, known as MahA NABagambhIrRa SomDec AggarAjaguru Varamoll, and established it in their lands.34 This indicates that Kengtung Buddhism flourished since the reign of BrayA Sridhamma CulAmaBi MahArAja.

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31 MahApAng Tham or Dhamma of the great epoch is known in Chiangmai and Bangkok as MahArA or MahAchA. It is the most expensive form of DAna of recital of the Vessantara-jAaka (JAaka No. 547).
33 Ibid. p.119.
34 Ibid. pp. 121-122.
The *Th. VJ* itself is believed to have been composed during the reign of a learned ruler, Sao MahA KhanAn (1814-1857 AD). It is about 200 years now. However, the author of the *Th. VJ* cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. Traditionally the people of Kengtung commonly attribute the works to Sao MahA KhanAn, (1814-1857 AD) one of the great rulers of Kengtung. He was the 33rd prince who ruled Kengtung State. Kengtung State was founded by Sao PhayA MangrAi, in 591 B.E. (1229 AD) who also founded Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai. However, most credit for the present layout of Kengtung with a lake in the middle of the city and pagodas in all quarters goes to Sao MahA KhanAn who is said to have reformed and rebuilt Kengtung State. He founded the present town of Kengtung in 1819 AD, and it was completed after three years which he marked by organising a big celebration. The chronicle records that during the celebrations offerings were made to the monasteries and sacrifices offered to the guardian spirits.

But there is no evidence to prove whether the author of the *Th. VJ* was Sao MahA KhanAn. Another assumption is that the *Th. VJ* was recomposed under the leadership of Sao MahA KhanAn, based on the earliest version called *Vesan Rom*. *Vesan Rom* is the gist of the *VJ*. It was composed in a simple vernacular language long before the *Th. VJ*. It was written on palm leafs, and in its present form it contains 26 palm leafs which make up 52 pages.

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36 *Kengtung State Annuals*, p. 402.
This said, it is, again, not clear whether the VJ which existed in Kentung since 1454 AD was the Vesan Rom or the MahA Vessantara Kabthi or the Vesan Kabthi. Vesan Kabthi is a text about the Vessantara-jAtaka. It is composed in a vernacular language occasionally mixed with PAli words or phrases and is in more detail than the Vesan Rom. So far, neither the Vesan Rom nor the Vesan Kabthi have been edited or printed. They are usually written on palm leaves or local-made papers in the form of manuscripts. A copy of them is produced whenever there is a new ceremony of recitation since an old copy is not favoured for this purpose. Copies of it are mostly kept in the temple library for young monks to practise their recitation. Both the authors of the Vesan Rom and the Vesan Kabthi and the dates of their composition are unknown.

Regarding the author of the Th. VJ, it is, however, possibly safe to say that it was not Sao MahA KhanAn alone who composed it into a classic poetic form. Instead he gathered various learned men in the country to help him when composing it. It may have been that he, with the help of various learned men of that time, recomposed the VJ and their composition became known as the Th. VJ up to the present day. But most of the credit goes to Sao MahA KhanAn.

For this study, I make use of the Th. VJ, the recent version in printed characters in the form of manuscript. I have also consulted MahA Vessantara Kabthi,\textsuperscript{39} Vol I and II and Vesan Roms, which I have collected at Wat Par Kharm, Kart Pha and at Wat Naung La, Kengtung, Burma. I have consulted the JAtaka PAli, ChaTTha-saNgAyana version Vol. I and II; the ChaTTha-saNgAyana version on CD ROM version 3 and JAtaka-a ThakathA Vol.

\textsuperscript{39} This text was obtained at Wat Yang Saw, Kengtung, Burma. It is a copy by Nan Seng.
VII, by Buddhaghosa, Yangon, Burma. Careful reading has also been made with (1) Fausbøll. The *Jātaka* Vol. VI, PTS London. (2) Rhys Davids, *Jātaka Tales*, (3) a translation of selected *Jātaka* tales by Francis and Thomas, (4) the translation of the *Jātakas* under the editorship of Cowell into six volumes with an index volume. I have also consulted a recent translation of *Vessantara-Jātaka* by Cone and Gombrich, *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara*. Reference is also made to some Thai versions.

The *Mahā Chāt Kham Loang* was first composed during the Sukho Thai period but it disappeared and it was recomposed under the patronage of King Prum TrailokanĀtha, Buddha Sakkarājā 2025 (1481 AD) in the Ayutthaya period. It is composed not for monks to help with their preaching but for reciting at the *Uposatha* day to the preceptors. *Karp Mahā Chāt* which was composed in the reign of King Sungdham in the Ayutthaya period (Culla Sakkaraja 964 Buddha Sakkaraja 2145, (1601 AD)) was also useful. It was composed for monks’ preaching to make people understand it more easily than *Mahā Chāt Kham Loang*. *Mahā Chāt Phark Phā Yap Cha Pap Sa Roi Sang Kaun* was recomposed into Thai via the northern Thai language by Phra DhammarĀnuwat which was also consulted. It is written entirely in the classic poetic forms and is also pleasant to listen to. One may find enjoyment when reading it.

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40 *Mahā Chāt Kham Loang* which was recited to the people was first published in the reign of Ram II and it is well kept at Wat Yang Aang Thaung or Wat Chulalok Na Kaun Sri Ayutthaya.
41 *Mahā Chāt Kham Loang*, pre. 4
42 An uposatha-day is a day of observing 8 precepts. It is the day preceding four stages, of the moon’s waxing and waning, viz 1st, 8th, 15th, 23rd nights of the lunar month that is to say, a weekly sacred day when Buddhists observe the 8 precepts.
43 Matthaṇa Kurtiphung, *Mahā Chāt Kham Loang*, pre. 5
44 Lanna Thai language which is also known as Chiangmai language or Lanna scripts was widely used in earlier time in northern Thailand, but now it is confined for writing secret teachings of the Buddha. Since it is not used in daily communication among people and used only in temples, young generations are not able to read and write in northern Thai language, instead they mostly use modernized Thai.
46 Ibid.
This study is divided into two parts, Part One and Part Two. Part One discusses the development of the *Jātakas* and their influence on the culture and literature of various countries, such as Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand, with special reference to the *VJ*, while Part Two deals with the translation of the *Th. VJ*.

**Part One**

Part One is again divided into seven chapters. Chapter One discusses the aim of the thesis, the last great ten *Jātakas*, historical background; the author of the *Tham Vessantara-Jātaka*, the sources and summary of the chapters.

Chapter Two discusses briefly the three Buddhist councils, attempting to trace the development of the *Jātaka* literature. It looks at not only the structure of the *Jātakas* and the various elements which make this distinctive structure but also their place in the Buddhist literature. The sources, dates, purposes, places of the *Jātakas* in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka* and their influence on the life of the people is also examined. It is demonstrated that, from the inception of the Buddhist traditions, *Jātakas* were regarded as of central importance, an influence which was soon evident in other artistic and literary forms.

Chapter Three deals with the influence of the *Jātakas* on Sri Lankan cultures, literature and art in general and the influence of the *VJ* on drama and daily life in particular. The aim of this contribution is to demonstrate that *Jātakas* are indeed not

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47 Phun Chakta, *Vessantara-Jātaka*, pre. 1-4
only the heart of Sri Lankan literature, but also permeate other aspects of cultural life, most particularly ethics and moral instruction.

Chapter Four discusses the influence of the JAtakas and their impact on Myanmar culture in both a religious and secular context. The impact of the JAtakas on Myanmar literature at different periods: the Ava period (1364-1555 AD), the Nyaung Yan period (1599-1752 AD), and the Kon-baung period (1782-1885 AD) and on the arts and drama or Pyazat from the periods 1818 to 1875 AD are examined. The main argument is that from the time JAtakas were introduced to Burma, they have developed as a major influence on many aspects of Burmese life, both religious and secular, becoming the original sources of poetry, literature, drama and various forms of arts.

Chapter Five examines the influence of the Jātakas, especially the last great ten Jātakas which the Thai have called ‘thosachĀt’ since ancient times. This chapter also shows that the Jātakas provide sources of Thai literature in various forms. They are pre-eminent, and are widely represented in temple wall paintings and cloth banners, murals and manuscript paintings.48 The recitations of the VJ or the Thet Mahā Chāt by the kings of Thailand between 1817-66 are examined. In addition, the influence of the VJ on painting and preaching, the legend of MĀleyya Thera which popularizes the recital of the VJ, the ancient custom of Ayutthaya and the prediction of the disappearance of the Buddhist scriptures are also explored. The highlight is the importance of the recitation of the Thet Mahā ChĀt, which becomes state-sponsored. The annual Thet Mahā ChĀt is not always held on such a great scale. However it still ranks among one of the most

48 Ginsburg, Thai Manuscript Painting, p. 44.
important religious performances to be seen in the country. The traditional ceremony, though not as popular as in ancient times, has lost nothing of its original magnificence.

Chapter Six examines two versions of the *VJ*, their differences and similarities. The 26 parts of the *Th. VJ* which have never before been the object of scholarly attention are examined. As the material is unfamiliar, this section provides a summary of each section and a description of the appearance of Tai-Khun manuscripts. This chapter also makes a comparison of the *Th. VJ* with the *VJ* edited by Professor Fausbøll, the Burmese version and the Thai version. Although it is usually mentioned at the end of the commentary that there are one thousand verses in the *VJ*, I have found only 804 verses altogether. The numbers of verses in those versions vary but none of them has one thousand verses. For example, the *ChatthasamNgayana* version consists of 790 verses; the PTS version has 786; and the *Th. VJ* and the Mahamakut versions contain 804 each.

Chapter Seven gives an account of the procedures involved in the performance of the *Th. VJ*. As this material has not been discussed before, this section also describes in some detail the social context, the preliminary negotiations and the setting in motion of the performance as a whole. It also provides some account of preparatory chanting work undertaken by the monks before the actual recitation, as well as customs associated with the chanting of each section in turn. In recent years there has, apparently, been some decline in certain customs associated with the performance. The intention of this chapter is to indicate that despite these problems, symptomatic of a more widespread decline in traditional practices in rural and urban communities, the
performance of the *Th. VJ*, with all its attendant status and ceremony, still plays a vital part in Kengtung communal life in Eastern Shan State, Burma.

### Part Two

#### Translation

The *Th. VJ* selected to translate here is in Tai-Khun text. It was edited by the present AGGAdham, the supreme leader of the Saṅgha, in Kengtung and was published in Maesai, Thailand in the year 2000. This is the only version of the *Th. VJ* ever printed but as a manuscript, thick in size and long in length. There are 369 pages and each page contains 14 lines. This version is supposed to be the most accepted version among the *Th. VJs* in Kengtung but is still, according to the editor, unsatisfactory as a lot of Pāḷi words as well as Tai-Khun dialect were mis-spelled and some words have been dropped when they were doing word processing.

As for my translation, I tried with various existing versions and try to remain close to the spirit of the original text of the *Th. VJ* with its original meanings. I do not abolish Pāḷi words and phrases, which are frequent among the dialect forms. This is to show that Kengtung people still respect and try to maintain the traditional way of writing. I have translated 23 sections in the *Th. VJ* out of 26 except one thousand *gāthās* or stanzas, which form three sections in the *Th. VJ*. I leave them as they are without translating them.
Chapter Two

Buddhist Literature and the JAtaka

As the birth stories of a Bodhisatta, an aspirant of enlightenment, the JAtakas have inspired many to follow a moral life. A Bodhisatta has to fulfil what are known as the ten Paramita, or perfections, in the course of millions of births in Samsara, the cycle of birth and death. The ups and downs and the triumphs and tribulations which occur in many Bodhisatta’s lives become examples for many, from the ruler to a pauper, from hermit to an animal. Some of the JAtakas have even been made use of as guidelines for legal ruling. For the faithful, the actions and lives of the Bodhisatta as found in the JAtakas are the very path to supreme enlightenment, for a great being attains full Enlightenment on the fulfilment of the ten acts of perfections. The term Buddha is thus a title for all great beings who achieve the highest spiritual perfection and it can be earned by anybody who has successfully and fully cultivated the necessary noble virtues.

Any discussion about the JAtaka is incomplete without talking about the three Buddhist councils as its background. The JAtaka forms a part of the Pali Buddhist Scriptures in the Theravada Buddhist countries. Its considerable influence on cultural and literary aspects, especially, in the Buddhist countries is tremendous. In this chapter, I shall briefly examine the three Buddhist councils, in an attempt to lay a background to the development of the JAtaka literature. Here, I shall look not only at the structure of the JAtakas and their various elements which make this distinctive form but also their
place in the Buddhist literature; the sources, dates, purposes, places of the *Jātakas* in the *Pāli Tipitaka* and their influence on the life of the people will be also examined. As I hope to demonstrate, from the inception of the Buddhist traditions, *Jātakas* were regarded as of central importance, an influence which was soon evident in other artistic and literary forms.

The first Buddhist Council was held under the patronage of King Ajatasatru at Rajagaha almost immediately after the passing away of the Buddha. At this Council, the ‘Dhamma’ and the ‘Vinaya’¹ were rehearsed. The ‘Dhamma’ here refers to the collection of all the discourses of the Buddha delivered on various occasions. They were expounded to suit different occasions for various persons with different levels of understanding. Though they were mostly intended for the benefit of *Bhikkhus* and deal with the practice of pure life, there are also many other discourses dealing with the material world and moral and ethical progress for lay disciples.

The ‘Vinaya’ is the rule of discipline laid down for regulating the conduct of the Buddha’s disciples. The rules are meant for *Bhikkhus* and *Bhikkhunis*. These rules embody authoritative injunctions of the Buddha on modes of conduct and restraints on both physical and verbal actions. They deal with transgressions of discipline, and with various categories of restraints and admonitions in accordance with the nature of the offence.

At the Council and as well as thereafter, the specialization of the *Vinaya* was entrusted to Upāli and his pupils. Similarly, other assignments were made to preserve

the teaching: the *Dīgha-nikāya*, a collection of long discourses of the Buddha which consists of thirty four long discourses, the *Majjhima-nikāya*, a collection of medium length discourses of the Buddha, the *Samyutta-nikāya*, a collection of 7762 suttas of varied in length, *Anguttara-nikāya*, a collection of 9557 short suttas which is divided into eleven divisions called *Nipatas*, were assigned *Sāriputta*, *Mahākassapa*, *Anuruddha* and to *Ananda* respectively and their pupils. It is believed that the *Khuddaka-nikāya*, the rest of the sayings of the Buddha excluding the first four *nikāyas*, was explained by Ven. *Ananda* at this Council. However, there are many different opinions, amongst many scholars which we cannot go into detail here, regarding the development of the *Khuddaka-nikāya*.

A hundred years after the Buddha’s passing away, the Second Buddhist Council was held at *Vesālī* under the patronage of King *Kalasoka* with the participation of 700 Bhikkhus, presided over by Ven. Revata Dhamma. This Council came into existence as a result of Vijji monks practising the ten points, which go against the orthodox point of

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3 *The Majjhima-nikāya* is a collection of medium length discourses of the Buddha. This collection has one hundred and fifty two suttas which forms three books called *Paṭṭhasaśa*. The three books are *Mūlapaṭṭhasa* dealing with the first fifty suttas in five vaggas, the second is called *Majjhima-paṭṭhasa* which consists of the second fifty suttas in five vaggas and the third one is called *Upari-paṭṭhasa* consisting of fifty two suttas in five vaggas.

4 *The Samyutta-nikāya* is a collection of 7762 suttas of varied length, generally short arranged in a special order according to subject matter.

5 *The Anguttara-nikāya* is a collection of 9557 short suttas which is divided into eleven divisions called *Nipatas*. These discourses are an important source book on Buddhist psychology and ethics.

6 *The Khuddaka-nikāya* is a collection of the largest numerous treatises and the most numerous categories of the Dhamma.

7 See detail of it (1), Abeynayaka, *A textual and Historical Analysis of The Khuddaka-nikāya*, (2) Norman, *Pali Literature*.

8 Ten Points practiced by Vajjian monks:
(1) *Sangilo-Bakappa*, the practice of carrying salt in a horn which is against *Pa-ittya* number 38
(2) *Dvangulakappa*, the practice of taking meals when the shadow is two fingers broad which is against *Pa-ittya* rule number 37 that forbids the taking food after midday,
view. To preserve the originality and purity of the teachings of the Buddha, the *Vinaya*,
the code of conduct, was rehearsed at this Council by the orthodox monks while the
Vajjis, also known as the monks of VesAll, decided to perform their own council and
called it the Great Council, MahÂ­sangiti, for they outnumbered the former, with an
attendance of ten thousand monks. The MahÂ­sangiti’s Second Council was held in
Pataliputta in 346 B.C.E. under the patronage of King MahÂ­pama Nanda. This marks
the beginning of the first schism in Buddhist history.

The Third Buddhist Council was convened at PÂ­taliputta in the third century
B.C. under the patronage of King Asoka and it is believed that it was there that the
Teaching of the Buddha was divided into three sections: the *Suttanta-pi Tika*, discourses,
the *Vinaya-pi Tika*, discipline for monks and nuns, and the *Abhidhamma-pi Tika*, a
collection of texts dealing with Buddhist metaphysics and philosophy. At this Council,
Buddhist scriptures were called *Tipi Tika*, meaning Three Baskets. The three *Pi Taka*
are also called *nikAyas*. The five *nikAyas* are *Dgha-nikAya, Majjhima-nikAya, Samyutta-
nikAya, Anguttara-nikAya* and *Khuddaka-nikAya*. Of the five *nikAyas*, *Khuddaka-nikAya*,
was divided into more than ten texts, indeed reaching fifteen at the Sixth Council in
Burma in 1956; the tenth of the *Khuddaka-nikAya* is called *JAtaka*. The *JAtaka* is also

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(3) *GÂ­mantarakappa*, the practice of going to another village and taking a second meal on the same day
which is against *PÂ­cittiya* rule number 35 that forbids over-eating.
(4) *Â­kakappa*, the observance of the *Uposatha* ceremonies in various places in the same parish,
(5) *Anumatikappa*, obtaining sanction for a deed after it is done,
(6) *Â­kakappa*, using customary practices as precedents,
(7) *Amathitakappa*, drinking buttermilk after meal,
(8) *Jalogim-Â­tum*, drinking toddy,
(9) *Adasakam-nisidanam*, using a drug which has no fringe and
(10) *Jkaruparajatam*, the acceptance of gold and silver which goes against the rule of *Nissaggya
PÂ­cittiya* number 18. Bapat, 2500 years of Buddhism, pp. 41-42.

Herman, *In Introduction to Buddhist Thought*, pp. 96-97.

Bapat, 2500 years of Buddhism, pp. 42-44.
one of the nine ANgAs\textsuperscript{11} or divisions of the Buddha’s teachings as number seven. The \textit{JAtaka} is, as already explained, a story of the Buddha’s former births, while he was still in search of Enlightenment. Belonging to the \textit{Khuddaka-nikaya}, the \textit{JAtaka} contains a collection of 547 stories of the Master’s former lives. Here the exact number of the \textit{JAtakas} is a matter of controversy: some say the total number is 550; but in fact the \textit{Pali} Text has only 547\textsuperscript{12} stories. Most scholars are of the opinion that the number of the \textit{JAtaka} Stories is 550.\textsuperscript{13}

The \textit{JAtaka} evolves a structure which is quite distinctive on its own. We shall now look at briefly the various elements which make the \textit{JAtaka} a distinctive form. Each story is assigned a number according to the number of the verses associated with that particular story, as indicated by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>\textit{JAtaka} numbers</th>
<th>Number of verses</th>
<th>\textit{PAl}-\textit{nipAta} (section)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Eka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>151-250</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Duka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>251-300</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>301-350</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Catukka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>351-375</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>PaGca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>376-395</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>396-416</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Satta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>417-426</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>ATha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{11} The nine divisions or Angas are: \textit{Sutta}, \textit{Geyya}, \textit{Veyyakarana}, \textit{Gatha}, \textit{Udana}, \textit{Itivuttaka}, \textit{JAtaka}, \textit{Abbhutadhamma} and \textit{Vedalla}.

\textsuperscript{12} Fausbøll, \textit{The JAtakas}.

We thus get the number of five hundred and forty seven *Jātaka*. They are arranged in twenty-two books in an order determined by the number of the verses associated with each story.

Each of the 547 Pāli *Jātaka* stories is composed according to a definite and uniform plan. A *Jātaka* consists of four parts, viz. (1) a *Paccappanna-vatthu*, an incident from the time of Gotama, that frames, as it were, and gives rise to Gotama Buddha telling an event of olden times, (2) an *Atītavatthu*, originally only in verse, but afterward retold by Gotama Buddha partly in prose and partly in verse, with moral teaching in view (3) a *VeyyAkaraBa* or Commentary which elucidates both the tale and certain words
in the metrical pieces, and ultimately (4) a *SamodhAna*, a winding up of the story. The last two belong properly to the *Paccupanna-vatthu*. The *SamodhAna* includes the identification, attributed to the Buddha, of personages in the present with the characters who appear in the story from the past.

As I have explained, *JAaka* is a technical name in the Buddhist literatures for a story or stories purporting to tell the previous births of Gotama the Buddha prior to his final enlightenment. Such a story is sometimes known as a *Bodhisattva* (the future Buddha) story. It is a story in which the *Bodhisatta* usually plays a major part in one of his former existences. Sometimes he is the hero, sometimes a secondary character and sometimes only a spectator.

The term *JAaka* is also used to refer to 547 such stories included in the *PAlī* Canon. These stories, in the *PAlī* version, exhibit lives in different forms. “They may be simple tales or beast fables, stories of common life or narratives portraying the lives of kings and countries, usually told in prose with the climax or essential part in verses”. 14 These verses are regarded as canonical and they are believed to be the words of the Buddha. Though from the earliest time, the canonical book of *JAaka* includes only the verses or *gAthA*, 15 there was probably an oral commentary which gives the stories in prose from the earliest times.

Whether the verses or the prose came into existence first is still a matter of controversy. 16 However, the general opinion of the scholars is that the canonical *JAaka* is a verse *JAaka*. It has been handed down in different versions from those of the

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Jñāaka-aThakatā which consists of gAṭhā verses and prose. So, the gAṭhā or verses have a much stronger claim to be regarded more canonical than the Jñāaka prose.

According to the Buddhist tradition of Sri Lanka the original Pāli was translated into Sinhalese, and afterwards re-translated into Pāli by Buddhagosa and others. In the course of this work of translating and re-translating, however, the gAṭhā are said to have remained in their original Pāli. If we accept this tradition, the gAṭhā are of course, more original than the prose. Prose always has more exposure to transformation and enlargement. We can assume that the language of the gAṭhā is more ancient than that of the prose.

As already mentioned, the Jñāaka text itself forms the tenth book of the Khuddaka nikāya and also forms one of the nine aṅgas or divisions of the Pāli canon. However, some Jñāakas have been included in a separate compilation, called the Cariyāpiṭaka. Some others have been found in various parts of the scriptures, though not under the name of Jñāaka but with many correspondences to the Jñāakas. So, it is difficult to say exactly when the Jñāakas in the present form came into existence and perhaps impossible to say how many of them were among the original number.

However, the general opinion is that they must have come into being and continued to grow over a period of time before they reached their final form.
stated that in the time of the Cullaniddesa, there seem to have been 500 *JAtakas*. This five hundred in number was seen by Fa-hien, the famous Chinese pilgrim, too. However, we are not sure if the reference made was to a rounded number or an exact one.

There are some *JAtakas* included in the *suttas* in the canonical PĀli literature. The *KUładanta* and *MahAsudassana-suttas* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and the *MakhAdeva-sutta* and the *Ghātikāra-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, which have correspondence of *JAtaka* analogues, are some examples. There is a well-known reference to the *JAtakas* as a book of the *Khuddaka-nikāya* in the Cullaniddesa where a collection of 500 *JAtakas* is mentioned. This collection appears to be earlier than the sculptural evidence of Buddhist literature. The *JAtaka* stories developed and spread in lands and among peoples where a belief in the concept of rebirth was prevalent. They show that such a view of life was an integral part of the psychological equipment of both tellers and listeners. They illustrate the operation of Karma and the law of moral action by the way the *Bodhisatta* shaped his destiny through unending efforts for the welfare of all beings. The relationship between action and its result can be seen through the actions of sentient beings from their experience. The *JAtakas* offers an opportunity to observe the working of Karma in daily life as individuals and society in the modern world.

The collection of stories popularly known as the *JAtakas*, is referred in the scholarly circles as the *JAtaka* commentary or *JAtaka-a Thakatha*. It is a compilation which assumed its final form in about the 5th century of the present era. It represents a voluminous early work which was evolved and written down in the PĀli language. It is believed to have been composed and written by a Buddhist editor-commentator in the
later period.\textsuperscript{24} If that is the case, the collection assumed its final form about a millennium after the passing away of the Buddha. This may imply and is indeed a popularly held concept among scholars that the work went through a process of growth and development before being put into writing. This also suggests that the collection or compilation is not the work of a single author but the product of various hands.\textsuperscript{25} The stories display an astonishing diversity: the form and contents of the narratives, the size and the structure of the collection, its literary quality, its gravity, its language and style and its mode of presentation all indicate the involvement of various hands in the composing.

To answer the question as to how ancient the \textit{J\textsc{A}taka} tales are and when they are first heard of and known in literature some facts need to be stated. One is that the sculptured representations of \textit{J\textsc{A}taka} scenes, on the stone railings around the \textit{stupas} of Bharhut and Sanchi, believed to be some of the earliest examples of monumental art\textsuperscript{26} suggest the existence and popularity of \textit{J\textsc{A}taka} tales as early as the 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} centuries B.C. The Bharhut \textit{stupa} has preserved representations of a whole series of scenes from the \textit{J\textsc{A}takas}. On some of these sculptures are inscribed the names of the stories, which they illustrate. These bas-reliefs provide incontestable proof that some tales termed \textit{J\textsc{A}takas} were considered sacred lore.

The date of the Bharhut \textit{stupa} is put at 250-200 B.C. Stone architecture is believed to have commenced at the age of Asoka 250 B.C.\textsuperscript{27} And we may assert the

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{24} \textit{Encyclopedia of Buddhism}, Vol. VI, p. 7.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid. p. 8.
\item \textsuperscript{26} James, \textit{Tree and serpent worship}, p. 85.
\item \textsuperscript{27} James, \textit{Tree and serpent worship}, p. 85.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
existence of \textit{J\&aka} tales as early as the 4\textsuperscript{th} century B.C., while the tales that Buddhism adopted must be older.\textsuperscript{28} The Sri Lanka tradition holds the \textit{J\&akas} existed at the time of the Council of Vesali.\textsuperscript{29}

T.W. Rhys Davids,\textsuperscript{30} the founder of the P\&\#248;i Text Society, confirms the idea that a book of Birth Stories existed at a very early date. Indeed, this statement is not only found in other parts of the P\&\#248;i Pr\&\#248;kas but also on such ancient monuments as such Sanchi.\textsuperscript{31} Sanchi is one of the 84,000 monuments traditionally believed to have been built by King Asoka. The gateways of the Sanchi \textit{stupa} are carved with the Buddhist legends and lifestyles of 2,000 years ago.\textsuperscript{32} Most of the illustrations round the dome-shapes of Sanchi, Amaravati and Bharhut are from the birth stories in the Buddhist \textit{J\&aka} book.\textsuperscript{33} For instance, the \textit{VJ} is distinctly sculptured in the lowest beam of the Northern gateway of Sanchi.\textsuperscript{34} “There are also half-a-dozen scenes that can be identified with certainty as representing events in the life of Sakya-muni.”\textsuperscript{35}

John Murry also opines that after the death of the Buddha, representations of the stories were carved on stone or painted on rock, as on the gate of the great Sanchi \textit{stupa}, the Bharhut \textit{stupa} and the Ajanta caves.\textsuperscript{36} As to the age of the \textit{J\&aka} stories, Rhys Davids writes that the ancient bas-reliefs afford indisputable evidence that the birth stories existed already at the end of the third century B.C. Since that time the technical

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{28} Francis and Thomas, \textit{J\&aka Tales}, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Rhys Davids, \textit{Buddhist birth stories}, p. LIII.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{31} James, \textit{Tree and serpent worship}, p. 100.
\item \textsuperscript{32} Pande, \textit{Masterpieces of Indian Art}, p. 85.
\item \textsuperscript{33} Pande states that the \textit{stupas} at Amaravati (1\textsuperscript{st} century B.C.), Sanchi (1\textsuperscript{st} century AD) or Nagarjunkonda (2\textsuperscript{nd} -3\textsuperscript{rd} century AD) display the wealth of carving and the main themes uniting the sculpted panels in all three stupas are scenes from the Buddha’s life. Pande, \textit{Masterpieces of Indian Art}, p. 88.
\item \textsuperscript{34} James, \textit{Tree and serpent worship}, p.102.
\item \textsuperscript{35} Ibid. p. 104.
\item \textsuperscript{36} John, \textit{J\&aka Tales}, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
name of the Jātaka has been known and the bas-reliefs were chosen as sacred subjects to be represented round sacred Buddhist buildings.\(^{37}\)

There is also literary evidence to show that the Jātakas were known before the Bharhut and Sanchi sculptures came into existence. Instances of such stories are recorded in the canonical literature. For example, the Jātaka collection does not include all the Jātaka stories existing in the early days of Buddhism.\(^{38}\) There are stories in the canon which are technically Jātakas because they purport to tell of the Buddha in an earlier birth, and conclude with an identification of characters. But they are not found in the commentary. Such are the Ghaṭāraka-sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya,\(^{39}\) the Kūṭadanta and Mahākudassana-sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya, and the Makkhāvīra-sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya. These stories are not Jātaka stories but they purport nonetheless to describe the Buddha in one of his earlier births and conclude with the identification of the characters. The Dīghavu story is one of them related in the Vinaya-ṭīkā, without the hero being identified with the Bodhisatta.

Ananda S. Kulasuriya has shown that “there are several Jātakas scattered throughout the canonical Pāli literature as well as the Sanskrit Buddhist Literature and even outside the literature of Buddhism, many of the stories of the Jātaka Book occur in the Pañcatantra, Kathasaritsagara and other Indian story books. Some stories have parallels in the Mahābhārata and in the Rāmāyaṇa, and still others in Jaina literature. There are also a large number of Jātaka tales in the non-canonical Pāli literature,

\(^{37}\) Rhys Davids. *Buddhist birth Stories*. p. LV.  
\(^{38}\) Malalasekera, *DPPN*, I. 951.  
\(^{39}\) *M.II*, 54.
notably in the *Milindapanha*.*" The *JAtakas* seem to have influenced the literature of the classical European languages, Greek and Latin. A sketch of the *JAtakas* can be also seen in the Arabic literature.*"41

The purpose of the *JAtakas* is to instruct people how to live a moral life and to teach people the value of a good life. Every story in the *JAtaka* book gives us a moral or an advice to live in a righteous way. For examples: *Somadatta-JAtaka,*42 *Migapothaka-JAtaka*43 and *SujAta-JAtaka*44 teach us that weeping over the death only aggravates grief; *VAbBAroha-JAtaka*45 advises us to be cautious about wicked people; *Javana-hamsa-JAtaka*46 reminds us of the virtue of help offered by someone. Thus these stories give one not only literary pleasure but also valuable advice to mould one’s life and that of others. They serve not only as instruments of preaching the doctrine but they are meant to amuse and entertain. The Buddha taught both *suttas* and stanzas and legends and *JAtakas*. Knowing the abilities of his numerous listeners, the Buddha preached in many different ways to suit the abilities of the level of understanding of his listeners. In this regard, Ananda S. Kulasuriya states that telling many tales, amusing, agreeable, both instructive and pleasant, tales by means of which all beings not only become pleased with the law in this present life, but also after death reach happy states.*"47

Telling stories is one of the key factors in the Buddha’s teaching method. The psychological values of such story are seen in the Buddha’s telling the former birth

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41 Ibid. p. 10.
44 Ibid. p. 103. *JAtaka* No. 352.
46 Ibid. IV. *JAtaka* No. 476.
story named *Canda-kinnara-jAtaka* to Yasodhara at his first visit to her after Enlightenment. It is obvious that the Buddha himself made use of popular tales for preaching to people. One of the instances recorded in the Pali Canon is the *MahAsudassana-sutta* of the *Digha-nikAya* where the Buddha preaches the *MahAsudassana-jAtaka*. The Buddha used two methods of teaching. First, he held before his audience the ideals of a household life. Secondly, if he found any one competent to receive higher spiritual teaching, he would then speak on *Nibbana*, the ultimate happiness of Buddhism. For its realization, renunciation of the world and strict observance of monastic rules is required. The first lessons included topics on the attainment of heaven (*saggakathA*), the observance of common precepts (*sllakathA*), the giving of alms (*dAnakathA*), the disadvantages of sensual life (*kAmAnaM okAraM AdinavaM*). The second explained the advantages of a homeless life (*nikkhave AnisaMsaM*). It centred round the excellent ‘Middle Path’ which he discovered under the Bo-Tree for leading mankind to enlightenment and *Nibbana*. The realization of the second part of his teachings could only be attained by being a ‘*Bhikkhu*’ of his Order. The *jAtakas*, therefore, essentially dealing with ‘*saggakathA*’, ‘*sllakathA*’, ‘*dAnakathA*’ and the like must have been the chief sources of his doctrine intended for householders.

Monks and preachers also make use of popular tales to make their preaching attractive to people. Usually they make use of *jAtaka* stories. This has been a widespread practice not only throughout India but also in other parts of Southeast Asia such as Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, and Laos.

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48 Cowell, *The jAtaka* No. 485.
50 See Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part II.
51 Cowell, Vol, I. p. 230. *jAtaka* No. 95
All religious preachers always take advantage of storytelling and story hearing and making much use of stories for preaching. Whenever they preach, they venture frequently to choose fables, fairy tales from the rich storehouse of popular tales or from secular literature. Sometimes they alter and adapt them wherever and whenever necessary to suit their aims to educate people.

In Sanskrit literature, the *MahAbhArata*, the great Hindu epic becomes the storehouse of Indian mythology, philosophy and folklore. It is often made use of to educate people of India. The other popular texts in Sanskrit literature are *PaGcatantra* and *Hitopadesa* whose original designs are more or less to teach princes right government and conduct. They are both the design of the expert of tradition of political science and the folk and literary tradition of story-telling. *PaGcatantra* is one of the earliest and the most frequently translated literary products of India. It is popular both from within the Indian subcontinent and the world at large. It is a complex book that does not seek to reduce the complexities of human lives, government policy, political strategies, and ethical dilemmas into simple solutions. It is simple and conveying useful information to different readers at different levels. The *PaGcatantra* is an older and larger collection which travelled into Persia.

The *Hitopadesa* is an equally well known and one of the most widely translated works of Sanskrit literature. It is a collection of animal and human fables in prose,

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53 Ibid. p. ix.
55 Rhys David, *Buddhist India*, p. lxx.
intended to impart instruction in worldly wisdom and the conduct of political affairs.\textsuperscript{56} Both the popular texts, \textit{PaG\textsc{catantra}} and \textit{Hitopades\textsc{A}} have been translated into many languages from their conception until the present time.\textsuperscript{57} Story-telling extracted from these two books is often used to educate children and adults.

Story-telling is one of the very ancient arts in India. Religious teachers often make use of these traditional popular \textit{PaG\textsc{catantra}} and \textit{Hitopades\textsc{A}} stories to educate people. For examples: regarding the way of making friendship, how to honour and maintain it and to help friends in case of need, \textit{the story of the crow, turtle, deer and mouse} is taught.\textsuperscript{58} On war and for peace, the story of \textit{the Crows and the Owls} which illustrates war and peace is taught.\textsuperscript{59} On the other hand, from how to associate with good friends and keep away from bad ones, a story from \textit{Hitopades\textsc{A}} named \textit{Gaining Friends} is taught. To remind us not to interfere in other affairs, \textit{the story of the Intrusive Ass} is taught.\textsuperscript{60} The story of \textit{the Crow and the Quail} is taught help people from staying or going with villains.\textsuperscript{61}

\textit{\textsc{J}Atakas} are considered without exception valuable instruments for educating people. The last ten \textit{\textsc{J}Atakas}, which are popular in South and Southeast Asian countries, Sri Lanaka, Burma, Thailand and Laos gives us each of the morals it contains. For examples: \textit{\textsc{M}Ug\textsc{a}-pakkha-\textsc{J}Ataka} or \textit{Temiya-\textsc{J}Ataka},\textsuperscript{62} the birth story of the mute prince,

\textsuperscript{56} Haksar, \textit{The Hitopadesa}, Intro. p. ix.
\textsuperscript{57} Patrick , \textit{The PaG\textsc{catantra}}, Intro. p. ix; Haksar, \textit{The Hitopadesa}, Intro. p. ix.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. pp.71-81.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. pp. 105-112.
\textsuperscript{60} Haksar, \textit{The Hitopadesa}, pp. 85-88.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid. pp. 147-148.
\textsuperscript{62} \textit{\textsc{J}Ataka}, No. 538.
teaches us the virtue of renunciation (*Nekkhamma*); *Mahajanaka-jAtaka*, the birth story of the lost prince, teaches us how to make effort (*Viriya*); *SAmA-jAtaka*, the birth story of the devoted son, teaches us loving kindness (*MettA*); *Nimi-jAtaka*, the birth story of the noble king, teaches us about determination (*AdhittAna*); *CandakumAra* (*KhandahAka*), the birth story of the honourable prince, teaches us about patience (*Khanti*); *BhUridatta-jAtaka*, the birth story of Naga prince, teaches us about moral ethics (*SlI*); *MahAnAradakassapa-jAtaka*, the birth story of the great Brahma, teaches us about equanimity (*UpekkhA*); *VidhUrapaBDita-jAtaka*, the birth story of the eloquent sage, teaches us about truthfulness (*Sacca*); *MahUmmagga-jAtaka*, the story of the clever sage, teaches us about wisdom (*PaGGA*) and *VJ*, the birth story of the charitable Prince, teaches us how to be generous (*DAwu*) and helpful to the needy. According to the words of the *NidAna-kathA* compiler, “the *ApABBaka* and other Births were related which in times gone by were recounted on various occasions by the great illustrious Sage, and in which during a long period our Teacher and Leader, desirous of the salvation of mankind, fulfilled the vast conditions of Buddha-hood”.

Throughout centuries, the *jAtaka* stories have been tremendously popular in Buddhist countries. They are made use of for educating people in a secular sense as well as spiritually. Particularly the last ten stories have been extracted to form a core in countries such as Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand and Laos. The popularity of the *jAtakas* in

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63 *jAtaka*, No.539.  
64 *jAtaka*, No. 540.  
65 *jAtaka*, No. 541.  
66 *jAtaka*, No. 542.  
67 *jAtaka*, No. 543.  
68 *jAtaka*, No. 544.  
69 *jAtaka*, No. 545.  
70 *jAtaka*, No. 546.  
71 *jAtaka*, No. 547.  
Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand, the ways they influence the life of the people, and the uses to which they are put will be discussed in detail here. Buddhist and non-Buddhist communities where the \textit{JAtaka} stories have been widely spread cannot escape from their influence. The influence of the \textit{JAtaka} stories is tremendous in the land of India and in other lands as well. The stories appeal to all strata of the population. They are understood not only by the wise but even by the simple-minded. They have human appeal and they continue to have much influence on the life of the people. Bollee wrote in his preface to the \textit{KuBAla-jAtaka} that the collection of the \textit{JAtaka} stories plays an important role in the literary and artistic life of the Theravada countries. It is an inexhaustible source, for the monks, of topics for sermons, and for the people, of diversion and examples of moral conduct.\textsuperscript{73}

The influence of the \textit{JAtakas} in the Buddhist countries can be seen in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. During the full-moon nights or on other religious occasions, a lot of people would listen with deep attention for hours when \textit{Bhikkhus} recite the \textit{JAtakas}, the stories of the Buddha’s former lives. For ordinary people “the \textit{JAtakas} are not merely literature or folklore, but something that happens in their very presence and profoundly affects their own life, something that moves them to the core of their being, because it is present reality to them.”\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{73} Bollee, \textit{KuBAla-jAtaka}, pre.
\textsuperscript{74} Quoted by Ananda Salgado Kulasuriya, \textit{Encyclopedia of Buddhism}, Vol. VI, p. 20.
The *JAtaka* stories have much influence in the Buddhist lands of Southeast Asia. In Burma, for example the last ten stories\(^{75}\) of the *JAtaka*, known as the *ManipAla*, appear to have become influential on the life of the people and popular in Burma from about the 4\(^{th}\) to the 13\(^{th}\) centuries. In prominent temples and Pagodas in Pagan (11\(^{th}\)-13\(^{th}\) centuries) like Ananda temple (စန္ဒန်) built by King Kyanzitha, the lower terraces of it house a complete set of *JAtaka* plaques. Its total number is 537. They are named and numbered in Pali. There are further 375 plaques depicting the *ManipAla*, the last ten *JAtakas*, on the upper terraces of it but the inscriptions are in Mon language.\(^{76}\) The hall of another temple, Abe-yadana, (စိုးရိုး) (1102/3 AD) was illustrated with a set of the 550 *JAtaka* story scenes, and now it is reported that they are in a lamentable condition.\(^{77}\) Naga-yon, a well known temple, (နဂါး) (1102/3 AD) built after Abe-yadana temple, also conveys the *JAtaka* paintings on the outer wall of it.\(^{78}\) The painting of the *JAtaka* scenes can also be viewed from the outer wall of Myinkaba Kubyauk-kyi (မိန်းကြီးကော်ဘိုကြည်).\(^{79}\) 550 painting of the *JAtaka* could be identified at Wetkyi-in Kubyauk-nge (ဝါကျင်ကြည်နူး).\(^{80}\) These are the examples where the temples and pagodas bear a variety of scenes of the *JAtakas* stories as pictorial and sculptural representations accompanied by descriptive texts.

The other aspect of the influence of the *JAtakas* on the people we can see is the transmission of texts by monks to laity. The laity consists of people from all walks of life.

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\(^{75}\) The last ten *JAtakas* are (1) *Mūga-pakkha*- játa No. 538, (2) *Mahājanaka*- játa No. 539, (3) *Sama*- játa No. 540, (4) *Nimi*- játa No. 541, (5) *KhaDahAla*- játa No. 542, (6) *BhUridatta*- játa No. 543, (7) *MahAraDakassapa*- játa No. 544, (8) *VidhUrapaDita*- játa No. 545, (9) the *MahAummagga*- játa No. 546 and (10) *Vessantara*- játa.


\(^{77}\) Ibid. p. 60.

\(^{78}\) Ibid. pp. 62-64.

\(^{79}\) Ibid. pp. 71-73.

\(^{80}\) Ibid. pp. 75-76.
life. Here we discuss the tradition in Thailand. There then is the preacher of the written text. Two methods were used for transmission; oral transmission and scriptural transmission. Oral transmission is a method of reading a palm leaf manuscript of the \textit{JAtaka} book. Even while teaching orally, monks would commonly recite long passages in \textit{Pali} and then translate the passage literally, which was very hard for the ordinary person to understand.\footnote{The Clock of Vipassana has Struck, p. 76.} The intention of this method is to impart instruction and propagating knowledge of the \textit{JAtaka} stories. This used to take place in the village temple with the participation of the laity and the community of monks. This kind of method of oral transmission is still in use in the Southeast Asian countries. The second method is the scriptural transmission. This is the method of writing the entire text of the stories on palm leaves. For example, in Thailand, there are many different versions of the \textit{VJ}. According to a manuscript survey conducted in the North of Thailand, the number of \textit{MahA ChAt} is 1,424 texts in more than eighty literary styles. The numbers of general \textit{JAtaka} stories are in 907 texts. They were composed by monks\footnote{Skilling, \textit{JAtaka and PaGGlsa-JAtaka in South-East Asia}. pp.127-128.} who have played the important role in both these methods of transmission.\footnote{Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Vol. VI, p.22.} The popular of the \textit{VJ}, in Thailand, is transmitted in its own right as \textit{Phra Wetsandon, MahA ChAt}, great birth.\footnote{Skilling, \textit{JAtaka and PaGGlsa-JAtaka in South-East Asia}. pp.126-127.} When \textit{gAthA} the verses alone are recited, it is called \textit{gAthA pan}, a thousand stanzas. On the other hand, the Phra Vessantara merit-making festival is an important part of the annual ritual calendar in the North-East of Thailand and in Laos. Recitation and performance is part of the fabric of merit-making.\footnote{Ibid. P. 127.} It was a court custom for princes, during their period of ordination, in the early Bangkok period, to preach a sermon on the \textit{VJ} to their father King. In 1817, during the Second Reign, Prince
Mongkut, the future King Rama IV, was ordained and preached a sermon on the Maddl section to King Rama II. In 1866, during the Fourth Reign, Prince Chulalongkorn, the future King Rama V, preached the Sakkapabba section, a version composed by his father the King. In 1891, during the Fifth Reign, Prince Mahavajiraun preached the Sakkapabba section and Prince Kronmaluang Nakhon Rajasima preached the Chakasat section.

Needless to say monasteries became effective centres for the spread of the *JAtakas* stories to the ordinary people. These monastic corporations have played a key role in the conservation, transmission and propagation of the stories in many countries. They have been, and continue to be, the centres where the knowledge of the *JAtakas* spread. They have contributed towards the popularization of the stories. Temples and monastic institutions have played this function in many ways. People of all walks of life and in all ranks of society have expressed the *JAtakas* through the medium of the plastic arts of moulding and modelling, like sculpture, ceramics and pottery. Sculpture has played a key role in this process.

Other art forms such as painting and architecture too have played a significant part in the process of communication. As already discussed, Naga-yon temple (စေနာ) in Pagan built after Abe-yadana temple, also conveys the *JAtaka* paintings on the outer wall of it. The painting of the *JAtaka* scenes can also be viewed from the outer wall of

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86 Ibid. p. 129.
87 Ibid. 129.
88 Ibid. 129.
Myinkaba Kubyauk-kyi (Myinkaba Kubyauk-kyi). Myinkaba Kubyauk-kyi (Myinkaba Kubyauk-kyi). 550 paintings of the JAtaka could be identified at Wetkyi-in Kubyauk-nge (Wetkyi-in Kubyauk-nge). In the later period, Mingala-Zedi, which was built by Narathipati (1255/6-1287 AD), contains in its completeness a full set of glazed JAtaka plaques, extant in good condition. Glazing as an art never died and glazed lobes decoratively stud many a temple exterior, for example on the Sula-mani and Hti-lo-min-lo temple.

The themes of Thai traditional paintings are derived from JAtakas. The main themes popularly illustrated are the Ten Lives of the Buddha (DasajAti-jAtakas), the life of the Lord Buddha (Gotama Buddha), the Three Worlds of Buddhist Cosmology (TebhUmi), and the Buddhas of the past and other Buddhism-related subjects. Later paintings often depict scenes from the JAtaka Tales.

The art of the JAtaka painting is also witness to the popularity of these tales in the Indian sub-continent and even in South-east Asia. The JAtakas were used to great effect in the decoration of monastic equipment such as the arts of lacquers, betel-boxes and rectangular trays which illustrate a scene from the VJ, the most favoured in Burma of all the JAtaka stories. There is hardly a temple in an Asian Buddhist country where representations of the JAtakas are not to be found. According to the Sri Lankan chronicle, MahAvamsa, King DuThagAmaNi (160 BC) built the MahAthusa at

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90 Ibid. pp. 71-73.
91 Ibid. pp. 75-76.
92 Ibid. pp. 102-103.
93 Ibid. p. 102.
94 Sonthiwan, Thai Traditional Paintings, p. 18.
95 Thirakanont, Magical Murals rise again.
96 Ralph and Richard, Visions from the Golden Land 'Burma and the art of lacquer,' pp. 59, 125, 159, 214.
Anuradhapura, in the first century B.C.E. He had the relic-chamber of it decorated with scenes from the life of the Buddha as well as with *Jātakas*, including the *Vī Jātaka*. The arts of *Jātakas* can also be found at the Northern Temple in Polonnaruva and at Dimbulagala Temple, about 1200 AD. Another temple where the influence of the *Jātaka* stories on arts can be studied is the temple built by King Sri Narendrasinha (1707-1739 AD). He built a beautiful two-storied splendid temple provided with all kinds of brilliant ornaments when he saw that the temple built by his royal father had fallen into decay. The two-storied temple was roofed with a graceful roof. The king even made thirty-two *Jātaka* stories, including *Vī Jātaka*, depicted in coloured painting on the two walls of the courtyard.

It is not only through the visual arts that the *Jātakas* came to be known to people but also through writing, thus transmitted as written texts to many countries. The *Jātakas* have been translated from the original Pāli into many Asian languages. They are used in areas such as national and religious festivals, marriage, funeral ceremonies, literature both verse and prose, music, dramas, films and fine arts, sculpture and painting.

Thus the *Jātaka* stories, no doubt, formed an important part of the popular literature and played a prominent role in the shaping of the attitudes of people’s life and in the formation of their worldview. They have indeed much influenced the shaping of life of the peoples not only in India but also throughout the Asian countries where the Buddhist community has spread widely. They have even found their way to some

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97 *MahāAvatāraMuṇḍaka* XXX, 87-88.
99 *Cuḷavamsa*, pp. 39-44.
western lands. Regarding the influence of the *Jātaka* stories in the West, Fausbøll quotes Spence Hardy’s *Manual of Buddhism* and says that “not a few of the tales which pass under the name of Aesop’s Fables are to be found in the Buddhist Book *Jātaka*, forming a part of the amusing stories, to which the Singhalese will listen through without any apparent weariness.” “Besides, there are some of the Comic stories that are well known all over Europe under different names, for example, stories about the wise men of Gotham in England, Molbohistorier in Denmark, Geschichte der Schildburger in Germany, and so on. And still further Fairy tales of the same style can be even found in Grimm and others.”¹⁰¹

Chapter Three

The Jātakas and their influence on Sri Lanka culture:

A brief study with special reference to the Vessantara-Jātaka

Jātaka stories have exerted a great influence as popular moral guidance among Bhikkhus and kings as well as ordinary people in Sri Lanka.¹ Most people in Sri Lanka are at least familiar with the names of personalities such as Vessantara,² the generous prince who really believed charity began at home, and Porisada, the king who turned cannibal, ate up everybody that his cook cooked for him and ended up by cooking the cook.³

This chapter will examine the influence of Jātakas on many aspects of Sri Lankan culture: literature and art in general and the influence of VJ on drama and daily life in particular. This contribution is to demonstrate that Jātakas are indeed not only at the heart of Sri Lankan literature and drama, but have also had a great influence on the way morality is taught and practised in a monastic and lay context.

Many Jātaka stories are told in Sinhalese verses. They have provided the subject matter for ornate poetic compositions, the Mahākavyās.⁴ Their influence on Sri Lankan literature can be traced back to centuries and can still be felt today. Many kings showed interest in listening to the Jātaka stories during the preaching of the Dhamma throughout

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² Jātaka No 547, The Jātaka No 547, Translated by Francis, pp. 246-305.
⁴ Ariyapala, Kavi/Sūmi/Bā, Prolegomenon.
the night. At school, *Jātaka* stories are meant to be compulsory reading. When Buddhist monks teach children in temples, *Jātaka* stories take a prominent place in primary education. Young novices are asked to read *Jātaka* stories aloud after the midday meal in order that they may learn and read and teach effectively.

The influence of *Jātakas* on arts is found at the Northern Temple in Polonnaruwa and at Dimbulagala Temple, constructed about 1200 AD. Most Kandyan paintings are based on the *Jātaka* stories. They become the themes of the murals of Sri Lankan temples. The Degaldoruva murals are considered to be the outstanding examples of this style of painting. A scheme of *Jātaka* scenes similar to Bharhut can be examined at Lohapāsada and at the great Thūpa built in Ceylon during the reign of King Duṭṭhadāminī. The Mahāvamsa, the Great Chronicle of Ceylon, records an account that when King Duṭṭhadāminī who came to the throne around 160 BC built a nine storeyed Lohapāsada as a residence for monks, scenes from various *Jātaka* stories were painted on the walls. Then again, when he built the great Thūpa at Anuradhapura, many *Jātaka* scenes were depicted and he commanded that the *VJ* scenes be depicted fully. Scenes from *Jātakas* were sculptured in gold were found inside the cavity of Ruwanveli pagoda which was built by King Duṭṭhadāminī.

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5 *Cuḷavamsa* XC, VV 80-87.
8 Ibid. p. xv.
9 Nandadeva, *Early Sinhalese Painting*, pp. 48-49.
10 Harischandra, *Psychiatric Aspects of Jātaka Stories*, Foreword, p. v. by Atukorala. Atukorala further confirmed that how Harischandra has shown clearly and succinctly that the *Jātaka* stories have helped in the study, prevention and treatment of mental ill-health, from ancient times. It is true that the Buddha preached *Jātaka gāthās* to give advice or guidance as crisis intervention.
12 *Cuḷavamsa* XC, VV 80-87.
14 Ibid. pp. 206-207.
National and religious festivals and other cultural activities of Sri Lanka over 23 centuries from 3rd century B.C. reflect the influence of *Jātaka* stories. A Chinese traveller, Fa-Hsien, was reported to have seen 500 sculptures of characters from all *Jātaka* stories in the 5th century AD during the festival of the tooth-relic. Even today, during the *Vesak* festival known as the Buddha’s day, which falls in May, many cities erect costly giant Vesak pandals, the majority of which illustrate *Jātaka* stories.

There is hardly any form of Sinhala literature which is free from the influence of *Jātaka* stories. Works of poetry beginning from *Sasadāvata* (12th century), *Muvadeva* (12th century), *Kavsilumibā* (13 century), *Guttalikāvayā* and *Kāvayashekharaya* (14th century), *Kusa-jātaka kāvayā* and *Asadisa dā kāva* (17th century) based on *Jātaka* stories. Poems of other genre are full of citations to events and personalities from *Jātaka* stories. As to the prose works, *Sulu Kalingu dāvata* (12th century), *Ummagga jātaka* (13th century), *Bhūriddatta-jātaka* (13th century), and *Vessantara-jātaka* are *Jātaka* stories. Other works namely *Amāvatura* (12th century), *ButsaraBā* (12th century), *Pujavāliya* (13th century), *Saddharmaratnāvaliya* (13th century) and *Saddharmālankāraya* are full of material from *Jātaka* stories. King Parākramabāhu IV of Kurunegala (AC.1302-1326) wrote the Sinhalese *Pansiya Panaś-jātaka* (the 550 birth stories of the Buddha from the original Pāli) with the help of a

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid. Intro, p. xiv.
22 Ibid. Interpreter’s Intro, p. xiv.
monk from Chola and his prime minister. The complete collection of the *JAtakas* was translated into Sinhalese during his reign. He was not only a scholar but also a mighty monarch who did much for the progress of literature in the country.

The king, having had the *JAtakas* translated from the Pāli, had them read out in the presence of Great Elders well versed in the scriptures and entrusted them to a theran by the name of Medhankara to preserve the tradition through his pupils. The king was also very fond of listening to *JAtaka* stories, usually told during the preaching of the Dhamma throughout the night. The other king who was equally keen in listening to *JAtakas* was IlanAga of AD 92-102. After listening to the *Kapi-jAtaka* by a *JAtaka bhAnaka bhikkhu*, MahA Paduma, he enlarged the bhikkhu's temple and pagoda at Nagavihara. And then he ordered the Tissa and DUra ponds to be dug for the welfare of the many.

After the translation of the whole collection into Sinhalese, the *JAtakas* continued to be referred to in Sinhalese religious works. They were extensively referred to or cited in the older prose, and they also provided material for early poets. Many of the *JAtaka* stories have been told in Sinhalese verse. They have provided the subject matter for ornate poetic compositions, the Mahakavyas. They have been put into popular verse. They have been acted. The most popular *JAtaka* in verse is said to be the *Vessantara-jAtaka KAvya*, which has 975 stanzas. There are many versions of it. Various recensions

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24 *CuLavamsa XC*, VV 80-87.
26 *JAtaka* No. 40.
of this poem are known among the Sinhalese villagers. Some of the manuscripts of the poem go back to the early eighteenth-century.\(^{30}\) A popular story is often known as a Halla and some *JAtakas* have been put into this type of poetry (17th and 19\(^{th}\) centuries). One of the best-known examples of such is said to be the Vessantara Halla containing 95 stanzas. The narrative is said to be really humorous. The chief character here is the old Brahmin *Ujaka*.\(^{31}\) This describes his setting off in search of wealth and slaves.

The influence of the *JAtakas* on arts of Sri Lanka is not less important. As cited earlier King DuThagAmi placed sculpture figures from the *Vessantara-JAtaka* inside Ruvanvalisaya and decorated the walls of Lohapasada temple with paintings of scenes from the *JAtakas*. The King believed that such acts were considered meritorious.\(^{32}\) The earliest paintings which came down to us are the paintings on the walls of the ancient shrine room at Tivamka-paTimA-ghara in Polonnaruva.\(^{33}\) It is dated from the reign of ParakramabAh I (1153-1186 AD). Other examples of the *JAtakas* are found at the Northern Temple in Polonnaruva and at Dimbulagala Temple about 1200 AD\(^{34}\) *JAtaka* stories such as *Vessantara-JAtaka*, *Sasa*, *VidhUra PaBlita*, *Culla Paduma*, *MUpapakkha*, *SAma*, *MahASudassana*, *Kusa* and *MahAummagga* were then popular. They are found at the northern temple of Polonnaruva. It seems that only certain *JAtaka* stories were then popular and these were portrayed by common agreement. Another temple where the influence of *JAtaka* stories on arts were found, is the temple built by King Sri Narendrasinha (1707-1739 AD). He built a beautiful two-storied splendid temple provided with all kinds of brilliant ornaments when he saw that the temple built by his

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\(^{31}\) Ibid. p. 277.

\(^{32}\) Ibid. p. 35.

\(^{33}\) Ceylon Paintings from Temple, Shrine and Rock, p. 24.

\(^{34}\) Nandadeva, *Early Sinhalese Painting*, pp. 48-49.
royal father had fallen into decay. The two-storied temple was roofed with a graceful roof. The king even made thirty-two *Jātaka* stories, including *VJ*, depicted in coloured painting on the two walls of the courtyard.\(^{35}\) It is said that the number 32 corresponds with the 32 auspicious marks of the Buddha described in the *Lakkhana-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and further with the 32 kinds of food offered to the Sacred Relic daily at the temple of the tooth-relic in Kandy.\(^{36}\) Except at Dambulla, where the fight between Duṭṭhadāminī and Elara had been painted, almost all mural paintings have been confined either to events associated with the Buddha or to the *Jātaka* stories.\(^{37}\) The *VJ* mural painting was displayed on the facing walls of the verandah of the Naga Vimanaya. Within the *Vihāra* are sedent Buddha images and two standing images facing each other, on the sidewalls within, all painted in sober colours.\(^{38}\)

The favourite subject of painting of all Kandyan artists is the *Jātakas*, which supply also the major themes for this particular group of murals from the Tivanga vestibule.\(^{39}\) Paranavitana states that “The subjects painted by Kandyan artists have much in common with those of earlier masters. The representations of *Jātaka* stories were as popular then as at any other epoch in the history of Buddhism.”\(^{40}\)

The *VJ* was a theme which almost every sponsor desired to be painted on the walls of new shrines.\(^{41}\) A section of a detailed illustration of the *Vessantara- Jātaka* is popular in all Kandyan painting. The Degaldoruva murals are considered to be the

\(^{35}\) *Cullavāma*, pp. 39-44.

\(^{36}\) Seneviratna, *The Temple of The Sacred tooth Relic*, pp. 81-82.


\(^{38}\) Lloyd Weerekoon, *Raja Mahāvihāra of Kandy*, p. 73.


\(^{40}\) *Ceylon Paintings from Temple, Shrine and Rock*, p. 28.

\(^{41}\) Ibid.
outstanding examples of this style of painting. From the east of the wall cave shrine of Hindagala Rajamaha Vihara in Kandy District, to the south of the door way, the \( VJ \) beginning from the top of the doorway are filled up and to the north of the door the \textit{Culladhammapala-\textit{jAtaka}} are painted. On the East wall of Dova Rajamaha Vihara of the Badulla District, Uva Province, the illustrations of the \textit{Vessantara}, \textit{Telapatta} and \textit{Culladhammapala-\textit{jAtakas}} are painted in the traditional styles. These \textit{jAtakas} are continued to the South and the West walls too. On the West, South and East walls of the shrine room of KelaBiya Rajamaha Vihara, among the paintings, \textit{jAtakas}, such as \textit{Culladhammapala}, \textit{Devadhamma}, \textit{S\'A\'na} and the beginning of \textit{Vessantara}, \textit{Mahas\'I\'lava}, \textit{Telapatta} and \textit{Saccankira-\textit{jAtaka}} are depicted. The copper-plate grant

\begin{itemize}
\item [42] Gunasinghe, \textit{An album of Buddhist paintings from Sri Lanka}, p. 64.
\item [44] Ibid. pp. 96-106.
\item [45] Ibid. pp. 38-39.
\item [47] Ibid. pp. 70-76.
\item [48] Ibid. pp. 78-92.
\item [49] Ibid. Intro. p. 39. The traditional style paintings at Dova Rajamaha Vihara represent a continuation of the Kandyan period tradition. They are expressed in the language of an unsophisticated folk-art. The prototype of this style is also to be seen in the painting of the low-country. p. 47.
\item [50] Ibid. Intro. pp. 39-40.
\item [51] Chutiwongs, Prematileke & Silva, \textit{Paintings of Sri Lanka, KelaBiya}, pp.92-93. The West wall contains only two plates from this \textit{jAtaka}. This \textit{jAtaka} relates the story of an evil-minded king who had his son killed because of jealousy and he went down to hell for its retribution.
\item [52] Ibid. pp.96-98. This \textit{jAtaka} is about the exiling of the elder son, the \textit{Bodhisatta}, by a king who was led by the wicked manipulations of his second wife. The \textit{Bodhisatta}'s two step brothers who loved him most followed him in exile. Together they went through an adventure, and all were saved by the wisdom of the \textit{Bodhisatta}.
\item [53] Ibid. p. 88. The \textit{Sama-\textit{jAtaka}} tells about the virtues of the \textit{Bodhisatta}, \textit{S\'A\'na} who was born to parents living as ascetics in a forest. He looked after his parents who later on became blind, until he was shot by a hunter’s arrow. With the intervention of the gods who were impressed by his virtues, the boy was restored to life and the eyesight of his parents was also given back to them.
\item [54] Ibid. pp. 68-80. The wall contains 7 painting plates from this \textit{jAtaka VJ} such as 1, the scene of the donation of the elephant, 2, the scene of Madd\'le leaving the palace, 3, the scene of giving up the horses, 4, the scene of retiring to the forest, 5, the scene of admonishing the family, 6, the scene of arrival at the kingdom of Ceta and the scene of biding farewell.
\item [55] Ibid. p. 90. There is only one plate depicted here. The \textit{Telapatta-\textit{jAtaka}} is about the story of the \textit{Bodhisatta}, Telapatta’s meeting with ogresses in the forest who had succeeded in eating up all his companions. The \textit{Bodhisatta} himself managed to overcome the machinations of the ogresses and reached the kingdom of Takkasila. An ogress followed him in the guise of a beautiful woman announcing that the \textit{Bodhisatta} was her husband who had deserted her. The king was warned by the \textit{Bodhisatta} as to the ogress's identity, but he fell for her beauty and took her to his palace to be himself eaten up by her at night.
\end{itemize}
of Kirtisri Rajasimha dated 1755 AD provides more information about the details of the constructions. In it, it is recommended that among the paintings, the JAtakas are to be painted on the walls of Madavala Rajamahavihara. The East wall of the temple contains many illustrations from the VJ covering the episodes of the Vankagiri where Prince Vessantara and his family lived during their exile. The paintings of Vessantara, Culladhammapala and Uraga-JAtakas can also be identified in the shrine room of the Muppane monastery in Moragala.

The JAtaka paintings are a resurgence of the oldest Buddhist art tradition exemplified by the bas-reliefs of Bharhut and Sanchi. The Bharhut carvings, illustrating the stories of the present and those of the past, present a distinct JAtaka selection with a sketch of the life of the Buddha, which presupposes an earlier collection of legends and stories known at the time. The Bharhut JAtaka scenes are important as indicating the existence of a collection of birth stories. In the early part of the 5th century AD, when Fa-shien visited Ceylon he is said to have seen representations of 500 Birth stories round the Abhayagiri temple.

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56 Ibid. pp. 43-44.
57 Chutiwongs, Prematileke & Silva, Paintings of Sri Lanka, Madavala, Intro. p. 32.
58 Ibid. p. 34. Vessantara is one of the most popular JAtakas illustrated in paintings and it demonstrates the Bodhisatta’s completion of the perfection of the virtue concerning offering where he parted his wealth, his wife and his children. Here in this temple, eight scenes, from the Vessantara-JAtaka, such as the hermitage, Madd gathering fruits, giving the children away to the Brahmin, JUjaka spending the night in the forest, the redemption of the children from the Brahmin are well depicted. Chutiwongs, Prematileke & Silva, Paintings of Sri Lanka, Madavala, pp. 74-88.
60 Ibid. Intro. p.11.
In Sri Lanka, a scheme of JAtaka scenes similar to Bharhut can be examined at LohapAsAda and at the great ThUpa built during the reign of King DuThagAminI. The two places are important in the history of Buddhism as evidence of the development of art. LohapAsAda is here important as indicating that the serpentine line on the Bharhut coping with lotus blossoms and JAtaka scenes and the great ThUpa is said to have had the account of carvings of JAtakas in the relic-chamber.

Throughout history, sculptors and painters have been translating JAtakas into visual forms. Veherahena Temple close to the Ruhuna Campus is a good example where thousands of colourful mural paintings depict scenes from almost all JAtakas. Viewing such scenes not only benefited devotees but also attracted them to the places where beautiful forms of arts are depicted.

The JAtakas also influenced the origin of dramatic performances in Sri Lanka. Harichandra wrote that “Drama must be the art-form most influenced by the JAtaka stories, from the days of their arrival in the third century BC to the present time”. It is said that centuries ago, during the Vesak festivals, plays based on JAtakas were staged without charging. Playing roles in such plays were regarded by actors and actresses as a meritorious deed. Some examples of the plays based on JAtaka stories are: Pabavati (1952) based on Kusa-jAtaka, Maname (1958) Chulladhanuggaha-jAtaka, Rattaran and Kadavalalu, (1958) based on Serivanija-jAtaka, MahAsAra (1967) based on MahAsAra-

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64 Ibid. p. 36.
66 Harischandra, Psychiatric Aspects of JAtaka Stories, p.35.
67 Ibid. p. 34.
68 Ibid.
There was not only a theatrical tradition, a type of opera called *Vessantara* *NIDagama*, but also there was a film of *Vessantara* based on the *VJ*. *Vessantara-JAtaka* is perhaps by far the best known. As Gombrich observes, “Even the biography of the Buddha is not better known”.

John De Silva (1857-1938) created *Vessantara NATakaya*, which has a prologue and six acts. Of all John De Silva's dramas based on *JAtaka* stories, “Vessantara” based on *VJ* was considered the best. John De Silva even advised the actors and actresses to observe five precepts strictly through the entire period of the run of the drama.

In 1956, Sarachchandra produced two play-lets “Rattaran and Kadavalalu.” Both these plays used prose dialogue, song, music and dance, stylised costumes and no sets, and utilized ritual elements of the bali, thouvil and Kolam. Both of them are said to have used the *JAtaka* narratives as the material for construction of the plot. In 1980, he also produced *Vessantara*, which had been a *JAtaka* story attempted by the Tower Hall playwright. He grafted several versions of the Buddhist legend as found in various Asian lands. He even claimed the *JAtakas* to be the only appropriate tales for today and hoped to highlight noble traditional values. The *VJ* illustrates the self-sacrifice of the

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72 Ibid. p. 34.
73 Makuloluwa and Kulatunga, *Index to books and Articles on Music, Dance and Drama of Sri Lanka*, p. 15.
King, Vessantara who gave away the white elephant of his own kingdom. He was exiled into the forest by popular request and there a Brahmin came and begged for his children.\textsuperscript{74} In the book of Butsarana, sixty-eight \textit{JAtakas} have been mentioned briefly while the \textit{VJ} is mentioned in length.\textsuperscript{75} However, is the book of Damsarana which was divided into three parts: the first part deals with the stories of the 24 Vivaranas of the \textit{Bodhisatta} beginning from his birth as the sage Sumedha; the second part contains a very brief account of the \textit{JAtakas} and the third part contains larger stories. Some were taken from the Dhammapada commentary, others from the longer \textit{JAtakas}. There are ten \textit{JAtaka} stories in this section and the last one is the \textit{VJ}, which can be identified with the version in the Butsarana.\textsuperscript{76} There was also a film of Vessantara, \textit{Vesaturu Sirita} produced by D.C.L. Amarasinghe in 1965.\textsuperscript{77}

The influence of the \textit{VJ} on Sri Lankan daily life since ancient times has been remarkable. King Dutthagamini was very fond of listening to \textit{JAtaka} stories during the preaching of the Dhamma throughout the night.\textsuperscript{78} The other well known king who listened to \textit{JAtakas} fondly was king Ilanaga of AD 92-102. After listening to the \textit{Kapi-jAtaka}\textsuperscript{79} by a \textit{JAtaka bhanaka bhikkhu}, Mahā Paduma, he enlarged the Bhikkhu’s temple and pagoda at Nagavihara. And then he ordered the Tissa and Đura ponds to be dug for the welfare of the many.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{74} Makuloluwa and Kulatunga, \textit{Index to books and Articles on Music, Dance and Drama of Sri Lanka}, p. 66.
\textsuperscript{75} Godakumbura, \textit{Sinhalese Literature}, pp. 73-74.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid. p. 75.
\textsuperscript{77} Gombrich, \textit{The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara}, xlii.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Cuḷavamsa} XC, VV 80-87.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{JAtaka} No. 40.
The reciting of the VJ at wakes is a common practice in the low country of Sri Lanka. It is also recited in Sinhalese verses in a funeral house to dispel the grief of the mourners.\textsuperscript{81} People in Sri Lanka are familiar with at least some of the interesting characters in \textit{JAtaka} Stories. Names of personalities such as King Vessantara and the King Porisada are household words.\textsuperscript{82} It is felt that \textit{JAtaka} stories are favourable to the little children of every country.\textsuperscript{83} The events of the Buddha’s own previous life were expected to illustrate particular points in order to make teaching easier. Even today a Buddhist monk or a teacher has remarkably observed this practice in order to teach.\textsuperscript{84} Harichandra mentioned in his introduction to \textit{Psychiatric of Aspects JAtaka Stories} that “Not only little children, but also adults find \textit{JAtaka} Stories stimulating.”\textsuperscript{85} He observed this when he lectured to people on poya days\textsuperscript{86} at the Dhammayatanaya, Maharagama, on psychiatric aspects of individual \textit{JAtaka} stories. He noticed that the congregation who observed the eight precepts on poya days at the Dhammayatanaya, Maharagama under the able guidance of the late Venerable Madihe Pannasiha Mahanayaka Thera exceeded 3,000 on ordinary poya days and 10,000 on Vesak poya days.\textsuperscript{87} Though many of those people have read \textit{JAtaka} stories, they had shown their interest in Harischandra’s psychiatrist-eye view.\textsuperscript{88} On full moon days, white-clad followers sat in a circle and one of them read \textit{JAtaka} stories aloud and it is a custom of some village temples to read \textit{JAtaka} stories on full moon days.\textsuperscript{89} Atukorala mentioned in his foreword of \textit{Psychiatric

\textsuperscript{81} Oldenberg, \textit{The DipavaMsa}, p. 215.
\textsuperscript{82} Harischandra, \textit{Psychiatric Aspects of JAtaka Stories}, p.1
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid. Intro, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid. p. 8.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid. Intro, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{86} Poya day means a full moon day of the month when Buddhists gather in a temple or a pagoda to observe eight precepts. This day, they listen to the teaching of the Buddha from monks and further \textit{JAtaka} stories are read among them either by monks or laity.
\textsuperscript{87} Harischandra, \textit{Psychiatric Aspects of JAtaka Stories, Intro}, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid. p. 5.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid. p. 28.
Aspects of *JAtaka* Stories that Harichandra showed clearly and succinctly how *JAtaka* stories had helped in the study, prevention and treatment of mental ill-health. It is mentioned that Harischandra is using *JAtaka* stories as practical and active therapeutic means for the cure of psychiatric disorders. He has used innovative methods of therapy based on an understanding of the cultural and religious background of Sri Lankan people and this is said to be helpful.\(^{90}\)

It is clear from Harischandra’s observation in his book, “*Psychiatric Aspects of JAtaka Stories,*” that *JAtaka* stories became popular not only among kings and *Bhikkhus*, but also among the ordinary people of Sri Lanka.\(^{91}\) Among them, *VJ* seems to have been the most favourable of all *JAtakas* that the *VJ* is special to people in all walks of life, for its influence goes deep into the hearts and minds of all, literate and illiterate, monk and lay. It is the last and longest story of the existence of the *Bodhisatta* before the grand final birth as Prince Siddhatha. It has a special appeal to poets and dramatists even today. It is only in the *VJ, Paramita*\(^{k}\), perfections, the essential factors for attainment of the Buddha-hood, which have been practised for many lives, reach its highest aim.

In conclusion, for centuries, the influence of *JAtaka* stories on the minds of the people is indeed tremendous. These popular Buddhist stories have made an imprint on every aspect of Sri Lankan culture from the time of their arrival around 306 B.C. to the present day. They have travelled from generation to generation and from country to country. Their influence even today is so great that *Bhikkhus* of any Buddhist country

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\(^{91}\) Ibid. Intro, p. 23.
would feel they would not be able to preach a sermon in an attractive and interesting way to people without referring to the *JÀaka* stories. The *VJ* is the most often cited when talking about generosity, a king’s listening to the voice of his subjects, the loyalty of a husband and a wife and the supporting of the children for their parents.
Chapter Four

A brief study of the influence of the JAtakas, especially the Vessantara-JAtaka on Burmese culture

JAtakas have shed a big influence on many aspects of Burmese life, from the earliest times till the present day. Such influence can be seen in both religious and secular contexts, ranging from the artwork of the pagodas, temples and palaces, to literature, drama, painting, sculpture, sermons and in the custom of the Burmese daily life.

In this chapter, I discuss in both religious and secular contexts, the impact of the JAtakas on Burmese literature at different periods, the Ava period (1364-1555 AD), the Nyaung Yan period (1599-1752 AD), and the Kon-baung period (1782-1885 AD) and arts, drama or Pyazat from the periods 1818 to 1875 AD. My main argument is that, like in Sri Lanka, from the time JAtakas were introduced to Burma, they have formed not only a major influence on many aspects Burmese life, in both religious and secular spheres but have also become original sources for poetry, literature, drama and various forms of art.

Evidence of the influence of JAtakas on religious places can be found in JAtaka plaques inside and outside Burmese pagodas with most of them in Pagan. The earliest examples in Pagan of JAtaka plaques, made of earth, can be found in the Phet Leit Pagodas (1057 AD). These plaques have never been painted. The inscriptions on these
plaques are in PAl.\textsuperscript{1} More \textit{JAtaka} plaques have been found on the lower parts of the Shwe San Taw pagoda (1057 AD) in Pagan.\textsuperscript{2} However, as a result of the renovation of the pagoda, some of them have been covered over. More examples with inscriptions can be found around the Shwezigon pagoda (Early 11 AD).\textsuperscript{3} They were painted with Cint but unfortunately nowadays some of them have been repainted in a way that has caused damage to the earlier images.\textsuperscript{4}

The great Ānanda Temple, in Pagan, built by Kyanzittha\textsuperscript{5} (1084-1112 AD) is famous for Burmese sculptures and paintings. Here in this temple, there are depictions of \textit{JAtakas} and other plaques, like, the life of the Buddha. In this, Mara, the lord of the defilements with a number of retinues in various forms marching towards the Buddha is also depicted. Plaques of Sakka, king of gods, Brahmās, gods and goddesses coming to pay homage to the Buddha with various flowers and offerings in hands, would be attractively seen not only on the lower but also on the upper parts of it. An inscription is written on each of the plaques. In the upper parts, one plaque corresponds to one \textit{JAtaka} story, while for the last ten births, known as the great ten births, more plaques are

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Bo Ke, \textit{Pagan Thu Te Tha Na Learn Nyun}, p. 48.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Ibid. p. 49.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} King Obhasa is said to have started this construction and left it unfinished and it was completed by King Kyanzitta (1084-1113 AD).
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Bo Ke, \textit{Pagan Thu Te Tha Na Learn Nyun}, p. 49.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} Kyanzittha did improve Buddhism a lot not only inside the country itself but also outside it. A Mon inscription at the Shewsandaw Pagoda at Prome shows that Kyanzittha was the first king of Burma to undertake the restoration of the Mahabodhi Temple at Buddhagaya, the most sacred place in the Buddhist world, commemorating, as it does, the attainment of enlightenment by Gotama beneath the shade of its holy tree. The inscription runs, “many persons from all the provinces came into his presence to attend him” One of these was a Chola prince to whom he had written a pious message “concerning the grace of the Jewel of the Lord, the Jewel of His law, and the Jewel of His Clergy, with Vermillion ink upon a leaf of gold” Extensive maritime trade with Indo-China had been developed by the Chola dynasty in the Carnatic. They also raided the Malay empire of Srivijaya. It has been suggested that the prince was the ruler of a Tamil colony in the Delta region and that Anawratha’s conquest of the south had really been undertaken to forestall a possible Chola invasion. These are mere guesses: there is no evidence that the prince was none other than a traveller paying a social visit.
\end{itemize}
required for each JAaka. All were painted and two languages, PÂli and Mon, were used for the inscriptions. The total numbers of JAaka plaques running around the outside of the building are 1500 and inside the corridors are eighty niches containing sculptures representing scenes from the Buddha's own life.

The other place where the plaques of some JAakas and of the life of the Buddha are found is the Phwa Saw DhammarÂja pagoda, but the stories are designated by numbers with no inscription on them. On the MaNgala pagoda, (1255/6-1287), like the Ananda Temple in Pagan, each plate corresponds to one JAaka, while the great last ten births are depicted through many plaques. The MaNgala pagoda, however, has inscriptions in PÂli and Burmese, while the Ananda Temple, has in Mon, the second language for inscriptions.

In addition to the JAakas and the life of the Buddha, there are many other plate decorations on the pagodas such as lotus flowers, creepers, wine, dragons, lions, demons and so on. Pagan, with paintings and sculptures around the pagodas and in the caves, has been considered the home of Burma later. Paintings followed the tradition of Pagan to decorate pagodas, caves and temples. Consequently, the Panya, Sagaing and Kon-baung periods tried to copy Pagan but they could not compete with its masterpiece of that time.

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6 Bo Ke, Pagan Thu Te Tha Na Learn Nyun, p. 49.
7 Mon is also called by the Burman, Talaing.
8 Harvey, History of Burma, p. 41.
9 Bo Ke, Pagan Thu Te Tha Na Learn Nyun, p. 50.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid. pp. 50-53.
The Royal Orders of Burma state that King Thalun, (1628-1648 AD) ordered that on the ceilings of the eight doors of the palace of the eight directions, namely Aung Htun, Tha Se, Kyaw Bhun, Wun Mana, San rA, Yan Aung, Le Tha, Marn Aung, pieces of cloth should be arranged. Various pictures were to be drawn on doors. On the ceilings of the palace, above the Buddha statue, a Bodhi Tree was drawn; then the Arahats, KondaGGa and Bhaddiya paying homage to the Buddha; Venerable Vappa holding an alms bowl of the Buddha, and Venerable MahAnama holding a jug; and then VaTTha rAja-jAtaka, Kappi-jAtaka, GandamAdana mountain, the Sun god with his abode, the Moon god with her abode, Sunakha jAtaka, the monkey king keeping the precepts, 12 LakkhaBA gAthAs, (words 384); CULAmabi 10 gAthAs, (words 320); CindAmabi 10 gAthA (words 320); Mahosadha 10 gAthA (words 320); MahAcunda bhojanga, (words 600); Sllasmin me, (words 80); SakkatvA Buddha Dhamma and SaNhga 3; SuvaBBabUmi mantra, (words 32); PaThAraBA mantra and many other mant ras and parittas to be written, drawn and set in place carefully.12

In April 26th, 1648, King Thalun invited the famous Taung Phll Saya Taws, AriyAlankAra Sayadaw, Anandadhaja Sayadaw, AnuruddhA Sayadaw to the Kaung Mu Taw Raja cULAmabi Cetiya13 and sought their advice how to decorate the drawings around the great walls of the Cetiya. Getting permission, he ordered the hells to be drawn at the lower parts of the wall, moving up the walls for the human world, the divine world, the Brahma world. It is a testament to the pre-eminence accorded to the JAtakas, that he ordered a series of JAtaka paintings, starting from ApaBBaka-jAtaka right up to the VI, at, literally the highest level of the walls. The total numbers of the JAtakas become 430. All scenes are shown from the life of the Buddha, starting from

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13 It is situated in Sagaing in the Upper Burma.
MahÄmayÄdevi’s conception, the birth of Siddhattha, the three palaces, RAma, Subha and SurÄma, the scene of the four sights (four nimitta) and the scene of the going forth for renunciation. He had drawn the scene of the ascetic practices, becoming a Buddha, spending 7 weeks under and around the SrimahÄ Bhodi Tree, the preaching of the Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta to the five ascetics at the Deer park, and of the places where the Buddha observed the rains-retreat for 45 years. Each JÄtaka is depicted in many paintings. For example: the VÄ has 13 parts and all of them have to be on the scene. Each JÄtaka is described in four languages, Burma, Mon, Yon (Lanna) and Shan. The reason for using four languages is that when people from Burma, Mon, Yon and Shan come and happen to read them in their own languages, they will be satisfied, benefit and have more faith. The King ordered to do so with the high hope for the happiness of the many.¹⁴

4.1 The influence of the JÄtakas on Burmese literature

The development of Burmese literature is mainly based on JÄtakas. The TipiÄtaka, was taught by the Buddha in Magadha language. It is believed that the highly venerated PÄli Scholar Venerable Mahabuddhaghosa, while residing at MahÄviÄra in the city of AnurÄdhapura, composed the JÄtaka-äThakäthÄ the commentary on the JÄtakas in MAgadha language.¹⁵ From there, PÄli ÄThakäthÄ along with other PiÄkas were gradually brought to Lower Burma, Sathon.¹⁶ In 1057 AD King Anawratha confiscated the TipiÄkas from King Manuha of Sathon to Pagan and little by little distributed them to all parts of Burma.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 2.
The history of Burmese Literature shows that, since the earliest time, from period to period, its development has been mainly based on Jātakas. For example: in the Pagan period, in the reign of king Alaung Sithu, 1112-1167 AD, there were some inscriptions written in rhymed prose and verses. One such inscription on the wall of the Shwegugyi Pagoda, contains the king’s prayer in Pāli verses. Pāli scholars have listed them as a first class composition. King Alaung Sithu was extremely inspired by the generosity of Prince Vessantara, as shown in the second part of his prayer,

“Through many lives our world’s majestic Lord,  
Summed all Perfections and observances;  
The Home of endless pity then achieved  
His self-denials five for all our weal;  
Born as Vessantara he sought delight,  
In doing good to men and aye excelled  
In all the Ten Perfections passing thence  
The Aye endowed was born in Tusita,  
That city where in beauty and the ten  
Additions he surpassed the other gods,  
Who fro the myriad Universe came  
Entreatings, till he longed for Buddha-hood,”18 (translated by Luce)

The Ava period (1364-1555 AD) was a highly developed time for literature in Burma. The literati of this time included laymen and clergy from different classes such as royalty, the nobility, the aristocracy, senior clergy and commoners. The newly invented verse forms in this period were ‘Pyo’, ‘Aye Chin’, ‘Mawgun’, and ‘Myittasa’. Pyo was the most popular among the numerous literary products of the Ava period. Later this period was called “The period of Pyo”. Four monk poets of great fame who appeared in the Inva period were 1. Shin Uttama Kyaw, 2. Shin Maha Sīlāvāṃsa, 3. Shin Ohn Nyo and 4. Shin Khemā. They were famous not only because of their literary output, which was of high quality, but also because of their association with the “Divine

18 Ibid.
Message” which was prevalent in Ava of that time.\textsuperscript{19} Shin Aggasamadhi, born in 1479 at Kanbya, east of Tabayin, also wrote poetical versions of the \textit{Jātaka} stories of the Buddha.\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Jātaka} stories and the Buddha’s teachings were made more known to the public through the \textit{Pyo} of monk writers who used local vernacular instead of plain P\textit{A}l\textit{i} text. So, this Ava period may be called the period of monastic writers, as it was they who led the literary activity of that time. It is true that the prolific pens of monk poets further promoted Buddhism in this Ava period too.

Just as the Ava period, Nyaung Yan period (1599-1752 AD) produced four monk poets of the “Divine Message,” the Nyaung Yan period produced “four monk writers of great fame” (\textit{Kyaw Lay Kyaw}) namely, 1. Shin Aggavamsa, the author of \textit{Saddan\textit{I}ti} P\textit{A}l\textit{i} grammar, the abbot of Pagan Saddan\textit{I}ti monastery, 2. Shin Ariyavamsa, the author of \textit{MaBisAramaG\textit{U}s\textit{A}-T\textit{k}A}, a commentary on the \textit{Abhiddhammatthavibhavini-T\textit{k}A}, and 3. Shin Warabisanganatha. He was the abbot of Ava and 4. Shin Munindaghosa, the author of \textit{Vinayal\textit{k}Ara-T\textit{k}A}, a P\textit{A}l\textit{i} work commenting on the whole \textit{Vinaya-pi\textit{t}\textit{k}A}. He was the abbot of TaungHpila. The abbot of Ava was an expert on religious subjects but he wrote only one book in prose. It was \textit{MaBikun-dala wuhtu},\textsuperscript{21} a prose version of \textit{Maha Thuta Thawma Jātaka} (\textit{Mahā sutasoma-jātaka}). In it he inserted all 550 \textit{Jātaka} stories. It was regarded as first-class writing, and so made him famous in literary circles. The abbot of Taung Hpila was a versatile writer and he not only wrote \textit{Yatha Wattana Wuhtu}, but also a collection of his answers to the king’s questions on religions, state and government, called three \textit{Amay-taw-pons}.	extsuperscript{22} His other works are 1.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{19} Khin Maung Nyunt, \textit{An Out line of History of Burma Literature}, pp. 31-32.
\textsuperscript{20} Harbey, \textit{History of Burma}, p. 104.
\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Wuhtu} is a story of the Buddha’s births and life in prose form.
\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Amay-taw-pon} is a collection of answers and explanations given to the king’s questions and problems regarding religious, state and government.
\end{flushleft}
The *Vinaya Linkara* (*Vinayalanka*) a commentary on the Discipline of the Buddhist Holy Order, 2. The *Weithandaya Pyo* (*Vessantara Pyo*), and 3. Many epistles and *ratus*. There were many other monks and lay writers in this period producing various literary works covering both secular and religious subjects. Their names and works are outside the scope of our discussion.

Jātakas, written in Burmese prose, continued to the Kon-baung period (1782-1885 AD), during the reign of King Bodawpaya.²³ A monk by the name of U Obhasa was famous for writing Jātakas in prose. It was U Obhasa who translated ten Jātakas from Pāli into simple Burmese prose for the first time. His intention was to make Burmese people from all walks of life understand and appreciate the Jātakas. However he could complete only eight of them. They were, 1. the Candakumāra-jātaka (544), 2. the Nārada-jātaka (545), 3. the Vidhūra-jātaka (546), 4. the Vessantara-jātaka (547), 5. the Mahosada-jātaka (542), 6. the Mahā-janaka-jātaka (539), 7. the Nemi-jātaka (541) and 8. the Temi (Mūga-pakkha) –jātaka (538). The remaining two, the Bhūridatta-jātaka (543) and the Suvannasāma-jātaka (540) were written in prose by some other monks, Shin Nandamedha and Shin PaGGātikkha, respectively. The Vessantara-jātaka, the Mahosada-jātaka and the Mahā-jānaka were prescribed textbooks for middle and high schools for many years in the British colonial period. All eight Jātakas done by U Obhasa were good prose works. Scholars accept that the Vessantara-jātaka was his masterpiece.

In the later part of the Kon-baung period, there appeared a couple of great playwrights, namely U Kyin Oo and U Ponnya, who wrote plays for overnight performance. U Kyin Oo was the pioneer in writing modern plays and his plays were more suitable for over night performance than those of U Ponnya. He used fables and legends rather than Jātakas for dramatization though he did write two plays on the Jāakas, namely the Mahosada and the Vessantara-jātakas. On the other hand, U Ponnya based his plays mostly on Jātaka stories and they were more suitable for reading than performing.24

4.2 A commentary on the great last ten Jāakas

A commentary on the great last ten Jāakas existed before the Kon-baung period. During the Konbaung period, between the years Sakkarāja 1125-1138, (1763-1776 AD) Dan Daing Sayadaw, Shin GuBalankāra, translated the commentary into Burmese vernacular.25 Up to this stage, there was no pure Burmese prose on the Jāakas. It was mixed up with Pāli phrases or words with one Pāli word followed by its Myanmar vernacular equivalent. It is only in the reign of Botawpaya (1782-1908) that U Obhasa, known as Minbu Sayadaw, composed eight great Jāakas except SuvaB巴斯Ana and Bhūridatta-Jākās into simple Burmese prose. The SuvaB巴斯Ana was composed by Ashin26 Pannyatikkha, while the Bhūridatta by the pupil of U Obhasa, Nandamedha. The names of Sayadaw, who composed the last great ten Jāakas and the years in which they were complete can be viewed as follows:

25 Ibid. p. 2.
26 “Ashin” or “U” in Burmese word is an honourable word. People used to address either of them to the fully ordained monks. Both “Ashin” and “U” are equal to “Venerable”. For instance Ashin TikkhaGana or U TikkhaGana. But for a novice, the word “Shin” is used. For example, Shin TikkhaGana. In front of a novice’s name the word Ashin or U cannot be fixed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Jānakas</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Years of completion</th>
<th>Requested by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candakumāra</td>
<td>Sayadaw U Obhasa</td>
<td>1144, (1782 AD) February</td>
<td>Devotee, Maung Wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narada</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1144, (1782 AD) June</td>
<td>Maung Thauk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidhura</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1145, (1783 AD) October</td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vessantara</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1145, (1783 AD) June</td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahosadha, I &amp; II</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1146,(1784 AD) December</td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jānaka</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1147, (1785 AD) July</td>
<td>Maung Wa's son Muaung Thauk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemi</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1148, (1786 AD) August</td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temi</td>
<td>-do-</td>
<td>1148, (1786 AD) March</td>
<td>Maung Wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhūridatta</td>
<td>Sayataw Ashin Nandamedha</td>
<td>1148, (1786 AD) January</td>
<td>a novice, Shin Ukkamsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SuvaBBasAma</td>
<td>Sayadaw Ashin Pannyatikkha</td>
<td>1188, (1826 AD) August</td>
<td>The great secretary, Maung Tha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aim of composing these last ten Jānakas into Burmese vernacular was to enable Burmese people in all walks of life to be able to read them with comfort and
ease. The works composed by Sayadaw U Obhasa were far better than the other two so that they have been read with much interest. Therefore, these great ten JAakas not only would be studied as the teachings of the Buddha but would also be seen as exhibiting an ideal prose style.27

These great last ten JAakas are the great love of the Burmese.28 They were read to children as stories when they were young. Growing up, they had chance to study them from the dramas. When they are able to read, they study them as prose, poems and figures of speech. In addition, the Burmese fondness of these great ten JAakas can be seen and heard in their daily speech, where they acknowledge them by taking examples from the JAakas. For instance, a glutton is known as Jūjaka. A generous man is called Prince Vessantara, while one who seldom talks is called Prince Temi and so on.

4.3 The influence of the JAakas on Burmese Drama or pyazat from 1818 to 1875 AD

Burmese drama or Pyazat originated from the JAakas. The PAl word JAaka is called Zat, in Burmese. When the two words Pya, “show” and Zat combine, it becomes Pyazat. Pyazat means the showing of actual events by visualizing and articulating audibly.29 The word Pyazat came into existence since 1733 AD at the reign of the King of Hansavati. It is a notable tribute to the high regard in which JAakas are held in Burma that to this day so many believe that Pyazat are derived from the teachings of the Buddha, the JAaka stories. However, some hold that the Burmese Pyazat originated from Burmese Nat Poi, a festival for Nat, which was practised in Burma before the

27 Obhasa, Vessantara Zat Taw Kyi, Preface, pp. 3-5.
28 Ibid. p. 4.
29 Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 176.
arrival of Buddhism to Burma. Nat Poi is a ritual festive of traditional drama to invoke the 37 traditional gods. A belief in these gods is believed to have existed in Pagan before Theravada Buddhism was introduced there.

Pyazat was first practised in the villages. It was based on the JAtaka stories. The earliest one is said to be MaBikat Pyazat, which was quite popular and written by Wun Khyi PadesarAja, an excellent drama composer, in the Nyaung Yan period (1698-1714 AD) in the reign of King Sane or King Taninganwe. In the play, he wrote in detail regarding how to act, to sing, to talk, as to what should be done and how the music should be played during the performances.

The purpose of Burmese Pyazats is not merely for entertainment but also for ethical instruction. Most of the stories enacted are from the Buddha's birth stories whose moral values are universally recognized. For example, the performance of the life of the story of the Buddha is meant to teach people not only to be cultured but also to learn the Buddha's teachings and to impart the knowledge of his rule. In addition to this, a Burma Pyazat acted as a kind of newspaper, a medium of expression of freedom, at a time when such a medium for the dissemination of news did not exist. So Pyazat would change the view of the people so that they would behave morally. As most of the dramas in the early time were meant only for playing in palaces, we do not come across

30 May Thwin, Burma Pyazats, p. 247.
31 Ibid. p. 177.
32 It is based on the JAtakas and said to be the oldest Burma Pyazat in the history of Burma Drama and Theatre. It is only played in the palace and it takes almost seven days to complete a performance. See May Thwin, Burma Pyazats, p. 522 and Maung Maung Tin, Burma Pyazat and Burma Pyazat Sa Pe Tha Maing, pp. 5-10. MaBikat Pyazat is said to be converted into Burma way from Cheingmai PaBBAa, Sattadhanu.
33 Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 177.
34 Ibid. p. 179.
harsh words. Instead, polite and sweet speech is used because, at that time, people would hold the words used by children, lunatics and Pyazats\(^{35}\) as the truth.\(^{36}\)

*Pyazat* performances were used as a political instrument to express some discontent over and to get rid of the malpractices in the court in earlier times, during the Kon-baung period in the reign of King Mindon, 1853-1885 AD. For example, there was a cruel mayor called Bai Chap who gave a lot of trouble to his subjects. Despite their suffering under Bai Chap the people dared not raise their voices to the king directly. When the opportunity favoured, *Vessatara Pyazat*, written by U Ponnya, was performed in the palace to inform the king indirectly about malpractice of Bai Chap. It was through this play that the king was convinced about his Mayor's inhuman acts to his subjects.\(^{37}\) Consequently, the king ordered Mayor Bai Chap to be sentenced to death. It was through drama that the king used to come to know about the ministers' injustices and hardships caused by them to the subjects. Being convinced through the play, the kings corrected them at once.\(^{38}\)

On other occasions, *pyazats* were also staged in favour of the king, for example, in the reign of King Mindon, to admonish some of the queens of the palace who had betrayed the king, the *pyazat* of *Mahāpaduma*, based on the *Mahāpaduma-jātaka*\(^{39}\) was played. To offer reassurance that some of the queens however were loyal to the king,

\(^{35}\) Thein Naing, *Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing*, p. 177.

\(^{36}\) In Burma people strongly held that the words uttered by children and lunatics might be accepted to be true because sometimes what they have uttered without any knowledge at all is really happening. Even today people are anxious about the words of children and lunatics. In the case of drama too, people used to imitate the way of the characters' behaviour clothing, speech and so on. Whenever a drama is performed, the composer, the director, the characters and people involved in the play have to be mindful the words they used, the clothes they put on and the way they behave as people would imitate theirs.


\(^{39}\) JĀtaka No. 472.
like the princess Maddl, Vessantara Pyazat, based on the VJ was played.\textsuperscript{40} With the aim of compromising the two royal brothers, Ye The Pyazat was performed.\textsuperscript{41} The plays proved to be successful and helpful in lessening the problems at court and the suffering of the subjects.\textsuperscript{42}

Drama became an important outlet for the expression of physical and social unease. Hence, malpractices in the palace and the suffering of the subjects, which they dare not point out directly to the king, were depicted through a Pyazat. Ancient Burmese Pyazats, mainly based on the J\textsuperscript{A}aka stories, proved to be useful, constructive and helpful in educating king, queens, ministers, courtiers and subjects from early time.\textsuperscript{43}

In the Burmese Sakkaraja era 1180, (1818 AD) Burmese Pyazat was shown in a new light. The old ones\textsuperscript{44} that already existed in the palace took a long time and it was impossible to complete the performance within a night. For instance: The great R\textsuperscript{A}na zat\textsuperscript{45} or Great R\textsuperscript{A}na story took 65 days to perform while I Naung zat\textsuperscript{46} took 45 days.\textsuperscript{47} R\textsuperscript{A}na is also called Thurasatti zat, (fearless story) while I Naung zat is known as an

\textsuperscript{40} J\textsuperscript{A}aka No. 547.
\textsuperscript{41} All the plays mentioned above are said to be the works of the great famous monk U Ponnya. His works are highly looked upon and valued not only in the ancient time but by the people in all walks of life up to date.
\textsuperscript{42} Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{44} The ancient Pyazats were confined to the palace. That means the plays were meant to be performed within the palace for the king, queens, ministers, courtiers and Burma dramas started from the practice at the palace till today. The plays for the palace in early times’ used to be longer than modern ones. To suit the taste of each generation, the characteristics of the play keep changing from period to period.
\textsuperscript{45} It originated in India and was written in the language of Sakk\textsuperscript{A}. It might have been brought to Burma earlier in the period of Sathon, or SuvaBBabhum\textsuperscript{I}, the golden land. The remains of R\textsuperscript{A}ja statues are still to be found in some places in Sathon.
\textsuperscript{46} It is about love-sickness and teaches good lessons for the palace people.
\textsuperscript{47} Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 178.
admonishing and lovesick zat. The purposes of the two Pyazats, Rama and I Naung are: (1), softness and smoothness, (2), to admonish the palace maids and maidens, (3), to ensure the morality of the subjects, (4), to teach princes and princesses to listen to and obey their parents, (5), to direct princes and princesses to act according to their seniorities, (6), to show the bravery of the King and his readiness to sacrifice his life in battle for the sake of his subjects, (7), not to surrender to the enemies rather than sacrificing his life and so on.

As they were too long and took time to perform, the need was felt for a change to create a short and sweet story to be completed within a night to save time and avoid tedious performances. So, the famous drama composer, U Kyin Oo, created short Pyazats or stories to cater for the needs of the people of that time. His works were mostly based on Jataka stories. They are: Mahosadha Pyazat, Devakubha Pyazat, Vankanta Pyazat, PApahina Pyazat, KAtakaBBI Pyazat, Teja Thu Rein Pyazat, MAya Pyazat and Vessantara Pyazat. Pyazats composed by the famous U Kyin Oo are mostly based on the JAtakas.

Another famous drama composer in the reign of King Mindon (1853-1878 AD) was Sale U Ponnya. He composed Paduma, Ye The, Vijaya, Kosala, Mahosadha and

48 Maung Maung Tin, *Burma Pyazat and Burma Pyazat Sa Pe Tha Maing*, p. 16-17.
49 He was born in Burmese Sakkaraja between 1135, (1773 AD) and 1140, (1778 AD) in the village of Chin Paung Woy in the city of Tha Rat. His works are Mahosadha Pyazat, based on Mahosadha JAtaka, Vessantara Pyazat, based on Vessantara-JAtaka, Deva kubha Pyazat, PAp hin Pyazat, KAtakavaliya, Vankanta Pyazat, various Yatus, many kinds of plays, comprising 12 season, writing about the rain, about the mountains, about midnight, and many kinds of songs. He was not only a literary man but also a composer of drama. He was famous and shone in the Burma history. He died about Sakkaraja 1200, (1838 AD)
50 Thein Naing, *Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing*, p. 178
51 He was born in Sakkaraja 1174 (1811 AD) on Thursday. He was the most popular among the composers of the dramas in the second period of Konbaung. Among his famous dramas are Paduma, Ye The, Vijaya, Kosala, Vessantara and Mahosadha Pyazats. Further he wrote many things such as 30 preachings, 60 Loving letters, about the rule and many others.
Vessantara Pyazats based on the JAṭaka stories. Most of his works were highly appreciated due to his excellent composition.52

In the Burmese SakkarAja, 1237 (1875 AD) there was a new Pyazat named Lu Wun Maung Na Ma, “The brother and sister of the Ape”, by Cha Taing Mut U Ku. He was popular and the creator of a new drama which built a bridge between the Konbaung period to the colonial period. It was well-received and he wrote other dramas or pyazats such as Vessantara, Būridat, Blriddattha-jAṭaka and KĀkavalliya Pyazat.53 In Burmese SakkarAja 1239, (1877 AD) Maw La Meing Saya Yaw wrote about Sathon RAja Wun Pyazat, a drama on the history of Kings of Sathon.55 Although it is not a great composition, it was appreciated and popular. Gradually Saya Chu ThA wrote a play called Saw Bhe and then Saw May and Tin Tin and Khin Khin Pyazat came into existence. After sometime, there are many modern writers, including Chin Pyu Kyun Saya Tin,56 Pu Jun Taung Saya Kha,57 for the plays.58

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52 Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 179.
53 Ibid. p. 181.
54 Born about 1195 (1263 AD) and died in 1245, (1283 AD) U Yaw was named Maw La Meing U Yaw as he lived in Maw La Maing. However he was not born in Maw La Meing. It is he who wrote a drama on the history of Sathon. He received more fame than U Ku though he was a later writer. Sathon RAja Wun written by him published in 1877 is well kept in the British Library of London. See also Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 192.
55 Sathon is situated in the Mon State of Burma. It is known as SuvaBBabhUmi, the golden land of Burma where one of the nine missionaries, after the Third Buddhist Council, was sent by King Asoka of India headed by Sona and Uttara to propagate Buddhism. It is where King Anawratha confiscated the TipiTaka from King Manuha of Sathon to Pagan with the help of Shin Arahan. It is where Buddhism gets rooted and from there spreads to all over Burma till it became the State religion.
56 He was born about Burma SakkarAja 1220 (1858 AD) and died in 1296, (1934 AD). He was the son of U Su and Me Khwe. He was well versed both in secular subjects and the teachings of the Buddha. He used to serve as a teacher, a writer, a fortuneteller, and puppet establisher. He used to give beautiful talks on the JAṭakas to educate the audience. Maung Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, pp. 192-193.
57 Born in 1200 (1838 AD) and died in 1260, (1898 AD). Though he was not as popular as U Ku and Saya Yaw, he was no less famous as a composer of the dramas. He used to serve as an editor and a writer in the publishing house called Pyi Khi Man Taing on the 25th Street in Yangon Burma. He wrote many dramas such as Kyawng Thi Yo Tha Maing, on the history of Kyawng Thi Yo Cetiya, Pa Thein Shwe Maw Thaw Thaw Maing, on the history of Pa Thein Shwe Maw Thaw Cetiya, Shwe Ti Gon Tha Maing, on the history of Shwedagon, the famous golden Cetiya and many others. Mostly, his dramas were published by Pyi Khyi Mandanaging Press.
58 Thein Naing, Burma Pyazat Thabhin Tha Maing, p. 181.
Having tasted a new style of cultural expression, mostly the composers of the dramas came to place emphasis on singing and dancing. So, the quality of the play, including the main characters within it, deteriorates when compared with the U Ponnya and the U Kyin Oo period. The characteristics of the plays changed after the British occupation of Burma in 1885. During this period, the emphasis was put on singing, dancing and grand decoration of the stage. In this regard, the ancient Pyazats were totally neglected.\textsuperscript{59}

Burmese Pyazat has undergone a tremendous change during the Second World War to suit modern taste and many Pyazats have been converted into movies. However it does not mean that Burmese Pyazats have disappeared from the stage. They have survived and even gained popularity along with the movies. In 1950, just after Burmese independence, Pyazats were flourishing and popular, without any interruptions. Leading dramatic performers such as Sein Aung Min, Shwe Marn Tin Maung, Kat Nat Sein became household names. Modern Pyazats usually take place in the first part of the night while the great Pyazats of the second Kon-baung period (1752-1885), such as the life of the Buddha, the history of the kings and others take place in the second part of the night. The reason for doing it in that manner is to maintain the ancient Pyazats and at the same time to improve the modern ones.\textsuperscript{60}

The all-night performance is always attractive to Burmese people. In this regard, Maxwell-Fefroy observes “There is probably no race in the world so fond of theatrical shows. Performances are usually held at night in the open air and are known as Pwe.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. p. 182.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. pp. 193-197.
Any and every important occasion in a Burmese life is celebrated by holding a *Pwe*- when he is born, christened, enters a monastery, marries, brings off a good business deal, dedicates a pagoda, builds a new house, and finally when he dies. And except during Buddhist Lent, when *Pwes* are forbidden, each religious festival, which falls on the day of full moon, is celebrated by *Pwes* of more than usual magnificence all over the country”.

Most *Pwes* start about 9 pm and often last all night. The entertainment varies from slapstick clowning to serious religious drama, based on tales of the life and teaching of the Buddha. The dramatic performance of Vessantara, based on the *VJ* is a favourite and always attracts a large audience to spend the whole night, listening to the trials of Prince Vessantara and the devotion of his wife, Maddl and their children, JAl and KãBhA. Children sometimes act better than adult actors.

The purpose of *zat-pwe* is to entertain and to convey a few truths for people to live by. Most of the stories enacted are from the Buddha’s birth stories whose moral values are universally recognized. The first part of Burmese *zat-pwe* is a musical play with a contemporary theme and the latter part is a presentation of a story from the *Jātakas* or *Dhammapada*, a story as well known to the Burmese public as Hamlet is to the English theatre-goers.

### 4.4 The fame of the *Vessantara-jAtaka*

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63 *Zat-pwe* is the whole night performance mainly based on the birth stories of the Buddha’s former births.  
Among the ten great *Jaṭakas*, eight, adapted by U Obhasa, as already mentioned earlier, would be read not only as the teachings of the Buddha but also as modern stories, reading for fun. The *VJ* is considered the best, as can be seen in Spiro’s remark:

"The story of Prince Vessantara is probably the best known and most loved of all Buddhist stories. It is taught to every schoolboy, alluded to frequently in conversation, recounted repeatedly in sermons, and even more important regularly enacted in dramatic form as part of the fare of the Burmese repertory troupes. Its sacrificial idiom provides the standard charter for and reinforces the Burmese belief in the religious efficacy of giving".65 Indeed, Blurton and Isaacs also observe "the Vessantara-*Jaṭaka* is the most favoured in Burma of all the *Jaṭaka* stories and the last before the birth of the historical Buddha".66

The popularity of the *VJ* in Burma simply can be judged from the fact that even *Kun It*, the Flat betel-box, as it is called in Burmese, is decorated with the scenes from the *VJ*.67 Many other scholars on Burmese culture, for example, Mack also accepts that "The Wethandaya or Vessantara is one of the ten great Burmese Zats or Birth stories of the pre-existence of Gautama, the founder of the Buddhist religion".68

So, the *VJ* gained popularity and has been adapted by different Burmese authors. But the most acceptable and the classic version was of course, the version written by Minbu U Obhasa. It is called the Weithantara Zatdaygyi, ‘The Great Vessantara-*Jaṭaka*’. Its composition is quite different from the others. For instance, in the section on Maddl, he described how Maddl panics and wails at losing her children, in a vivid manner. The readers are unable to hold their heartache for her. Some would burst into tears reading it or watching scenes from the drama.70 The *Vessantara-*Jaṭaka* was also

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66 Blurton and Isaacs, *Visions from the Golden Land Burma and the art of lacquer*, p. 214.
68 The last ten birth stories of the Buddha are known in Burmese, as Zat Gyi Zae Po, the Great Ten Births.
70 Pe Maung Tin, *Burma Sape Tha Maing*, pp. 221-222.
adapted in the form of the classic poems *Weithantara Pyo*,\(^{71}\) by Mahagandhasa and U No.\(^{72}\)

In the literary world of Burmese, different authors composed five Vessantara Dramas based on *VJ*, at different times. In the reign of Pagan Min in Sakkaraja 1212, (1850 AD) U Kyin Oo composed a Vessantara Drama. U Ponnya, whom I have already discussed several times, also composed Vessanatara Drama during this period but the year of composition is not known. In Sakkaraja 1260, (1898 AD) another Vessantara Drama was composed by Sa Taing Moot Ku. In Sakkaraja 1267, (1905 AD) an anonymous author wrote another Vessantara Drama and the last one was composed by Minbu, U Obhasa.\(^{73}\) Of them the *VJ*\(^{74}\) and the Vessantara Drama\(^{75}\) composed by U Obhasa are regarded as so classical and highly valued that they never disappear from people's sight. They become pioneer works in the development of Burmese prose.

In the early years of the British colonial regime, two English men, Mr. O. White, a head master, and Mr. A.L. Goss translated *Vessantara-jātaka* into English in 1906.\(^{76}\) It was used in earlier days as a prescribed text for the sixth, seventh and eighth standards in the school and for the entrance examination in Burma.\(^{77}\)

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\(^{71}\) It is well kept and preserved in the British Library but hard to find it in Burma.

\(^{72}\) U No composed Vessantara Pyo in the reign of King Botaw. See more detail, Hla Tin, *Vessantara Pyo*.


\(^{75}\) Its full drama has been studied in "*U Punnya Let Ywe Sin Mya*", pp. 241-258 by U Tin Myint. It contains five sections; Accuta and his pupil; the god of trees and the deity, the protection of the forests; Madddevi's looking for fruits in the forest and the hunter, Ceta and his dogs wondering in the forest.


\(^{77}\) White, *Wethandaya*, pre, p. ii.
Vas mentions in the preface of a book called “JAtakas”, that this little book of JAtakas was intended mainly for the use of students preparing for the Matriculation, High School Final and Teacher’s Test examinations. The aim of setting this book for schools was to provide a more intelligent knowledge, and appreciation of the Pāli Language.\textsuperscript{78}

In the Shan State, after observing the precepts, a meditator would recite the formula of one of the 550 Jātakas related to the occasion with sweet and clear voice to request a monk to preach a sermon.\textsuperscript{79} Sometimes the formula may be either in the form of prose or poem. In this regard, Milne, the author of Shan At Home, makes the following remark on the JAtakas that were retold in the Shan State,

\begin{quote}
“the people gossip a little about their neighbours; then the children plead for stories, and the old tales are again and again of kings and queens in golden palaces, of mischievous imps, of bad fairies and of good ones, of magic bows and flying horses. The Buddhist JAtakas are retold with Shan embellishments, but the stories are probably far older than Buddhism; they might have been used by the Buddhist missionaries, but as many of them are purely animistic, it is not possible now to determine their origin”.\textsuperscript{80}
\end{quote}

In conclusion, since the 11\textsuperscript{th} century, JAtakas have exerted a great influence on every aspect of Burmese life. Burmese culture, painting, drama, theatre, literature and the Burmese way of life more or less originated from the JAtakas. It was the custom during the Pagan period to paint or sculpt especially the life of the Buddha and his former births on and around religious places and public sights. It is one of the accepted

\textsuperscript{78} Vas, JAtakas, pre.
\textsuperscript{79} Saya Myint, Do Lu Myo, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{80} Milne, Shan At Home, p. 109.
practices that the *JAtakas* and the life of the Buddha are to be drawn on a religious place such as a pagoda or a temple or a cave when it is constructed. The purpose of doing so is to impart the Buddha's moral teachings to the people. The Kings throughout the centuries in the Pagan period up to the present day have adopted the practice. As a result, religious places are beautifully decorated by paintings or sculptures of the life of the Buddha and his former births and many other paintings throughout Burma.

In the 19th century in the reign of King Mindon, *Paduma* and *Vessantara Pyazats*, or dramas based on *Paduma-JAtaka* and the *VI*, were played on stage. They were played at times to inform the king or his subjects. They proved to be fruitful and helpful to the court at that time. These and similar events show that *JAtaka* dramas played the role of social critique and that they were used to communicate a social and political message to society.

Further more, *JAtakas* have had great influence on Burmese literature. Works based on *JAtakas* are pioneer works of Burmese literature. One cannot talk about Burmese literature, without talking about the *JAtakas*. The last ten birth stories top the list, with the *VI* the best known of all. In Burma it has been used as a school textbook to be studied by every student. In addition, it is cited frequently in conversation and repeatedly in sermons and enacted in dramatic form. The paintings of the key events of the *VI* have been and still are largely made use of in the decoration of the pagodas, monasteries, and rest houses in Burma. Today there are many writings on *JAtakas* by various authors, such as *Zat Kyi Zae boi*81 (the great ten births) by U Moe Myint, a

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81 This book contains 152 and a summary of the last great ten births of the Buddha. People may love reading them to save their time and are more easily to be benefited from them rather then reading the longer ones. See its detail stories by Moe Myint, *Zat Kyi Zae boi*. 
Summary of Zat Khyi Zae boi,\textsuperscript{82} (the great ten births) by Min Yu We; Zat Taw Kyi Zae boi,\textsuperscript{83} (the great ten births) illustrated with full pictures by U Ba Kyi; the facts of the \textit{J\textit{A}takas}\textsuperscript{84} by U Pho Kya who was Commissioner of Education before Independance; the collected stories\textsuperscript{85} from 550 \textit{J\textit{A}takas} by U Hla Khin and there may be many others which are out of my reach. So, there has been a great influence from the \textit{J\textit{A}takas}, especially the \textit{VJ} on Burmese culture on aspects of life since the ancient times till today. No doubt they will continue to exert an influence on Burmese people in times to come.

\textsuperscript{82} All the ten stories contained in this book are short and sweet. They are the summaries of the last ten \textit{J\textit{A}takas} illustrating pictures from each story. Glancing at the pictures, one would be attracted to read the stories inside.

\textsuperscript{83} This seems to be the most attractive one to the readers among the \textit{Zat Kyi Zae Boi} as all the stories have been illustrated with colorful pictures in the forms of cartoons. See more, U Ba Kyi, \textit{Zat Taw Kyi Zae Boi},

\textsuperscript{84} U Pho Kya's writings are a bit different from the others as he chooses which he thinks the most popular ones and shortens them into simple Burma vernacular to suit the tastes of modern society. His works were divided into three volumes. See U Pho Kya, \textit{The facts of the \textit{J\textit{A}takas}.}

\textsuperscript{85} The writings of U Hla Khin are remarkable in his way of collections and using simple language. He collected the same stories together in a book. For examples: in book one, he collected stories related to sacca, truthfulness, adhi\textit{\textipa{\textdagger}}\textit{\textipa{\textdagger}h}ana, determinations and mett\textit{\textdagger}A, loving kindness and so in the other books. It is pretty much easy to go through his books so as to read the same related stories collected in one book.
Chapter Five

*Phra Vesandon in Thailand:*

* A study of the influence of the *Jātakas* on Thai culture
  
  *with special reference to the *Vessantara-jātaka*

*Jātakas* have exerted an influence on Thai society too from ancient times and especially, as in Burma and Sri Lanka, the last great ten *Jātakas*, known to the Thai ‘*thosachAt* or *Sip ChAt*’. They are the sources of Thai literature in various forms. They are widely represented in temple wall paintings and cloth banners, murals and manuscript paintings.\(^1\) Of the great ten births, the *VJ* is the best known of all and has its recitation annually. It is believed that the origin of recitation of the *VJ* in Thailand derives from the Buddha’s relating the *VJ* to the assembly of his relatives and friends.\(^2\) Though, today, the traditional annual recitation of the *VJ* is not always held on a great scale and popular like in ancient times, it still ranks one of the most important religious performances to be seen in the country and has lost nothing of its original magnificence.

As in Sri Lanka and Burma, the last great ten *JAtakas* are very popular in Thailand. They are widely represented in temple murals, cloth banners as well as in manuscripts.\(^3\) It is believed that each of the ten births epitomizes a major Buddhist virtue. Among the greatest virtue of all, is giving. The oldest narrative of the *DasajAti-jAtaka* is dated

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This chapter demonstrates the influence of the *Jātakas* on aspects of Thai society and the importance of the recitation of the *VJ*, known as the *Thet Mahā Chāt* by the kings of Thailand between 1817 to 1866. It discusses the influence of the *VJ* on painting and preaching; the legend of *Mālayya Thera* known as *Phra Malai* in Thai, which popularizes the recital of the *VJ*, the ancient customs of Ayutthaya and the prediction of the disappearance of the Buddhist scriptures.

5.1 The recitation of the *Vessantara-Jātaka* or the *Thet Mahā Chāt* by the kings of Thailand (1817-1866)

In Thailand, there exists the practice of meeting in the domestic hall or within the boundaries of a temple to listen to the recital of the religious poem by any young member of the family who has been admitted to the priesthood and invested as a novice or *Samanera*. This custom of a novice reciting the *VJ* had been in practice for up to forty or fifty years and it used to be observed by every family, rich or poor. However, as time went on, it has gradually declined and nowadays this practice is limited only to a few of the noblest and most able families. It seems that the origin of it owes to the Buddha’s relating the *VJ* to the assembly of his relatives and friends. As the ceremony is connected with the ordination of a monk, we can see many similarities with the acts of the Prince Siddattha’s renouncing of the world. So the practice of newly ordained novices’ reciting the *Mahā Chāt* in the family circle is in imitation of what the

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4 Sonthiwan: *Thai Traditional Paintings*, p. 36
Buddha did when returning home to Kapilavasthu after attaining Buddha-hood. This is why the $VJ$ is selected for the novice to rehearse on such occasions. The invitation to the recital of the $VJ$ confers pleasure on his parents. It is because the performance is a rare occasion for their son to distinguish himself and gain public honour and applause.

The time for this impressive ceremony is in October or November after the end of $Vassa$, the rains-retreat. The invitation is extended not only to the young elect but also to the other novices of the same temple. Offerings of many kinds are prepared to honour the preacher for his service. After the sitting is over he distributes these offerings among his brethren and the elder of the temple and also to his young relatives and friends of the laity. He does this with a pride to show the reward received from his performance.\(^6\) The young novice is not expected to recite in succession the whole of the 1,000 $g\text{Ahā}$ of the $VJ$ and the thirteen $kan\text{Das}$, chapters of the poem or dialect version. As a rule, he rehearses only one or two $kan\text{Das}$, with the other samaneras\(^7\) and elders charging themselves in turn with the remainder. In most instances one of the three $kan\text{Das}$, $Culla\text{vana}$, the sparse forest, $Mahā\text{vana}$, the thick forest and $Sakkava\text{cana}$, Indra’s words, are selected for recitation,\(^8\) perhaps because they deal with the ascetic life and have a great deal of emotional effect.

The popularity of the recitation of the $VJ$ not only among the ordinary people but also the royal family from early times is clear from Gerini’s remark:

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\(^6\) On such occasion there is generally a large attendance of relatives and friends and the alms collected are more copious than ordinary.

\(^7\) Samanera means a novice. The novice ordination is called $pabbajja$ and cannot be received before eight years of age. The full ordination called $upasampada$ can only be obtained after twenty years of age.

\(^8\) Gerini, *The Ther Mahā Chāt*, p. 111.
“This religious ceremony, which was performed with great pomp in every household in past generations, was most solemnly celebrated in the royal palace when a young member of the King’s family entered on his novitiate. In latter times, however, it became an exclusive prerogative of the Crown Prince or Heir-apparent to the throne. In the absence of a Crown Prince (Chau Fa) the ceremony would not take place; in the reign, Phra Phuttha Lo La Nophālai, Rama II, (1808-24) a samanera by the name of Chau Fa Mongkut, who would become Rama IV (1852-68) rehearsed with great ceremony the Mahā Chāt. On that occasion a colossal grachāt, a conical seven-storied structure of Khruang Kan is employed instead of the usual trays and wicker baskets commonly employed by the people under identical circumstances. A brief account of the Thet Mahā Chāt ceremony, as performed at that time, may perhaps be found interesting. It is translated from a small but valuable book, which although issued in print, is, but little known to foreign residents in Siam.”

This royal ceremony is re-quoted by Gerini as follows:

“In 1179 (A.D. 1817), year of the Ox and 9th of the decennial cycle he who was to be the future King Phra Nang Klao, (Rama III) devised the building of a magnificent seven-storied Krachāt, adorned with a quantity of offerings for the priests, and altogether splendid to behold.” “In the 12th month and on the 8th day of the waxing moon, he invited King Phra Chom Klao, Rama IV (then the Prince Chau Fā Mongkut) still a novice of the order to come and do his country the honour of rehearsing the Kanda of Massi. The ceremony was a really imposing one. The Court, the nobility and the people assembled in large crowds to witness and enjoy the meritorious performance, which had never in former reigns happened on such a magnificent scale. Phra Phutthaloetla, Rama II, was also exceedingly pleased with it and greatly commended the arrangements that had been made.”

Krachāt means a wicker basket for eatables, used for carrying to market.

It bears the title of “Biographies of their M.M. the late four Kings, intended for recitation” It is ostensibly edited by H.R.H. Prince Krom Phra Pavarar, Archbishop of the Buddhist Church in Siam: but the materials were—it is said—prepared by H.M. the then King. The Biographies are designed for recital during the annual ceremonies in commemoration of the late four Kings. This book was printed by order of H.R.H. Prince Chau Fā Bhnurangsi and distributed by him as a souvenir to all who grasp representing the monarchs forming the subject of biographies, and was issued in 1885.

The next exposition of the Mahā Chāt took place in the reign of Phra Chom Klao in 1866, by Prince Chau Fa Chulālongkorn, who later reigned as Rama V (1868-1910). We learn that the event is said to have been marked by a striking and very happy innovation, which was due to the inventive talent of the then reigning Sovereign, a great religious restorer of all state ceremonies. We have no means to trace the event of the ceremony rather than quoting a brief account of the festival from the same book quoted above.

“In the year of the Tiger, 80 of the decennary cycle, 1228 (A.D. 1866) the sovereign, Rama IV “was admitted to holy orders as a sāmanera ……………….(Page 374).”

As the period of religious confinement was over, in the 12th month, the Sovereign did the honour of rehearsing the KanDa Sakkabappa the King Phra Chom Klao designed to compose a new version of the sacred text himself especially for that occasion; and granted permission to his elder son, Prince Krom Mong Mahesvara to erect a “great Krachāt in the shape of a Chinese junk, decked with sweetmeats, cold eatables, fruits, Buddhist priests’ requisites12 and implements, in large quantities. The junk was set up on “the royal esplanade (Sanām Chāt) and splendidly decorated. It was the admiration of the “people at large, who assembled in crowds to see it. The King

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12 Buddhist monk’s requisites contains eight kinds, (1), Upper robe, (2), a robe, (3), an under wear robe, (4), bowl, (5), girdle, (6), razor for shaving, (7), needle, (8), straining cloth for water.
directed that theatrical or “Lakhons\(^{13}\) should be added to the programme, so as to render the pageant more attractive.\(^{14}\)

In the afternoon King Bhumibol arrived in a state coach. Phra Chom Klao came forth to meet him, and taking him in his arms made him alight, then led him by the hand up to the royal chapel called (Phra Thinand Song Tham), in Thai, used at that time as a preaching and lecture hall. On that occasion the future monarch was immensely delighted and gave unmistakeable proof of great kindness to the select audience that attended.\(^{15}\)

The last exposition of the royal Mahā Chāt in the present capital, Bangkok, was held equally in December 1891, in solemnization of the present Crown Prince’s novitiate. A symbolic ship was built decorated with a numerous fleet of minor craft of all descriptions; of fishes both real and fantastic and filled with eatables and other offerings tastefully arranged. The text recited on this occasion was the one used by the King in 1866, and the exposition was said to take place in the same hall.

Before concluding our discussion it is better to have a few words on the historical state recitation of the Mahā Chāt performed in the present capital. The first of these ceremonies was held in 1805 AD at the royal chapel. On this occasion, the members of the royal family assumed charge of the Krachāt and other various offerings for the monks. This memorable performance was far surpassed by that of 1807, held on a much

\(^{13}\) A kind of play or a dramatic performance especially based on the Jātaka stories.
\(^{15}\) Gerini, The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony, p. 112.
larger scale and outshining all previous records. The following is a shortened translation of an account of the display as it has been handed down to us.

“His Majesty (King Phra Phuttha Yot Fā, the first of the present dynasty) appeared in state in the throne hall Busabok Mālā Chakraphaddi Phimān, surrounded by the royal family, the court and ministers of the realm, the wise men (Kravijāti), the purohitas of the royal household and the astrologers, all prostrated before the golden lotus flowers supporting his royal feet; and devised holding a great festival of offerings to the priesthood in honour of Buddha’s birth as Prince Vessantara which is the last and most excellent of all previous existences of the Great Teacher and the nearest to the one in which he attained the infinite knowledge (Bodhiyāna). Therefore the King was pleased to order his most prominent relatives to take charge of the gifts for the priests reciting the cantos of the Mahā ChĀt.

The Second King (H.M.’s younger brother) thereupon undertook to supply the offerings for the first and last Kandas the former being recited by the Saṃgharāja residing in Wat Mahā Thāt, and the latter by Phra Phanarat of Wat Pho.

Princes Chau Fa Kroma Khum Senanurak (H.M.’s second son) took upon himself the care of the gifts for the 2nd Kanda, etc.

Here follow the names of other princes and princes who assumed the task of providing the presents for the remaining ten Kandas. All the King’s children and relatives patronised the exhibition in the capacity of chief donors and took pleasure. His Majesty in his highly meritorious deed, made magnificent preparations for the ceremony. The prominent feature of the festival was thirteen gigantic krachāts pyramidal structures seven wāha (33 feet) wide at the bottom, some five and some seven storied, tapering up into graceful pyramidal structures seven wāha (47 feet) in height. They were surrounded at the base by one storied krachāts (consisting of a single wicker basket) of smaller size, namely one cubit wide at the mouth, acting as large krathongs. Both the larger and smaller krachāts were replete with dry food, boiled rice and sweetmeats prepared in the best style. All round the upper edge of each story of the krachāts were stuck sabongs (priestly under garments, the Pāli antarvasaka) in great numbers and pieces fine white and folded up in the shape of conical umbrellas, sprays, twigs and flowers, or displayed so as to represent flags and banners.

By command of the King the eight companies of tamruets (body guard) and the phrailuangs (tattoed government serfs) erected an imposing and lofty shed over each krachāt, for shelter from the sun and
rain. The King’s presents to the priesthood consisted of bedsteads, large brass bowls, boats, palanquins (khre kanyā) covered with a proof of kajangs (made of toi grass and resting on the top of two carved posts); sedan chairs (salieng); covered howdahs (kūp) and uncovered elephant seats (sappakab) with mahouts for mounting on the neck and group to the number of two for each elephant.

These and other offerings were intended for the King to present to the priests in the royal audience hall.

Besides, the King destined magnificent donations of four different kinds of valuables (money, clothing, etc) for each of the thirteen kandas that were to be recited. When all the krachāts and other preparations had been got in readiness, they were inaugurated by chorus songs called prob kai (sung standing, the time being beaten by clapping both hands together) with accompaniment of musical instruments.

The people assembled in large crowds to see the Krachāts; all beholders were raising up their joined hands in act of praise and admiration, exclaiming sādhū; (well done! hurrah!) and rejoicing in their hearts at the sight of the great act of merit accomplished by the King. The elders, who had in their childhood witnessed similar exhibitions at Ayuthia, said they never beheld krachāts of so sumptuous and imposing a character. The throne hall Charaphaddi Phimān had been gaily decked with conical umbrellas, flowers of the most brilliant hues and sweet fragrance; gorgeous lustre and candelabras, giving it a highly picturesque appearance. Precious hangings and flower also decorated the raised platform upon which the priests were to sit and perform the recital. In front it were placed-as honoured offerings- the golden and silver trees of tribute sent by the Malayan, Cambodian and Laos States recognizing the suzerainty of the King of Siam.

The recitations began in the year 2350 of the Buddhist Era, corresponding to Saturday, 8th of the 12th waxing moon, year of the Rabbit, of the Chula Era 1169 (i.e, 7th November 1807). On that day, the three head-priests – Phra Phimonlatham, Phra Thamma-warodom (udom) and Phra Phutta Khosāchān convened- at the King’s invitation-to rehearse each one third of the one thousand gathās of the Vessantara Jātaka in the original Pāli, (Thetsanā kathā phan) and were rewarded, by the King in person, each with a set of robes and priestly requisites, besides a quantity of sweetmeats, fruits and other presents. These offerings (Khruang Kan) were loaded in three canopied royal barges decked with innumerable hanging lamps gay makara flags (Chinese dragon standards) and moored at the royal landing, each waiting to convey in turn one of the three officiating high priests to their monasteries. As each finished the recital of his one third of the Vessantara-jātaka, he was escorted with great pomp to the barge designed for him, and accompanied by a large retinue of other boats to
the temple, where the offerings were taken out of the barge and carried to his cell.

These offerings were intended to speed the Kind on the way to attain Buddha ship at some future existence when he would be enabled, in accordance with the Gospel of Salvation preached by Gotama Buddha, to lead all sentient beings to the attainment of Nirvāṇa, thus emancipating from the evils of continued rebirths.

On the next day, viz. Sunday, 9th of the 12th waxing moon, the second set of recitation or Thet Mahā Chāt took place: the next rehearsed being the Mahā Chāt in Siamese verse, in thirteen Kandas. As soon as the repetition of each Kanda was completed, the musical band consisting both of string and brass instruments, Malay drums, sankha shells, etc., struck up a lively strain. Directly the King’s relatives who patronized the recital of that particular Kanda came forth and invited the officiating to sit in the kitler, palanquin or on boat, lying in wait for him and which was henceforward to become his definite property. Then a procession in two ranks, carrying conical umbrellas decked with incense sticks and tapers; flags of yellow and white cloth; and huge artificial flowers of the same material escorted the beneficiary, either by land or water, as it was found most suitable, to his own temple, when all the umbrellas, flags and other insignia carried by the procession were left with him as permanent offerings.16

5. 2 The legend of the MĀleyya Thera

The legend of MĀleyya Thera as occurred in the Malaya-sutta17 may give the true reason why the recitation of the VJ became so popular. This sutta is not preached by the Buddha but is said to have been composed by commentators long after his passing away.18 Regarding the place where the Malaya-sutta was written, there is still controversy among the scholars.19 A brief account of the legend of MĀleyya Thera

17 The details of its story can be studied in the *Tham Vessantara-jāaka*, pp. 39-47; See also, Nan Ai, *MahāVessantara*, under the sections of Pathama Malai and Dutiya Malai; Nan Seng, *Mahāvessantara Kanti*, pp.22-37.
would not be out of place to be mentioned here. The legend goes: A holy Arahat, Maleyya Deva Thera who possesses supernatural powers, paid a visit to the TāvatiMśa heaven to worship the sacred Culāmanī Cetiya. There he met Amarindra Devarāja and the Bodhisatta Metteyya who happened to talk to him. The Bodhisatta spoke as follows of his future to be reborn in the human world: The men in general who anxiously long for the happy event of my descent to incarnate myself in their midst and become a perfect Buddha, must not be so ill-advised as to disregard the five abstentions. On the contrary let them be steady in observing the courses of meritorious deeds, in the practice of charity and in the keeping of the festive days (of fasting and abstinence from worldly pleasures,) and be careful so as not to fall into the five capital crimes. Let them endeavour to listen to the exposition of the Mahā Vessantara-jātaka in one thousand gāthās and commentary in a single day, complete in its thirteen KanDas (parts). Let them prepare offerings of conical umbrellas, flags and pennants, lamps, tapers, incense sticks, and terrestrial as well as aquatic flowers of diversified hues, that is to say, nymphaea flowers of the five varieties, equal in number to the stanzas of that

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20 Situated on the summit mount Meru. This Arahat is said to have visited the infernal regions and other places.
21 A Cetiya is a place in which a tooth relic of the Buddha is enshrined. It is known as the Cūḷāmanī Cetiya. This tooth was stolen at the distribution of the Buddha’s relics by a Brāhmaṇa, Dorana who concealed it in his topknot so that it became a gem (mani). Indra, the king of gods snatched the precious tooth relic from the Brāhmaṇa and enshrined it in the Cetiya. It is situated in the TāvatiMśa heaven. It is said that this same Cetiya contains the Buddha’s hair.
22 Indra is the king of gods who rules over the five-deva heavens (Kāmadevaloka). He is said to inhabit the TāvatiMśa heaven.
23 It is the name of the coming Buddha who will become known after his rebirth on earth.
24 Refraining from killing any living being, stealing things, which are not given, sexual misconduct, telling lie and taking any intoxicant drinks.
25 Kusalakammapha: the virtuous act of refraining from the above five crimes and from other five faults of minor importance.
26 Anantariyakamma: crime of killing parents, Arahat, causing the Buddha’s bloodshed, creating disunion among the Sangha, the community of monks.
Jātaka. Such meritorious practices will hasten the event of my future descent, birth and inspiration in the terrestrial world.  

According to some commentators the custom of expounding the Vessantara-jātaka is accounted for as originating from the exhortations contained in that sutta; but evidently it existed before, and the sutta seems to encourage a practice already in force than rather creating a new one. It was clearly written with the intention of rendering such a practice more general and popular.  

The VJ is recited at Loi Kranthong, “Festival of the Floating Boat,” which takes place on the full moon day of November; one month after the end of the monastic rain-retreat (vassa). It is retold each year at an annual festival called The MahāChāt, or Sermon of the Great Birth Story.  

It is certain that the custom of practising the recital of the Vessantara-jātaka is very old. The people of Thailand, Pegu, Hamsavati (Mon country) Cambodia and other Southern Buddhist countries have practised it for centuries. They prepare offerings at the expiration of the period of religious seclusion occurring about the end of the rainy season and assemble both in the boundaries of monasteries and in private dwellings to listen to the recital of Vessantara-jātaka. Regarding the process of the recital of the text, Gerini observes that some of the lecturers were in the habit of reading the thousand  

29 Swearer, The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia, pp. 42-46.  
30 Wray, Ten Lives of The Buddha, p. 16.
stanzas, others of delivering both the original text and the commentary; and various
preachers explained the various Kāṇḍas in turn.\textsuperscript{31}

The \textit{Thet Mahā Chāt} or the recital of \textit{Vessantara-jātaka} has become a state
ceremony in Thailand, gathering the faithful annually.\textsuperscript{32} It is performed with great
honour and begins at the end of the Buddhist rains-retreat (the 15\textsuperscript{th} day of the 11\textsuperscript{th}
moon) to mark the \textit{Pavāranā}\textsuperscript{33} day.\textsuperscript{34}

On the \textit{Pavāranā} day, according to the custom, people prepare offerings,
consisting chiefly of flowers for the monks to adorn the halls where the recitation of the
\textit{The Mahā Chāt} is to take place. This occurs at the season of high water when the rivers
are full and overflowing their banks. It is the season when the lotus flowers are
blossoming and all natures full of spirit.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Wray, \textit{Ten Lives of The Buddha}, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{33} A day of monks’ invitation to confess minor faults committed during the rain-retreat to each other
regarding to faults whether seen, heard or suspected. It takes place every year at the end of rain retreat on
the full moon day.
\textsuperscript{34} “The recitation of the Pāli text of the \textit{Vessantara-jātaka} is called in Thai \textit{Thet Kathā Phan} (repetition
of the one thousand gāthā of that Jātaka.) The collective rehearsal of the same story (\textit{Suet Vetsandon Chādok}) takes place in the compounds of the
Royal temples for three consecutive days, at three different periods of the year: -
At the outset of the \textit{vassa} (middle of 8\textsuperscript{th} month);
At the middle of the \textit{vassa} (at the time of Sāt festival) and
At the end of the \textit{vassa}, that is at the time of the \textit{Pavāranā} festival.
This rehearsal is done by Panditas (ex-chief priests who have left the order) pariens (Pāli graduates who
left the orders) and pupils of the royal schools. Before the present reign in Bangkok, and formerly in
Ayuthia, King Songtham’s \textit{Mahā Chāt Kham Luang} was recited in \textit{Wat Phra Keaw} and \textit{Wat Sri
Sanphaphet} on every Buddhist holiday (\textit{wan phra}) by the royal panditas and pupils of the royal schools.”
(Quoted from Gerini’s footnotes, p. 99).
One of the ancient customs at the old capital, Ayutthaya, is the second King or *Upparāja* to journey in a boat at this time of the year and collects from the people offerings of selected nympheoa flowers of the five varieties. This custom existed also in the present capital, Bangkok, up to the reign 3rd of the King Phra Nang Klao, whose daughter, Princess Krom Mun Akson Sudhathep, went yearly to Bangphui in the district of Muang Prathum, to collect the flowers. Muang Prathum is a town famed for lotus flowers. The flowers collected in these legal excursions were used to adorn the *Rājadhamma Sabhā* or royal preaching hall. It is the place where the assembled chief monks of the northern and southern read in turn the *Mahā Chāt*. The text used on these formal occasions was a special one only to be found in Siamese literature.35

5.3 Prediction of the disappearance of Buddhist scriptures

There is a statement concerning the five declines of Buddhist scriptures called *Pancantaradhāna*.36 This is firmly sustained by Thai people. The prophecy runs that the seven books of *Abhidhamma-PI Taka* will become lost first. Afterwards the same will happen to the collections, the *nikāyas* consisting of the *Sutta-PI Taka*, the last of which the *Khuddaka-nikāya*. The tenth is the book of *Jātakas* containing the *VJ*, which forms

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36 Five gradual declines which are said to occur at every *Kalpa*: -

1. *Pativedha antaradhānam*, declining of the superior knowledge of the four paths leading to the attainment of *Nirvāṇa*.
3. *Lingga antaradhānam*, declining in the practice of duties incumbent upon religious confraternities and the laity of both sexes.
4. *Dhātu antaradhānam*, disappearance of the relics of the Buddha, saints, etc.
5. *Pariyatti antaradhānam*, decline of the knowledge derived from the Scriptures and the gradual disappearance of the sacred texts.
the subject of our discussion. The prediction tells that as the VJ is the best of all, it will fade away first.37

This prediction concerning the disappearance of the VJ deeply impressed the extremely religious heart of Phra Chao Song Tham, King of Ayudhya (1611-28). As a result of this he resolved to provide for the protection and keeping of this birth story for posterity. It is said that prior to being a king, he was Phra Phimontham (alias Phra Sī Sin of Wat Rakhang). He assisted the high priest or the Sangkharāt (Saṅgharāja), ruling over the northern district of monks. He was well versed in religious teachings. Even after becoming king, he devoted himself to the promotions of the religion and upholding the Buddhist faith. After handing over the kingship to his nephew (the second king) in charge of the State, he devoted his life totally to attaining Nibbāna. He is said to have built three halls, in which he taught a hundred monks daily, on the royal esplanade inside the palace walls. They were called Phra Thinang Chom Thong halls surmounted by gilt tapering roofs.

It was in the reign of King Song Tham that the famous footprint called Phra Bat was unearthed on the Suvanna Banphot Mountain. Afraid of losing the VJ, as in the prediction, he devoted his time to composing a poem based on the subject of this Jātaka and it is known as Mahā Chāt. He proposed to hand this poem down to the next generations in the hope of preventing or lessening the effect of the prophecy. The poem is said to have been completed in 1627. From the literary point of view, this poem is one of the best works ever produced in the Siamese language and is still looked upon as a

gem of Siamese classic literature.\textsuperscript{38} Besides, \textit{Mahā Chāt} King Song Tham was a learned and eminent writer and composed many more poems of various kinds.\textsuperscript{39} All these works are still valued and the practice of kings composing poems dates from his time.

The \textit{Mahā Chāt} he composed is also called \textit{Mahā Chāt Kham Luang}, meaning the \textit{Mahā Chāt} royal version. In this kind of poem, the one thousand stanzas of the original of the \textit{VJ} are taken as a text and alternated with the enlarged poetical version. It is for reciting on the festive days during and after the season of Buddhist rains-retreat. The whole poem was to be delivered in a single day but later this kind of poem is said to be recomposed according to circumstances to suit the listeners without changing the original meaning. The first composer of the new versions was Khun Luang Häwat, the last King of Ayutthaya.

The \textit{Mahā Chāt Kham Luang}, or the great birth, composed by King Song Tham of Ayutthaya in 1627 AD, consists of thirteen parts. Each includes an unequal number of \textit{Pāli} stanzas or \textit{gAhās} of the original \textit{Vessantara-jātaka}, with their version and paraphrases in Thai verse. It is said that \textit{Pāli} stanzas of this \textit{VJ} are written in the old Khom or Cambodian characters.\textsuperscript{40} As time went on many new versions come into existence so the original \textit{Mahā Chāt Kham Luang} is no longer used for recitation in selected circles. It is replaced by more varied editions better adapted to modern taste and requirements.

\textsuperscript{38} Gerini, \textit{The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony}, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Gerini, \textit{The Thet Mahā Chāt Ceremony}, p. 103.
5. 4 The influence of the Vessantara-\textit{J\acute{a}taka} on paintings

The themes of Thai traditional paintings are derived from \textit{J\acute{a}takas}.\footnote{Ginburg, \textit{Thai Manuscript Painting}, p. 44.} The history of Thai pictorial art is not very ancient, since little survives of it before the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. Even so, the paintings, in the form of temple murals, wall paintings, illustrated manuscripts, and painted banners, offer us a rich record of the culture of old Thailand.\footnote{Ginburg, \textit{Thai Manuscript Painting}, Intro. p.7.} From ancient times, sculpture and architectural remains survive to represent the first known Thai kingdom at Sukhothai, in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century.\footnote{Ibid.} The inscriptions carved in stone of the Sukhothai period was the first record in Thai history.\footnote{Ginburg, \textit{Thai Manuscript Painting}, p. 44.} The earliest mural paintings are still found in Wat Ceti Cet Thau in the Sukhothai period.\footnote{Klaus, \textit{Mural paintings in Thailand}, p. xlvi.} Surviving \textit{J\acute{a}takas} paintings are also found in a tunnel in the Sichum temple in Sukhothai, dating from the 14\textsuperscript{th} century.\footnote{Ginburg, \textit{Thai Manuscript Painting}, Intro. p. 7.} They are a splendid series of about one hundred inscribed stone slabs in the names of the \textit{J\acute{a}takas}.\footnote{Skilling, \textit{J\acute{a}taka and Pa\textgreek{a}g\acute{a}-J\acute{a}taka in South-East Asia}, 123.} In the lower halves of the walls Wat Ratchabur\textgreek{a}n\textad{153}, Ayutthaya, (fifteen century AD) are covered with \textit{J\acute{a}takas} scenes.\footnote{Klaus, \textit{Mural paintings in Thailand}, p. il-l.} The style of the painting is said to copy the Sukhothai period.\footnote{Ibid.} The seed of the early paintings continued to the Thonburi period (1767-1782). This period is also called the period of transition. It is between the destruction of the old capital city of Thailand, Ayutthaya, and the foundation of the new capital, Bangkok, in the year 1782. Two manuscripts belonging to this period have been preserved. One of them is in the Indian Art Museum in Berlin and the other parallel edition is in the Thai National Museum in Bangkok.\footnote{Ibid. pp. lvi-lvii.}
Mural paintings of this period are found at Wat RAtchasithAram in Thonburi and Wat DusitAram, Bangkok Noi. On the South wall of Wat RAtchasithAram, scenes from the VJ such as the departure of Vessantara, the farewell of Vessanatara, Brahmin asking for the horses of Vessantara, Vessantara on the way to Mount VâMka, Jûjak and the ascetic Accuta, the return of Maddl hindered by wild beasts and the return of Vessantara are well depicted.51

After the destruction of Ayutthaya by the Burmese, the restoration of Thailand under Rama I (1782-1809) and the construction of the new capital city of Bangkok, the year 1782 marked the beginning of the last creative phase in Thai painting.52 The most classical refinement of the paintings of Bangkok period can be studied in the throne hall Phra Thlnang Phuthaisawan, in Wat DusitAram, Wat RAtchasithAram and Wat SuwannAram.53 On the ordination walls of Wat SuwannAram scenes from Nemi, Maha-Ummagga and Vessantara-Atakas are illustrated.54

Paintings of Atakas with an instructive subject matter have always played a vital role in Buddhist art. In the past, Thai people donated murals of the Thai pha phra bot (a picture of a standing Buddha with two chief disciples SÃriputta and Moggallana) to the temples as an act of merit to be used during major festivals and ceremonies.55 Such murals were in demand up to and during the reign of King Rama V (1868 to 1910).56

51 Klaus, Mural paintings in Thailand, pp. 63-71.
52 Ibid. pp. lvi.-lvii.
53 Ibid. Wat SuwanAram is designated in Thai literature as Wat PoRAn, an old temple. This expression is use to designate the Ayutthaya period as the time of foundation.
54 Ibid. pp. 127-159.
55 Thirakanont, Magical Murals rise again.
56 Ibid.
The murals of *pha phra bot* differ from the early and latter periods; as Thirakanont says “Early *pha phra bot* typically show a standing Buddha flanked by two disciples, *Sāriputta* and *Moggallana*. Later paintings often depict scenes from the *Jātaka* Tales.”

The murals of *pha phra bot* seemed to have disappeared with the fading away of the *Thet Mahā Chāt*, the preaching of the *VJ* ceremony. Stuart writes in the foreword to the book of *Thai Manuscript Painting* that “In Thailand, the Buddhist religion has been a major inspiration for both texts and illustrated works. The eyes of the monk in the sala, the public hall of the monastery, reading to the people from a popular religious text on a holy day or at ceremonies, grave or joyful, look also upon the miniature paintings that accompany the text. Such paintings in larger mural form in the halls of the monastery also provided a visual key to those who listened but perhaps had not acquired the skill to read. Even today, in widely literate times, printing technology reproduces or reflects in works about religion the twin traditions of text and illustration for Thai men and women to contemplate”.  

The earliest manuscript paintings that we can learn from, according to Ginburg, are ascribed to the 17th century in the Ayutthaya period. Due to the Burmese invasion, the climate and insects, few examples are found. Mostly the works of Thai manuscript painting are said to be based on works from the 18th and 19th centuries.

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57 Thirakanont, *Magical Murals rise again*.  
58 Ginburg, *Thai Manuscript Painting*, foreword  
60 Ibid.  

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The main themes popularly illustrated are the Ten Lives of the Buddha, the life of the Lord Buddha (Gotama Buddha), the Three Worlds of Buddhist Cosmology (*TebhUmi*), and the Buddhas of the past and other Buddhism-related subjects. Of the ten previous birth stories of Gotama Buddha, the *VJ* is the longest and has the greatest influence on aspects of the life of Thai people. The scenes from the *VJ* are most frequently depicted in Thailand. Thai artists seem to prefer to depict the *Vessantara* Story rather than the other nine. If the other stories are illustrated on the same side, the *VJ* will occupy the prominent position.

Archaeological findings showed that *pha phra bot* existed in Thailand as early as the Sukhothai period (1230-1438 AD). They were plentiful in the Ayutthaya period (1460-1767) but are almost impossible to find now due to their popularity amongst antique collectors according to Sakchai, the archaeologist and director of the National Gallery of Bangkok. One of the most famous murals in Thailand is from the *VJ* and is 34 meters long.

In conclusion, from the account shown above we get an idea of the importance of the recitation of the *Mahā Chāt* in Thailand when it becomes a state ceremony. The annual *Thet Mahā Chāt* is not always held on such a great scale. However it still ranks among the important religious performances to be seen in the country. At the season for the *Mahā Chāt*, the royal preaching hall and the preaching halls of the temples are

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61 Sonthiwan, *Thai Traditional Paintings*, p. 18.
62 Ibid. p. 31.
64 Ibid. p. 31.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.
always adorned in gay style with the *nymphoea* flowers of the five varieties.\textsuperscript{67} The traditional ceremony, though not so general and popular as in the ancient times, has lost nothing of its original magnificence. Furthermore, there are very few religious places which do not convey the paintings of *Atakas* in general and the *VJ* scenes in particular either on the walls of an ordination hall, on the base of the pagodas, rest houses, public sights and so on. Monks also from time to time make use of the *Atakas*, in particular the *VJ*, in their preaching to convey messages to lay people. The *VJ* has been widely recited, preached, read and made use of. As a result, there are various kinds of the *VJ* versions coming into existence. Some of them are in the form of Thai verses, some are composed in *Pali* and paraphrased with Thai language, some in prose and some illustrated in the forms of cartoons and some have been used as dramas and movies. It is also found in a school text book. Most Thais are familiar with the *VJ* and it is still favourable for the many.

\textsuperscript{67} They are: white, carmine, pink, light blue and light violet flowers. These five are used for offering under the name of *dok bua benchaphan* or *nymphoea* of the five hues.
Chapter Six

**Two versions of *Vessantara-jAaka*,
their differences and similarities**

The *Vessantara-jAaka* has, for a long time, been famous and very much still alive, in Kengtung. People living in Kengtung are mostly known as Tai-Khun. They have their own dialect and culture which is quite different from Burmese. In Kengtung the *VJ* is popularly known as “*Tham Vessantara-jAaka* or *Th. VJ*. The *Th. VJ* consists of many stories. The word “*Tham*” derives from the word “*Dhamma*” which means the teaching of the Buddha. Indeed, the *Th. VJ*, the Kengtung version of the *VJ*, encompasses not only the *Vessantara-jAaka* but also many parts of the *TipiṬaka* such as PÂramī, Uţhassa, Lokavutti, Suttanta, and Abhidhamma-piṬkas, M âlai which is divided into two parts, *Vessantara gÂthÂs* and its full story, the good result as well as the bad result of Vessantara. Some people may, with good reason, assume the *Vessantara-jAaka* as the *TipiṬaka* for it encompasses so many Buddhist things in it.

This chapter describes the appearance of the *Th. VJ* manuscripts. It also examines the 26 parts of the *Th. VJ* and its development, which have never before been the object of scholarly attention. As the material is unfamiliar to many, it will provide a summary of each section. It also compare the *Th. VJ*, with the *VJs* edited by Fausbøll, the Burmese version and the Thai versions to see similarities and differences between them.
6.1 The presentation of the *Tham Vessantara-Ataka* manuscripts

Tai-Khun manuscripts, in which the *Th. VJ* is written, are two types: palm leaf and folding paper books. The size of a palm leaf is 5cm by 53cm, there are five to six lines on each side of a palm leaf (Figure 6.1). The folding manuscripts are much more common. The size of a folding manuscript is usually 19 cm by 38cm and each page contains 14 to sixteen lines (Figure 6.2). The folding manuscript is used for both Buddhist and secular Tai-Khun text of literature, as well as practical writings such as official documents and letters while palm leaf is used mainly for writing sacred texts. The text is usually transmitted in hand-writing on manuscript or palm leaves. The *Th. VJ* selected here is an existing printed version on local made papers arranged as a folding manuscript. This kind of manuscript is called *Parabaik* (folding book) in Burmese. The *Th. VJ* contains 365 pages, many times bigger than the original *VJ* edited by Prof. Fausboll, and Burmese *JaAtaka PAli, ChaThaNgAyana* version. The *Th. VJ* is sometimes written on palm leaf but people favour the paper manuscript. The language is always Tai-Khun. The Tai-khun language used in this book belongs to the early eighteenth century AD.¹ Tai-Khun people can read Northern, Lanna, Thai characters and Northern Thai people are also able to read Tai-Khun scripts. They are very similar.

Tai-Khun scripts are widely used in northern Thai, Chiangmai, Lao, Sipsongpanna and Kengtung. It is one of the dialects of the Tai.

Since the *Th. VJ* is usually written by hand either on hand-made papers or palm leaves, we hardly come across any printed versions. It may be due to the belief that sponsoring a writing of a Buddhist text is a significant act of religious devotion; it brings religious merit to the sponsor, since fine writing and decoration by skilled artisans is felt to promote and glorify the faith.\(^2\) Simply copying a text constitutes an act of merit, and often a brief colophon at the end of a manuscript specifies the goal of advancing the faith.\(^3\) It may also mention the scribe’s name and that of the sponsor, and sometimes the date of completion of the text. Those who are capable of copying such manuscripts are mostly monks or those who have been monks at some time in their life and have been trained in the practice of reciting, composing and arranging such works under competent teachers for a period of time. To be accepted, the handwriting must be readable and clear. The scribes have to copy from the previous versions but usually they are not themselves concerned whether all the manuscripts are correct or otherwise. They are not editors. They may hardly have time to check that what they have just copied down on hand-made paper or on palm leaves from the old sources, is correct and orderly. Even the version from which they have copied may be full of mistakes for manuscripts have been recopied in the same manner from generation to generation up to the present day.

\(^3\) Ibid.
No one tries to edit, upgrade or modernize the text. Even today, we come across very few printed versions of the *Th. VJ* except the one printed in the year 2000 in Maesai, Thailand. This printed version came into existence in response to the difficulties of the copiers, both of the palm leaves or paper, as has been stated earlier. Realizing not only the hurdle to the copiers and also the reciters, of sometimes, illegible hand-writing, the most Ven. Aggamahapandita Khuwa Sengla, the chief monk of Vat Saimoung Tachileik decided to produce a printed version of the *Th. VJ*.

However, it is not in the form of a modernized book, but still in the traditional paper form, Parabeik, with printed characters. This is supposed to be the first attempt to put the *Th. VJ* on print. So, the printed version of the *Th. VJ* is still in traditional form long in length, wide in breadth, thick in size and quite heavy to carry about. Traditionally thick hand-made paper has been used as the material for the compilation of the *Th. VJ*. The shape of it is like that of a palm leaf.

### 6.2 Primary findings in the *Tham Vessantara-jAtaka*

#### Contents of the *Vessantara-jAtaka*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Th. VJ</th>
<th>PTS &amp; CTN</th>
<th>VJ-MPJRD (Lan Na)</th>
<th>MKL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>སྣ་དོན་(pAramI)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>སྣ་བོད་(UhBssa)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>སྣ་བོད་(LokavuDDhi)</td>
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</tbody>
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4 *Th. VJ*’s preface.

5 He is most respectable and well known to the people, monks and lays both in Burma and Thai. He even arranged the whole *Tipi ṇka* into Tai-Khun character which had never been done before and distributed widely among the Buddhist countries in December, 2000.

6 *Th. VJ*’s preface.
| 4. | ผู้เรียน (Suttanta) |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | คติ (Vinaya) |  |  |  |  |
| 6. | ธรรมคติ (Abhidhamma) |  |  |  |  |
| 7. | ปัฏฐานคติ (Pathama Malai) | ปัฏฐานมาเลยวัตถุ |  |  |  |
| 8. | ดุติยาปัฏฐานคติ (Dutiya Malai) | ทุติยมาเลยวัตถุ |  |  |  |
| 9. | ภาคที่ 1 (the first section of gAnthA) |  |  |  |  |
| 10. | ภาคที่ 2 (the second section of gAnthA) |  |  |  |  |
| 11. | ภาคที่ 3 (the third section of gAnthA) |  |  |  |  |
| 12. | ต่ำตัน (Dasabon) | ต่ำ aravakaAnthA | ทศพร | กัณฑ์สะพาว |  |
| 13. | หิมาภัย (Himapan) | HimavantavaBBaM | ทิมพานค์ | กัณฑ์หิมพานค์ |  |
| 14. | ตานกัน (DAnakan) | ตานกัน BDaM | ทานกัณฑ์ | กัณฑ์ทานกัณฑ์ |  |
| 15. | วานพัน (Vanapave) | Vanapavesana-kDaM | วานประเวศน์ | กัณฑ์วันประเวศ |  |
| 16. | ชูชก (Jujauk) | JujaukaBDaM | ชูชก | กัณฑ์ชูชก |  |
| 17. | จุลพน (Cullabon) | CullavaravaBBaM | จุลพน | กัณฑ์จุลพน |  |
| 18. | มหาพน (Mahabon) | mahavBaM | มหาพน | กัณฑ์มหาพน |  |
| 19. | กุมมาร (KumArapan) | KumArapabbaM | กุมมาร | กัณฑ์กุมมารบัน |  |
| 20. | มัทรี (Maddl) | mahApaM | มัทรี | กัณฑ์มัทรี |  |
| 21. | สักรบรรพ (Sakkapan) | SakkapabbaM | สักรบรรพ | กัณฑ์สักรบรรพ |  |
| 22. | มหาราช (MahArAj) | mahArAjapabbaM | มหาราช | กัณฑ์มหาราช |  |
| 23. | ฉักขัตติยบรรพ (Chakkhatti) | ChakkhattiyakaBDaM | ฉักขัตติยบรรพ | กัณฑ์ฉักขัตติย |  |
| 24. | นครกัณฑ์ (Nagon) | (ฉการากันDa) | นครกัณฑ์ | กัณฑ์นครกัณฑ์ |  |
| 25. | อานิสงส์มหาเวสันตรชาดก (Anisong Vesan) |  |  | อานิสงส์มหาเวสันตรชาดก |  |
| 26. | Vipak Vesan |  |  |  |  |
The *Th. VJ* consists of 26 sections, compared with the *PAli* version of the *VJ*, only 13 sections from the *VJ* itself. However, since the *Th. VJ* itself passed on from generation to generation, there are slight differences between many versions due to the carelessness of the scribes and the particular needs of the people in each place. For instance, the *Th. VJ* may be arranged merely for the purpose of chanting or it may be arranged for the preservation of the text. Some parts might be cut and some might be inserted where found necessary or unnecessary for the occasion of the time.

The 26 sections or *KanDas* of the *Th. VJ* are: (1) *PAramI*, perfections; (2) *UBhassa*, anxiety; (3) *LokavuDDhi*, the welfare of the world; (4) *Suttanta*, discourses of the Buddha; (5) the *Vinaya*, the rules of monks; (6) the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, the philosophical teaching of the Buddha; (7) *Pathama Mālai, Phra Mālai Kao*, or *Pathama MĀleyya*, a text about Phra Mālai’s visiting hells; (8) *Dutiya Malai, Phra Mālai Pai*, or Dutiya MĀleyya, about Phra Mālai’s visiting heavenly abodes; (9) *Pathama GAthA*, the first section of the stanzas; (10) *Dutiya GAthA*, the second section of the stanzas; (11) *Tatiya GAthA*, the third section of the stanzas; (12) *Dasabon* or *Dasavara*, the section about ten boons given to Phusatl by the king of gods, Indra; (13) *Himapan* or *Himavana*, the section on the Himalaya; (14) *DAnakan* or *DAnakaBda*, the section on almsgiving; (15) *Vanapave* or *Vannapavesana*, the section on entering the forest; (16) *Jujauk* or *JUjaka*, the description on JUjaka Brahmin; (17) *Culapon* or *Cullavana*, the section the small forest; (18) *Mahapon* or *MahAvABBa*, the section on the great forest; (19) *KumArapan* or *KumArā-pabba*, the section on King Vessantara’s giving away his

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*Th. VJ*, pp. 1-6. See also *MahAVessantara KaBhi*, Vol I, a recopy by Nanseng, pp. 1-4; *Vessantara KaBhi*, Vol I, a recopy by Nan Ai Wan Pong, pp. 1-4. These three copies are on folding books in the forms of hand made paper. We can also study *PAramI* which has 7 pages on palm leaves, a copy by Nanseng, pp. 1-7.
two children to the Brahmin; (20) Daddari or Maddl, the section on Maddl; (21) Sakkapan or Sakkapana, the section on Sakka; (22) MaharAj or MahArAjA, the section on the Great King; (23) Sakkati or Chakhattiya, the section on the six noble families; (24) Nagon or Nagara-kaBda, the section on entering the city; (25) Anisong Vesan, the section on the good results of Vesan; (26) Vpak Vesan, the section on the bad results of Vesan.

The Th. VJ has developed a unique form for itself. Looking at the table of contents of the Th. VJ, we see some unique features of the Th. VJ. The first six chapters and the last two chapters of the Th. VJ are not found in any of the other VJSs. They are considered to have been developed in Kengtung.

The first section, PAraml, is, as the name suggests, an explanation of thirty types of the perfecting acts. PAraml is an explanation about the ten perfections. The ten perfections are (1) the perfection of generosity (2) the perfection of moral ethics (3) the perfection of renunciation (4) the perfection of wisdom (5) the perfection of effort (6) the perfection of patience (7) the perfection of truth (8) the perfection of determination (9) the perfection of loving-kindness and (10) the perfection of equanimity. Among the ten, the perfection of wisdom is much more emphasised than the others. This section emphasises that any one who practises the perfection of wisdom will never be defeated by any kind of defilement and will be protected by the king of the gods, Indra.

The second section, Ubhassa explains the results of the god, SupatiThitA's past actions in various ways. SupatiThitA, who is about to die in the next seven days, is
informed where he is going to be reborn and suffers as a result of his actions. He became fearful. For example, he is going to be reborn as a pig, as a result of mixing up paddy and bran and selling it to others. So, fear makes him go to see the Buddha for help. In return, the Buddha teaches him *UBhassavijeyya-sutta*, the teaching which is free from uncertainty and dangers. Following the advice of the Buddha, the god, SupatiThitA, lives a long life.

The third section, *Lokavuttahi*, expounds the ways to achieve development here and hereafter. It explains that any person, who takes refuge in the Buddha, his teachings and in the Saṅgha, will be free from all sorts of suffering and uncertainty in this life and the life after. This *sutta* explains that any one, who follows and practises according to this *sutta*, will be prosperous, wealthy and healthy not only in this life but also the life hereafter. Despite its claim to be the words of the Buddha, this *sutta* is not in the five Pāli Collections (*nikAyA*).

The fourth section, *suttanta*, is a summary of the *Dakkhina-vibhanga-sutta*. The chapter explains different types of benefit received, based on fourteen different kinds of receivers, ranging from *Sanghika-dAṇa*, offering to the community of monks, to *dussila*, people without morals. The *sutta* demonstrates how to give gifts. Here it is important to note how the Kengtung *Vessantara-Jātaka* tries to educate the donor about various receivers and the varied results gifts bring to them.

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8 *M III*, pp. 253-257.
The fifth section, the *Vinaya*, gives a brief history of the *Vinaya* and a summary of the four pĀrajika rules: how they came into existence one by one, following the wrong doings of the monks. Although there are some mistakes in recounting the historical formation of the *Vinaya* rules, the inclusion of the *Vinaya* in the Th. Vj is significant. It shows how the laity are educated about the *Vinaya* and how the tradition considers the *Vinaya* to be very important for the Buddha-sAsana.

The sixth section, the *Abhidhamma*, is the contents from the DhammasaNaBi. They include the 22 triads (tika-mAtikA), 100 Dyads (duka-mAtikA) and 40 suttantika-mAtikA This chapter is all in Pāli and no explanation is given.

The seventh section, *Pathama Mālai, Phra Mālai Kao*, the first section of Phra Mālai text, is a text about Phra Mālai’s visiting hells and reporting them back to people. It is believed to have been composed in Sri Lannka. It concerns a Sri Lankan Arahat monk named Phra Mālēyya Thera. Through practicing, he can fly up into the sky and dive into water. He visits hells and sees many beings suffering from various kinds of tortures due to their past actions. Upon seeing them, he asks the caretaker of hell the reasons they were suffering in hells. He is told that these ladies and gentlemen had committed various kinds of sins while they are in human world. So, they are reborn as hell beings and suffer here. He is requested to help them to get out of hells. Then he returns to the human world and narrates what he has seen to human beings and asks them not to do bad deeds but to do meritorious actions, listen to the teachings and to transfer merit to departed relatives. This text teaches people to avoid engaging in bad deeds and to perform good ones.
The eighth section is *Dutiya Mālai, Phra Mālai Pai*, or *Dutiya Maleyya*, the last parts of *Phra Mālai* text. It is about *Phra Mālai*‘s visit to heavenly abodes which he then narrates to people back in the human realm. This text educates people on how to perform meritorious deeds with various benefits in different levels.

The ninth section is *Pathama gAthā*. The tenth is *Dutiya gAthā*. The eleventh is *Tatiya gAthā*. In the *Th. VJ* a thousand *gAthā* or stanzas are divided into three sections, the first, the second and the third sections of stanzas. Their divisions will be discussed when we examine the *gAthā* sections.

The twelfth section is *Dasabon* or *Dasavara*, the Ten Boons. Indra, the king of gods, invites a Deva’s daughter, Phusatī, to take a rebirth in the material world as a queen and become the mother of the *Bodhisatta*. She consents on the condition that ten boons are bestowed upon her, which will render her the most privileged and happy amongst women. Indra grants her request and calls upon her the ten blessings wished for. The ten boons are: (1) to be born in the Kasattiyas’ caste and become Queen to the King of Sivi, (2) to be endowed with eyes as beautiful and brilliant as the gazelle’s and graceful, velvety brows (3) to continue to bear on earth the name of Phusatī (blossoming) the same name as she was known by the Devaloka, (4) to become the mother of an illustrious son, and to be delivered without pain, (5) to keep her slender form while with child, (6) to keep her breasts even, having become a mother, as fair as blooming lotus buds, (7) to preserve her youthful, maiden features and her black hair free from hoariness and decay, (8) to be graced with a complexion of a delicate hue and a soft brilliant skin, (9) to be allowed, on becoming a queen, to release all prisoners from jail, (10) to obtain anything on earth she might wish for.
The thirteenth section, *Himapan or Himavana*, contains the section on the Himalaya forest. Phusatī is reborn in the human world as a royal maiden and becomes the queen consort of King Sirī Sanjaya who rules the city of Vijaya Jetthuttara, capital of the Sivī Kingdom, in India. Shortly afterwards she conceives and in the tenth month of her pregnancy, she is taken for a drive by her royal husband, to see the market. A son was born to her during the tour. As the child was born on Merchant’s Street, he was given the name of Vessantara. As soon as he was born, the prince asks from his mother if he can make donations.\(^9\) He marries a Princess Maddī, the daughter of King Madarāja of the Ceta country. They live together in greatest happiness. They have two children, Jāli and KaBhā. In their kingdom, there is a magical white elephant, which helps the country in various ways in time of need. Then, the Kingdom of Kālinga\(^10\) suffered from drought. The King of Kālinga sends eight Brahmins to Vijaya to ask for the white elephant from Prince Vessantara. The prince gives it to them. This donation made the subjects of Vijaya so furious that the Prince is driven into exile.

The fourteenth section is *Danakan or DanakaBDa*, the section on almsgiving. As in the original Pāli version, Maddī, the prince’s consort, implores the king’s forgiveness for her husband but fails to obtain it. Prior to his leave, *Vessantara* makes a sevenfold great donation to people in need. About to leave, he entreats his wife to remain in the capital and take care of the children but she rejected the suggestion and insisted in going with him. Then he took her with the two children in his chariot. They leave by the southern gate of the city, throwing silver and golden coins to the people along the road.

\(^9\) The future Buddha is said to utter his voice immediately on leaving his mother’s womb in three births, as Mahosadha, Vessanatara and Prince Siddhattha. In the Vessantara birth, as soon as he was born, he stretched out his right hand, saying; ‘Is there anything in the house, mother? I would bestow a gift’. *The Nidānakathā*. p. 68.

\(^10\) On the Coromandel coast.
as they proceed. After a while two Brahmins approach them and ask the prince for horses. He gives them without hesitation. Then again another Brahmin comes forth to ask for their golden chariot in which they ride. Prince Vessantara gave it to him. They had to continue their journey on foot. The Prince carries Jālī while Maddī Kanhā. They take the road leading to the Vanka Mountain to become hermits.

The fifteenth section is Vanapave or Vanapavesana, the section on entering the forest. They arrive in the Ceta country where Maddī’s father is ruling. He comes out of the city to see them, and invites them to reside in his palace. However, Vessantara declines the offer, convincing him that he is determined to live in the jungle and practice the precepts. Having witnessed the Prince’s desire, the king requests them to stay in his kingdom for seven days. Then they set off on their journey to the Vanka Mountains. They are provided with a hunter named Cetaputta to keep watch over the road and ward off intruders and troublemakers. In the meantime Indra sends Vissakamma, the celestial architect, to create two places provided with necessary things for hermits, one for Vessantara and the other for Maddī and her two children. He practises asceticism while Maddī attends to the children and collects fruits and roots for food.

The sixteenth section is Jujauk or Jūjākā, the story of Jūjākā Brahmin. Jūjaka, from the kingdom of Kālinga, has wedded a beautiful young girl named Amittā. She learns of Vessantara’s giving everything away to the needy. So, she urges her husband to go and ask for the two children to serve as their slaves. He is reluctant at first; but being pressurised he at last consents and goes forth. As he comes closer to the Vanka
Mountain, the Cetaputta takes aim at him with a bow and arrow. But Jūjaka deceived him by telling lie so that he was directed to the Prince’s hermitage.

The seventeenth section is *Culabon* or *Cullavana*, the section on the small forest. Jūjaka continues his journey in the direction pointed out by the hunter. And he arrives at the place where a holy ascetic, Accuta is residing. It is close to the Vipula rock.

The eighteenth section is *Mahabon* or *MahAvana*, the section on the great forest. Arriving at the holy man’s abode, Jūjaka makes an enquiry as to the site of Prince Vessantara’s hermitage. The ascetic, Accuta, is annoyed to see him at first but he is deceived by the cunning Brahmin, Jūjaka, by saying that he is not a malefactor but an honest man; not an intruder but a well known familiar of the Prince’s, sent by his relatives to gain news of him. Having exchanged their greetings the holy ascetic shows him the place where the Prince lives.

The nineteenth section is *Kumārapan* or *Kumā-ra-pabba*, the section of King Vessantara’s giving away of his two children to the Brahmin. Having arrived at the Prince’s hermitage, Jūjaka tells him the aim of his coming to ask for the two children to be his slaves. At that moment Maddī is out in the forest to gather fruits. The Prince grants the request with joy in giving up Jālī and Kanhā as slaves.¹¹ The Brahmin ties their hands with withes and draws and drives them away but after a short distance, he stumbles and falls so that the children escape and run back to their father’s hermitage and hide themselves in a nearby lotus pond. Jūjaka returns to the Prince and bitterly

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¹¹ The donation of the children is one of the great donations known as mahāparicāga.
reproached him for his children’s behaviour. Vessantara set off in search of them and found their footprints beside the lotus pond. He requests them to come out with kind words which touched their hearts and they come out to him one by one from their hiding place. Then he entrusted them to the Brahmin who tied them tighter, and drove and tortured them unmercifully in the presence of their father. Vessantara was about to lose his self-control but content himself as the thought of a resolve to attain Buddha-hood arose. Therefore he allowed Jūjaka to set off unmolested with the two children.

The 20th section is Maddl, the section on Maddl, the Prince’s consort. While the incident is taking place at the hermitage, Maddī is detained longer than usual in the forest. As she is returning she finds her way barred for a long time by three fierce animals: a lion, a tiger and a leopard. Having known that Jūjaka was away with the two children by that time, the three beasts sent by Indra let her pass. Maddī arrives back at the hermitage only after the night has fallen. Having found no children anywhere, she inquires from her husband what has happened to them. But he keeps silent. She is very upset, burst into tears and falls down unconscious thinking that misfortune has befallen her dear ones. When she recovers her senses, the Prince tells her what has happened during her absence, and exhorts her to repress her grief and put her heart at peace. Maddī, therefore, consents and shares with her husband the satisfaction of having performed a highly meritorious deed.

The 21st section is Sakkapan the section on Indra. Knowing that Prince Vessantara has nothing left but his wife, Indra becomes fearful that he should give her away in future if anyone comes forward to ask for her. As a result, nobody would look
after him. With this fear in mind, Indra appears to the Prince in the form of an aged Brahmin and tells him that he has come to ask his wife as a gift.\footnote{The donation of the wife constitutes another of the five great sacrifices, Mahāparicāga.} The request is agreed but Indra gives the Princess back to him and then bestows upon him his blessing.

The 22\textsuperscript{nd} section is Maharāja or Mahāraja, the section on the Great King. Jūjaka is journeying home to Kālinga but losses his way and instead of arriving at Kālinga, finds himself in Vijaya. When he enters the capital, the king sees him with two decent children from his balcony. This makes him send his officers to call the Brāhmin along with the children into his presence. When they are brought to him, he asks Jālī how it is that the Brāhmin is dragging them about and the boy replies that his father, Vessantara has sold him to Jūjaka for the price of ten Kahāpanas and Kanhā for 100 Kahāpanās, 100 of gold, 100 of precious stones, 100 elephants, 100 horses and one hundred pieces of every kind of other valuable property. The King gives Jūjaka all of those and thus rescues his grandchildren from bondage. The Brāhmin does not live to enjoy his easily acquired wealth. He dies of over eating. Since he has no heirs to his property, all the wealth is to be the king’s possession again. Then the King arranges to take his son back from exile and sets off on his journey in a great pomp with an armed force accompanied by the Queen and his two grand children.

The 23\textsuperscript{rd} section is Sakkati or Chakhattiya, the section on the six noble families. The expedition marches to Prince Vessantara’s hermitage where the King and Queen, Prince Vessantara, his wife, Maddī and their two children, Jālī and Kanhā, mest and Prince Vessantara is at last induced to quit the wilderness.
The 24th section is *Nagon* or *Nagara-kaBla*, the section on entering the City. They return with the banished Prince to the kingdom where the subjects warmly welcome him with great happiness. Various kinds of great festivals are held and a distribution of alms is made in his honour. He keeps practicing his generosity as ever before and led his subjects to do likewise and lives happily until the end of his life.

The 25th section is *Anisong Vesan*, the section on the good results of *Vesan*. *Anisong Vesan* is about the benefit of sponsoring each chapter on the recitation of the *Th. VJ*. Besides meeting Arimetteyya as a result of listening to the great *Vessantara-jAtaka* there are particular results from listening to each section of the same *jAtaka*. This may aim to generate more faith of the listeners by emphasizing the result of each section. This *Anisong Vesan* has to be recited a day before the real *Vessantara-jAtaka* is recited.

The 26th section is *Vipak Vesan* which is the section on the bad result of Vessantara. This text describes bad actions and their consequences. For instance, how Devadatta, the Buddha’ cousin, developed his hostility towards the Buddha because of jealousy during his past lives and became the Buddha’s enemy for many lives until the Buddha gained Enlightenment. This chapter also explains how JĀli and KaBhA and their mother, Maddl, are separated from each other due to actions they have performed in their past lives. The text, *Vipak Vesan* became popular and is recited a day before the *VJ*. 
Of the last two chapters, the first one, anisong, is about the benefit of sponsoring each chapter on the recitation of the Th. VJ. This clearly indicates a later development to the text in order to attract sponsorship for each chapter. This was necessary as the recitation rituals became elaborate and more expensive.

The last chapter, Vipaka, gives explanation why the Th. VJ happened the way it happened. In other words, Prince Vessantara and his father, King of the Sivi had incurred bad karma for themselves. Apart from these eight chapters, the Th. VJ also repeats all the verses from the canon.

Having studied the development and outlined the 26 sections of the Th. VJ, we will examine the similarities and their differences between the VJs and the Th. VJ.

6.3 Similarities and differences between the Vessantara-jAtakas and the Tham Vessantara-jAtakas

As mentioned earlier, there are altogether 26 sections in the Th. VJ. Among them, only 13 sections being recorded in the VJ/s, yet the rest are included as mentioned earlier. In each section of the Th. VJ, we find out that only gAthAs, verses have been recorded and prose is hardly found in the Th. VJ.

When we compare the verses of the Th. VJ with the other versions (Burmese, PTS and Thai), we find that the Th. VJ and the Mahamakut version in Thai characters contain the most verses. Although it is usually mentioned at the end of the commentary that there are one thousand verses in the VJ, it is in fact, only 804 verses altogether. The versions vary but none of them have one thousand verses. Among them, the
Chatthasaṅgiti version consists of 790 verses; the PTS version has 786; and the Th. VJ and the Mahamakut versions contain 804 each. But the Mahamakut and the Kengtung versions are not exactly the same. They differ in six verses.

Examining the gāthās in the Th. VJ, we learn from the table of the contents that gāthās are being divided into three parts: Pathama gāthās, the first section of the verses,¹³ Dutiya gāthās, the second section of the verses¹⁴ and Tatiya gāthās, the third section of the verses.¹⁵

Pathama gāthās consists of four kāṇḍas: (1) Dasavara gāthā,¹⁶ (2) Himavanta¹⁷ (4) Dānā kāṇḍa,¹⁸ (5) Vanappavesana.¹⁹ The second contains four sections: (1) Jūjakapabba,²⁰ (2) Cūlavanavaṭṭāna,²¹ (3) Mahāvana vaṭṭāna,²² (4) Kumārapabba (in Burmese, Dārakapabba).²³ The third one comprises five parts: (1) Maddipabba,²⁴ (2) Sakkapabba,²⁵ (3) Maharājapabba,²⁶ (4) Cha-khattiyapabba,²⁷ (5) NaḥgarakanDā.²⁸

When we study the Th. VJ, at the outset of each section, explanations or prose parts have been omitted without any reason being provided as to why they have done so.

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¹³ Th. VJ, pp. 58-74.
¹⁴ Th. VJ, pp. 74-91.
¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 91-108.
¹⁶ Ibid. p. 58.
¹⁹ Ibid. pp. 71-73.
²⁰ Ibid. pp. 74-78.
²¹ Ibid. pp. 78-80.
²² Ibid. pp. 80-84.
²³ Ibid. pp. 84-90.
²⁴ Ibid. pp. 91-95.
²⁵ Ibid. pp. 96-98.
²⁷ Ibid. pp. 103-105.
while the standard *VJs*, such as the PTS edited by Fausbøll\(^{29}\) and Burmese version \(^{30}\) are full of explanations to the *gathAs*. They are more easily comprehensible.

When we go through the *Th. VJ* we see mostly the verses or *gathAs* with very little prose in each section. We have much difficulty in going through them since the nature of the verses or *gathAs* are hard to understand.

The first *gathAs* consist of four divisions (1) *Dasavara gathAs*\(^{31}\) (2) *Himavanta*\(^{32}\) (3)*Danakanda*\(^{33}\) and (4)*Vanapavesana*.\(^{34}\) At the outset of the *Dasavara gathAs* or ten boons,\(^{35}\) ‘Namotassathu’ is mentioned followed by “*phussati varavaBBAbheti idaM satthA kappilavatthuM upanissAyA nigroDhArAme viharanto pokkharavassaM ArAbbha kathesi.*”\(^{36}\) Meaning “Ten boons” etc. This story the master told while dwelling near Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Grove, about the shower of rain\(^{37}\) followed by the other passage, like “*ussAcandhanacuBBena*\(^{38}\) *puJAmehaM urehotu maA puGGena nimitAti . yAjettha dvIhi tuhmehi puJAmehyaM paTIGtA tAya ijjhantu tumhmAkaM yathAvo patthaBA tathAti.*”\(^{39}\)

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\(^{29}\) Fausbøll, *The Jàaka*, Vol.VI.

\(^{30}\) Mahàbuddhaghosa, *JaakathakathA* Vol. VII.

\(^{31}\) *Th. VJ*, p. 58.

\(^{32}\) Ibid. p. 58-63.

\(^{33}\) Ibid. pp. 63-71.

\(^{34}\) Ibid. pp. 71-73.

\(^{35}\) Ibid. “*phussati varavaBBAbheti idaM satthA kappilavatthuM upanissAyA nigroDhArAme viharanto pokkharavassaM ArAbbha kathesi.*” *ussAcandhanacuBBena puJAmehaM urehotu maA puGGena nimitAti . yAjettha dvIhi tuhmehi puJAmehyaM paTIGtA tAya ijjhantu tumhmAkaM yathAvo patthaBA tathAti.* Then only gathas and no prose at all, have been recorded throughout this section.


\(^{38}\) *Th. VJ*, p. 58. To get the meaning of the Sandalwood, this word should be *UsAcandana cuBBena.*

\(^{39}\) *Th. VJ*, p. 58.
“I offer Sandalwood powder, may it be as the wish. I have created the meritorious flower. I offer you these two great things with my promise. By those, may your wish be fulfilled.” There are only two scattered prose passages in this section with incomplete meaning. Thereupon no prose passages are found nor the explanation to the gAthAs through out the section of the Dasavara gAthAs.

The phrase ‘Namotassathu’ meaning ‘May homage be to Buddha’ is mentioned at the beginning of Pathama gAthAs, Dutiya gAthAs and Tatiya gAthAs while such a phrase is not mentioned in the PTS and Burmese version. Placing ‘Namotassathu’ at the outset of the gAthAs or any other religious works seems to be the stylistic and popular way of writing in Northern Thailand. According to Chaingmai Chronicle, the phrase ‘Namo tassathu’ is placed at the outset of almost each section especially in the field of Buddhism. It is customary for Thai people and Tai or Shan to utter such a phrase with the purpose of paying homage to the Buddha who shows us the path to liberation, before they start doing something religiously. Tai-Khun or Shan people in Kengtung may copy the stylistic Thai way of writing and saying Namotassathu since the Tai-Khun characters, cultures and language are quite similar to those of northern Thai, Chiangmai.

Unlike the Th. VJ, there are neither divisions into three categories of the gAthAs neither as edited by Fausbøll nor Burmese version by Buddhaghosa. On the other hand,

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40 Th. VJ, p. 58.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid. p. 74.
43 Ibid.p. 91.
44 Wyatt & Wichienkeeo, The Chiangmai Chronicle, pp. 1, 51, 75,
all the *gāthās* in the *Th. VJ* have not been given numbers as in the PTS or Burmese version. Instead they are divided into three categories as mentioned earlier.

Going through all the *gāthās* we do not know where to stop till we encounter the full stop, we hardly come across the comas, as they have been continuously written without any space. It seems that one *gāthā* is recited till the end. The *gāthās* reciters have to recite the *gāthās* till to the end of one *gāthā* and then start to recite the next ones. Systematic and well-organized versions, such as the PTS and Burmese, mention verses with their commentary in detail and are easier for every one to get the gist of the story.

Going back to the two passages mentioned above, the first one

*phussati* varavaBBAbheti idaM satthA kappilavatthuM upanissAya nigrodhArAme viharanto pokharavassaM Arabbha kathesi.

“This story the master told while dwelling near Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Grove, about the shower of rain” only this passage has been stated, and the rest prose as mentioned in the standard ones which are being omitted in this version. Since some parts being omitted we have much difficulty to learn what the rest are. The two above-mentioned passages do not convey us the full meaning on what occasion the Buddha told this story, and of what kind of story that the Buddha had told and to whom and what this story is all about.

Having examined we come to know from the above context that the present story, which prompted the Buddha to relate the relevant story of the past, has not been stated in detail in the *Th. VJ*. For example: There is no mention of the Sakyan people
being proud of their race and not willing to pay homage to the Buddha, nor about King Suddhodana, the Buddha’s father, worshipping or paying homage to the Buddha three times:45 (1) On his new born babe turning his feet to the head of Kaladevala, seeing which act, he worshipped the Buddha for the first time. (2) On the ploughing day, seeing no shade of the tree move, he paid his homage to the Buddha for the second time. (3) Seeing the miracle that the Buddha performed on the day of convincing the Sakyan people to pay him homage, he worshipped him for the third time. While the other versions of the VJs,46 provide many details to give the meaning of the gAthAs or the verses and give full story of the present, which prompted the Buddha, requested by the Bhikkhus to tell the related past story.

There is no mention of the great king of the Sivi ruling in the city of Jetuttara who had a son, Sanjaya nor the princess, Pussati, the daughter of the king of the Maddas who became the chief queen of King Sanjaya.47

The Th. VJ, does not mention about the previous birth account of the princess in her past life when she met the Buddha Vippassi, nor give any mention about King Kiki with his seven other daughters such as Samani, Samana, Gutta, Bhikkudasika, DhammA, SudhammA and Sanghadasi;48 and no prose that the king of gods granted ten wishes to Pussati.

45 Fausbøll. The JĀaka Vol. VI, p. 479.
46 Ibid.
47 Gombrich The perfect generosity of prince Vessantara, p. 5.
48 Ibid.
On the other hand, why is the second passage, \textit{ussAcandhanacuBBena pUjAmehaM urehotu mAIA puGGe nimitAti. yAjettha dvehi tuhmehi pUjAmehyaM paTGiA tAya ijjhantu tuhmAkaM yathAvo patthaBA tathAti} stated earlier has been recorded in the \textit{Th.VJ}, but there is no such a statement in the PTS \textit{VJ} version or in the Burmese version. Such passage might have been added later by someone in Kengtung since it is found neither in the \textit{VJs} of PTS nor in Burmese and Thai versions.

Instead of giving with the standard details, the \textit{gAthAs} or verses occur without their past story in prose, in the \textit{Th. VJ}. Since only the \textit{gAthAs} have been recorded, it is hard indeed to relate them to their authors, audience and background. However, in the part of the \textit{Th. VJ} which is narrated in Tai-Khun, it recounts the full story of Vessantara as it is mentioned in the other versions.

In the \textit{Himavanta} section, that is the second category of the \textit{Pathama gAthAs} of the \textit{Th. VJ}, there is no prose but only \textit{gAthAs}. Unlike in the PTS version, no explanations are offered to the \textit{gAthAs}.\footnote{Fausbøll, \textit{The JAtakas}, pp. 484-498.} The same thing happens to the \textit{DAnakanDu} and \textit{VanapavesanakanDu}. There are no proses in these \textit{KanDu} but only the \textit{gAthAs}. In this \textit{DAna} section, there are 124 verses while the PTS mentioned only 120. In fact, between the verses 135 and 136 of the PTS there appear two \textit{gAthAs}\footnote{\textit{Th. VJ} , p. 65.} in the \textit{Th. VJ}. They speak of: (1) "Women, princes, prostitutes and Brahmins joined Phusat\textit{I} in wailing in the palace of Vessantara and (2) "horsemen, mahouts, charioteers and foot bearers all
combined with Phusatl in her wailing and lamentation in the palace of the prince Vessantara".

The other deviations are that there appear two more \textit{gAthA}s\textsuperscript{51} repeated twice in this section. These two \textit{gAthA}s first occur on page 66 and then are repeated on page 67 of the \textit{Th. VJ}; these two \textit{gAthA}s are not numbered in the PTS. One \textit{gAthA}\textsuperscript{52} listed in the PTS as number 212 is missing in the \textit{Th. VJ}. The rest of the \textit{gAthA}s are the same. The \textit{gAthA}s in the \textit{Vanapavesanakan\textit{Dti}}\textsuperscript{53} of the \textit{Th. VJ} are the same as the PTS and Burmese versions.

\textit{Dutiya-gAthA} or \textit{Dutiya-gAthApan} encompasses four categories namely, (1) \textit{JUjaka-pabba}\textsuperscript{54} (2) \textit{CULavana-vaBBanA}\textsuperscript{55} (3) \textit{MahAvana-vaBBanA}\textsuperscript{56} and (4) \textit{KumArapabba}\textsuperscript{57} but Fausbøll in his edition of \textit{JAtaka} has not divided them into \textit{Pathama-gAthA}, \textit{Dutiya-gAthA} and \textit{Tatiya-gAthA} as in the \textit{Th. VJ}.

When we study section one, which is \textit{JUjaka-pabba}, grouped under \textit{Dutiya-gAthA}, we see that the phrase "\textit{Namotassatthu}"\textsuperscript{58} occurs at the beginning of this section followed by a brief introduction\textsuperscript{59} before starting the \textit{gAthA}s or verses. No prose is found

\textsuperscript{51} Th. VJ, p. 66. (1) \textit{Athettha vatthai} saddo tumulo bheravo mah\textit{A}d\textit{An}ena tam niharanti puna \textit{dAnaM} ad\textit{A} tu\textit{vaM}.  
\textsuperscript{52} Fausbøll, \textit{The Jataka}, p. 511. 
\textsuperscript{53} Th. VJ, pp. 71-73, Fausbøll \textit{The Jataka} pp. 513-521.  
\textsuperscript{54} Th. VJ, Ibid. pp. 74-78.  
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid. pp. 78-80.  
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. pp. 80-84.  
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid. pp. 84-90.  
\textsuperscript{58} Th. VJ, p. 74.  
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. \textit{Namotosstatthu}. Tad \textit{A KalingaraThe dunnavi ThabrahmaBagAmavAsI JujakonAma} brahmanobhir\kha\textit{cariyA}ya kah\textit{A}pana satam \textit{labhitvA} \textit{Aekasmin} brahmanak\textit{ule thapetvA punna dhanam
At that time there was living in the Brahmin village of Faulstead in the kingdom of the Kalinga a Brahmin called JUjaka. He left a hundred kahapana he had gained by begging in the care of a certain Brahmin family. Then he went off again in search of more money. As he was away along time, the family spent the money and when pressed for it on his return, they were unable to give back the kahapanas. Then they had to give him their daughter, whose name was AmittatApanA.

According to the content of this passage, we come to understand that even a small paragraph has not been mentioned in full. About JUjaka taking the maiden with him to Dunnivittha, in Kalinga and dwelling there and being dutiful to her husband as a result, Amittatapana was reproached by the women in the village. This part is omitted in the Th. VJ, however, the gAthAs related to this story are continuously mentioned there.

In the CULavana-vaBBanA kanDa, the section on the small forest, there is a brief introduction of prose before the gAthAs, the meaning of which is as follows: "when the Cetan had fed the Brahmin and given him as provision for his journey a gourd of honey and a thigh of roast deer, he put him in his path, and raising his right hand described the region where the Great king was living." This prose is very much the same with that in the PTS and Burmese. However, no more prose would follow in this section of the Th. VJ while the PTS and Burmese are full of prose, interrupted between the verses.
The difference that we can see in the section of Mahavanavannana, the section on thick forest, is that all the prose passages have been omitted throughout the section.\(^{63}\)

When we analyze the KumArapabba-kanDa, the section on children a small prose passage, which I will give shortly, has been traced at the beginning of this section. The rest, which is given in the PTS are omitted. Let us study what this small passage translates as: “When JUjaka reached the square lotus pond by the path described for him by the ascetic Accuta, he thought, “It is too late today, for Maddl will by now have returned from the jungle, and womenfolk are just a hindrance, I shall go to the hermitage tomorrow when she has gone into the jungle, beg the children from Vessantara, and be off with them before she comes back.”

The Th. VJ is not like the PTS that described full gAthA and their commentary in detail. The rest of the prose\(^{64}\) describing about Maddl’s bad dream, about her reporting it back to the prince, Vessantara, about her leaving the next day early morning in search of food and leaving the children with the prince, Vessantara and of Vessantara and the children beholding JUjaka coming from distance and about their welcoming JUjaka, have not been mentioned in detail.

Tatiya gAthA\(^{65}\) the third section of the stanzas contained five categories; (1) Maddlpabbā\(^{66}\) (2) Sakkapabbā\(^{67}\) (3) MahArAjapabbā\(^{68}\) (4) Chakattiyakamma\(^{69}\) and (5)

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\(^{63}\) Th. VJ, pp. 78-79.
\(^{64}\) Fausbøll, The JAakas XXII, p. 540.
\(^{65}\) Th. VJ, p. 91.
\(^{66}\) Ibid. pp. 91-95.
Each of these sections except *Nāgarakānda* which consists of only *gAṭhās*, contains a small prose passage at the beginning.

We can trace only this small prose at the commencement of the *Maddipabbakanā*, the section on Maddl, which has the meaning:

“That whereas the king gave his dearly beloved children to the Brahmin, the earth did resound with a great uproar that reached even to Brahma’s heaven and pierced the hearts of the deities which dwelt in Himavada; who, hearing the children’s lamentation as the man drove them along, thought with themselves, “If Maddl comes betimes to the hermitage, not seeing her children she will ask Vessantara about it; great will be her longing when she hears that they have been given away; she will run after them, and will get into trouble.”

This incident takes place only in the *Th. VJ*. According to the PTS prose Indra instructed three gods to take upon them the shape of a lion, a tiger and a beer in order to obstruct Maddl’s way until the sunset to keep her safe from the attacks of lions and other wild beasts. From this context, it appears that because of the omission of some necessary parts we do not know the story in full as to what would happen to the next.

In *Sakka-pabbakanā*, the section on the king of gods, there is some lengthy prose at the beginning before the *gAṭhās* start. Once the *gAṭhās* started, there are no prose interruptions in between. The others have been omitted so we will not get a clear idea of the story.

67 Ibid. pp. 96-98.
69 *Th. VJ*, pp. 103-105.
70 Ibid. pp. 105-107.
72 Ibid.
The *Maharajapabbakan* section is introduced with a small prose passage which conveys thus: ‘The Bodhisatta and Maddl lived happily together in the hermitage that had been given them by Sakka. Meanwhile JuJaka traveled sixty leagues with the children, and divine spirits looked after them. Each night at sunset JuJaka tied the children to a bush, and made them lie down on the ground, while he himself, out of fear of fierce wild animals, climbed a tree and lay down in a fork of the branches.’ The rest of the prose is omitted and is followed by the *gAha* throughout the section.

The *Chakhattiya-kan*, the section on the six nobles mentions a small prose like:

“On the bank of Lake Mucalinda, Prince JAli caused them to entrench a camp; the fourteen thousand chariots he set facing the road by which they came, and a guard here and there to keep off lions, tigers, rhinoceros, and other wild beasts. There was a great noise of elephants and so forth.”\(^{73}\)

According to PTS and Burmese version of the *JAtakaThagatha*, there is some prose here but the *Th. VJ* leaves all prose parts out except the one stated above; the rest are all *gAha*.

In the *Nagara-kan*, the section of entering into the city no prose passage has been found but only *gAha*.

When we examine the conclusion of the *Th. VJ*, we see that the conclusion of the *Th. VJ* is arranged differently by modifying the characters vividly while the other

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\(^{73}\) Cowell, *The JAtaka*, p. 299.
two versions, the *VJ* edited by Fausbøll and the Burmese *JAtakaathagathA* maintain the same conclusion:

\[
\text{satthA imam gAtha sahasapatimanditam Vessantara dhamma desanam} \\
\text{AharItvA jAka kan samodhanes: ‘tadA jUjako devadatto aho,} \\
\text{amittatapanA CincamAnavikA, Cetaputto Channo, accuta paso} \\
\text{SAruputto, Sakko anuruddho, SaGayanarindo SuddhodanamahArAjA,} \\
\text{PhussatIdevI uppalavaBBA, sesapariA buddhaparisA, VessantarArAjA} \\
\text{aham eva’ti. }^{74}
\]

"When the Master had ended this discourse of Vessantara, with its thousand stanzas, he identified the Birth: “At that time, Devadatta was JUjaka, the lady CincA was AmittatapanI, Channa was Cetaputta, SAruputta was the ascetic Accuta, Anuruddha was Sakka, King Suddhodana was King SaGaya, MahAmAyA was PhusatI, RAhula’s mother was Queen MaddI, RAhula was Prince JAli, UppalavaBBA was KAhijnA, the followers of Buddha were the rest of the people, and King Vessantara was I myself.”^{75}(Cowell).

The *Th. VJ*, however, differs from the two versions mentioned above. It runs:

\[
\text{lophenu pento jUjako tadA so pApatibhAlo ahu devadatto. AmittatapanA} \\
\text{76 jUjaka jAyA abhUtavAdi ahukiGcA CetAbhidhAno varadvArAlo} \\
\text{ChandotidhArena}^{78} \text{ TherO mama dAni turaMgapAro islpavAro} \\
\text{acuntobhidhAno SAruputto. Varadakkhineyyo surindo varadevarAjA} \\
\text{therobhidhAno. parA mAnuruddho sakko Anuruddho Asi} \\
\text{dibbacakkhumamuttamo. SaGeyyonAmo sivirAjA seTho Suddhodhana.} \\
\text{kho vara rAjA pita. PhussatibhidhAnAsivi rAjAmATa mahAmayA idAni sA maddI rAjadhitA} \\
\text{bhimbAbhidhavara rAvedI. kumAro so JAIrAhulo kaBhAbhidhAnA} \\
\text{sivirAjadhitA UppalavaBBA idAni. sA ye rAjAmacchA sivirAjA yodhaE} \\
\text{etA cattAro sesapariA ahesum. yo Vessantaror AJA puttadArA cAgO kuTAM} \\
\text{gahetvA varapAramInAM sabbaGGUuddhopara dhammadhAro therO} \\
\text{kanAtho} \quad 79 \text{ AhaM mevassositi. tuMhebhavantApathento} \\
\text{varasaggamokkhaM evA M dhAretha JAtakanti” (nagarakandaMniThitaM.} \\
\text{Tatiya sahassabandhAnagathA niThitaM.)}
\]

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74 PTS, p. 593. Burmese, p. 387. However, in the Burmese version, the last sentence of the conclusion is slightly different from the PTS *MahAvesantaror rAjA pana ahameva samAtAsambuddho aho* sin it.


76 PTS, AmittatapanA, Fausbøll, p. 593.

77 *Th. VJ*, p. 98; ahukiGcA, PTS, *ahu cincamAnA*

78 Ibid. *ChandotidhArena*. It should be *channotidhArena*. Otherwise the word has no meaning in this context.

79 *Th. VJ*, p. 98. To be meaningful, this word changed to tiloka nAtho or telokAnAtho. Meaning the Lord of the three worlds.
“At that time, Devadatta was greedy and cruel JUjaka. CincamAna was JUjaka's wife, deceitful AmitattApanA. Channa was the entrance keeper, Ceta. My disciple, SAriputta who had crossed over the sea of SamsAra, the circle of birth and death, was the ascetic Acutta. Anuruddha who possessed the supreme divine eyes, worthy of receiving donation, was the Sakka, the king of AdulA and gods. The noble Suddodana, the father of the Buddha, was Sanjaya, the noble king of Sivi. MahaMa was PhusatI, the mother of King, Vessantara, of Sivi. The noble princess BhirmA was the princess, MaddI. RAhula was the prince named JAli. Then UppalavaBBA was KannA, the daughter of the King of Sivi. The rest of the people such as ministers, four kinds of army and others were the followers of the Buddha. The noblest Buddha, understanding the nature of the Dhamma, and the Lord of the three worlds, was King Vessantara who ever gave up wife and children and practiced PAraml, perfection. You praying to obtain deity-world and Nibbana, keep this JAtaka in your minds.” (My translation)

In comparison, we can conclude as follow:

(1) the Th. VJ contains 26 sections but the VJs only 13;

(2) though the commentary mentions 1,000 gAthAs, there are only 804. Each version varies in number. ChaThasangAyana consists of 790, the PTS 786 while the Th. VJ and the MahAnakut versions contain 804 each;

(3) the whole gAthAs of the Th. VJ are divided into three gAthAs. Pathama and Dutiya gAthAs contain four sections while Tatiya-gAthA contains five sections. Each gAthA is not numbered, like ChaThasangAyana, the PTS and the MahAnakut versions;

(4) at the outset of each section of the Th. VJ, a phrase “Namotassathu” is mentioned but there is not such a phrase in the other versions; and

(5) the Th. VJ contains mostly verses but very few prose passages while the other versions are full of prose between the gAthAs.

80 The word "bhirmA" is usually used for the name of the princess but here it is referred to the princess, YasodharA
Chapter Seven

Recital of the Tham Vessantara-jañAtaka

as a socio-cultural phenomenon

7.1 Introduction

The recitation of the Th. Vj is very highly honoured and valued by people of all walks of life in Kengtung. The recital of the Th. Vj (Ataka No. 547) is the most expensive form of DAnā or offering in Kengtung. They work hard to put this kind of recital into action: it takes years for some families to make their dream come true. Some of them are even in debt after sponsoring it due to excessive spending on offering. People do not feel fulfilled if they have not sponsored such a kind of offering once in their lifetime. Any family who is able to sponsor this kind of performance is praised and honoured as generous. When such a ceremony takes place, people are united and

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1 It was earlier known to Kengtung people as MahāPaṅg Tham or Dhamma of the great epoch or Tang-Tham-long is known in Chiangmai and Bangkok as MahāAt or MahāChāt. In Isarn district, in North-east Thailand, it is called Bun Phrawes. Bun Phrawes is not only the grandest merit-making ceremony in the village but also a major merit-making religious ritual which occurs after the harvest and combines merit-making with secular interests. Tambiah, Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand, p. 160-161.

2 DAnā is meritorious offerings to the Triple Gems or others with the object of obtaining meritorious kamma in the coming rebirths.

3 Tambiah, Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand, p. 160.

4 Interviews from Nan Then Haung, Warn Waw Kut, Kengtung, March 11, 2006; Nan Hla Long, Warn Com Kham, Kengtung, April 14, 2006; Nan Sarm Taan, Warn Kung Kyaung, Kengtung April 13 2006. They are the mediators who lead people to perform every kind of meritorious deed. They play an important role between the monks and the laity in each of their monasteries. They are the people who invite monks to give sermons and lead devotees to share merit to mark the completion of their offering. Since they perform as mediators, and play an important role leading people to do merit-making, they are equally worthy of the amount offered to the monks.
perform together as a whole with joy.\textsuperscript{5} They believe that unity and strength gained from helping each other, whether in secular life or merit-making bring good luck to oneself and family and relatives in this life and the life after. This kind of belief leads them to do meritorious deeds together.\textsuperscript{6}

The recitation of the performance of the \textit{Th. VJ} usually takes three days or more depending on the wealth of the sponsors. A day before and a day after, other \textit{JAtakas} or \textit{suttas} are read out or recited. The \textit{VJ} is recited a whole day, from predawn to about seven or eight in the evening. The sermons are also preached before the libation water is poured by the chief devotee to commemorate the donation and mark its completion. This three-day ceremony is still very much active in Kengtung and is performed in the monasteries, Wats. The main sponsor, relatives, friends, elders and monk reciters, eat and sleep within the boundaries of the monastery for the duration. It is also a good occasion for the children to have fun. Although the recital of the \textit{VJ} in Thailand has been studied in details by scholars, the recital of the \textit{Th. VJ} in Kengtung has not been described and explained to the general public.

This chapter gives an account of the procedures involved in the performance of the \textit{Th. VJ}. As this material has not been made available before, it intends to describe in some detail the social context, the preliminary negotiations and the setting in motion of the performance as a whole. It will also give some account of preparatory chanting work undertaken by the monks before the performance, as well as of customs associated with the chanting of each section in turn. In recent years there has, apparently, been some

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\item[6] Ibid. p. 241.
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decline in certain customs associated with the performance. Although evidence is primarily anecdotal rather than textual, it appears, for instance, that sometimes the traditional consultative process with village elders has been neglected, resulting in some inappropriately high expenses on the part of some sponsors and a failure to observe the traditional ‘step-by-step’ approach to the practice of generosity, which did not make inordinate financial demands on sponsoring families. This chapter is to indicate that despite these problems, symptomatic of a more widespread decline in traditional practices in rural and urban communities, the performance of the Vessanatara-\textit{Ataka}, with all its attendant status and ceremony, still plays a vital part in Kengtung communal life in Eastern Shan State, Burma.

### 7.2 A brief history of the Tham Vessantara-\textit{jataka} recital

The local P\textit{Adaeng} Chronicle\footnote{Saimong, \textit{The Padaeng Chronicle and The Jengtung State Chronicle Translated}, pp. 122-123.} records that this kind of recital was first performed in the Kengtung city in the homage hall of Wat P\textit{Adaeng} or P\textit{Adaeng} monastery by BrayA Srisudhamma Cula\textit{M}a\textit{Bi} Mah\textit{Ar}Aja (1445AD). The first performance of this kind was called \textit{MahAp\textit{Ang} Dhamma}.\footnote{Mah\textit{Ap\textit{Ang} Tham or Dhamma} of the great epoch is known in Chiangmai and Bangkok as \textit{Mah\textit{Ar}A or Mah\textit{Ar}\textit{A}}.} The second performance took place on July 1\textsuperscript{st} 1739 during the reign of Prince Konkaeu Indraeng. He offered a D\textit{Ana} of one hundred and thirty sets of palm leaf books of \textit{MahAVJ} and other \textit{Dhamma} stories and consecrated images of the Lord at Wat Jengkhum.\footnote{Saimong, \textit{The Padaeng Chronicle and The Jengtung State Chronicle Translated}, p. 277.} In June 14\textsuperscript{th} 1747, the Prince also offered a D\textit{Ana} of the \textit{VJ} and other \textit{Dhamma} stories, including five sets of
"a ThaparikkhAra"\textsuperscript{10} and consecrated the great Arakan image of the Lord (a replica of the Arakan MahAmuni image of Mandalay) at the great Wat Brasing of Hokhon.\textsuperscript{11}

However, in the absence of a written record, it is uncertain whether this kind of performance had ever been performed before the time of BrayA Sridhamma CuLamaBi MahArAja. What is certain is that the performance of the recital of the Th. V/J still in existence in Kengtung today was started in the reign of BrayA Srisudhamma CuLamaBi MahArAja. The recital of the Th. VJ is divided into two types.

### 7.3 Two kinds of the recitation of the Tham Vessantara-jAtaka

i.  
_Tang-Tham-pa-phee-nee_, the annual recitation of the Th. V/J

ii.  
_Tang-Tham-vesan Long_, the sponsorship of the recitation of the great Th. V/J

i.i.  
_Tang-Tham-pa-phee-nee_ is the annual recitation of the Th. V/J. It is the occasion where a group of people from a village or a town get together and sponsor monks to recite the Th. V/J while the ritual takes place so that the sponsors accumulate merit. It is also performed as _Tang-Tham-pam long wat_, the recitation of Tham to raise funds for monasteries, especially when a new construction work in a monastery is planned. The same ritual of the recitation may be performed again to mark the completion and success of any new building. This indicates that even though they may have constructed many buildings and donated to the Buddha S\textit{Asana}\textsuperscript{12} people in Kengtung do not feel

\textsuperscript{10} _a ThaparikkhAra_ means the eight necessities for a Bhikkhu or a monk. They are the three robes, the alms bowl, a razor, a needle, the girdle, and a water strainer.

\textsuperscript{11} Saimong, _The Padaeng Chronicle and The Jengtung State Chronicle Translated_, p. 277.

\textsuperscript{12} The Buddha S\textit{Asana} means the dispensation of the Buddha.
satisfied unless they have included as a part of their whole donation, the sponsorship of the recitation of the *Th. Vj* and listened to it in a single day.

This kind of annual recitation of the *Th. Vj* is quite effective in raising funds for monasteries since every one in a village or a town has a chance for participation. As there are 26 sections of the *Th. Vj* to be recited, there must be 26 sponsors for each of the sections. Then again each section of the *Th. Vj* is divided into, at least, three depending on how many the reciters and the sponsors are. For instance, the section ‘ten boon’ is divided into three parts. Each part has its own reciter and its own sponsor. Sometimes more than one family or other persons combine as a single sponsor for their particular section. Each sponsor competes with the other for the performance. They would like to be the best and grandest in this merit-making because such occasions usually occur once a year only.\(^\text{13}\) Nobody will refuse the invitation to participate in the communal merit-making of their own Wat in their own village or town. They feed the monks and laity, make donations and other requisites suitable for monks. The donations are fixed for each section by the committees of the organizers, who decide how much donations should be made to the reciters for each section. Usually, one third of the donations is donated to the recital monks and the rest goes to the monastery funds. The more sponsors and the reciters are, the better for funds-raising. There are no conditions set for a sponsor to follow like *Tang-Tham-vesan Long*, a private sponsor of the *Th. Vj* recital which forms our next discussion.

\(^{13}\) Anuman Rajadhon, *Thet MahAChAt*, pp. 8-13.
Tang-Tham-vesan Long, the sponsorship of the recitation of the great Th. VJ, requires a wealthy family sponsoring the whole recital of the Th. VJ. Undertaking a sponsorship of this great recitation is a big job and costs a lot of money. It takes three days and three nights. The cost includes food for all who come to listen to the recitation for the whole three days including necessary preparations for the ceremony; a construction of a new preaching hall; and some offerings to the monasteries.

The offering includes money to the monks and their monasteries; payment for negotiators; and the bills for artworks depicting important events in the story and for a new palm-leaf copy of the vernacular version of the VJ, which are also donated to the monasteries after the function. The negotiators, who are lay, all specialists and who almost in all cases have previously received training while in the monastic order, lead people to perform rituals in every kind of meritorious deeds. They play an important role mediating between monks and devotees. They are responsible for inviting monks to recite, give sermons and lead devotees to share merit to mark the completion of their offering. Because of their crucial role, they also receive the same amount of offering as the monks, which indeed add extra cost to the sponsors.

The artwork can be costly, depending on the quality and the number. 13 paintings of the Th. VJ either hang on the walls or are to be painted on the walls of the monastery or on the walls of an ordination hall. The purpose of the paintings is to teach people the great former life of the Buddha before he became Gotama the Buddha. There are also other paintings such as scenes from the life of the Buddha, scenes of the other
Jataka stories, paintings of hells and heavens and so on. All paintings convey valuable information to the viewers when they happen to view them.

As to the copy book or a set of palm-leaves, once it is donated to a monastery, it is not used again for similar functions. It is kept in the monastery for young monks to use for their rehearsals. This means a new copy of the Th. VJ has to be produced each time there is a new recitation. So, copies of the Th. VJ either on palm leaves or on local hand-made papers in the form of folding books become numerous.

The most suitable time for this kind of ceremony is between March to May when people are free from their seasonal cultivations. This kind of performance is only confined to one well-to-do family. If a family is able to sponsor this kind of ceremony, it is much admired for its generosity. This praise and admiration inspire many people in Kengtung to follow their ancestors to sponsor this private recitation. In brief, the different between Tang-Tham-pa-phee-nee and Tang-Tham-vesan Long is that there are a group sponsors for Tang-Tham-pa-phee-nee and it is annual recitation of each monastery. In this case, a monk from a monastery near-by must be invited to come for the recitation. However, in the case of Tang-Tham-vesan Long, since a single family is the sponsor, it depends on the sponsors which monks and from which monastery they invite for the recitation. As it is not an annual event a monastery may hold this kind of recitation two or three times a year or even more initiated by different sponsors at different times. Both kinds of recitation use common recital books and similar donations and preparations are made.
To avoid chaos and poverty to the family that could result from excessive expenses in merit-making, some conditions have been laid down by experienced people in Kengtung since early times. The conditions are nothing but things to be fulfilled before the great merit-making.

7.4 Conditions before sponsoring *Tang-Tham-vesa-long*

i. *Dan Song Sa Lark*, offering food and other requisites to monks by drawing a lottery system. This is a kind of offering of food and other requisites to monks, without specifying to which monk the offering is to be given. People prepare donations within their capacity and bring them to a monastery where *Dan Song Sa Lark* will take place. Each and every family of a village will prepare donations and each donation is different from one another depending on their wealth. The preparations include food and other requisites suitable for monks. No family can chose which monks they are going to offer their donations. On the other hand, monks also cannot expect from such and such devotees’ donations. The donations are made through a lottery system. For example, if one draws the name of a young novice, then one should be satisfied and offer him donations. Usually, this kind of offering takes place in the morning in the monastery.

ii. According to the tradition of step-by-step merit-making, one has to start by making a donation of robes either to the Buddha or monks before one can be allowed to sponsor the recitation of the Th. *VJ*. Once a year, there is an annual robes offering to monks after the rains-retreat. A monk is worthy of receiving a set of robes when he observes rains-retreat in one place for three months. If he has to attend to some emergency matters, he can travel but has to return to the place where he observes the rains-retreat within the seventh day.
iii. Next is Dan Tham Nam aio, offering Tham sugar cane juice. Dan Tham Nam aio, offering sugar cane juice is popular and practiced by young people, especially a newly wed couple. By offering sugar cane juice, young people or a young couple wish their life to be happy and sweet like sugar cane juice. This is the beginning of their life. They offer sugar cane juice to monks and laity in the evening when there is a ceremony of the Th. VJ recital. This kind of practice becomes known as Dan Tham Nam aio, offering sugar cane juice. It is practiced only in Kengtung and is not heard of in northern Thailand.

iv. Then, Tang-Tham kam nam, donating a chosen Tham to enhance one’s fortune in life. Tang-Tham kam nam means sponsoring a part of the Dhammas according to one’s birthday and making an offering to the monk who recites it. For instance, if a person is born on Sunday, the Abhidhamma-sanginl is chosen to be recited by the monks and he has to bear the cost of offering for his service.

v. Raising one’s son to become a novice or a monk is another step. There is a local belief that when a son becomes a novice, the gates of hell are closed for his mother. The same gates are closed for the father when his son receives higher ordination at the age of twenty. In fact, this kind of belief is held not only by the Shan and Burmese but also Thai Buddhists. If there is no son in the family, then one has to look for boys from other families and undertake the sponsorship to ordain them either as a novice or a monk.

vi. Tang-Tham-vesa-long, the sponsorship of the great teaching of the recitation of the Th. VJ. This means taking the sponsorship of the whole Th. VJ recital. It is the most expensive form of DAna of recital of the Th. VJ. It is recited a whole day, from

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14 See Anuman Rajadhon, *Thet MahAChA*, p. 11.
15 *JA*aka No. 547.
predawn to about seven or eight in the evening. The day before that the other JAtakas and the suttas are recited. So, altogether, it is three days. Sermons are preached before the libation water is poured by the chief devotee to commemorate the donation and mark its completion.

These conditions are followed firmly by people before sponsoring the great merit-making like Tang-Tham-vesan Long. For example, in the past when a person wished to do merit-making, he used to consult with village elders who would ask him whether he had participated in each stage of the ceremony before. With the negative answer, he would have no chance to proceed but would instead start offering step-by-step until he could be a sponsor of the Th. VJ recital. Sometimes the elders would advise against sponsorship on the grounds of excessive use. I was informed by the elders that this consultative process, which prevented excessive expenses and strain on individual families, had broken down. Regarding these conditions, there were some reports that earlier there were some families who had performed this great merit-making due to their devotion and suffered from poverty. They could not lift up their life to the standard they used enjoy. They could not conduct their business well like before. Whatever they did, they mostly failed to reach their aims.16 Seeing those families suffering from poverty after sponsoring Tang-Tham-vesan long, people tended to believe that because of their excessive spending on offering, they suffered a miserable life. It is true that they suffer from poverty due to their excessive spending on merit-making. It is because they empty their pockets when offering without thinking about their future. Without investment, no

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16 Since very few records are available on this matter in Kengtung, we have to depend on the collections I have collected by interviewing three leading Puchans, Nan Then Haung, Warn Waw Kut, Kengtung, March 11, 2006; Nan Hla Long, Warn Com Kham, Kengtung, April 14, 2006; Nan Sarm Taan, Warn Kung Kyaung, Kengtung April 13 and April 15 2006, on my fieldwork.
people can do their business well. Putting all these conditions into consideration, we may come to the conclusion that one has to perform merit-makings step-by-step to prevent extravagant expenses in merit-making. Conditions of merit-making step-by-step are still followed by average families who cannot afford all at once. Affluent families, however, may perform everything at once and are happy doing it. They can cope with their life better after offering. It is considered appropriate for them to sponsor this kind of recitation.

However, average families who try to follow affluent families can suffer from poverty and debt. Even nowadays, it is often reported that some are in debt because of their excessive spending on merit-making. They have to start earning from zero again to settle down their debts to lift up their life. According to the Buddhist tradition mentioned in the *sutta* on giving in the *Anguttara-nikaya*, gradual merit-making is also an effective way of expressing generosity. One should also remember that the practice of *AgAnussati* may be generosity applied to a small donation, not just the extravagant ones. An example of a small gift bearing equally great result is the *gift of the sesame mansion* in the *VimAna-vatthu*, Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon Part IV. The story was told when the Buddha was living at Jetavana, in the park of AnAthapiNDika. At that time in Rajagaha a certain woman who was with a child had washed some sesame and dried it in the sun, because she wanted to drink a little sesame oil. She was going to die on that very day, and her accumulated deeds pre-determined her rebirth in hell. The Buddha, while contemplating the earth at that time of dawn, saw her with the Buddha eye and thought of accepting her sesame oil as her offering to save her from birth in

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hell. As a result of offering a little sesame oil to the Buddha, the woman was reborn in the realm of the Three-Ten in a golden mansion twelve yojanas in extent.\(^{18}\)

Every year during the rains-retreat which starts from the middle month of July to October, in the city of Kengtung, many monasteries arrange their own \(Th.\ VJ\) recitation festival. The recitation may be performed in the early part of October or on other special occasions such as funds-raising events for the monastery. However in the countryside, people prefer to hold this recitation after their harvest cultivations. They would choose three months, March, April and May, as they have to resume their seasonal cultivation in July. This kind of practice is followed in parts of Thailand though each district has its own customs regarding time and location for the ceremonies.\(^{19}\)

### 7.5 How monks are trained for the ceremony

Novices and young monks are trained to recite all kinds of recitation in the monasteries. It is one of their daily duties to recite one of the \(J\)Ataka stories or one of the \(suttas\) repeatedly until they are able to recite it without any fault. They have to be ready whether there is a ceremonial recitation or not. It takes a few years for a novice to master all kinds of recitation. For a ceremonial recitation, the invited monks are sent out in advance with the sections which they are going to recite for the ceremony. Upon receiving the invitation, monks have to devote their time doing rehearsals to be ready for the day. As their recital parts are mostly either written on palm leaves or local hand made paper, in hand writing, they have to practise reading them, sometimes, with difficulty. They have to practise sustaining their voices for a long period of time. In this

\(^{18}\) Jean & Henry, \(Vim\)Ana-\(vatthu, Minor Anthologies of the PALi Canon\) Part IV, pp. 15-16.

\(^{19}\) Anuman Rajadhon, \(Thet Mah\)\(\botch\)z\(\), pp. 8-9.
case they do not practise only what they are to recite but also other parts as well. To maintain their voices, they have to practise the whole of the Th. VJ and besides this, they have to practise chanting selected texts such as Phra Malai Kao, a popular text about Phra Malai’s visit to the hells, Phra Malai Pai, a text about Phra Malai’s visit the heavenly abodes, the PAramI, the perfections and so on. Sometimes they practise reciting other JAtakas at the monastery prior to the recitation. Their teachers will teach and guide them where to stop and where to start. They are thoroughly taught where to lower and raise their voices, where to chant on higher or a lower note and how to keep the chanting even. They have to learn and remember how to recite suttas and JAtakas according to their teachers’ guidance. They have to practise reciting them daily until they master them. Their nervousness is dispelled by practising.

In Thailand, there are monks who specialise in reciting the VJ. They are well expert in reciting their particular sections. This means that each and every monk cannot recite the other sections except the particular section which he masters. A monk who masters particular sections with their sweet voice through practice, becomes famous and wins the heart of the listeners. He gains many material donations from devotees so that jealousy may be created by other monks. As a result, he might be poisoned to make him lose his sweet voice. Such a famous preacher has to be cautious when entering a monastery where the ceremony of recitation takes place,

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20 Pha Yaung Yong, “Pra Phe Nee Tang Tham Long”, Phang Thet MahÂChÂLanna, pp. 32-34.
21 Pha Yaung Yong, “Pra Phe Nee Tang Tham Long”, Phang Thet MahÂChÂLanna, pp.72-76; see also Thet MahÂChÂpre, pp-7-8 and details of it can also be studied “Pra Phe Nee Tang Tham Long”, Pa Phe Nee Sip Saung Deun, Lanna Thai by Mani Pha Yaum Yong, pp. 26-56.
22 Pha Yaung Yong, Pra Phe Nee Tang Tham Long (Phang Thet MahÂChÂLanna) pp. 32-34; the same author, “Pra Phe Nee Tang Tham Long”, Pa Phe Nee Sip Saung Deun, Lanna Thai, pp. 38-40.
before eating, and before sitting on the preaching hall. He has to remind himself to recite some mantras to prevent the dangers caused out of jealousy from others.

However, while in Thailand, in the case of reciting the *Th. Vj* in Kengtung, there do not seem to be specialized monks for particular sections. They have to recite whatever sections they are assigned to, according to a lottery system. This indicates that monks in Kengtung have to do rehearsals for the sections they are assigned to for the particular ceremony. The important thing for the monks to do is to make themselves ready for the ceremony to be able to recite them well without any fault and getting stuck when reciting. This is only possible through considerable practice. It is expected that a monk should recite and preach well to draw the attention and to arouse the faith of the listeners. To become a good preacher who can draw the attention of the listeners, one has to fulfill several criteria.\(^{23}\)

1. He has to study the language well and must be able to compose poems and learn how to summarize the language where necessary.

2. He has to learn the basic intonations of the sounds.

3. He has to practise chanting of the *Phra Makai*, the *Th. Vj* and besides, many other *JAtakas* and *suttas*.

4. He has to study about the people, their local culture and the place where he is going to recite.

5. He should be able to edit, compose, and shorten the texts where necessary to suit the will of the listeners.

\(^{23}\) Anuman Rajadhon, *Thet MahÂChÂt*, pp. 6-7.
Unless one has these skills, he will not become a good reciter and preacher who can capture the attention of the listeners. Much effort and persistent practice play important roles in enabling one to become a good preacher and reciter. It would take a few years for a monk to master all sorts of recitation.

7.6 Preparations for the ceremony

Before the recitation of the Th. VJ, the monks of the monastery where the function is taking place, with certain leading members of the village, or the town fix a suitable date for the performance. When everything is well planned out, invitations are made in advance. So, the sponsors of each section have enough time to prepare and arrange necessary donations. As mentioned earlier, sometimes more than one family combine as a single sponsor of their particular sections. The village which does not have the Th. VJ recital would suffer and lose its prominence. It is quite usual for people to refuse the invitation to participate in the communal merit-making of their own monastery in their own village or town.

When one accepts the invitation to be one of the sponsors of one of the sections of the Th. VJ, one has to arrange food and other essential offerings suitable for the occasion. There will be many friends and relatives in the house on the eve of the recitation. There will be cooking of food and the preparation of sweetmeats both for merit-making and for entertaining people. Neighbours will come to give their hand on this occasion on a voluntary basis and such help should be returned in kind when the opportunity arises.
On the actual day, people will give a hand to carry the offerings from the village to the monastery in the procession with pomp and music. Each sponsor knows when the recitation of the section he sponsors is going to take place. If it is the first section, he has to be in the monastery early in the morning, if it is the last section, then the time will be in the evening. A crowd will witness the ceremony and the donations. When a rich man’s offering is mean, then there will be gossip in the village. If there are many rich sponsors of different sections, it will be a great day. People compete for worldly honour through these religious ceremonies. The best and most expensive offerings earn donor a privilege and status. The processions go round the monastery compound three times before entering the preaching hall, where all the offerings are placed in their proper places. The above mentioned accounts are meant for the communal sponsorships. A single family sponsorship of the whole great recitation of the *Th. VJ* follows the same procedures; but the sponsoring family will take all the responsibilities of looking after people and monks.
As a preparation for the ceremony, the entrance of the monastery on the day of the *Th. VJ* recital is specially decorated with bananas trees, ripe fruits and sugar cane trees. Sometimes it is also decorated with young coconut leaves. It is called ‘*Phaktu PA*’ or the ‘forest gate’. Passing the forest gate, one will find a ceremonial fence called ‘*Rachamat*’ or king’s fence, erected at intervals and decorated with flags, banana trees and sugar cane trees. Besides this gate, at the preaching hall, there is another gate. Every post in the preaching hall is also decorated with a banana tree with ripe fruits and sugar cane trees. There in the preaching hall, small coloured flags equal to the number of a thousand of the *gAthA Phan* are prepared. These thousand flags are distributed to the thirteen sections of the *Th. VJ* according to the number of *gAthA* in each section. For example, if there are 90 *gAthA* or stanzas, then 90 flags will be stuck in rows on both sides of the place where the offerings are put. There are, besides the small flags, also small beeswax candles equal in number to that of the small flags. According to the traditional preparation, a thousand lotus flowers, 100 Kasalawng flowers and various other kinds of flowers numbering 1,000 each are prepared in honour of a thousand *gAthA*.

In the middle of the preaching hall, there will be a beautiful and costly preaching seat where a monk sits to recite the *Th. VJ*. It is usually made of bamboo and decorated
with shining coloured papers in the shape of a seven storyed house with three windows and one main door. It is a square and is four feet wide. Its height is between 25ft to 27ft. There is a ladder for the preacher to go up. The preaching seat is arranged facing to the east while the ladder is to the south. It takes about three to four weeks to construct a preaching seat for this occasion and the labour would cost about US$ 250. The preacher sits on this preaching seat facing the east while doing the recitation.

In the preaching hall thirteen paintings depicting the life of the Prince Vessantara as narrated in the thirteen sections are hung. The thirteen paintings are intended to be viewed to enhance their faith while listening to the recitation. Whenever there is a recitation, there will be the paintings of thirteen sections being shown in the monastery. There are also 100 elephants, 100 horses, 100 cows, 100 buffalos, 100 chariots, 100 young female servants, 100 young male servants and 100 gold coins. They are sometimes either made of toys or painted and hung on the preaching hall posts. These are meant to illustrate the price for King Sanjaya to redeem his grand children back from the old Brahmin Ūjākā. Sometimes the preaching hall is decorated with some toys made out of leaves, papers, split bamboo in the shape of birds, fish and so on. There are also a thousand Buddhist flags in various colours hanging overhead in the preaching hall. Besides all these, four pots of water have to be prepared to hold holy water and they are placed close to the preaching seat, to ensure its sanctity.

24 Ngarn Pun Phra Wed Muk Dar Harn, pp. 54-55.
A toy of a well decorated white elephant and a horse are also placed near the preaching seat. Threads which will be blessed for the ceremony are tied from the Buddha statue and then scattered round the preaching hall. Four store houses are also prepared: the first one is for storing paddy; the second for rice; and the third for gold; and the last for silver. They are all placed also in the preaching hall near the place. Two trees of a thousand flowers made of gold and silver leaves are always arranged when there is a ceremony of the Th. VJ recital. Various kinds of offerings for the services of the monks who conduct the ceremony of the recital are also placed properly in the preaching hall. The recitation is usually confined to the preaching hall within the boundaries of a monastery and, as already mentioned, takes at least three days. The Th. VJ recital begins early in the morning and continues sometimes to late midnight. The recitation of the Th. VJ is, as dictated by the Phra Malai text, to be completed within a day to gain great merit.  

7.7 The ritual aspects of the recital of the Tham Vessantara-JAtaka

Before the recitation and after the offerings in the preaching hall, a priest, not monk, called in Tai-Khun PLukan, leads main sponsors to make an offering to the guardian spirit of the place including four guardian spirits of the four directions. An offering to the guardian spirit is to be done whenever there are important functions.
In so doing, people believe the function would go smoothly without any disturbances. This kind of practice is also practised in all parts of Thailand,\textsuperscript{27} including the Isarn region.\textsuperscript{28} In Isarn, Thailand, a custom is that whenever there is a religious function, Ven. Upagutta, an Arahat, is invited to the place first.\textsuperscript{29} Devotees pay homage to him and offer him food and fruit, lighting candles and scent sticks. They believe this Upagutta is so powerful and will chase away any evil spirit in order to make the function successful. After that there is also an invitation to the good divine beings to come and listen to the recitation and to rejoice and witness this merit-making.\textsuperscript{30} In the early morning on the day of the recitation, the Isarn people arrange a thousand rice balls equal in number to a thousand stanzas and bring them in procession towards the monastery where the recitation will be held.\textsuperscript{31} They circle the preaching hall three times and place them in the appropriate places near the preaching hall. It is also a custom that guardians who look after houses, villages and towns and so on. Their names vary depending on the places they look after. For example, if a guardian looks after a house, he is given a name ‘Devala Heun’; one who looks after a village is called ‘Devala Warn’ while one who looks after a town is called ‘Devala Mong’ and so on.

\textsuperscript{27} This kind of belief is also followed in Thailand. See also the detail of it in \textit{Thet MahA ChA}, by Anuman Rajadhon, pp. 18-19.
\textsuperscript{28} Ngarn Pun Phra Wed Muk Dar Harn, pp. 50-53. This custom is not found in other parts of Thailand.
\textsuperscript{29} Tambiah, \textit{Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand}, pp. 162-164.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid. pp. 164-165.
\textsuperscript{31} Ngarn Pun Phra Wed Muk Dar Harn, pp. 61-63.
before the reciting of the \textit{V\textsc{j}} a leading monk has to give an account of how Buddhism began and continues up to the present day.\footnote{Ibid. p. 56.}

When the recitation is about to begin, the sponsors are asked to light candles and incense sticks. Then all the devotees pay homage to the Triple Gem i.e. the Buddha, the \textit{Dhamma}, His teaching and the \textit{Sa\textsc{ng}ha}, his disciples. The presiding monk will administer the precepts to the devotees, after which sometimes, monks are invited to chant the \textit{Ma\textsc{ng}ala-sutta},\footnote{The \textit{Ma\textsc{ng}ala-sutta} was preached by the Buddha at Jetavana in answer to a question asked by a Deva as to which are the auspicious things in the world. The \textit{sutta} describes thirty eight kinds of auspicious things in daily life. They include not to associate with fools but to associate with the wise, honouring those who are worthy of honour and so on. This \textit{sutta} is often chanted on the occasions, such as blessing a new house, a new wed couple, opening a new place and so on. Besides these, monks and laity chant this \textit{sutta} when they pay homage to the Buddha either in the morning or in the evening.} in order to purify the offerings as well as to bring them good fortune and protect them from misfortune.\footnote{Tambiah, \textit{Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand}, pp. 199-208.} Sometimes when the donation is also meant for the departed parents or relatives, a blessing for them has to be performed. Monks chant selected \textit{suttas}.\footnote{Selected \textit{suttas} for the departed ones usually are \textit{petha vatthu}, about the hungry ghosts, the \textit{p\textsc{Ar}am\textsc{l}}, thirty kinds of perfections, \textit{U\textsc{bh}assa}, \textit{Loka\textsc{v}uddhi}, the welfare of the world and so on.} At the end of the \textit{suttas} merit is shared to the departed ones by pouring libation water to mark the end of the rite. In this case, monks are invited again to chant the \textit{Ma\textsc{ng}ala-sutta} to make things purified before starting the recitation. In some places, there is a superstitious belief that after monks’ chanting the \textit{Ma\textsc{ng}ala-sutta}, the spirits or ghosts cannot come to receive merit from their relatives. So, a rite is performed to share merit before the chanting is carried out. Another superstitious belief

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{Figure_7.7.jpg}
\caption{The presiding monk is administering the precepts to the lay followers before the recitation. Wat La Mong. Photo by Pannyawamsa.}
\end{figure}
is that when a person dies in an untimely death from an accident, that person can not enter into the monastery to receive his merit performed by his or her relatives. In this case, whenever a relative makes offering on his behalf, a monk is invited to a gate outside the monastery and performs the rite, after which merit is transferred to the departed one.

After these rites have been performed, *Pūkhan* invites the monks one by one to come to the preaching seat and start the recitation of each section.

At the end of each recitation, there are sounds of beating a drum or sounds of beating a triangular brass gong to mark an interval before inviting the next monk to come and recite his assigned sections. According to Thai custom, there are sounds of music to mark the interval before inviting the next monk to go to the preaching seat and the music also informs the next sponsors of the sections to be ready to listen to the recitation and to be ready for their offerings to the monks. The duty of the owner of the sections is to provide a gift for the reciting monk with money and things suitable for offering. These are called ‘*Kham-Tham*’ or offering things for the sections. They

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Beating a triangular brass gong is popular in Burma and every one is reminded of religious practice when they hear this sound. For example, it is usually beaten to mark the end of the completion of merit-makings when sharing merit. At the end of the chanting of paying homage to the Triple Gem, people beat it to transfer merit to the unfortunate ones. It is also beaten to remind people to be ready for their offerings when monks in line go round for alms food.
included robes, and essential requisites for monks, eatables and sweetmeats and a large quantity of fruits of the season.

At the end of each recitation, the reciter comes down from the preaching seat and is rewarded with offerings for his service.

Thus, the recitation keeps going on until the completion of the whole Th. VJ. Materials for the recitation are either palm leaf or manuscripts. About fifty or more novices and monks are needed to recite the whole sections of the Th. VJ. The detail of the programme of the recitation is mentioned in the appendix II. People, especially the main sponsors of the family, sit in the preaching hall and listen to the recitation. Sometimes, they serve and chat with guests and relatives who occasionally come to listen to the recitation and sometimes, they are busy and hardly have any time to listen to the recitation. They all stay in the temple until the completion of the recitation of the Th. VJ.
The ascending orders of the *Th. VJ* recited at the ceremony may be briefly discussed here. The recitation of the *Th. VJ* is usually done for two purposes. One is to make merit for departed relatives while the other is to perform great merit for oneself. The former uses the fragments of the sections\(^{37}\) such as *PAraml*, perfections, *UBhasa*, anxiety, *LokavuDDhi*, the welfare of the world, the *Vinaya-pīṭaka*, the rules of monks, the *Suttanta-pīṭaka*, various teachings of the Buddha, the *Abhidhamma-pīṭaka*, the metaphysical teaching of the Buddha and some other *JAtakas*. After the completion of the recital, merit is shared with the departed ones, as usual, by pouring libation water.

After this, merit-making for oneself continues. This time, *Phra Malai Kao*, a text about *Phra Malai*’s visiting hells, *Phra Malai Pai*, about *Phra Malai*’s visiting heavenly abodes and, *Anisong Vesan*, about the good results of *Vesan* and *Vipak Vesan* about the bad results of *Vesan*, are chanted. After this, ‘*gAhA Phan*’ or a thousand stanzas of the *Th. VJ* are chanted in three sections: *Pathama gAhA* the first section of the stanzas *Dutiya gAhA* the second section of the stanzas and *Tatiya gAhA*\(^{38}\) the third section of the stanzas respectively. They are usually recited at midnight before starting the recitation of the *Th. VJ* in the Tai-Khun language. Then the remaining sections of

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\(^{37}\) Fragments of the *Dhamma* mean *suttas*, taken from the *Tipiṭaka*, for the purpose of reciting in the ceremony of the *Th. VJ*. They are to be recited first and finished before the actual *VJ* is recited.

\(^{38}\) In the *Th. VJ* a thousand *gAhA* or stanzas are divided into three sections, the first section of stanzas, the second section of stanzas and the third section of stanzas whereas a thousand *gAhA* in Thai, Burmese, Sinhalese and Lao versions are not divided. They singly form a thousand *gAhA* which known to Thai ‘*gAhAphan*’. 
the Th. VJ in Tai-Khun are recited. There may have been some significant reasons for reciting a thousand $gAhA$ or a thousand stanzas before the recitation of the vernacular language.

i. $gAhAs$ are the shortened form of the $VJ$ which nonetheless narrate the whole story.

ii. As the $gAhAs$ are arranged at the beginning of the text, they represent the original starter of the text and are regarded as canonical.

iii. The listeners can enjoy the story of the $VJ$ by listening to PAli chanting.

iv. To gain great merit from listening to the whole 13 sections of $VJ$ at once in a condensed form and to

v. Maintain the sacredness of PAli chanting.

At the completion of the three sections of the $gAhAs$, there will be a break for a few hours and then the recitation of the 13 sections of the Th. VJ is resumed in vernacular language, in this case, Tai-Khun, at predawn throughout the day. At the end of the Nagon, the last section of the Th. VJ, there will be a sermon by a senior monk who usually explains the Th. VJ briefly and praises the sponsors for their generosity and its consequences here and now in this life and the life after. When the sermon is completed, donations to monks conducting the ceremony are made. Then sponsors pour libation water to mark the completion of the ceremony and to transfer merit to the departed ones.
At the completion of the ceremony, the heads of the sponsors, husband and wife, must not go back home. Instead they have to go out of the town or the village to spend a night. The next day, members of the family and relatives prepare nice food with a festive to welcome them back home.

7.8 Recital in Pāli as an integral part of the ceremony

Though the story is recounted in Tai-Khun, the language is frequently mixed with Pāli phrases or words here and there. For example, the phrase, *Sammattham pakkāsento sattāhāha*, (to explain the matter, the teacher said), is followed by story told in Tai-Khun. This method, which lends authority to vernacular sermons and introduces narratives sections, seems to be the style of the preaching for centuries. Although no one can provide me with reasons behind the mixes of Pāli phrases or words with Tai-Khun in the *Th. V.J*, I would venture to suggest that without hearing Pāli phrases or words at a religious recitation or reading, people pay less respect to it, thinking that such
a recitation is not *Buddha-vacana*, the Buddha' words. On the other hand, hearing PAl phrases or words mixed with vernacular, may increase their faith and can draw their attention to the recitation or chanting. This is still in practice in Burma, Thailand and Sri Lanka. In Burma for instance, a monk gives a sermon with a few *gAthAs* in PAl which people hardly understand. He then translates them into the native language after which he explains the meaning and incorporates them into the story telling to make his sermon lively. Thus the sermon continues until he concludes it. He may conclude his sermon either with PAl *gAthA* prose or a group of PAl words and translate them into the native language. In Thailand, one of the examples of this is the recitation of *gAthA-pan*, a thousand PAl stanzas of the *VJ* when comes to the annual merit-making ceremony called *Thet MahA ChAt*, after which the commentary in Thai language is followed. Only then do people receive intelligible moral instruction. The whole night *Paritta,*

chanting in Sri Lanka to bring them fortune and protect them from misfortune and the three days and or seven days none-stop *PaTThAna* PAl chanting, and occasional *Parittta* chanting in Burma and Thailand,

serve the same purpose. The *Paritta,* protection, suttas were collected as the core body of ritual texts in the Sinhalese *MahAvihAra*

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39 The *Paritta* contains the *MaNgala-sutta*, *Ratana-sutta*, *KaraBiya-mettAsutta*, *AtAya-sutta*, *Jayamangala-gatha* and so on. *MaNgala-sutta* a sutta which describes thirty eight auspicious things including such as the avoidance of fools, association with the wise, honouring those worthy of honour, etc. The *Ratana-sutta* is one the most famous and often used *Paritta* because of its dramatic warding off of evil and misfortune. *KaraBiya-mettAsutta* is a sutta about loving kindness towards all living beings. *AtAya-sutta* is a potent *Paritta* that wards off evil spirits and is particularly to combat illness. *Jayamangala-gatha* recounts the eight victories of the Buddha, in his last life over evil demon spirits, evil humans, and antagonistic forms of nature, in short his domination of *KaNa Loka*, the sensuous world. and after the proclaiming of each victory the blessing is transferred thus:

40 *PaTThAna* PAl is the seventh and last book of the *Abhidhamma*, is called the *MAHA PAKArana*, the ‘Great book’ announcing the supreme position it occupies and the height of excellence it has reached in its investigations into the ultimate nature of all the *Dhammas* in the Universe. *PaTThAna* is a system of relations. It describes all conditioned things under twenty-four kinds of relations, and classifies them into a complete system for understanding the mechanics of the universe of *Dhamma*. Ko Lay, *Guide to Tipi Tika*, p. 148.

41 *Safeguard Recitals*, Intro. p. v.

monastic tradition of *Theravada* Buddhism and have been widely used as the basis of most chanting ceremonies in Southeast Asian *Theravada* Buddhism since the fourteenth century. The twenty-four standard *Paritta* discourses from the five collections of Pali *sutta* texts contains a *Dhamma* handbook for newly ordained monks. These groups of texts are accepted as the ritual texts most widely memorized in the tradition of *Theravada* Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia. Piyadassi Thera mentions four doctrinal explanations for the efficacy of *Paritta* texts stressing the fact that the recitation of *Paritta* texts produces mental well-being to those who listen to them with intelligence and confidence in the truth of the Buddha’s words. He states that the texts empower the truth of the Buddha to the listeners; that the discourses describe the virtuous life that establishes the listeners in a virtuous state of mind; that the monks who chant *Paritta* do so reflecting on the compassion of the Buddha for all sentient beings and thus establish the listeners in the power of love; and, finally that the power of the chanting sound helps both mental and physical states to be in harmony.

The common belief in Buddhist countries is that Pali is a sacred language, that is meant to be heard though they are not understood by the majority of the congregation. Through listening to the recitation, the congregation gains merit, blessings and protection. More important thing than understanding is the hearing, in the proper context and setting, of chants or recitation and sermons delivered by the proper persons. The advantages of listening without understanding are recorded in Buddhist moralistic

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43 Swearer, *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia*, p. 27.
44 *The Book of Protection*, p. 5.
45 Swearer, *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia*, p. 27.
46 *The Book of Protection*, p. 12.
47 *The Book of Protection*, p. 49.
tales, which prove the benefit of listening even without understanding. One of the examples is the story of a frog which happened to listen to the Buddha’s teaching by chance and praised the sweetness of his voice. After death, the frog was reborn in the Tavatimsa deva-loka and had a mansion of gold twelve yojanas in size.\(^{49}\) The other example is the story of 500 bats which happened to hear the rehearsal of monks on the Abhidhamma\(^{50}\) in Pali and were reborn as deities in heaven, enjoyed heavenly food, and were surrounded by female apsara attendants.\(^{51}\)

The message is that if animals, after a short hearing of the teaching in Pali can enter heaven, a human being can do even better. Quoting Pali passages has been so important that when people see a monk preach without quoting from the Pali of any sutta, they may think that that monk is talking nonsense. Moreover, this preacher may be regarded as uneducated and therefore not worth listening to. People, on the other hand, have come to regard highly a monk who occasionally quotes Pali when preaching or teaching. One of the outcomes of this, incidentally, is that the laity themselves become familiar with Pali terms, heard repeatedly over many years.\(^{52}\)

However in contemporary society, this attitude is changing; it has less impact on the younger generations who prefer grasping the essence to listening to language they do not understand. Many complain that they become less interested in listening to the preaching from a monk who often inserts Pali stanzas or phrases into the native

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\(^{49}\) Hardy, *A Manual of Buddhism, in its Modern Development*, p. 392

\(^{50}\) *Abhidhamma*, the higher teaching of the Buddha is the third great division of the Pīṭaka. It is a huge collection of systematically arranged, tabulated and classified doctrines of the Buddha, representing the quintessence of his teaching. It is higher teaching and unique in its abstruseness, analytical approach, immensity of scope and conduciveness to one’s liberation.


\(^{52}\) Tambiah, *Buddhism and Spirit Cults in North-east Thailand*, pp. 195-196.
language. To them, it is a waste of time to listen to a tedious talk. This is in contrast to old people who are not satisfied until they hear a monk quoting a *sutta* in *PAlì*. The *PAlì* canon gives them a sense of authenticity. The Buddha taught in the local language, *PAlì*, to increase understanding among the faithful but later *PAlì* became the enshrined language of Theravada Buddhism and was not understood by the majority of the people. But it is held today in the Theravada countries that in religious ceremonies, the words recited on religious occasion should be in the language of the sacred texts. So, people are fond of listening to a monk who can quote many *PAlì* stanzas or phrases. The *Th. V/J* texts are filled with *PAlì* phrases or words mixed with Tai-Khun language. Sometimes the text mixes *PAlì* phrases or words with the vernacular language, or word by word and at other times, a *PAlì* word or phrase is just mentioned at the beginning of the sentence to be followed by the whole page in Tai-Khun.

### 7. 9 Constructive views of the performance

What are the obvious benefits of the ceremony? My own feeling is that familial security is a major factor. Positively, this kind of performance brings in family members, relatives, friends far and near together. It is a kind of merit-making to unite the family and relatives. A family who sponsors this kind of performance has to track their furthest relatives back. They have to invite those from the parents’ sides. When the performance begins, family members are called for and relatives and friends are invited to the place where the recitation is taking place. Family members, far or near, once informed, have to come to participate for this special merit-making because this kind of

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53 Ibid. p. 197.
costly merit-making may take place only once in a life time for the family. It is a good occasion for family members, relatives, friends and neighbours to be reunited.

If any member of the family is absent, he or she is often asked after by people. Since every one of the family should be present, every one tries his best to join the ceremony in time to participate in the warm sense of family on this special occasion. This kind of great merit-making, which was started by BrayA Srisudhamma CulAmabhi MahArAja in 1445AD, became quite popular in Kengtung through either a single family sponsorship or a collective sponsorship. Since then it has also become one of the most expensive forms of cultural merit-making in Kengtung. In this regard, some anthropologists estimate that in modern Burma, villagers spend a quarter of their income on religious donations. Whatever the economic side, performing this kind of merit-making annually helps the cultural heritage to flower and it is one of the duties of Kengtung people to preserve it well. When the cultural aspects of that people decrease, the identification of that people disappears. It is confirmed by the remark of Sulak Sivaraksa that “The Thai word for culture was coined by Prince Wan, who felt that the Siamese would lose most of their traditional identity. As modern Siam became more progressive or civilized, she would have to be more like the West. The only identity to be exclusively Thai would be the Thai language.”

Kengtung people have a firm belief that when there is no more Th. VJ recital, the dispensation of the Buddha will come to an end. This belief may have originated in the Phra Malai. For this reason, this recitation becomes the annual merit-making throughout

54 Spiro, Buddhism and Society, p. 459.
Thailand, Laos and Kengtung. This kind of annual merit-making may educate many people through the transmission of recitation. By listening to the recitation and visualizing the paintings of the Th. VJ, people derive great personal satisfaction. The percentage of literate people in Kengtung is very low. There is a lack of facilities and they do not get much support from the current government; the environment is not favoured; they are not encouraged in their education by the government and so on. Some peasants cannot read nor write even the native language, Tai-Khun at all. Since some of them cannot read nor write even their native language, they are educated through listening to the others’ reading or recitations or visualizations of the paintings. When they happen to encounter the paintings, they are eager to learn what they are about. This curiosity inspires them to learn more about the paintings. So they ask people who know how to narrate the messages from the paintings to them. Thus they learn and benefit through listening and visualizations. Listening and visualization play an important role when educating people either to impart knowledge of the Dhamma or secular subjects. The majority of those learned in the native language, Tai-Khun are monks who preserve this language and culture and teach them back to the young generations in the monasteries. So, the monasteries become the centres of all Tai-Khun language and culture. The teaching of the Tai-Khun language and culture is forbidden in any government school in Burma. They are only to be taught in monasteries and practiced among the Tai-Khun themselves in Kengtung. The fear is that these valuable cultures will not long last since they are discouraged by the authorities. The Th. VJ is an exception to the usual rules as it is written in Tai-Khun language moulds the life of Kengtung people in so many ways. Since Kengtung was opened to the outside world fifteen years ago, its culture started to decline. People feel that this valuable seven-
hundred year old culture of Kengtung should be well preserved. The preservation of this culture is felt to be the duty of every native person. Though there are some signs of decline, it has been well preserved in its pure form until the present day in spite of the outside influences.

7. 10 Critical views of the performance

As already discussed, the performance of the recital of the *Th. VJ*, costs a lot for a family to sponsor it. It costs about 500,000 to 700,000 Kyats, the Burmese currency to perform it today. It is equivalent to US$ 5,500 to 7,500. Such an amount of money is too much for ordinary people, especially farmers, in parts of Burma. So, it is with much devotion and strong determination, that people in Kengtung bear in their minds to make it happen once in their life time. They work hard to collect wealth bit by bit with the sole purpose sponsoring the *Th. VJ* recital. Since the performance of the recital is costly, some people cannot afford this. Some families are in debt after sponsoring this kind of recital. But they are satisfied with their great merit-making and never regret what they have performed. Of course, a debt can be settled later on. The Buddha ideally, points out that one should be debt-free, as being debt free is a form of happiness. To prevent debt and unnecessary problems in families performing this great merit-making, leading people in Kengtung set down some conditions for the welfare of the families involved.56 Traditionally, the conditions or step-by-step merit-making before taking the sponsorship of the whole recitation of the *Th. VJ* were practised about

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56 Collections of interviews from Nan Then Haung, Warn Waw Kut, Kengtung, March 11, 2006; Nan Hla Long, Warn Com Kham, Kengtung, April 14, 2006; Nan Sarm Taan, Warn Kung Kyaung, Kengtung April 13 2006.
50 years ago. Such conditions or step-by-step merit-makings are valued to prevent excessive spending on merit-making.

Though expensive, people are fond of sponsoring it because of the attractiveness of the benefits mentioned in the Phra Mālai texts. One of the sole purposes for this merit-making is to meet Ariyametteyya, the next Buddha. Besides this, prior to meeting him, people wish to have a good and comfortable life and to enhance their fortune for the betterment and to avoid a miserable life here and now. Having these wishes in minds, people put their utmost effort to this merit-making. Though Tang-Tham-pa-phee-nee, annual recitation of the Th. V/J assigns much benefit either to the construction of a monastery or to mend it, Tang-Tham-vesan Long, a private sponsor of the Th. V/J recital leaves very little material benefit for the monastery though in terms of its purpose as a spiritual centre there are obvious and considerable benefits. Sometimes a monastery where this ceremony is going to take place is not in a good physical condition but a single family sponsor does not think about improving the monastery first but to sponsor the Th. V/J recital in that monastery and leave the monastery as it is. Despite spending a lot for the ceremony, when after the ceremony is over, little material benefit is left for the monastery. For instance, even the grand preaching seat, ‘PrachAt,’ which is specially prepared for this kind of ceremony and cost a lot of money is burnt right away after the ceremony. It can not be kept as it is made of bamboo and decorated with colourful and shining papers. As I have already discussed, it would take three to four

58 See detail of the annual recitation of the Th. V/J under the subtopic of two kinds of the recital of the Th. V/J.
weeks to prepare this kind of splendid preaching seat. If they divert the use of this resources for the other purpose of mending or repairing the monastery or construction another building, that would bear more result than burning the resources away. Two third of the resources would be spent on food to entertain relatives, people and monks for three days and nights. Linear mechanistic thinking would argue that all the money should go to the improvement to the monastery they as it might suggest, donations to the poor: but of course the logic of merit-making is of a different order for this. As a monk I would venture to suggest that the sponsoring of a ceremony of this kind should helpfully include some remuneration to maintain the building in which it is held. So, I would like to offer two constructively critical suggestions: (1) that economic consideration should include some contributions towards the upkeep of the building in which the ceremony is held. No monastery, there will be no ceremony! And (2) that the ceremony does not become excessive and so place extravagant demands on the sponsors. But unfortunately neither monks nor people do realize this shortcoming. Few monks try to discourage people from extravagant spending on merit-making. It may be partly, they do not want to disappoint people and partly this kind of merit-making is one of the most prominent cultural aspects in Kengtung, already deep-rooted in the minds of the people.

One of the good things the tradition of the Th. VJ recitation has brought to Kengtung is the right focus of the people when earning. With the holding of the Th. VJ recital in their minds, people are careful when they earn their living. Many earn with the sole purpose of making merit. They earn in a righteous way through their own sweat. They refrain from earning through means of harming and hurting others. They do not
engage in prohibited five kinds of trades. They save it carefully bit by bit with that purpose and do not spend on unnecessary things. It takes a farmer many years to be able to sponsor the whole recital of the *Th. VJ*. But many keep trying to be the sponsors of this kind of the recital. They are never disheartened and downhearted in earning their wealth bearing this kind of merit-making in their minds. On an anecdotal level, I know that some of my relatives have been saving their wealth for years for the said purpose. I have also met families who spent their entire wealth once they have sponsored this kind of performance, which cost them a lot of money. They are happy with it and satisfied with the praise and admiration from monks, relatives, friends and people and foster the wish to meet the Ariyametteyya, the future Buddha. The word ‘Baya Vesan’ or ‘Prince Vessantara’ is a household word for Kengtung people. When they see people who are generous either making offerings to religious places or helping the needy, people regard them as Prince Vessantara. The *Th. VJ* has an impact on how they see the world around them.

And when people happen to meet the cruel and greedy, they compare them with the old Brahmin *Ujaka* who tortured the two children and died of over eating because of his greediness. Here, it is a pity that many do not realize that without the help of *Ujaka*, Vessantara’s wish of donation of his children would not be fulfilled. As Gombrich states:

> “Without his despicable request Vessantara could not have reached the peak of self-sacrifice; but the bad man gets no credit for occasioning virtue, and *Ujaka* goes straight to hell.”

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59 Prohibited five kinds of trade are: 1, trade in weapons, 2, trade in human beings, 3, trade in flesh, 4, intoxicating drugs and drink and 5, trading in poison. The Book of Gradual Sayings, Vol. III, by Hare, p. 135.

“The selfless generosity of Vessantara, who gave away everything, even his children and his wife, is the most famous story in the Buddhist world.”61

Learning about generosity from the Prince Vessantara, some people in Kengtung deal better with shortcomings. If they happen to lose their belongings through natural disaster in case of fire and water or they are confiscated by the authorities, they console themselves by reminding themselves of Prince Vessantara’s generosity.

In conclusion, despite the problems, symptomatic of a more widespread decline in traditional practices in rural and urban communities, the performance of the Th. VJ, with all its attendant status and ceremony, still plays a vital part in Kengtung communal life in Eastern Shan State, Burma. The ceremonial recitation of the Th. VJ brings together the monastic and lay community, provides an outlet for generosity that is graduated and accommodates both the wealthy and the poor, sustains the practice of sons joining the Sangha for a three month period and provides an outlet for a communal celebration of generosity as the cornerstone of Buddhist lay activity.

61 Ibid. Intro, p. xv.
Conclusion

In this presentation I have made an attempt to offer an overview about the influence of the *JAtakas* on aspects of various cultures in different countries in general and the *VJ* in particular to show that the *JAtakas* became not only the heart of Asian literatures, forms of art and dramas but also exert their influence on peoples’ life. Their influence, even today, is so great that *Bhikkhus* of any Buddhist country would feel they would not be able to preach a sermon in an attractive and interesting way to people without referring to the *JAtaka* stories.

Throughout centuries, for many people in those lands, the *VJ* has been one of the most interesting one amongst the five hundred and fifty of the former birth stories of the Buddha. In this final life, as a *Bodhisatta*, he was practising *DAna* *P Alam*, the perfection of generosity and various *P Alamitas*, perfections, the essential factors for attainment of the Buddha-hood, which he had been practising for many lives, and reached their fruition only in this Vessantara life.

The *VJ* has much influence on many aspects of Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. The influence of the *VJ* on Sri Lankan daily life is remarkable from ancient times. For instance, during the Anuradhapura period, King Dutthagamini was very fond of listening to *JAtaka* stories during the preaching of the *Dhamma* throughout the night. Reciting the *VJ* at wake is a common practice in the low country of Sri Lanka. Moreover, it is also recited in Sinhalese verses in a funeral house to dispel the grief of

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1 *Cullavamsa* XC, VV 80-87.
the mourners.\footnote{2} The $VJ$ is the most often cited when talking about generosity; the ruler listening to the voice of his subjects; the loyalty and devotion between husband and wife; and the support of the children for their parents. People in Sri Lanka are familiar with, at least, some of the interesting characters in the $JAtaka$ stories. For example, names of personalities such as King Vessantara and the King Porisada are household words.\footnote{3} $JAtaka$ stories are meant for compulsory reading.\footnote{4}

In Burma too, since the time of King Anawratha (Aniruddha) till the present day, $JAtakas$ have exerted a great influence on every aspect of people’s life. Burmese culture, painting, drama, theatre, literature and Burmese way of life more or less are originated from the $JA\text{aka}$s. The $JA\text{aka}$ Dramas were preformed to get rid of the malpractices in the court, for example, during the Kon-baung period in the reign of King Mindon, 1853-1885 AD. It became an important outlet for the expression of physical and social unease. It is the custom of Pagan period to paint or sculpt especially the life of the Buddha and his former births on and around religious places and public sites. Works based on $JAtakas$ are pioneer works of Burmese literature. Undoubtedly, there has been a great influence from the $JA\text{aka}s$ especially the $Vessantara-JAtaka$ on Burmese culture and on every aspect of life since the ancient times till today.

I have also briefly described the influence of the $J\text{\u03bc}takas$ especially the last great ten $J\text{\u03bc}takas$ called ‘$Thosa\text{\u03bc}At$’ on Thai society. They are, as in Sri Lanka and Burma, the sources of Thai literature in various forms. They are pre-eminent, and are widely are represented in temple wall paintings and cloth banners, murals and manuscript

\footnote{2} Cu\text{\u03bc}l\text{\u03bc}avamsa XC, VV 80-87.\footnote{3} Harischandra, Psychiatric Aspects of $JAtaka$ Stories, p.1\footnote{4} Ibid. Intro. p.1.
paintings.⁵ The *VJ* is the best known of all and has its recitation annually. Though the annual recitation of the *Vessantara-jAtaka* is not always held greatly as earlier, it still ranks among the important religious performances in Thailand. The traditional ceremony, though not so general and popular as in the ancient times, has lost nothing of its original magnificence. The *VJ*, from the ancient times, has been widely recited, preached, read and made use of. As a result, there are various kinds of the *VJ* versions. Some of them are in the forms of verses, some are composed mixing PĀli and paraphrased with Thai language, some in prose and some illustrated in the forms of cartoons and some have been used as dramas and movies. It is also a school text book. Most Thais are familiar with the *VJ* and it is favourable reading for the many.

It has been noted that there have been scholars on the *VJ* in Sinhalese, Burmese and Thai. However, there is no critical study of the Th. *VJ* in Kengtung and there is no translation of it. The Th. *VJ* has developed to acquire unique features of its own in Kengtung. It has outgrown its origin. For many people in Kengtung, the Th. *VJ* is considered the original words of the Buddha because many elements from different *nikāyas* have been incorporated into it. The Th. *VJ* is in Tai-Khun script and dialect, which is one of the many dialects of Tai. It has 26 parts. The first six chapters and the last two chapters of the Th. *VJ* are not found in any of the other *VJs*. They are considered to have been developed in Kengtung. Apart from these eight chapters, the Th. *VJ* also repeats all the verses from the canon. I have translated 23 sections of the Th. *VJ* out of 26, which holds high position among Tai-Khun classics and for the excellent

⁵ Ginsburg, *Thai Manuscript Painting*, p. 44.
beauty of its style and language. This is the first time this important Buddhist literature is made known to the people outside Kengtung.

The recitation ritual helps maintain the interest in the Th. VJ and the moral teachings it offers. Unfortunately, the Th. VJ has also become the most expensive form of merit-making, held annually throughout the country in Kengtung. The recitation of the performance of the Th. VJ usually takes three days or more depending on the wealth of the sponsors. A day before and a day after, other JAtakas or suttas are read out or recited. The Th. VJ is recited the whole day, from predawn to about seven or eight in the evening. The sole purpose of this kind of merit-making is to meet Ariyametteyya, the future Buddha.

I have also presented an account of the procedures involved in the performance of the Th. VJ in the social context to show the influence and impact of the performance of the recitation of the Th. VJ, with all its related status and ceremony.

Though currently Kengtung is a part of the Union of Burma, the Buddhist culture in Kengtung is more akin to that of Lanna. Even the Th. VJ bears similarities with some of the Lanna VJ versions in the style of language and emphasis. But the Th. VJ has since developed its own unique features.

I hope this brief study will induce sociologists and anthropologists to explore more of this part of the Buddhist world. I hope I have demonstrated that the Th. VJ helps people of Kengtung understand the Dhamma spiritually, culturally and morally.
As other Theravada nations have their own vernacular versions of the *VJ*, here, Kengtung or the Tai-Khun people in the Eastern part of Shan State also posses their own vernacular version of the *VJ*. This shed light on the role of the *Jayatagas* in general, the *VJ* in particular, in the expansion of the teaching of the Buddha. I hope this study will contribute to the understanding of the Theravada Buddhist world in general and Buddhism in South-East Asia, Burma and Thailand in particular.
Part Two

Translation

Section One

**PArami**: Perfection

*Namotassatthu*: May homage be to the Buddha.

EvaM me sutAM ekaMsamayaM bhagavA rAjagahe viharati gijjaKe pabbate’ti
tatra kho bhagavA: “Thus have I heard when the Buddha was residing at the Vulture
Peek of Rājagaha, at that time the Buddha.”¹ When the Lord Buddha, before entering
into parinibbAṇa, was still carrying the affliction of the physical body, he resided at the
foot of the Vulture Peak near the city of Rājagaha with two thousand two hundred and
fifty disciples, who were all *Arahats* except Ânanda, who was still a trainee.² At that
time Lord Indrā, with gods numbering ten thousands, including the four guardians of
the world, came to meet the Buddha at his abode. Gods of the *CatumahArAjika* realm,
numbering ten thousands, also came. The great *Brahma*, Sahampati, also came. Ten
thousand *Brahmas* in the realm of the second *jhāna* also came. Five thousand *Brahmas*
of the realm of the third *jhāna* also came. A large number of *Brhamas* from the Pure
Abode also came to pay homage to the Lord Buddha and the *Arahants*, and each sat in a
suitable place. Then, the compassionate Buddha who wished the world of beings to

¹ Up to this point, the paragraph begins with a PAli sentence found in many places in the Canonical
Texts. The reason for this seems to follow the tradition of starting a sermon with a PAli sentence.
This suggests that the Th. VJ was composed as a sermon. The sentence cited here to
open the paragraph looks also to remind the background of the story that follows.
² *sekkha puggala*-one who has achieved one of the three lower stages of spiritual attainment before
arahatship.
attain three kinds of happiness, of which *Nibbana* is supreme, instructed the two great elders, *MahASriputta* and *MahASubhUtisa* to explain the result of perfections that each and every *Bodhisatta* had to fulfil. Fulfilment of the ten perfections is the only path for a *Bodhisatta*. The two great elders then discussed the teaching of the perfections, in all meanings as follows:

“Venerable Sir, what are the perfections that *Bodhisattas* have to practise for countless lives continuously?” “Venerable Sir, the perfections that *Bodhisattas* have to practise for countless lives continuously are called the ten perfections. They are: (1) the perfection of generosity (2) the perfection of moral ethics (3) the perfection of renunciation (4) the perfection of wisdom (5) the perfection of effort (6) the perfection of patience (7) the perfection of truth (8) the perfection of determination (9) the perfection of loving-kindness and (10) the perfection of equanimity. There are, Venerable Sir, ten in all. Preliminary are the ten perfections, while the ten “minor perfections” are of middle level (achievement) and the ten “advanced perfections” the highest, all of which make the thirty perfections.

All these perfections indeed produce many results and development in various ways. Any person who recites them day and night is indeed, well developed in his wealth as a result of practicing perfections. Any person, ascetic, Brahmin, and mendicant who produces, writes, studies, worships, donates, preserves, listens to or recites the perfections, is always happy and comfortable, blessed with longevity, beauty, comfort, and strength. He lives a long life and has a fair complexion to be beheld in the eyes of those that see him. He is brave, smart and wise seeing all that is right and wrong. He is kind and speaks more sweetly than all the others in this world. That is
why; perfections are more precious and valuable than the righteous king Cakkavatti’s jewel”.

The two great elders spoke thus in order to let people, deities, gods, brahmās, ascetics and Brahmins to invite them to listen to the teachings of the Buddha. Then the two great elders requested the Buddha to expound the ten perfections, as to which one is more developed and highly regarded. They requested the Buddha thus: “Venerable Buddha Sir, we know that the ten perfections are almost the same, however we would like to know further which one is more developed and highly regarded. We kindly request the Lord to explain and expound it to all of us right now”. At that place the Buddha says: “Dear, Sāriputta, of all the perfections, would you like to know which is more advanced and highly regarded than the others? Of the ten, it is Paṭga-pāramita, the perfection of wisdom, which is more advanced, developed and more important than the other nine”.

Then, the Lord says: “Great king, Indra ‘this perfection of wisdom’ is more precious and important than all of the other nine, keep this in your mind, recite and practise it here and now; addressing: “Thus, that Lord (i.e. The Exalted One, The Buddha) says the perfection of generosity; the perfection of minor generosity; the perfection of the highest generosity. Thus that Lord says the perfection of moral ethics, the perfection minor moral ethics, and the perfection of the highest moral ethics. Thus that Lord says the perfection of renunciation, the perfection of minor renunciation, the perfection of the highest renunciation. Thus that Lord says the perfection of wisdom, the perfection of minor wisdom, the perfection of the highest wisdom.

Thus that Lord says the perfection of effort, the perfection of minor effort, the perfection of the highest effort. Thus that Lord says the perfection of patience, the
perfection of minor patience, the perfection of the highest patience. Thus that Lord says
perfection of truth, the perfection of minor truth, the perfection of the highest truth.
Thus that Lord says the perfection of determination, the perfection of minor
determination, the perfection of the highest determination. Thus that Lord says the
perfection of loving-kindness, the perfection of minor loving-kindness, the perfection of
the highest loving-kindness. Thus that Lord says the perfection of equanimity, the
perfection of minor equanimity, the perfection of the highest equanimity. The Lord
explains the ten perfections in this way.

Study these, king of gods, and keep them in your mind for the welfare of men”.
Then the King, *Indra* paid homage to the Lord uttering thus: “Venerable Enlightened
One, Sir, what are the results if one practises, writes, studies, worships, respects,
donates, or recites *p*Ar*am*it*ā*s?”

The Buddha replied thus: “Great king, any person, whether he is a man or a
woman, if he worships or donates or if he studies or writes or listens to them or
practises or recites them, he will not die with any sort of instruments such as a piece of
wood, swords, spears, guns, and no one is able to harm him. Kings and ministers too are
not able to endanger his life. And any sorts of uncertainty and danger would be kept
away from him because of the merits of the perfections. They always keep him in
protection. Besides, everyone is always pleased to see him and to talk to him happily
and whole-heartedly. Wherever he goes, wild animals such as elephants, horses, bulls,
buffalos, tigers, bears, forest spirits, scorpions, snakes etc never ever can harm him”

While the Buddha was expounding and praising the results of *p*Ar*am*it*ā*s to king *Indra*,
the *A*G*G*ādi*T*his, those who followed others’ beliefs who liked to compete with the
Buddha, came towards Him. At that time *Indra*, the king of the gods, seeing the
AGgadiThis coming towards the Buddha intending to defeat and harm him, said “I will recite, right now, the pAGGa-pAramitA which I have just learned from the Buddha not to let them do any harm to him”. Then Indra indeed recited the pAGGa-pAramitA right there. All the AGgadiThis then came and paid homage to the Buddha and after that they all fled away.

Then the Buddha spoke to the elder SAriputta in this way: “SAriputta! As you have already seen, all of the AGgadiThis would like to compete with and humiliate the tathAgata. Due to the power of the pAGGa-pAramita, which king Indra recited, they are not able to do any harm or humiliate me; instead they all run away.” At that time, the king of defilements, with bad intentions, thought in this way: “Today there are many men and gods living in this world who are coming to pay homage to the Buddha and gather here I am going to destroy the teaching of the Buddha with my lusts”. He created four kinds of armies and came towards the Buddha.

When Indra, the king of gods, saw the armies of the king of defilements coming in this way, he recited the perfection of wisdom so that the king of defilements with his four kinds of armies ran away. Then gods and goddesses showered puffed rice, and many kinds of flowers to pay homage to the Buddha. At that time, there came into being the teaching of the perfections.

Indra paid homage to the Buddha speaking in this way: “Our Lord, the teaching of the perfections is indeed of much benefit. Any person, a man or a woman, who has put them into writing to be worshipped or offered, or only keeps them in their mind to perform as such a practice and recite like that; that means they have already indeed accumulated meritorious deeds in this life and the life after.” “Great king! any person who recites them, has good dreams, dreaming of the Buddha as if he were alive,
dreaming of Pacceka Buddhas, dreaming of the Bodhi Tree (the Tree of wisdom),
dreaming of the Buddha teaching the Dhamma. That means that gods and goddesses are
looking after that person”.

The Buddha knew and explained that gods and goddesses came to listen to the
teaching and they would protect his teaching, the perfections. King Indra was much
satisfied and happy as he was given the opportunity to look after the person practising
or reciting the perfection of wisdom, which is the most advanced. He paid homage to
the Buddha and said: “Venerable Lord, Sir, any person who faithfully takes refuge in
the Buddha, the Enlightened One, the Dhamma, his teaching and the Saṅgha, the
community of monks, is indeed the follower of the teaching of the perfections and I will
look after that person with his prosperity, longevity, beauty, comfort, strength and
wisdom. I will not let any sort of uncertainty and danger befalls that person at all”.
Then the Lord Buddha says: “Great King, you protect that person, who is the follower
of the perfections. Let him live comfortably; let him not have any sort of uncertainty
and danger at all; Great King, any person who produces, writes, studies, worships,
recites and practises the Paṭṭhāna has indeed performed a great meritorious deed.”
Indra, the king of gods, having paid homage to the Buddha says: “My Lord Buddha:
Sir, this Paṭṭhāna, whosoever follows it is indeed prosperous, endowed with
longevity, beauty, comfort, strength, wisdom and freedom from any sort of illness.”
Indra, praised the goodness of the Paṭṭhāna which is more advanced than the other
nine in front of the Lord Buddha and the Arahats, among the peoples, gods and
goddesses in the bamboo grove situated near the bottom of the mountain, the Vulture
Peak in the city of Rājagaha. The Buddha taught this Paṭṭhāna, which is more
advanced, for his disciples, the Arahats numbering 2250 then.
The King, Indra with great Brahma, Sahampati, gods and goddesses who also had the opportunity to listen to the teaching of the PaGGApAramI, paid homage to the Buddha and the Arahats. They returned to their places.

End of PaGGApAramI Section.

This is the end of the preaching of PaGGApAramI, which is more developed and advanced.3

Section Two

UBhassa: Anxiety

Namotassatthu: May homage be to the Buddha.

Ekasmim kirasamaye sattha tAvatimsA bhAvane viharanto ParisattakamUle pabdukambala sIAsane nisidi: Listen, ladies and gentlemen, who are faithful, lend your ears to the preaching!4 These are the questions, which the king of gods asked the Lord. There was one aeon while our Enlightened Lord, was still carrying the affliction of the physical body, when he resided in the TAvatimsA heaven5 sitting on a seat named pabdukambala under the tree PArikajAta the unique seat for King Indra.6 At that time,
the Lord Buddha, taught seven books of the *Abhidhamma,* the special *Dhammas,*
starting from the *Abhidhamma-sangiBl.* The Lord Buddha taught the *Abhidhamma* to the
god *Sri MahAmayÅ* with gods and goddesses. At that time there was a god named
*SupatiThitÅ* who lived in the *TAvatiMsA* heaven. That god, *SupatiThitÅ,* was prosperous
and had a lot of goddesses surrounding him as his followers. He lived in a heavenly
palace, (*vimAna*) built with diamond and gold. It was fourteen miles in height.

However, that god did not know that his life span would soon be over. At that
time there was a god named *ÔkAsacÅriBl* who came to meet him (*SupatiThitÅ*) and spoke
him in this way: “Sir, he who does not understand suffering (*dukkha*) must fall away
from this heavenly world within this week at the end of the seventh day. After this
heavenly world, you have to be reborn in the hell called *Aviçi* and have to suffer there
for a thousand years. After being released from hell, in the human world you have to be
reborn as a kite, a crow, a tortoise, a pig, a dog, or a blind and deaf man from a mother’s
womb; then you have to be one thousand animals, each rebirth lasting a thousand
years.” Having informed him that, the god *ÔkAsacÅriBl* returned to his place.

*SupatiThitÅ,* when he heard what *ÔkAsacÅriBl* had told him, trembled much with the fear
of death. He was unhappy, sorrowful and thought, “All these dangers will definitely
come to me. What shall I do to get rid of them? And who is able to prevent the course of
this action for me?” There are always five signs, which occur to the gods and goddesses
to remind them that their life is going to be over soon. What are the five signs? They
are: (1) the flowers, which are meant to decorate and beautify their bodies, fade away,
(2) the complexion of the body becomes abnormal (3) the clothes become dim (4) sweat

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7 Name of the Third *Piṭaka,* the third group of the canonical books.
8 *Sri MahAmayÅ* was the mother of Prince Sidhattha, who died and was reborn in *TAvatiMsA* heaven shortly after giving birth to Prince Sidhattha.
9 *Aviçi niraya,* one of the great hells, described in vivid colours at many passages of the *PÂi* canon, e.g. at *Vin* II. 203; *DhÀ* I.148 and *SnA* 290.
and dirt discharge from their armpits, and (5) their seats become hard and extremely hot. These five signs always occur to the gods and goddesses when they are going to die. The god SupatiThitA, who was going to die, came to see the King of gods, Indra. After greeting and paying him his respects, he said: “My great king, who is the greatest of all the gods and goddesses, I request you to be the protector for all of us right now. From today onwards at the end of the seventh day, I will fall away from this heavenly abode and will be reborn in the hell called *Avīci*. I have to suffer there for one thousand years, and then from there I will be born as various animals such as a kite, a crow, a tortoise, a pig, a dog, and to be reborn as a blind and deaf man born from the mother womb. Whatever the animal is, each will last for one thousand years. As I cannot find anyone to help me, I request you, my Lord King *Indra* to help me Sir!”

Having heard what that god had said, *Indra* replied in this way: “God, though I am the king of gods who possesses miraculous powers, I cannot prevent the results of actions of sentient beings. It is only the Enlightened One, the Buddha, who may be able to do so for the sentient beings”. Then SupatiThitA worshipped the king of gods, *Indra* and said: “My great king! Please do take me to see the Lord Buddha,” speaking in this way, he took five kinds of special fragrant flowers and went to see the Lord Buddha with King *Indra*. After paying homage and offering flowers, he told the Lord Buddha that he was to be reborn as a kite, a crow, a tortoise, a pig, a dog and a blind and deaf man since born from the mother’s womb. Each animal life would last for one thousand years.

“Lord Buddha, Sir, what is the cause and effect that this god is to be born as a kite and crow?” asked *Indra*. Having heard the question from the king of gods, the Lord Buddha explained it to him in this way: “Great king, there was an aeon in the past when
this god was born as a human being and was a butcher who lived on killing animals and never endeavoured to do any good deed, keep precepts nor listen to the Dhamma and did not do meditation at all. Therefore, this god is going to be born as a kite and a crow”. “Lord Buddha Sir, what is the cause and effect that this god is to be born as a tortoise?” Then the Lord Buddha replied to him thus: “Great king, this god is to be born as a tortoise as a result of his action of taking the eggs of birds and young birds away from their nests when he was a human being. As a result of that, he is going to be born as a tortoise.”

Then, King Indra asked the Lord Buddha: “Lord Buddha, Sir, what is the cause and effect that this god is going to be born as a pig?” The Lord Buddha explained to him clearly the result of the action that the god had performed in the past, once he was a human being: “Once when he was a human being, he mixed up paddy and bran and he sold that to others and as a result of that action he is going to be born as a pig.”

King Indra, further asked the Lord Buddha: “Lord Buddha, Sir, why is this god going to be born as a dog? I request you to enlighten this to all of us.” Then the Lord Buddha narrated thus: “Great king, this god once when he was a human being used to torture religious leaders such as ascetics and Brahmins. He never took refuge in the Triple gem, the Buddha, the Dhamma His teaching and the Sangha, the community of monks nor did he pay respect to Elders, parents and teachers; so he is going to be born as a dog.”

“Lord Buddha, Sir, why is this god going to be born as a deaf man?” Then, the Lord Buddha explained this: “Great king, this god when he was a human being, had no faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Whenever he came to a place where
people were keeping precepts and meditating, he talked nonsense and insulted the teaching of the Buddha. As a result of this he is going to be born deaf.”

Then Indra asked: “Why is this god going to be born blind?”

Then the Lord Buddha explained thus: “Great King, this god, once when he was a human being, whenever he saw monks begging for alms or beggars he pretended not to see them. As a result of that action, he is going to be born blind.”

Then king Indra paid homage to the Buddha and requested him thus: “The Lord Buddha, Sir, please do teach to enlighten me more!”

Then the Lord Buddha expounded to king Indra in this way: “Great King, there is a teaching called *Ubbassavijeyya-sutta* which can prevent all sorts of danger in this world. Great king, take this *Ubbassavijeyya-sutta*, the teaching that is free from danger and death, for refuge. Any person, who writes, studies, recites, worships day and night, or preaches it to others, that person is prosperous; lives long like the god *SupatiThita*. Any goddess, who respectfully follows the teaching of the Lord Buddha, is always comfortable and happy and prosperous. She is free from all kinds of danger and illness. Goddesses! Should any person take this teaching of the Lord Buddha for refuge, it is a good medicine for that person and she is indeed prosperous. Any goddess, who takes refuge in the Buddha, His teaching and His community of monks, will be indeed prosperous. There will be no dangers and uncertainty for that person. Goddesses! Take this teaching, which is called *Ubbassavijeyya-sutta* for your refuge. You will be free from uncertainty and dangers. Goddess! Any person who offers meals and medicine that means she offers her life so that she is prosperous and healthy”.

Having listened to the teaching of the Lord Buddha, Indra, king of gods, was very pleased. He honoured the teaching of the Lord Buddha by offering special fragrant
offerings and practised according to the teaching of the Lord Buddha. From that time onwards, the god SupatiThita was prosperous and lived a long life between the two Buddhas, our Lord Gotama and Arimetteyya who is going to be the next Buddha. Because of the power of the Buddha, His teaching, and His community of monks, because of morality, because he had made the gift of life, all obstacles hindrance, all danger and all bad luck would not befall the god, SupatiThita. Then King of gods, Indra and the god SupatiThita paid homage to the Lord Buddha respectfully in the way of putting five limbs on the floor and returned to their places. At the end of the teaching of the UBhassavijeyya-sutta, all the audience and the god SupatiThita obtained spiritual power. They became stream winners,11 once returners,12 non-returners13 and arahant14 according to the meritorious deeds they had performed in the past.

This is the end of UBhassavijeyya–sutta

Section Three

**LokavuDdi**: The welfare of the world

**Namotassatthu**: May homage be to the Buddha.

Buddho setho tilokasmin sabba satTAnaM saMsArabandhana sino hitaM karo ahaM vantAmi sabbadA: I always take refuge in the Buddha, the noblest of the three worlds who served for the purpose of the world for all living creatures which are in the

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10 The five limbs are: forehead, two hands, two elbows, two knees, and two feet.
11 SotApatti- entering upon the stream, namely the noble eightfold path. SotApanna- One who has entered the stream.
12 SakadAgami-returning once. One who will not be reborn on earth more than once or one who has attained the second grade of saving wisdom. See more details; Vin i.293; D i.156, 229; iii. 107; M i. 34; S iii. 168; A i.120,232 sq; ii. 89, 134; iii. 348; iv. 292 sq., 380; v. 138 sq., 372; Dh A iv.66.
13 AnAgAmi is a person who dose not return. One who has attained the third stage out of four in the breaking of the bonds (SaNyojanas) which keep a man back from Arahantship. After death he will be reborn in one of the highest heaven and there obtain Arahantship and never returning to rebirth as a man.
14 Arahant-One who has put rid of all kinds of defilements and reached the stage of Arahantship.
circle of birth and death as results of their own actions which are obstacles for them to reach the ultimate happiness.

Ye janA Buddhosetho nlsamaBo gahattho. Dhamma mahaghoratdhaNo tiloke saMsArento pitArAyI sabbasasenava dhammo svAkkhAto mahAgho rattano.

Yo puggalo dhammo mahogho rattano tiloke saMsArento pitArAyI sabbasa tena vA tampannamAmi dhammaM ahaM vantAmi sirasAsabbadA : Any group of men, any ascetic and Brahmin, who takes the teachings of the Buddha for his refuge, will be free from all sorts of suffering in this life and the life after.” “Any person, an ascetic, a Brahmin, a king or minister or the rich or business man who always faithfully takes the teachings of the Buddha numbered eighty four thousand which lead all living creatures to cross over the circle of birth and death of which NibbAna is the supreme, for his refuge is indeed free from all sorts of suffering and dangers in this life until obtaining NibbAna the ultimate happiness.

Sangho visuddho varadakkhineyyo santindriyo sabbaphala pati guBohino samithi pato taM pannamAmi saNghaM. AhaM na mAmi sirasA : I take refuge, by bowing down my head, in the Order of monks, the disciples of the Lord Buddha, who are pure in their precepts and have concentrated minds and controlled their senses which is worthy of doing meritorious deeds producing results right now with prosperity, wealth, longevity until obtaining the ultimate happiness.

Yo buddhaGca dhammaGca saNghaGca tirattanaM idaM lokaM muGcisAmi ahaM vantAmi : I take the Buddha, the Dhamma and the SaNgha for my refuge. These Triple gems lead us to freedom from all sorts of suffering, dangers and variety of uncertainty.

15 NibbAna is the ultimate aim of Buddhism in which the threefold of raga (greed), dosa, (hatred) and moha (delusion) are devoid. NibbAna can be reached by following the Noble Eightfold Path and all expressions which deal with the realisation of emancipation from greed, hatred and illusion apply to practical habits and not to speculative thought. See more detail about the definition of NibbAna by Rhys Davids and William Stede, Pali-English Dictionary, pp.362-365.
May there not be any sort of danger and suffering for all of us from this life until attainment of *Nibbāna* the ultimate happiness! May we be free from all sorts of suffering in this life and the life after and may there be good relatives and suitable surroundings, rich, wealthy and healthy! Therefore I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha for my protection from this life and the life after until I obtain the ultimate happiness. Besides, whoever takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, may he have much strength. May all who go round the circle of birth and death, live long in their every life and may they honour the teaching of the Buddha! May my wife never suffer from headache, and always be healthy! May I be free from illness! May my head be clear, free from any part illness which I have been suffering! Let not my hands and legs be hurt and may I be free from illness in this life and the life after! May I know eighty four thousand of the teachings of the Buddha!

People, who listen to the teaching of the Buddha, called *Lokavuddhi*, are prosperous and healthy, rich and have a number of elephants, horses, and attendants. They live with seven fold noble treasure. They are: (1) treasure of faith (2) treasure of morality (3) treasure of modesty (4) treasure of fear of evil (5) treasure of learning (6) treasure of self-denial and (7) treasure of wisdom. Anyone with these treasures anywhere is prosperous and healthy. Any person who listens to this *Lokavuddhi*, should he be reborn in the next world, will always be happy and comfortable, healthy and wealthy until he obtains *Nibbāna* which is the supreme happiness.

Whosoever faithfully listens to the teaching named *Lokavuddhi*, will be reborn in the heavenly world as a god or a goddess, or King, *Indra* or a great Brahma. When he dies in the heavenly world, he will be reborn in the human world. He will be happy and more comfortable than the others. Whosoever takes this *Lokavuddhi* for his protection
will never be a servant but always a master. Whether he will happen to be like that as mentioned above, we request the Lord Buddha to enlighten us.

Any group of people who invites a proper teacher and faithfully listens to this teaching from the beginning until the end of it without thinking and worrying of their wealth; paddy, money, gold, elephants, horses, cows, buffalos, farming and government services and listens to the teaching carefully and attentively without forgetting it, they are indeed free from all danger and uncertainty in this life and the life after until attainment of NabbAṇa.

Should they listen to the teaching called LokavuDDhi with faith they shut the door on all sorts of suffering and discomfort. The doors of the four hells also are not open for them. They are reborn in the heavenly worlds and enjoy heavenly pleasures until their life-spans are over. The lifespans of the CAtomahArAjika is the first and lasts for five hundred years. TAvatimsA lasts for one thousand, YAma two thousand, Tusita four thousand, NimmaNaaratti eight thousand, Parinimmitvasavatti sixteen thousand. Any one, who has faith, has a long lifespan like gods, goddesses, MahAbrahma and King of gods, Indra. After enjoying the heavenly pleasures in the heavenly world, he will, in every rebirth, be born in the human world in a royal family or in a wealthy family where life is free from suffering. He has abundant wealth and wins the love of sons and daughters. He never troubles his parents but looks after them. These are the results of listening to the teaching of LokavuDDhi. If he is married, his wife never betrays him. Therefore if you do listen to the teaching of MahAlokavuddhi, which is well developed and honourable, you will be free from all dangers and uncertainty from here and now and the next life until attainment of Nibbana. The wise took this MahAlokavuddhi from the Abhidhamma-pi Tika for the welfare of all sentient beings who live in this world.
This is the end of *Mahālokaṃvuddhi-sutta*, which the Buddha taught to King Pasenadīkosalā.

Section Four

**Suttanta-pīṭaka**: The discourses of the Buddha

*Namotassatthu*: May homage be to the Buddha.

Listen! Dear ones who have faith! These, the *Suttanta-pīṭaka*, the *Vinaya-pīṭaka* and the *Abhidhamma-pīṭaka* are good teachings. Here is the *Dakkhiṇabāṇhāṅga-sutta* in the *Suttanta-pīṭaka*, which the Buddha expounded about the results of the generosity of the Pajāpatigotamī, the stepmother of the Buddha.

Evaṃ me suttaṃ ekāmsamayaṃ bhagavaṃ sakkasu viharati kapilavaththusamim nigrodha Arame mahāpajāpatigotamī masiyukam atayagaṇa bhagavaṃ tenu pasaṃ kamitvā bhagavantaṃ abhivadetvā ekamantaṃ nisino kho mahāpajāpatigotamī bhagavantaṃ etadavoca:16 Thus have I heard: once, when the Lord Buddha was residing at Nigrodharāma, He taught the Suttanta Piṭaka, which produces much result, in this way: Pajāpatigotamī who was the milk mother of the Lord Buddha, with a clear mind and faith, wanted to offer the robe to the Buddha. She ordered people to buy special thread. She took it with her own hands and gave it to the weavers and they made it as a set of robes, which was suitable for the Lord Buddha. Placing it in a special golden case with fragrances, she put it on her head and went towards Nigrodharāma with her attendants.

16 This is the *Pāli* passage occurred at the beginning of this text and no more *Pāli* passage can be found throughout this *Suttanta-pīṭaka* except occasionally one or two *Pāli* words. The rests are in Tai- Khun dialect throughout the section.
She offered it to the Lord Buddha with her own hands and then she sat down in a suitable place. Placing her palms properly together to her forehead, she paid homage to the Lord Buddha and said: “My Lord Buddha, this set of robes is new and beautiful and which I had it made and prepared it with my own hands. I intend to offer it to you. In compassion towards me, please accept it for the happiness and welfare of myself.”

Having heard what PajApatigotamI his stepmother said, the Buddha replied:

“Let mother PajApati, offer it to the SaNgha. If you offer it to the SaNgha, that means an honourable offering to the Lord TathAgata”. When PajApatigotamI heard what the Lord Buddha spoke, she was very sad and insisted up to two three times that the Lord Buddha accept it. However the Lord Buddha in reply, said this and then three times: “Mother, offer it to the SaNgha”. At that time, the great Ven. AnandA spoke in this way: “My Lord, please, out of great compassion, do accept this set of robes because PajApatigotamI is your stepmother who has much gratitude for the Lord Buddha. Because of the Lord Buddha, PajApatigotamI takes refuge in the Triple Gem and keeps the five precepts without breaking any one of them. She has become a stream winner and understands the four noble truths. She has much gratitude as she looked after the Lord Buddha when the Lord Buddha was a baby. She always took care of you and carried you. Because of these things, please accept her robes.”

Then the Lord Buddha replied: “AnandA what you have said is indeed true. Because she has so much gratitude to the TathAgata, I want her to gain more merit for this offering. That is why I told her to offer it to the SaNgha. If she is indeed joyful before her offering, happy while offering and satisfied after the offering is made, that would bring much good for her welfare. Because of this thought, I, the TathAgata told her to offer it to the SaNgha.
Ananda, there are various kinds of offering which bear different results. Offering made to the Lord Buddha is being the first individual offering. Offering to a Pacceka Buddha is the second offering. Offering to the noble disciples who are Arahants is the third. Offering to noble disciples who are non-retuners is the fourth. Offering to the disciples who return once is the fifth. Offering made to the disciples who are on the path of non-return is the sixth. Offering made to the noble disciples who return once is the seventh. An offering to the noble disciples who are stream winners is the ninth and to animals such as birds, crows and so on is the tenth. Thus whosoever makes offerings to the animals; its result is one hundredfold. That offering is conducive to him for one hundred lives. The offering made to the ordinary people who do not keep precepts produces results for a thousand lifetime, to the ordinary people who keep precepts for one hundred thousand lifetimes, to the ascetics and Brahmins etc. who gain wisdom and tranquil minds for two million Kottis. The offering made to disciples who are on the path of the stream winner, gains countless results. Here, if the result of the meritorious deeds made to the stream winner is uncountable, the result of the offering made to the disciples who are on the path of once return up to the Lord Buddha is the supreme of all. For examples, it is like drops of rain, which fall from the sky into a one fathom field. The drops of rain are countless. How to count the drops of rain falling into the fields of one hundred fathoms, one thousand fathoms? This is like that offering to the noble disciples up to the Lord Buddha: the result is indeed countless. Therefore the result of the offering to the Sangha is conducive to countless results.”

That is why the Lord Buddha asked the Sangha to accept one of the robes from Pajapati. Then Ven. Acita who was the youngest of the Sangha took that robe and put it as a curtain on the top of the ceiling upon the seat of the Lord Buddha, where
he used to sit to give Dhamma talks. Then the Lord Buddha foretold in this way: “Dear disciples! Ven. Acita, who has accumulated a great deal of merit, is going to be the future Buddha”.

Then PajApataigotaml was very pleased and requested the Lord Buddha to expound the suttas and the nikayas. The Lord Buddha spoke in this way:

“Dear Ven. AnandA there are seven kinds of offering to the Sangha. They are: (1) offering to the Bhikkhu Sangha, male Order, and Bhikkhuni Sangha, female Order with the Lord Buddha as a leader (2) offering to both Orders with the relics of the Lord Buddha as a leader after the Lord Buddha has passed away (3) offering only to the Order of monks (4) offering to the Order of monks, in this case ones who have faith go to the temple and invite as many monks as they want (5) offering to the Order of nuns (6) offering only to the Order of monks and (7) offering to the Order of monks and nuns. None-of them produces as much result as offering to the Sangha. Ven. AnandA, there was a religious man called GotrabhU, who was full of anger. He wore a saffron robe round his neck and tied it with his hands. He did it to look after his wife and children. He was immoral and had a bad mind. At that time, people offered him with the intention of offering to the Sangha, that offering indeed produced much result. The ThathAgata never says offering to the individual produces more result than offering to the Order of monks. Even offering made to immoral ones, if one’s mind is directed to the Order of monks, that offering reaches the Order of monks and produces result. Any who has faith who only requests a specific monk, when he can fulfil with his request, he will be pleased but when he does not fulfil with it, he will be sad. This means that this kind of offering cannot be called offering to the Sangha as a whole. Instead it is called an individual offering. When any one who has faith, considers any monk as the
representatives of the Saṅgha, no matter whether young or old, and makes his offering, that is indeed called offering made to the Saṅgha.

There was a follower named Katumbika who built a temple. When it was completed, he invited one of the Saṅgha. But the one sent by the Order of monks was immoral. Despite that, he offered that temple to him respectably as he was a representative of the Saṅghas. After that the above said monk wanted to clean the temple. He went to the devotee Katumbika to borrow a broom. Then Katumbika took a broom and gave it to him with his feet in an un-respectful manner”.

At that time, people saw what was happening and spoke: “Earlier when this monk came to receive his offering, Katumbika made his offering to him honourably. But later why did he use his feet to give a broom to him with disrespect?”

Katumbika replied in this way: “Dear all, the monk who came earlier was the representative of the Saṅgha, to whom I have to pay respect. Now, he is not a member of the Saṅgha at all, but he is indeed an immoral monk”.

The Lord Buddha explained the result of offering to the Saṅgha, which produces more result than offering to the individual. The Lord Buddha continues expounding the purity of four kinds of gift thus: “Dear Ananda, there are two kinds of offering to the Saṅgha. (1) Any devotee who offers gifts to the ordinary monk as a representative of the Order produces more result, (2) Any person who is pure in morality, has faith in the Triple gems, and believes in the action and its result, makes his gift to an immoral one, like King Vessantara offered his two children to the Brahmin. Such an offering is called a pure gift of the giver. The result is only for the giver. So it is. For example, a person living on killing ducks, hens and birds and so on donated alms to a young novice. When he was dying, he perceived flames of hell as if the flames were like the portion of rice
he had offered. Then, he recalled his offering rice to the young novice. Having recalled, he cried thus: “Young novice! Come and take me out of hell.” Then, there was a divine chariot appeared and took him to be born in the deity world. This is the result of merit, when he offered alms to the young novice in the past.

“Dear Ananda! Like a butcher who donated alms to an immoral man, shared merit to the departed one who was his friend. The departed one could not receive the merit shared with him by his living friend. So, he cried out thus: “The immoral man has taken all my food. Then the butcher again offered alms to a virtuous monk and transferred merit to the departed one. As a result, the departed one could receive the merit shared with him. From that time onwards, he could have good food and clothes.”

“Dear Ananda, a person donating righteous things indeed, produces meritorious deeds. It is due to the craving of sensual pleasures living beings go around the circle of birth and death and never find the ultimate happiness. Sometimes they are reborn in hell and suffer a lot there. Those four kinds of donations produce meritorious deeds here and now within seven days. For example, there was a poor man called Kakavaliya who lived in the city of Rajagaha. His wife was a servant of a wealthy man’s wife. One day, she cooked rice gruel and waited for her husband. In the mean time the Elder, Mahakashapa had just come out of his trance. He traversed through the world by his divine eyes. He saw a poor man’s wife taking rice gruel to her husband. She was faithful and would donate alms to him. Having prepared his robes and taken his alms bowl, the Elder Mahakashapa suddenly approached the door of the poor couple. When the woman saw the Elder Mahakashapa waiting in front of her house she was happy and pleased and offered all food, which she would bring for her husband, to the alms bowl of the Elder. Then again she cooked new food for her husband.
Having received food from her, the Elder returned to the bamboo grove. Then he shared some of the food not only with the Lord Buddha but also with the group of the Saṅgha community. After that, the Elder inquired from the Lord Buddha as to the Kamma (actions) of the wife of the poor man. The Lord Buddha spoke thus: “Both of them will be rich within one week”.

At that time, King Bimbisāra went around the city of Rājagaha. He saw a criminal who was about to be put to death outside the city. When he saw the King coming towards him, that man cried thus: “Honourable King, having suffered so much, I request you, in compassion towards me, to give some of your food for me to eat.” When it was the right time to partake of food, the king remembered the man’s word asking for food. The king told his ministers to send for someone who would send food for that criminal. Then, they took with them one thousand pieces of gold in order to find someone to go to the criminal. However they could find no one. In the meantime, the wife of the poor man, thought thus: “I am able to do so”. Then she undertook to take food and a thousand pieces of gold. Having taken them, she was brought to the king. She convinced the king that she could go. Then she disguised herself into the form of a man and took various weapons and went out of the city. When she went about 12 miles, there was a demon called Dīghatāka which lived at the palm tree outside the city. When she went close by, the demon spoke thus: “Oh! human, stop and stand there. You are to be my food”. Then, she replied thus: “I am not to be your food because I am the servant of king Bimbisāra”. Then the demon asked her thus: “Where are you going?” She replied: “I am going to see the criminal who was about to be put to death outside the city.” Then the demon asked thus: “Oh! human, are you able to bring my rice with you?” Then she replied thus: “I am able to do so”. Then the demon told thus: “Take my
rice with you and convey my regards to the demon KakarAjjadhira-sumanadeva, the 
wife of DlghaTaka, who gave birth to a baby son. If you have carried out my message, I 
will give you rice, things including seven pots of silver and gold which had been buried 
under this palm tree as a reword for you. You come and dig and take all of them”.

Having taken the word of the demon, she sought the help of deity to be her 
witness. Then she spoke thus: “Oh! Deities, Kall the princess who is the daughter of 
Sumanadeva, the wife of DlghaTaka demon, now gives birth to a baby son”.

At that time, the demon Sumanadeva who was the father of Princess Kall was 
sitting at the meeting of the demons. When he heard what was said, his retinues thought 
thus: “It was the sweet word from a man that pleased him”. Then he sent his men to 
find the witness to come to meet him. The wish of the demon Sumana was fulfilled. 
When she was brought to the demon Sumanadeva, she was asked various questions. She 
answered according to the truth that prevailed. Sumanadeva the demon was happy and 
pleased and said thus: “Nine koti, gold and silver is buried under the Nigrodha tree, I 
will give you all, so you can come and claim them”. After accepting the word of the 
demon, she approached the man who was put on the top sharp point of the post. She 
handed food to him to eat. Then she took her knot of her hair to wipe out his mouth. 
When he knew it was her knot, he kept biting it. Then she cut her own knot with a knife, 
and fled to the palace of king BimbisAra.

The king questioned her thus: “Has that man eaten my food?” if so, who is the 
witness?” She replied: “My lord, whether that man has taken food or not, just look at 
my knot which is still stuck in his mouth”. Then she told the king all the various things 
which happened on her way. The next day, the king ordered the ministers to go and take 
all the gold and silver, which the demon promised to give her, to the city.
The king thought thus: “No one ever has so much wealth like this”. So, he appointed the husband and wife to be the richest people and to live in the city of Rajagaha. The reason why both of them becoming rich was the result of donating alms to the Elder Mahākassapa who had just come out from his trance. They are indeed rewarded in the present life and the life after. No matter whether a donation is big or small, more or less, if one has intention, there will be meritorious deeds.

Having become wealthy, the husband and wife never forgot to do meritorious deeds, keeping the precepts and practising meditation until the end of their lives. Then they were reborn in the heavenly world and lived happily there.

The Enlightened Buddha told the Thera Ananda thus: “Dear Ananda, if the Tathāgata passes away, all of you follow the teachings of the Tathāgata which are promulgated for the community, Bhikkhu, Bhikkhunī, Upāsaka and Upāsikā. You all should do meritorious deeds, keep the precepts, listen to the Dhamma and, practise meditation without any break until you obtain Nibbāna”.


Section Five

Vinaya-piṭaka : The book of discipline

Namaṭassaṭṭhu : May homage be to the Buddha.
TadhA sutAM bhagAvA vesAliaM viharA mahAvanekuThAkarAsAraYAM avidure katAkaMo nAma ahosi: Listen, ladies and gentlemen! The disciplinary rules started from the first ParAjika and became the Vinaya-piThA. There was a question as to which PiThAkAs the Buddha firstly preaches. Of the three PiThAkas, the Lord Buddha taught Sutta-piThA first; Vinaya-piThA second and third was Abhidhamma-piThA. Having become the enlightened one, the Lord Buddha spent seven weeks in meditation. During forty-nine days, the Lord did not partake in taking any food. At the last day of the seven weeks, there was a Brahman who came to invite the Buddha to teach the Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta. Then, he taught the gradual teachings and so on in order to teach living beings. At the deer park in Beneras, the Lord Buddha preached Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta and Anattalakkhana-sutta to a group of five ascetics.

Then he expounded the gradual saying to five hundred men who later became Arahants. Thus the three refuges came into existence. The Lord Buddha, after that, sojourned to Uruvela forest to convert the ascetic, Uruvela Kassapa and his nine hundred and ninety nine followers. After the converting the Lord Buddha went to the city of Rajagaha and stayed there for his first rain retreat (vassa). During the 1st rain retreat, there was no rule promulgated by the Lord Buddha. At the second rain retreat, when the Arahants went on preaching in various places many men became monks. The group of new monks could not wear their robes properly when they went for begging. They put alms bowls on their legs or thighs. When people complained to the Buddha, he appointed their preceptors to teach those new monks but their advise was ignored. It

17 This section starts with only this PAl passage.
18 The Buddha, the enlightened one, the Dhamma, his teachings and the Sangha, the community of monks, found by the Buddha. The three refuges are also called the Triple Gem.
was after that happening, the Buddha set up rules such as *Dukaṭa*, *Dubbhāsita*, *Pacittiya*, minor and major. He even set up the duty of a preceptor and the duty of students and close pupils. Then five ecclesiastical, minor and major offences were set up. At the beginning, there were no rules of *Pārājikas* and *Sāṅghādīsesas* and so on.

Once, when the Buddha resided in the cave at the great forest, near the city of Vesālī there was a village called Karatattana. In that village, there was a son of a wealthy man named Sudinnakumāra. He happened to listen to the teaching of the Buddha and he desired to become a monk. He requested the Buddha permission to allow him to be a monk. Having become a monk, he practised a scrupulous way of life, living in the forest and going for alms. One day, the Thera Sudinna went for an alms round, as it was difficult for him to collect from the villagers, he turned his direction to his relative village called Karattanakā. There, he had intercourse with his former wife. He thought that there was no sin in doing that.

When the Buddha came to know about that, he laid down a rule thus: *Yo pana bhikkhu bhikkhunā sikkhasācivasammapanno sikkham apaccakhāya dubbalayam duppaseyya anākatvā methunam dhāmman paṭisevyya antamato tiracchānagatayapi pārājiko hoti asamvāso*: Should any bhikkhu-participating in the training and livelihood of the bhikkhus, without having renounced the training, without having

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19 There are 75 *Sekhiya* rules of polite behaviour for monks, which explain how to behave, how to wear, how to take food and so on. If a monk has committed one of them, that means he has committed *Dukkata*, or breaking a minor rule which is curable by confession it to the senior monks.
20 There are 92 *Pātitaya* rules mentioned in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. They are minor rules for monks to follow. If one of them committed by a monk, he has to undergo an expiation or expiatory in the way of confession.
21 There are four *Pārājikas* (Major rules) for a *Bhikkhu* to observe strictly. If a monk has committed one of these major rules, his position is automatically low and he is not acceptable as a disciple of the Buddha. There is no remedy for these major rules once committed. But the minor rules such as *Sāṅghādīsesas, Pācittiyas* and so on have ways and means to be mended.
22 *Sāṅghādīsesa* rules are 13 in numbers and they are next to the major offences, *Pārājika*. If a monk has committed one of them, he requires the suspension of the Order. They are the class of offences, which can be decided only by a formal *sāṅgha-kamma*. See detail in the *Vinaya* II. 38 sq; III. 112, 186.
declared his weakness—engage in the sexual act, even with a female animal, he is defeated and no longer in communion.23

Once, when the Lord Buddha was residing at the mountain of the vulture peak, at that time, Ven. Sudhana heard the order of the king Bimbisāra to Samanas and Brahman to take firewood in the forest at they pleased. Sudhana Thera misunderstood that he asked his pupils to take the wood collected by people for making the gate of the city. Having heard that Sudhana Thera had asked his pupils to take that wood, king Bimbisāra strongly criticised this improper act. As a result, the Lord Buddha, had to lay down a rule for the monks thus: Yo pana bhikkhu gAmAvA araGgAvA adinnaM theyyasankhAtaM yathArUpa bhikkhu adinnAdAn rAjAno coraM gahetvA haneyyumvA bandheyyumvA pabbAceyyumvA corosi pArosi mullosi thenositi tathArUpaM bhikkhu adinnaM AdiyamAno ayaMpi pArAjiko hoti asaMvAso: Should any Bhikkhu, in the manner of stealing, take what is not given from an inhabited area or from the wilderness—just as when, in the taking of what is not given, kings arresting the criminal would flog, imprison or banish him, saying, “You are a robber, you are a fool, you are benighted, you are a thief” a Bhikkhu in the same manner taking what is not given is defeated and no longer in communion.24

Once, when the Lord Buddha was residing at the great forest, near Vesālī, he preached meditation on death (Asubha kammathāna). Having listened to it, the monks were practised until they reached an agitated knowledge of life. They discarded their existence and they killed themselves. Having known this incident, the Lord Buddha laid down a rule thus: Yo pana khikkhu saGcicca manussavigahaM jlvitA voropeyya sathAharakaM vassapariyeseyya marAnNaM samvenayya marAnAyavA saMmAAdapeyya

ambhopurisakim tuNhimihA pApakena dujñijvitaena matantejivitas eyyo itticitta manocitta samkapo anekapariyA yanena maraNavanamva samveneyya maraNayava sammvA dapeyya ayampi pArañjiko hoti asaMvAso : Should any Bhikkhu intentionally deprive a life of a human being, or search for an assassin for him, or praise the advantages of death or incite him to die thus: “My good man, what use is this wretched, miserable life to you? Death would be better for you than life,” or with such thoughts in mind, such intentions in mind, should in various ways praise the advantages of death or incite him to die, he also is defeated and no longer in communion.

Once, when the Lord Buddha was residing at KuttasanA in the city of Vesali, at that time, there was a famine. As a result, monks faced difficulty in collecting alms.

Then the Bhikkhus got together and discussed thus: “Dear brothers, let's praise each other in dignity in order to get food from the devotees easily. Otherwise we will suffer from starvation”. Then they started praising each other by saying thus: “This monk has already attained the first trance; this monk second trance, this monk third trance. This monk is a stream winner, this monk is a once re-turner, this monk is a non-returner and this monk is an Arahat and so on”.

Having heard their praising each other, people were so pleased and they offered food to them. At the end of the rain retreat, those monks went to see the Lord Buddha to pay respect according to the culture. Then the Lord Buddha asked them thus: “Oh! Monks, have you got enough food to eat?” The monks replied to the Lord Buddha what they had already done. After coming to know this incident, the Lord Buddha laid down a rule thus: Yo pana bhikkhu anabhijAnaM uttarimanussadhammaM antupañAyikaM alamariyaGAñasadassaM samuddhaAcareyya iti jAnAmiti iti passAmitti tato aparena samayena samanuggAhiyamano vA asamanuggAhiyamano vA Apanno visuddhaApekko
evaM vadeyya AjAnamevaM Avuso avajaM jAnAmi apassAmi ducchaM musA vilabinti ayaMpi pArAjiko hoti asaMvAso: Should any Bhikkhu, without direct knowledge, boast of a superior human state, a truly noble knowledge and vision as present in oneself, saying, “Thus do I know; thus do I see,” such that regardless of whether or not he is cross examined on a letter occasion, he-being remorseful and desirous of purification-might say, “Friends, not knowing, I said I know; not seeing, I spoke I see-vainly, falsely, idly, “unless it was from over estimation, he also is defeated and no longer in communion.

After that, the Lord Buddha laid down 13 rules of Sa Nghadisesa starting from SukkavisaThi. There are seven AdhikaraNasamattha, which have been included in the Cullavagga and then laid down ParivAra rules, where monks have to meet at the Uposattha hall to declare self-purification every fortnight. The PARAJIKA rules that the Lord Buddha laid down were altogether two thousand eight hundred fifty koti and forty four hundred thousand. However, the commentators said thus: DuvekotisatisahassAni paGGA sati: The rules that the Lord Buddha laid down in the section of PACITTAYA were two hundred eighty koti and one hundred thousand”. The commentators said: DuvekotisahassAni: The rules that the Lord Buddha laid down in the section of MAHAVAGGA were eighty-four koti and ten hundred thousand. The commentators said: Duvekoti sahassAnicattAlisattAyo: The rules that have already been mentioned were altogether nine texts and the numbers mentioned were nine koti, three hundred thousand and thirty-six. These rules have been collected as Pu TimokkhasaMvarasilla. These are said to be all the rules. Regarding the other rules, it is mentioned as follows: When Sudinna committed sexual intercourse for the second time, the Lord Buddha laid down a rule for monks thus: “If a monk commits sexual intercourse, he has committed the
offence of the first rule of *Paññika*, if a monk takes a thing worthy of a penny, he has committed the second *Paññika* rule, if a monk kills a human being, he has committed the offence of the third *Paññika* and if a monk boasts to gain favour, he has committed the offence of the fourth *Paññika* and forever he looses a brotherhood”.

A thing worthy of capable of committing *Paññika* is explained as follow:

There is a thing without owner. That thing is brought to be offered to the deity or it is hung on the branches of a tree, or is put on the rocks or in the bush, if a monk takes it intentionally, he is not committing the offence of *Paññika* because there is no owner of it. If there is someone looking after it, a monk should not take it. Committing a theft means taking a thing by force due to craving by any means. Then a monk commits the offence of *Paññaka*. That is why; the Lord Buddha laid down rules for monks thus: *Yo pana bhikkhu adinnaM theyyasankhaTaM* : “Should any Bhikkhu, in the manner of stealing, take what is not given and so on.” This is called *MulapaGatti*, which later is recited by monks every fortnight for their purification.

Later there was a monk who thought that the Lord Buddha had laid down a rule not to indulge in sexual intercourse only with a human being. Then he indulged in sexual intercourse with a female monkey. Then the Lord Buddha laid down further later *AnupaGatti*, which goes *Antamaso tirachAnagatAyapi pPaññiko hoti asaMvAso* : That means if any monk commits, at least, sexual intercourse with any animal, he commits the offence of *Paññika*.

Venerable monks, if any rule has not been understood clearly, please do ask the learned ones. When the Lord Buddha was still living, he promulgated discipline for his four groups of disciples, *Bhikkhus, BhikkhuNs, UpasakAs* and *UpAsikAs.*
This is the end of a brief section on the *Vinaya-piṭaka*

Section Six

*Pathama Malai*: The first section on MAleyya

*Namotassatthu*: May homage be to the Buddha...

SuramahiyaM buddhseGaM namitvA sugatApavadhammaM saNghaGca namitvA sakkaraJAnampAdaM MAleyya namavatthum yaramaneyyavicittaM ariyyabha asammApatisati: Listen ladies and gentlemen, I pay homage to the Triple gem and I am going to narrate the story of Ven. MAleyya who was virtuous in discipline. As I have already learned, there was an elder named Ven. MAleyya who possessed spiritual, miraculous powers residing at a village called Kambojagama in the Island of Lanka. It was known as the place of the Triple Gem. The great elder monk visited the hell and retold about it to relatives who remained in the human world to perform good deeds and share the merit to them. Having received that merit, they would be able to be reborn in heaven.

One day, in the early morning, that elder monk got dressed and went round for alms food. There was a poor man who was looking after his parents living in the same village. One day, when he went to a lake to bathe, he saw eight lotuses. He took them and went along the road and met the elder who was peaceful and serene.25

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25 The section of *Pathama MAleyya* begins with *PAli* passage just like the previous sections as mentioned earlier. Throughout this section we can find no *PAli* passage like at the beginning but sometimes there are
He was so pleased to see him that he offered him the eight lotuses and made a vow thus: “Venerable Sir, with the meritorious deed that I offer eight lotuses to you, may I be reborn to a good family and where poverty is not to be found in any part of my life”.

The great elder appreciated his vow and thanked him thus: “Dear devotee, whatever your wish is, May it be fulfilled?” After receiving the eight lotuses, the great elder thought thus: “I am going to take these eight lotuses to be offered to the CulamaBl Cetiya which is situated in the TAvatimsA heaven”. Having thought thus, he entered into the forth trance. Coming out of the trance, he went to the place of PAtura and appeared in the compound of the CulamaBl Cetiya.

When the prince Siddattha cut his hair with his sword and threw it into the sky, he made a vow thus: “if I am to be an enlightened one, may this hair remain in the sky”. Then the king of gods received it with a golden bowl and kept it in the heaven to be the place of paying respect for the deities. After offering eight lotuses to the Culamanl Cetiya and paying homage to the eight directions, he sat in a suitable place. Then the king of gods, Indra came to the Culamanl Cetiya to pay homage and offer fragrant scent to it with his retinue. There he met the great elder and paid homage to him too.

Having paid his respects to the great elder, he inquired thus: “Sir, where do you come from?” The great elder replied thus: “I come from the human world”. The great elder asked him thus: “Great king, you built this CulamaBl Cetiya, didn’t you?” King Indra replied thus: “Yes, Sir, I did so for the deities to pay homage to”. The great elder asked thus: “Great king, as a result of good deeds performed in the human world, they came to be born in the heaven, why do they need to perform more?”

one or two PAli words mentioned such as TathAgata and so on. The style of arrangement seems to indicate none other than the way of chanting of the texts as ritual in Kengtung.
King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, due to the wish to be reborn in a higher heaven, these groups of gods and goddesses want to perform more good deeds. Venerable Sir, gods and goddesses who accumulated less merit could not live a long life in the heaven. For example, just like people who have a little paddy in their store will not be able to sustain themselves for a long period. Similarly, gods and goddesses who perform less meritorious deeds are not able to remain long in the heaven. Venerable Sir, gods and goddesses who are able to remain long in the heaven, are just like people who have much paddy in their store and are able to sustain much longer. Venerable Sir, people who have little paddy, they have to conduct further business for their sustenance. Similarly to the gods and goddesses who accumulate less merit have to perform more good deeds. Just like people who have much paddy, and further conduct more business, similarly, gods and goddesses who accumulate much merit, have also to perform more good deeds to continue living in the heavenly world.

People, who have much paddy but do not conduct any more business, will later face difficulty. Gods and goddesses, who accumulate much merit and continue to perform more, will enable them to be reborn in the higher heaven.

Having heard what was said, the great elder was pleased and asked the king Indra thus: “Dear King, Is this Culamani Cetiya only for gods and goddesses to pay homage? Or does Ariyametteyya (the future Buddha) also come to pay homage to it?” King Indra replied thus: “Yes, he does, but he comes only four times a month, on the eighth day of the new moon, on the eight day of the waxing moon, on the waxing and on the full moon days”. The great elder further asked thus: “Today is also the eighth day of the new moon, has not Ariyametteyya yet come?” King Indra replied thus: “He is coming indeed today”.

41
While they were exchanging this dialogue, there was a god with a hundred retinue coming to pay homage to the Cūlanmaṇi Cetiya. When the great elder saw that god coming, he asked King Indra thus: “Great king, what kind of merit has led this god to be born in this heaven?” King Indra replied thus: “This god, when he was living in the human world, was poor and lived by selling fire wood. Then one day, he gave rice to a crow as a donation, as a result of that merit, after death he was reborn in this heaven and had a hundred retinues”. That is why, the commentators said thus: “Dear Listeners, if anyone gives something to any animal, such as crows, birds and so on, they will be reborn in the heaven and will have a hundred retinues”. Having paid homage to the Cūlanmaṇi Cetiya with fragrant materials, that god sat in a suitable place facing the east. Then, there was a god with one thousand retinues happily coming towards the Cūlanmaṇi Cetiya. Having seen that god coming so, the great elder asked king Indra thus: “Great king, that god is the Bodhisatta Ariyametteyya, isn’t it?” King Indra replied thus: “That is not the Bodhisatta Ariyametteyya”. The great elder further questioned thus: “what kind of merit, has this god performed?” King Indra replied thus: “This god, when he was in the human world, saw a man who looked after cows. He gave some food to that man. As a result, he was reborn in the heaven and had one thousand retinues”.

In this regard, the commentary said thus: “Anyone who donates something to a person who is pure in morality, will be rewarded with that result after death”. After paying homage to the Cūlanmaṇi Cetiya, that god sat in a suitable place facing the west direction.

Then there was a shining god who had ten thousand retinues coming happily towards the Cūlanmaṇi Cetiya to pay homage. Then the great elder asked thus: “great king this is
god Ariyametteyya, isn’t he?” Then the king Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then
the great elder further asked thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed while he
was in the human world?” Then king Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once this god
offered food to a novice, and as a result of that merit, after death he was reborn as this
god who has ten thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the Culamani Cetiya with
fragrant things, he sat in a suitable place facing the south.

Then there was a god who had twenty thousand retinues coming to pay homage
to the Culamani Cetiya. Then the great elder asked thus: “what kind of merit has this
god performed while he was in the human world?”

Then king Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once this god had offered food to a
monk, and as a result of that merit, after death he was reborn as this god who had
twenty thousand retinues. Having paid homage to the Culamani Cetiya and the eight
directions, he sat in a suitable place facing to the north direction.

Then there was a god who had thirty thousand retinues coming towards to pay
homage to the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that, the great elder asked thus: “Is this
god Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder
inquired thus: “what kind of merit has this god performed?” Then King Indra replied
thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human world, he used to donate alms
food and cremated a dead person. As a result of that merit, he was reborn in this heaven
and had thirty thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the Culamani Cetiya with
fragrant flowers and other materials, he sat close to the gods who came earlier.

Then there was a god who had forty thousand retinues coming to pay homage to
the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god
Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired
Thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?” Then King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human world, he was a wealthy man living in the village called Harita. He lived in a righteous way and offered alms to the monks, as a result of that merit, he was reborn in this heaven and had forty thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the Culamani Cetiya, he sat next to the former gods.

Then there was a god who had fifty thousand retinues coming to pay homage to the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?”

Then King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human world, he was a king named Saddadhika, the brother of king AbheyyaduttaAja. He took refuge in the Triple gem. He donated food and clothing to the community of monks. He observed the five and eight precepts until the end of his life. After death, he was reborn in this heaven and possesses fifty thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the Culamani Cetiya, he sat next to the former gods.

Then there was a god who had sixty thousand retinues coming to pay homage to the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?”

Then King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human world, he was a king called Abheyya. He propagated the Triple gem; built the Buddha statues, Satupas, cultivated the Bodhi Tree and looked after his parents. Besides he observed the five and eight precepts and offered the four requisites to the community of monks. After
death, he was reborn in this heaven and had sixty thousand retinues”. After paying
homage to the Culamani Cetiya, he sat next to the gods who came earlier.

Then there was a god with seventy thousand retinues coming to pay homage to
the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god
Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired
thus: “what kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?”

Then King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human
world, he was ordained as a novice. He was clever and intelligent and looked after his
teachers and preceptor. He always kept the temple clean. After death, he was reborn in
this heaven and possessed seventy thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the
Culamani Cetiya, he sat next to the gods who arrived earlier.

Then there was a god who had eighty thousand retinues coming to pay homage
to the Culamani Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “is this god
Ariyametteyya?” King Indra replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired
thus: “what kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?”

Then King Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human
world, he was poor and lived on begging. One day, he saw a monk coming for alms in
front of a house but the owner of the house could not see that monk.
Then that poor man informed them thus: “Dear Sir, there is a monk who has come for
alms food in front of your house. You may offer him according to your wish” At that
time, having faith toward the monk, the owner of the house offered alms to him. As a
result of informing the owner of the house, he was reborn in this heaven and had eighty
thousand retinues”. Paying homage to the Culamani Cetiya, he sat next to the gods.
Then there was a god who had ninety thousand retinues coming to pay homage to the
*Cula*manι*Cetiya. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god
*Ariyametteyya?” King *Indra* replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired
thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?”

Then *Indra* replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human
world, he was born in the *Lankadipa*. He offered a lotus to the image of the Buddha; as
a result of that merit, he was reborn in this heaven and had ninety thousand retinues”. Having paid homage to the *Cula*manι*Cetiya*, he sat next to the former gods.

Then there was a god who had one hundred thousand retinues coming to pay
homage to the *Cula*manι*Cetiya*. Having seen that the great elder asked thus: “Is this god
*Ariyametteyya?” King *Indra* replied thus: “No, he is not”. Then the great elder inquired
thus: “What kind of merit has this god performed in the human world?” Then *Indra*
replied thus: “Venerable Sir, once while he was in the human world, he was a
poor man. He always lived on selling grass and firewood. One day, when he went to the
bathing place, he saw the pure sand. He collected it and made it as a *Cetiya*. Then he
offered it faithfully with a lotus flower and praying thus: “This sand *Cetiya* is indeed
beautiful”. As a result of that merit, after death, he was reborn in this heaven and had
one hundred thousand retinues”. Paying homage to the *Cula*manι*Cetiya*, and to the
eight directions, he sat next to the gods who were there earlier.

This is the end of *Pathama Mālai* or the first section on *Pathama MĀleyya*. 
Dutiya Malai : The second section on MAleyya

Namotassathu : May homage be to the Buddha.

_TadA ariyametteyyo bodhisatto dasa sakiruBani kappabhavirAji tena tikAti sattasahassesu rayuvatti suraputtehi parivArito_ : Dear listeners, there were a queen of goddesses and a hundred thousand _kotis_ of gods who were retinues of the future Buddha _Ariyametteyya_. All of them were shining and holding fragrant flowers came down from _DusitA_ heaven to pay homage to the _Cullaman Cetiya_. Due to the shining colour of the future Buddha, _Ariyametteyya_ and his retinues, all the heavens of king _Indra_ were overwhelmed with fragrance and brightness. The future Buddha, _Ariyametteyya_ came to the _Cullaman Cetiya_. Having paid homage to the _Cetiya_ and the eight directions, he sat in a suitable place facing the east.

After seeing so the great elder inquired from king _Indra_ thus: “Great king, is this god _Ariyametteyya_?” King _Indra_ replied thus: “this god is _Ariyametteyya_ Bodhisatta.” Then the great elder asked thus: “Great king, queen and gods who came before the _Ariyametteyya_ possessed bright colours. When they lived in the human world, what kind of merit had they performed?”

Then king _Indra_ replied thus: “Venerable Sir, these gods when they were in the human world, they listened to the Dhamma, offered four requisite to the monks of which the Lord Buddha was the leader. As a result of that merit, they became members of the retinue of the future Buddha, _Ariyametteyya_”.

Having heard what was said, the great elder was very pleased and praised the meritorious deeds performed. Then the great elder further asked thus: “great king,
goddesses who came on the left side of the *Ariyametteyya* possessed colourful clothes. What kind of merit have they performed?” Then king *Indra* replied thus: “Venerable Sir, when they were in the human world, they listened to the Dhamma, kept precepts and donated alms food, fragrant flowers, good clothes to the monks of which the Lord Buddha was the leader. After death, they were reborn in the heaven as the retinues of the *Ariyametteyya*”.

Having heard what was said, the great elder was very pleased and praised the meritorious deeds they had performed. Then the great elder further asked thus: “great king, goddesses who came behind the *Ariyametteyya*, possessed grey colourful clothes, what kind of merit have they performed?”

Then king *Indra* replied thus: “Venerable Sir, when they were in the human world, they kept eight precepts, listened to the Dhamma and offered fragrant grey flowers and grey clothes to the monks. After death, they were rewarded with miraculous grey things and became the retinues who came behind the *Ariyametteyya*”.

Having heard what was said, the great elder was very pleased and praised and appreciated the meritorious deeds of them. Then the great elder further asked thus: “great king, goddesses who came on the right side of the *Ariyametteyya*, possessed yellow clothes, what kind of merit have they performed?”

Then king *Indra* replied thus: “Venerable Sir, when they were in the human world, they kept the eight precepts, listened to the Dhamma and offered fragrant yellow flowers and clothes to the monks. After death, they were rewarded with miraculous yellow things and became the right retinues of the *Ariyametteyya*”.

Having heard what was said, the great elder was very pleased and praised and appreciated the meritorious deeds of them. Then the great elder further asked thus:
“Great king, however, what kind of merit has the Metteyya Bodhisatta performed in his past life?” and that he is able to enjoy fully in this present life.”

Then king Indra replied thus: “Venerable Sir, there are three things that a Bodhisatta has to fulfil, namely, Saddhâdhika-bodhisatta, Paśâdhika-bodhisatta and Viriyadhika-bodhisatta. They practised thirty perfections; ten general perfections, ten minor perfections and ten superlative perfections. They have to practice five great donations. They are donation of wealth, donation of parts of one’s own body, donation of life, donation of one’s own children and donation of one’s own wife. Then they have to maintain good behaviour, bodily action, verbal action and mental action. Venerable Sir, this Ariyametteyya is a Viriyadhika-Bodhisatta”. After explaining the meritorious deeds of the Ariyametteyya, further said thus: Bodhisatto hi pitvâ puśâdhi nekavâ seta sabbaGu buddho sakkavâni vaBBitun: Venerable Sir, I am not able to explain all the good deeds that Metteyya had performed in detail. I can only explain them briefly as I have learned. Great Venerable Sir, the deeds that Ariyametteyya has performed are uncountable. A Bodhisatta has to practise countless aeons. Of the three kinds of Bodhisattas, a Saddhâdhika-Bodhisatta has to practise perfections for sixteen aeons and one hundred thousand kappas. And then he becomes an enlightened one.

However, the commentators said thus: “A Viriyadhika-Bodhisatta has to practise perfections for eighty thousand aeons and one thousand kappas and then he becomes Enlightened One”. And a Paśâdhika-Bodhisatta has to practise perfections for four aeons and one hundred thousand kappas and then he becomes an Enlightened One. Having practised perfections for sixteen aeons and a hundred thousand kappas, these three Bodhisattas were reborn in the Tûsîtâ heaven and then they came down to be born in the human world to be the Enlightened Ones. While king Indra were talking to the
great elder, Ariyametteyye came to pay respect to the great elder saying thus: “Venerable Sir, from where do you come to the Indra world?” Then the great elder replied thus: “Great king, I came from the human world.” Then Metteyya asked the great elder thus: “Venerable Sir, it is good to see that you have come here by your miraculous power”. He further inquired thus: “How are the people in the human world?”

Then the great elder replied with the verse thus: Sabbe deva manussA satthasakakammesu jīvitA: “Great king, they live according to their own Karma. There are two kinds of people; one does good and the other does bad. Those doing good deeds, have beauty, longevity and posses much wealth and property. Those doing badly are poor, ugly and have short life. Great king, people who are faithful and posses much wealth are fewer than the poor who have less property.” Having heard what the great elder had said, Metteyya further inquired thus: “what kind of merit do people perform?” Then the great elder replied thus: “Some people listen to the Dhamma, keep precepts and practise meditation on the fast days; some of them donate robes, some of them donate eight requisites necessary for monks, some causing Cetiya to be built as a donation; some build temples and so on”.

Then he further asked thus: “having performed such meritorious deeds, what do they wish to be?” Then the great elder replied thus: “Those who perform less or more deeds, they wish to encounter the future Buddha Ariyametteyya. Before the future Buddha Ariyametteyya is born, may we be free from all sorts of suffering during wandering in the circle of birth and death”.

Having heard that news, the Bodhisatta was pleased and said thus: “Great elder, if they wish to see me when I become a Buddha, they have to prepare one thousand
white lotuses, one thousand red lotuses, one thousand Kasala flowerers, one thousand portions of rice, flags, banners, one thousand oil lamps and perform the honour of the ritual of chanting the Th. VJ to be completed in a day. As a result of listening to the MahAVJ, they are rewarded with four PatisaMbhida GABA, in the presence of me when I become Enlightened One.” He further explained the ones who had no opportunity to meet him thus: “Great elder, people who commit five heavy sins; namely killing parents, causing the Buddha’s blood shed, disharmony of the community of monks and murdering Arahats. Besides those who destroy Cetiyas, cutting down Bodhi trees and stealing the property of the community out of jealousy”.

Then the great elder told the Bodhisatta thus: “Great king, I will indeed take these messages and convey them to the people. However, when are you going to the human world?” Then Metteyya replied thus: “Venerable Sir, I will come there, when five thousand dispensation of the Gotama Buddha comes to an end. At that time there will be few who will do good deeds at all. By that time people will be shameless and think that everyone is indifferent. They want to kill each other, living like dogs and pigs. Then the age of people will get shorter from a hundred year up to only five years. They will get married at a very young age. If it so happens, at the time of Satantara, killing each other will be prevail among the people. Whatever things in their hands, will be transformed into weapons to kill each other for seven days. Some of them, who are wise, will flee to the caves to be saved during those seven days. After that period is over, they will come out of the cave and meet each other, talking sweet words to please one another. Then they will start refraining from killing any living beings, stealing

26 Attha, analysis of meanings, Dhamma, analytic insight, Nirutti of definitions paTibhAna and paTibhAha.
things, sexual misconduct, telling a lie, harsh speech, gossip and frivolous talk.\textsuperscript{27} They give up doing evil things and holding no wrong view. They don’t harbour aversion and malice towards each other.

Thence, they start performing meritorious deeds continuously. With the results of those meritorious deeds, the age of their children and grand children will be strengthened up to sixteen years. They continue doing meritorious deeds and their age period will become thirty years. Their children and grand children’s age period will become forty years. They will continue doing meritorious deeds and the age of them will become one hundred year. The children of one hundred year people continue doing meritorious deeds and their age period will become two hundred years and then will go up to one thousand years. They perform good deeds as a result of them their age period will be two thousand years and then go up to four thousand years, five thousand years, six thousand years, seven thousand, eight thousand years, up to one hundred thousand years till an aeon. By that time, there will be no aging and death.

Having longevity people will be unintelligent and starting doing bad things. Their age period will be reduced up to one hundred thousand years. This is the normal age period of the people. When the age of the people reduces up to eighty thousand years by then, the Ariyametteyya will be born in the human world. Then there will be enough seasonal rain in the human world and it will be prosperous indeed. By then in the human world, there will be no bad people, such as thieves, insurgents and so on. The country is prosperous and fruitful with crops. There will be no quarrel among families, husbands and wives. People neither have to cultivate nor do any business. Then, corn will grow by themselves without any growers”.

\textsuperscript{27} Here only four of the precepts have been mentioned, the fifth one which is abstaining from taking any intoxicant drink is being omitted but the fourth one is divided into four like gossiping, harsh speech and frivolous talk etc.
The commentators mentioned that every eatable thing grows by itself and people have compassion towards each other. In addition, different kinds of animals will live with one another happily. By that time, I will get an invitation from the MahāBrahma who foresees through five kinds of reflections\textsuperscript{28} to be born in the human world. Then I will be born in the human world. Having mentioned, the Ariyametteyya will explain the perfections which he has already fulfilled thus: “Venerable Sir, (MahāMāleyya), I have been practising perfections for sixteen aeons and one hundred thousand kappas and then I am known as a Viriyadhika. In addition, whenever I donate something to someone, I always make it clean before I do it. By the time I am born, there will be no disabled and diseased people. Besides, when I donated my ears and eyes, I cleaned them and gave them to others and as a result of doing that there will be no people born deaf and blind.

On the other hand, as I spoke no lies and frivolous talk, when I become the Enlightened One, there will be no dull and dumb people. And then, whenever I listened to the Dhamma, I listened to it faithfully and happily. I gave medicine to someone as donations, when I become the Enlightened One; there will not be any sickness among the people. As I did not do any harm to any living beings, when I become the Enlightened One, there will be no enemy for me. I donated eatable and drinkable things with honesty and happiness; people born at that time will be prosperous. As I donated good robes, when I become the Enlightened One, people will be beautiful and handsome. As I donated horses and elephants, when I become the enlightened one, people at that time will be happy and have a comfortable life. As I released the prisoners, when I become the Enlightened One, there will be no prisoners at my time. As I had compassion toward all living beings, liked or disliked equally, when I become

\textsuperscript{28} Rhys Davids, \textit{Pali-English Dictionary}, p. 94. Paśāvītikā\textit{kha}five kinds of reflections, as to when, where and how one shall be born consisting in Kāa, desa, dīpa, kula and māla.
the Enlightened One, the earth will be flat and level. As I always donated food to the beggars, when I become the Enlightened One, there will be no starving people dying of hunger.

Venerable Sir, people who donated something and wished to see me, I will enlighten them to be free from the three oghas and lead them to the ultimate happiness. I will expound the Dhamma for the beings who suffer in hell to be free from their suffering and to reach to the highest sphere of happiness. Besides, I will open the 32 doors of wrong view holders and instruct in the right view and lead them to supreme bliss. Having said thus, the noble Bodhisatta paid homage to the great elder Debba Malai and said thus: “Please do take these messages and convey them to the people”.

Then he paid homage to the hair shrine, Culamani Cetiya with proper worshipping. Then saying good-bye to the great elder, Debba Malai, and then returned to the Tusida with a large number of his retinues. Having paid homage to the hair shrine Culamani Cetiya, gods and goddesses returned to their own abodes with their retinues.

At that time, after paying homage to the Culamani Cetiya, the great virtuous elder Debba Malai said good-bye to the king Indra and then returned to earth. He went into the village called Gamaniga rajadhana to collect alms. He narrated the message that Ariyametteyya had told him to the people. Having heard the messages, people were pleased and then they were doing good deeds throughout their lives. After death, they were reborn in the Tavatimsa heaven. Laity, who had donated red lotuses to the great elder, after death, was reborn in Tavatimsa heaven. He was living in a golden palace named Vimana with a large number of goddesses with many sort of entertainments. Whenever the god went, lotuses of five colours would spring up under his foot. The

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29 Kamogha, the flood of lusts, Dithogha, and Avijjogha.
30 Five kinds of paying homage, touching two feet on the floor, placing two palms, keeling down two knees, putting two elbows down, and placing forehead to the floor.
scent of his body diffused all over the kingdom of king Indra. Having got that scent, king Indra went towards him and asked what meritorious deeds he had performed in the human world.

Then that god replied thus: “Great king, when I was in the human world, I was looking after my parents. One day, I went to the bathing place and saw eight red lotuses. I plucked them and on the way back home, I happened to donate them to a monk; as a result of that merit, I happen to live a comfortable and happy life”.

Having heard what was said, king Indra took lotuses to be offered to the Culampi Cetiya. That god had been living in the Tavatimsa heaven till the present. Having lived in the heaven, later that god would be born in the time of Ariyametteyya. Thus, if any person donates something, he will be rewarded as a result of that merit. Even if for any reason, he is not born in the time of Ariyametteyya, whenever he is born, he is never in hell. Whoever performs good deeds and wishes to see the Ariyametteyya, will definitely see him.

This is the end of Dutiya Malai (Dutiya MAeyya)

Section Twelve

Dasabon : Ten boons

Namotassatthu : May homage be to the Buddha.

Phussati varavaBAbheti idaM satthA kappilavatthum upanissAya nigrodha ArAme viharanto pokkhara vassaM Arabbha kathesi. SAdhavo : Dear listeners, ladies and
gentlemen, listen to the *Mahāvessantara-jātaka* which contains one thousand *gāthās* divided into thirteen sections. Whoever wants to end up the circle of birth and death, aiming to obtain *Nibbāna* which is freedom of all kinds of suffering, listen to the teaching which is going to be delivered thus: *Satthā va hō nāyako*: The Buddha, the leader of beings, when he was residing in the city of Kappilavatthu, at the temple named Nigrodha, preached the *Mahāvīja* to a group of monks beginning thus: Phusat varavaBBabhēti. *Satthā*: the Enlightened One, (the Buddha) the teacher of men and gods, after his Enlightenment, he preached the first sermon (*Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta*) to the five ascetics (*Panccavaggiya*) and then He proceeded to the city of Rāgaha to fulfill His promise given to King Binbisara prior His Buddha-hood. He spent three months there. After the rain season, the Buddha with ten thousand *Arahats* led by Ven. Udāyi went to the city of Kapilavatthu for the first time. *Tadā Sākya rājāno*: At that time, the royal family of Sākya people, gathering together to welcome the young prince Siddhattha who was born to the Sākya family, were preparing a suitable and peaceful place called Nigrodha for him to stay. Then, with many kinds of flowers in their hands, they welcomed the Buddha in procession. They arranged the children of the subjects to go first and then young boys and girls, the sons and daughters of ministers the second, the third came, the ministers and rulers, holding fragrant flowers staying behind to welcome the Buddha to the Nigrodha temple. *Bhagava*: the Buddha who has six miraculous powers with ten thousand *arahats* went to the Nigrodha temple, which was offered on that day by the Sākya people. *Tadā Sākya rājāno*: at that time, the royal family of Sākya who were proud of their noble births, thought thus: “the young Siddhattha was our son and nephew and younger than us so we should not pay homage to him. The children would pay homage to him as we are older and we will sit behind”.

31 *Pāl* verses.
when the older members of the royal families who were proud by birth were sitting thus, the Buddha knew their thoughts and thought thus: “I am going to make them pay homage to me by causing the rain to wet them”. Having thought thus, the Buddha entered into the fourth trance. After the fourth trance, the Buddha went into the sky, shaking the dirt from his feet to fall down as a heavy rain to wet the royal families in order to frighten them first; showing them the wonderful six miracles namely, white, green, black, red, blue and yellow from the sky.

When the King Suddhodhana, the father of the Buddha, saw those wonderful miracles being performed by the Buddha, with flowers in hands he paid homage to the Buddha saying thus: The Buddha Sir, I pay homage to you the second time as I did at the auspicious paddy cultivation ceremony when I saw that the shade of the Jambu tree was never moving away from you even in the evening. This time, when I see the variety of wonderful things which I had never come across before, I pay homage to you for the third time”. When the royal families of Sakya saw King Suddhodhana’s paying homage to the Buddha, they could not stop paying homage to him (the Buddha). When the Buddha saw his relatives paying homage to him; He came down from the sky and sat on a preaching seat prepared by them at the Nigrodha temple. After sitting, the Buddha glanced at His relatives who were sitting happily in the Nigrodha temple, waiting to listen to the teaching on that day. A torrential rain, rained heavily everywhere only to wet those who wanted to get wet and not to wet those who did not, till they were frightened, crying and admiring wonderful miracles they had ever seen.

At that time, the group of monks talked thus: this is a wonderful miracle which we have never seen before.
magnificence of the Enlightened One” TaM sutvA : When the Buddha heard what the monks were talking, he came and sat on a prepared seat and asked thus: “Bhikkhave : monks, what are you discussing about?” Te bhikkhu : paying respect to him those monks replied thus: “Bhante bhagavA : Venerable Buddha Sir, we are discussing about the wonderful heavy rain which fell on the relatives because of your meritorious power. SatthA : the Enlightened One, having heard the talking of his disciples, He preached thus: “Bhikkhave : monks, this Pokkhara rain rained among the relatives not only this time but also in the past when I was still a Bodhisatta.”

SatthA : the Buddha was silent waiting for the invitation from the monks to request him to continue the teaching. Te bhikkhu : One of the monks who was well versed paid respect to the Buddha and requested him to narrate the past story regarding the fallen rain for them to hear. SatthA: the Buddha, having been requested to preach the sermon regarding the fallen rain, he narrated a past story named the VJ thus: “atite bhikkhave siviratthe jetuttara nagare sivi maharAjA nAma rajaM kArento saGjeyya nAma puttaM paTilabbhi” Bhikkhave : monks, when I was a Bodhisatta wandering in the circle of birth and death and while practicing perfections, there was a powerful king named Sivi who lived in the city of Jetuttara. He had the dearest son called SaGjeeyya. He wanted his son to be the successor of his heritage. Then he brought suitable beautiful princess named Phussadl from the city of Maddaraj for his son to marry. SaGjeeya became a powerful ruler of that country with the beautiful and famous queen Phussadl. Api ca- besides, let me (the Buddha) narrate you further the meritorious deeds performed by her for many lives. Atite kAe : once, in the time of the Buddha Vipassi, there was a powerful king named Bandhumati who reigned in the country of Bandhumati. Tasmin kAe : at that time, SatthA the Buddha, was residing in the city of
Bandhumati at the forest called KhemiggadAya, with a group of arahats. Eko rAjA : there was a king who ordered his ministers with valuable assortments of presents namely red sandal-wood and lovely golden flowers to present to king Bandhumati. dve dhitA rAjA : the king was quite pleased to have two lovely daughters.

So, he presented fragrant red sandal-wood to the elder daughter for offering and the priceless lovely golden flowers to the younger one to beautify herself. TAubho pi : then the two daughters thought thus: “the presents given by our father should not be kept for ourselves instead it would be good to offer them to the worthy one (the Buddha)” After these thoughts, both of them went to see their father informing him thus: “Dear father, now, we have planned to offer the invaluable fragrant red sandal-wood and golden flowers to the Buddha so we wish you to be happy with our plan” TAubho : of the two daughters, the elder one caused the red sandal-wood to be made into powder and put in a golden box while the younger caused the golden flowers to be arranged well and placed them in a silver box and they carried them to the temple of Migadaya to fulfil their wishes.

TAubho : after arriving at the temple, the elder sister offered the powder to the Buddha and wished thus: “Bhante bhagavA : Venarable Sir, because of the meritorious deeds I have performed now, when I am borne, may I be a mother of the Buddha and may my wish be fulfilled” KAthA bhaginI : the younger sister offered the Buddha the golden flower which was meant for beautifying herself with a wish thus: “ Venerable Sir, as a result of the meritorious deeds I have performed out of my heart, whenever I am borne in the circle of birth and death, may this beautiful flower always be with me and may I obtain arahatship. Sattha : the Buddha appreciated their offerings and wishes
saying: “YAcettha dvi hi tumhehi pUjAmeyhaM paTTThAya iminA tumhAkaM yathA te 
patthanA tathAti : may your wishes be fulfilled”. TAu bho : having heard the blessings 
of the Buddha, the two sisters were very pleased and paying homage to the Buddha 
returned to the palace. TAu bho : after departing from the human world, the two sisters 
were reborn in heaven.

TA su : both of them while wandering in the circle of births and deaths, 
sometimes as man, sometimes as god but was never born in hell. After ninety one 
kappas (aeons) the elder sister, at last, was born as the mother of the Buddha. SApi- the 
younger sister was reborn in the human world in the time of Kassapa Buddha to the 
family of king Kimkisaraj. When she was a baby, she was beautiful, lovely, good 
complexion and adored by relatives so that she was named UrasadÅ. At the age of 
sixteen, she happened to listen to the Buddha’s teaching named BhattÅnumodanÅ32 from 
the beginning to the end and became SotÅpatiphala (stream winner) among the 
listeners. appalabhÅge : Then she happened to listen to the teaching named 
BhattÅnumodanÅ with her father. As a result, she became an Arahant after which she 
entered into a BhikkhuÅ Order and gained Nibbana. Kimkisa rÅA: But King Kimkisa 
kept doing meritorious deeds at the palace as a result of listening to BhattÅnumodanÅ. 
Satta puttÅ : King Kimkisa had seven other beautiful and lovely daughters. TAÅam 
ÅnÅAmAni : the seven daughters’ names were (1) SamaBl of good complexion; (2) 
meritorious SamaBagotamjart (3) beautiful Bhikkunl (4) BhikkudÅsikA (5) lovely 
DhammÅ (6) SuddhammA and the (7) was a good-looking SamghadÅsI who looked like 
a divine being from heaven. They all were the daughters of King Kimkisa. Imasmim 
Buddha pÅde : In the time of our Buddha, SamaBl became golden KhemÅ who wore a

32 It is a king of sermons which is usually given to devotees explaining about the benefit of offering 
food, while offering it, and after offering it and how to rejoice with their offering thereafter.
lovely complexion, meritorious SamaBagotamjart was reborn as beautiful UppalavaBBA,
lovely Bhikkunl was reborn as PattacArA, BhikkudAsikA was reborn as Gotaml, charming
DhammA was reborn as DhamadinnA, meritorious SuddhammA was reborn as the mother
of Gotama Buddha and generous SamghadAsl became VisAkhA. Tesu : Among the
mentioned daughters, SuddhammA who kept doing meritorious deeds, refrained from
doing bad deeds and always kept precepts, as her wish, she became Pussatl. She was
born with a gifted fragrance like the smell of sandal wood as a result of her offering
fragrant sandal powder to the Buddha Vipassi when she was the daughter of King
Bandhumati. Devesu : She went through the circle of birth and death and was reborn in
the heaven enjoying heavenly pleasure. At the end of her lifespan there, she was reborn in
the human world. Appala bhAke : At the time passed by, she was reborn in TAvatimsA
heaven as the chief queen of Indra, the king of gods. When her lifespan was to be an
end, there were five signs that appeared. The garland that adorned her body became dry;
she did not only become easily tired but her complexion became pale; her sitting seat
became not only hot but also its colour faded away; dust and sweat came out from her
armpits and the palace where she lived losing its shining colour and light. Then the
king of gods, Indra knew that her time in the heaven was run out. He accompanied her
to the Nandana Garden with a lot of surrounding followers where she lay on the
ornamented couch. Sitting beside her, Indra said to Pussatl thus: “Badde : Lovely
Pussatl I am going to grant you special wishes that you should take with you and do not
forget this”. Sakko : Indra, the open-minded king of gods granted ten wishes to Pussatl
and asked her to choose by uttering the first stanza of the $VJ$ which contains one
thousand stanzas thus:
“Phussati varavaBBAbhe varassu dasadhAvere pathabyAcArū pubbam glyaM tuhmaM manaso piyanti.” “Beautiful and wonderful Phusatl, the queen of beauty, choose ten wishes whatever you like most to take with you on earth”. EvamAhu : Beautiful Phusssatl did not realize that she was going to depart from the heaven TAvatimsA, uttered the second stanza: Devaraja namotayatthu kim pApaM pakataM mayA rammA cAve simaM thAnAvAto va dharaBl ruhyanti : My dear Indra, the kind of gods, I worship you with my hold palms. What have I done wrong that you are going to make me fall down from this heavenly place like the wind overthrows a tree?

AthasA : Then extraordinary Indra, the king of gods knew that she was preoccupied; he uttered two stanzas to her: Na cevate kataMpApaM nacea tvum asi apiyA puGGaca te parikkhIBaM yena tetaM vadAnihaM : Beautiful and wonderful Phusatl, the queen of beauty, you have done no mistakes, and you are dearest to me, but your merit is run up. This is the reason I speak this way to you. Santike mAraṇaM tuyham : Your death is approached. We shall be separated due to our past actions. Please accept these ten wishes which I am going to grant you.

Sakka vacanaM sutvA : Hearing the Indra’s words, she realized that she was surely to die, she chose the ten wishes from the Indra saying: VaraGce me adosakka sabbabhUta namissarA slvIrajassa bhaddante tatha assaM nivesne : King of gods, lord of all beings, may you be well. If you have granted me a wish, when I am reborn in the human world from the heaven, for my own welfare, may I reborn in the kingdom of the Sivis and to be the chief queen of the king. NilA nettA nilIabhamuM : May I have dark eyes, my eyebrows be black; may I have dark-eyed like a month old deer. May I be beautiful and have a name of Phusatl. I respectfully bow down to you and ask you this. PuttaM lAbhetha varadaM : May I have a son who is open-handed in his generosity to
the needy of every direction without anything holding back, who will be famous with good reputation and be honoured by the kings. *GabbhaM medhArayantiyA* : When I am carrying a baby in my womb, let not my figure go, and always looks beautiful, may it be slim and graceful like a finely fashioned bow. *ThanA me nappavatteyyuM* : King, may my breasts be firm, may my hair go not grey. May my body free from dust. May I have prisoners set free. *MayUrakoGcAbhirude* : King of gods! May I be the chief queen of the Sivi king in the kingdom of Sivi which is full of the cries of peacocks and herons and with a crowded group of lovely women and menservants and maiden servants. The kingdom is extolled by bards and panegyrists and noisy with jewelled door bolts and the summons to meat and wine. *NArivara gaBAyute* : May I have sixteen thousand beautiful women with excellent eyebrows surrounded to attend on me when I am in need of them. May I have not only male servants who are clever and know the right time for meal and ready to serve but also may I have the palace doors sound like the music when they are open and closed. May I have people I like and in the palace may I have plenty of various kinds of foods like fish, sweet meat.

*Tesi dasa varesu* : Phassat asked for ten wishes from the king of gods, Indra. The first wish that I asked is to be the chief queen of the Sivi kingdom. *NilanettA* : To have beautiful dark eyes and eyebrows like a month old deer is my second wish. *PhusstI nAma* - To be named as Phuṣṭi, the queen of beauty is my fourth wish. *PuitA paTlAbho* : To have a son who is open-handed in his generosity to the needy is my fifth wish. *Kusi anunato* : My sixth wish is let not my figure go when carrying a baby in my womb. *AlarbathanA tA* : May my breasts be firm is being the seventh wish of mine. *AppalltA bhAvO* : May my hair go not grey is the eighth wish of mine. May my body free from dust. May I have prisoners set free. *Sukhuma paribhAvO* : The ninth wish of mine is to
have good, beautiful and lovely complexion. \textit{vajja pamonA samatthatA} : The tenth wish of mine is to set free the prisoners. These are the ten wishes I request from you, great king.\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Sakko}-King of gods, Indra, replied: \textit{Ye te dasA varA dinNA mayA sabbanga sobhane siviRamA assa vijite sabbe te lacchaSI vareti} O Phusatl, the queen of beauty, you will obtain the ten wishes you have wished for from my gift to you in the kingdom of Sivi. \textit{TamatthA} \textit{pakkA} sento \textit{sathA Aha} : The Buddha explained thus: \textit{IdaM vatvAna maghavA devarA sujaMpati phussatiyA varaM datvA anumodittha vAsavo ti. bhikkhave:} monks, \textit{maghavA} : The king of gods, named VA\textit{sava} Suja\textit{Mpati}, the husband of the young Suj\textit{A} was pleased to give his blessing to the wish of Phusatl and then returned to his heavenly abode.

\textit{Dasavara-g\textit{AthA} niThitA} : This is the end of the section of the ten wishes which consists of nineteen stanzas.

Section Thirteen

\textit{Hima\textit{p\textit{an}}} : \textbf{The section on the Himalaya forest}

\textit{Namotassatthu} : May homage be to the Buddha.

\textit{Iti sA vare gahe tvA tato cutA maddaraGGo aggamahesiya kucchimhi nicchimhi nibbati} : When she had made her wishes, she fell from that state and was conceived in the womb of the king of the Maddas’ queen. Since the time of her birth, her body looked as if it were sprinkled with sandal-powder, so, they named her Phussadl. She grew up among the great company of attendants. At the age of sixteen, she was the most

\textsuperscript{33} This may be a later addition by the author and it is not found in the other versions.
beautiful girl in the land. Then the great king of the Sivi brought her for his son, the prince SaGāya whom he made a king and Phussadī was made the chief queen, the highest in rank of sixteen thousand women. So it is said: Tato cutā sā phussati khatṭīye upapajjatha jetutaramhi nagare saGāye nasa mAgamīti : Phussadī came down from that state and was born in a royal family of Sivi, in the city of Jetuttara and she was married to SaGāya. SA phussati : SaGāya loved Phussadī, who was with a great group of attendants dearly. Atha sakko devarAjā : Sakka took note and saw that nine of the boons granted to Phussadī were fulfilled. But one, the promise of a son is not yet fulfilled. This I will fulfill for her. Tadā bodhisatto : At that time the Great Being was living in the heaven of the thirty three gods, and his life span in the heaven was running out. Realizing this, Sakka approached him and said: Lord, it is high time for you to go to the world of men. You are to be conceived in the womb of Phussadī, chief queen of the king of Sivi. So Sakko : With these words, asking the consent of the Great Being and the sixty thousand sons of gods, who were due to fall from that heaven, he returned to his own dwelling.

Tadā : At that time, the Great Being came down and was conceived in Phussadī’s womb and the other gods were conceived in the homes of sixty thousand ministers. Mahā satto : When the Great Being was conceived in her womb, Phussadī desired to have six alms-halls built, at the four gates of the city, in the middle of the city and at the gate of her palace. And each day she distributed six hundred thousand gold coins. When the king knew of her desire, he consulted the fortune-tellers. They said: “Great king, the queen is pregnant with a being who is devoted to almsgiving. He will never be satisfied with giving.” Tam sutvā : Hearing this King SaGāyā was pleased and made a practice of giving as before said. Tato pathAyā : From the time of the
Bodhisatta’s conception, there was no end to the king’s income, because of the king’s merit, people throughout the whole of India, sent him presents. Devl mahante : When the tenth lunar month of her pregnancy was completed, the queen while carrying the child in her womb, with a large company of attendants, wished to visit the city. She informed the king who caused the city to be decorated like a city of the gods. The king placed her in the finest chariot, and made a tour encircling the city right-wise. As she arrived at the middle of the street where the Vessa lived, she felt the pain of the labour. They informed the king about her pain and the king ordered a lying chamber to be made right there in the street of the Vessas and had her taken to it. And then she gave birth to a son. Tena vuttaM : Therefore, the Buddha spoke thus: “Dasa mAs dhArayitvA karonti puraM padakkhiBaM vessAnaM vlthiyA majjhe janeti phussati mamaMti” : “Dear SAriputta, for the ten months she carried me, while she visited the city in the middle of the Vessa Street, Phussad gave birth to me”. MahAsatto : The Great Being came from his mother’s womb in purity, wide-eyed and holding out his hand to his mother and said thus: “Amma tAa : Mother, I wish to make a gift; is there anything?” Atha sAPhussati : At that time, Phussad replied thus: “Yes, my son, give as you will,” and handed him a purse of a thousand gold coins into the outstretched hand. MahAsatto : The Great Being as soon as he was born, he spoke on three occasions: in his Ummagga birth, in this birth, and in his final birth. On his naming day, because he was born in the Vessa Street, they gave him the name Vessantara.

Therefore, the Buddha spoke: Na meyhaM mattikaM nAmaM napi pe tikasM bhavaM jAtomhi vessa vlthiyA tasM vessantaro ahunti : “Dear SAriputta, my name does not come from my mother’s, nor from my father’s but as I was born in the street of Vessa, so my name was called Vessantara”. JAti divase : On the very day of his birth
there was a female flying elephant brought Prince Vessantara a totally young white elephant and placed it in the state elephant of the royal stable. This symbol denoted the auspicious occasion to the Bodhisatta. *Te janA* : Because this white elephant came to supply the needs of the Great Being (*Bodhisatta*) it was given the name Paccaya. *RAjA* : The king employed sixty-four nurses for the Great Being. They were neither too short nor too tall, freed from all sort of guilt, with sweet milk; the king also employed nurses for the sixty thousand of boys who were born at the same time. *So boddhisatto* : Hence the Great Being grew up surrounded by this great group of sixty thousand children. Then the king had a princely necklace made with a hundred thousand pieces of gold coins and gave it to his son. The Great Being, who was then about four or five year of age, gave it away to his nurses and would not take it back when they returned it to him. *AthA sA* : Then they told this to the king who said, “What is given by my son is given well. Let it be a holy gift,” and had another ornament made. While the prince was still a child, he gave away those necklaces to his nurses nine times.

At the age of eight, while sitting on his bed, the boy thought to himself: “All that I give is external and this does not satisfy me. I want to give something of my very own. If someone were to ask my for my heart, I would split open my breast, take out the heart and give it. If someone were to ask for my eyes, I would pluck out my eyes by the roots and give them. If someone were to ask for the flesh of my body, I would cut off all the flesh of my body and give it. If someone were to ask me as a servant for his household then I would let my kinsfolk know that I am the servant of his house”.

*Tasseva* : As the Great Being thought thus seriously, this earth, forty thousand quadrillions of leagues in extent, and two hundreds of leagues in depth, quaked thundering like a great mad elephant. *Sineru*, chief of the mountains bowed like a sapling in hot stream and seemed

34 Such a sentence is not available in the *PAli* standard text.
to dance towards the city of Jetuttara. At the earth’s rumbling the sky thundered with
cracking lightning and rain; the lightning flashed forth; the ocean swelled. Sakka, king of the
gods, snapped his fingers in approval; Great Brahma cried “Bravo!” and all was in
tumult right up to the heaven of Brahma.

Tena vutta: That is why the Buddha spoke the stanzas according to the
Cariyā Piṭaka thus: Yadaḥaḥo daṛako homi: When I was yet a boy of eight, sitting in
my palace, I pondered on giving gifts. If someone were to ask me, I would cut open my
body, and give my heart, my eyes, my flesh and my blood. While I contemplated with
thoughts like these, at that time, the earth did shake and quake with mountains, woods
and trees. Mahākatto: The Great Being, at the age of sixteen, had completed mastery
of all skills and crafts. Atha: At that time, his father wished to hand over the kingdom
to him. After discussion with his mother, from the family of the King Madda they
brought his first cousin, Maddil, with sixteen thousand attendant women and made her
his Queen Consort. Then he anointed the Great Being in the kingship.

Mahākatto: The Great Being, from the time of his receiving the kingdom,
distributed much alms, giving each day six hundred thousand pieces of gold coins.
Aparabhage: In the course of time, Maddil gave birth to a son whom they named Jāli
because they laid him on a golden net (Jāla). When he started walking, Maddil gave
birth to a daughter whom they named Kābhājina because they laid her in a black skin.
Bodhisatto: The Great Being, each month, would visit his six alms-halls six times,
mounted on the back of his magnificent elephant. Tadakaṅkara: Now at that time,
there was a drought in the kingdom of Kāṇīga. The crops did not ripen and there was a
great famine and men unable to live turned to stealing. Then killing took place and there
lost a great many of lives and there were cries and lamentation everywhere. Stricken by
the famine, people gathered together in the royal courtyard and shouted their discontent. The king heard and asked the ministers what was wrong. When they explained the trouble to him, he consoled them saying, “Very well, my dear subjects, I am going to make it rain.”

Vatvāca: After saying this he pledged himself to moral vows and fasted but he could not make it rain. So, he called the citizens together and said to them, “though I undertook the vows and observed a fast for seven days, I was not able to make it rain. And what are we to do now?” he asked. Atha sā: Then they replied, “Vessantara, son of King SaGjaya in the city of Jetuttara, who is liberal in giving, has a completely white lucky elephant. Wherever that elephant goes, there is rain. Therefore, if you are not able to bring rain, then send Brahmins to ask for that elephant and bring it here.”

So tassa vacanāṁ sutvā sādhuti: Hearing their suggestions, the king agreed to do this. He called the Brahmins together and chose eight Brahmins namely RĀma, the leader of all, Juja, LakkhaBa, Jotika, KoGGānGā, YaGā, SujĀtA and SuyĀmA. These eight Brahmins were brave, clever and masterly and possessed vocabularies for begging. The king provided them expenses for their trip and ordered them to go and fetch Vessantara’s elephant. Eventually the Brahmins reached Jetuttara and had a meal in the alms-hall. Their plan was to ask the king for the elephant on the full-moon day. So, they covered and splashed their bodies with dust and mud. They went to the east gate at the time when the king came to the alms-hall. Early in the morning, the king intending a visit to the alms-hall, bathed with sixteen pitchers of fragrant water, breakfasted and adorned himself and then mounted on his richly noble elephant, and went to the east gate. The Brahmins found no opportunity there so they went to the southern gate standing on a high spot and watched the king distributing alms at the east gate.
**Atha mahAsatto** : When the king reached the south gate, they stretched their hands out and cried, “Victory to the noble Vessantarā!” Seeing the Brahmins, the Great Being directed his elephant to where they were and, seated upon its back, he uttered this first stanza thus: *ParuNuha kaccha nakha lomA panka dandA rAjassirA paggeyha dakkhiBaM bhAhum tim maM yAcanti brahmaBA pabhinnaM kaGjaraM dantim opaveyha gajuttamanti* : “With hairy armpits, hair grown long, stained teeth, bodies grey with dust, stretched out hands, O Brahmins, what do you ask of me?”

**TaM sutvA** : Hearing this, the Brahmins replied thus: *RatanaM deva yAcama. SivInaM raThavaDDanaM dadA hi pavaraM nAgaM IsA dantaM urulhavam* : “We ask a precious thing from you who bring prosperity to the kingdom of the Sivi, Give us the marvelous elephant, the colossal beast with tusks like poles.”

**TaM sutvA** : Hearing this Great Being thought, “I desire to give anything that is my own, to give something like my head. What they ask for is external to me. I am going to fulfill their want.” And from the back of elephant, he replied thus: *DadAmi na vikampAmi yaM maM yAcanti brahmaBA pabhinnaM kuGjaraM dantim opavayham gajutta manti* : “I do not hesitate; I gave what the Brahmins ask: the tusked riding-beast, best of elephants, trumpeter in rut.” *MahAsatto* : The king, the saviour of the kingdom of the Sivi, who set his heart on charity descended from the back of elephant and gave that present to the Brahmins. *CatuPAdo* : The ornaments on the elephant’s four feet were worth four hundred thousand, those on his two sides were worth two hundred thousand, the cloth under its belly a hundred thousand; on its back were nets of pearls, of gold and of jewels, three nets were worth three hundred thousand, the bells on its ears two hundred thousand; the rug on its back a hundred thousand; its three head-ornaments three hundred thousand; the ornaments at the roots of its ears two hundred thousand;
those on its tusks two hundred thousand; the lucky jewel on its trunk a hundred thousand, and the ornament on its tail a hundred thousand; so that not counting the priceless objects, the trappings on its body were worth two million, two hundred thousand. Then the mounting ladder was worth a hundred thousand, so that so far it was worth two million, four hundred thousand. But additionally more, there were six priceless objects: a gem on the top of the umbrella; a gem on the crown of its head; a gem in the string of pearls; the gem on its goad; a gem in the pearls on the covering of the elephant’s throat; and a gem on its frontal lobe. Besides, the elephant itself was priceless. So there were seven priceless things including the elephant, and all this he gave to the Brahmins. In addition, there were the elephants’ attendants, five hundred families in all together with mahouts and keepers. AcariyaM: When the gift was taking place, there were earth tremors and so on just in the way described previously.

SamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: To explain this, O monks, the Master uttered stanza thus: TadAsi yaM bhinsanakaM tadAsilo mahamsanaM hatthinAge padinnamhi me danl. SampakaMptha: “Then there was a startling thing, then there was something to make your hair stand on end; when the grand elephant was given away, the earth shook. Then there was startling thing, then there was something to make your hair stand on end; when the grand elephant was given away; then the city trembled. Then the city was in disorder, and there was much noisy shouting, when the grand elephant was given away, the bringer of wealth to the kingdom of Sivi.

The city of Jetuttara all did tremble. The Brahmins received the elephant at the south gate and mounted upon its back. They made their way through the middle of the city surrounded by a big crowd. When people saw them, they cried out, “O Brahmins, that elephant you are on is ours and why are you taking our elephant?” The Brahmins
replied, “The Great Being Vessantara gave the elephant to us. Who are you?” They mocked the crowd with insulting gestures, went on through the city and went out by the north gate. The people of the city were so angry with the Great Being; they gathered at gate of the royal palace and shouted their discontent. Tena vuttaM : That is why in explaining to Venerable SĀriputta, the Buddha spoke the stanzas thus: SamA kulaM puraM Asi gho so ca vipulo mahanatthinAge padinnamhi sivInaM raThavaDDhano : The Buddha told SĀriputta, that when he was King Vessantara and while giving away the elephant, there arose such a terrible noise, such a great uproar, when the elephant was given away, the earth shook. 35 The citizens, trembling at heart for this loss, informed the king. Therefore it is said: UgA ca rAjaputta ca : Lords and princes, tradesmen and Brahmins, mahouts and guards charioteers and soldiers, one and all, all the country people and all the Sivi people, when they saw the elephant being led away, told the king thus: VidhamaM deva te raThaM putto vessantararo tava kathaM no hatthi naM dajiA raThassa pUjitaM : “You Majesty, Your son, Vessantara is ruining your kingdom, How could he give away our elephant so honoured in the kingdom? How could he give away the gigantic elephant, with tusks like poles, experienced on all battlefields, the white best of all elephants? The rutting destroyer of our enemies, covered with its white blanket, tusked, white as Mount KelĀla, with its cowries, its white umbrella, its cushion, its keeper, its attendants; that noble bearer, the royal mount? He has given away this precious thing.” After saying this, they continued thus: Annam pAnaGca so dajiA vattha senAsanani ca etaM kho dAna patirUpam etaM kho brAhmaBAraham. Deva : King Sir, Should one give food and drink, clothes or a place to live, that would be a good gift and quite worthy of Brahmins.

35 Actually here in this place according to the PTS and Comrich’s translations there are three gAhA but in this Th. Vj version there is only one gAhA
How SaGjaya, the saviour of the kingdom of the Sivi, could your son Vessantara, the leader of our race, give away the elephant? Should you not care what the Sivi tell you, we think, the Sivi people, will use force against you and your son.

_TaM surivA_ : Hearing this, the king thought, “They wished to kill Vessantara!” and he said thus: _KAmA janapado mAsi rAThaGcA pi vinassatu nAhaM sivInaM vacanA rAjaputtaM adUsakaM_ : “Let my country be no more, let my kingdom be ruined, I will not, at the command of the Sivi, exile the prince, innocent as he is, from his own kingdom as he is my own son and dear much to my heart. Let my country be no more, let my kingdom be ruined, I will not, at the command of the Sivi, exile the prince, guiltless as he is, from his own kingdom as he is my own son and dear much to my heart. I do not harm him as he is good and noble. It would be a shame for me and would cause a great sin. How can I kill him by the sword, Vessantara, my very own son?”

Then the people of Sivi replied thus: _MA naM danDena na hi so bandhanA raho pabbAjeti ca naM rATha vanke vasatu pabbate ti_ : “Do not kill him by the sword, he does not deserve such a sentence. Exile him from the kingdom; let him live on Vamka’s mountain.” When the king SaGjaya heard this saying, he said thus: _Iso ce sivInaM chando chandaM na panudAmase imaM so vasatu rattim kAme ca paribhuGitum_ : Should that be the will of Sivi, I will not go against their want. But let him stay one more night to enjoy all pleasures. At the passing of this night and when it is dawn, let the people of Sivi come and banish him away from the kingdom.”

They agreed to the king’s suggestion for just one night. Then the king dismissed them and thought to send a message to his son. He sent for a clever minister and sent him to Vessantara. He went to Vessantara’s house and conveyed him what had taken place.
Tamatthaṃ pākāsento sathā ahaṃ: To make this clear, the Buddha spoke the following stanzas to the monks thus: *Uthēhi katte tarama no gantvā vessantarām vada siviyo deva te kuddhā negama ca samagatā.* Rise, fellow, go quickly and tell the prince my word. All the people are angry raising a big voice with one accord. My son, lords and princes, tradesmen and Brahmins, mahouts and lifeguards, charioteers and footmen, everyone and all gathered together here. When this one night passes and dawn comes, they will gather here one and all to banish you away. *So katā.* The minister sent by Sivi king, having bathed well, perfumed and finely dressed. Head bathed in water, he put on ears with jewels, he rode on the lovely elephant and came to Vessantara’ house. He saw the happy prince abiding in his land with the ministers standing around him like Vasāva the king of gods.

Tadā: Then, this minister went quickly to the prince and he said: “Sir, I bring bad news about you; be not angry with me.” After paying his respect, he said to the king thus: “You are my lord, Sir, you give me everything: you bring some comfort but I have to tell you bad news now: The citizens in all, in wrath, with one consent, lords and princes, tradesmen and Brahmins are all bent, mahouts and lifeguards, charioteers, the footmen every one, all citizens and the country folk together now have run. After the passing of this night, when dawn comes, they are all determined to come and banish you away.”

Mahāsatto: Hearing this, the Great Being asked the minister thus: *Kismin me siviyo kuddhā naṃ tattvām pāsaṃ dukkhaṃ taṃ katte viyā cikkha kasmā pabbājyanti manti.* “Why are the people angry with me? For I have done nothing wrong. Tell me, good minister, why they do wish to banish me?” He replied thus: “Lords and princes,
tradesmen and Brahmins, lifeguards and charioteers and foot-soldiers are angry because you gave away the elephant and that is why they are banishing you.”

TaM sutvA : When he heard this the Great Being was full of delight and said: HadayaM cakkhumpahaM dajjaM kim me bAhirakaM dhanaM hiraGGaM vA suvaBBaM vA muttA veluriyA maBi : “I would give my heart, my eyes! What is external wealth to me, gold or money, or pearls or lapis lazuli gems?” “Should anyone come to ask for it, I would give him my right arm without hesitation because my mind is pleased in gifts.” “Let the Sivi people exile me or slay me! Let them cut me into sevenfold I will not stop giving.”

At this the minister spoke, not the message given him by the king, nor one given by the citizens, but different instructions from him own thoughts thus: EvaM taM sivayo Ahu negamA ca samAgatA kontimArAya tirena giri mArAGJaraM pati yena pabbAjita yanti tena kacchatu subbato : “The Sivi people say this to you: “Let the good lord go where the exiled go, to Mount AraGJara by the river of the KontimARa River.” It is likely that he said this by the inspiration of a deity. TaM sutvA : Hearing this, the Great Being replied, “Very well, I will go by the path taken by exiled men, though the citizens banish me for no other crime than that I made a gift of the elephant. In this case, I hope to give a great gift of seven hundreds. If the citizens grant me to make this gift for one day, after giving gift tomorrow, I will leave on the next day.”

So it is said: So haM tena gamissAmi yena gacchanti dUsakA rattindi vaM me khamatha yAva dAnaM dadAmahA : “I will go by the road that the exiled go. Bear with me for a night and a day, until this gift has been made.” “Very well” said the minister, “I will report this to the citizens,” and he went away. The Great Being then had the order of the army summoned: “Tomorrow I am going to make the gift called the gift of
the seven hundreds. You must get ready seven hundred elephants, seven hundred horses, seven hundred chariots, seven hundred women, seven hundred cows, seven hundred female slaves, and seven hundred male slaves, and supply various kinds of food and drink, and even spirits and everything which is fit to give.” MahAsatto: The Great Being, having ordered for the great gift of the seven hundreds, he dismissed the ministers and went alone to dwelling of Maddl. He sat there on the royal bed and began to talk to her. TamathaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explanation the Master spoke thus: Amanta yittha rAjA naM maddim sabbangasobhanaM yaM te kiGci mayA dinnaM dhanaM dhaGGca vijjati: Monks, the king Vessantara went to Maddl, who is beautiful in every limb and said to her: “Whatever I have given you, in money and grain; gold or coins, pearls or lapis lazuli stones in plenty; store all of that, together with your own wealth which you have from your father.”

Then, the princess Maddl who is beautiful in every limb, asked him, “My lord, where shall I find a place to hide it? Tell me where?” The king Vessantara replied to Maddl thus: SIlavantesu dajjAsi dAnaM maddi yathArahaM na hi dAnA paraM atthi patiTThA sabbapABinaM: “You should give gifts to the virtuous, Maddl, as they deserve; because there is no safer place than making gifts.” TaM sutvA: Maddl, after hearing the king’s words she consented saying, “Very Well,” and Bodhisatto: The Great Being further instructed her thus: Puttesu maddi dayesi sassuyA sassuramhi ca yo ca taM battA maGGeyya sakkaccaM taM upathahe: “Maddl, be kind to the children, and to your father and mother-in-law. Wait reverently on whoever places himself forward as a husband for you. And if no man should wish to be your husband, when I am far away, look for another husband for yourself and do not waste away without me.”
Atha *naM*: When Maddl heard what the king had said to her, she was extremely sad wondering and asked: “Why, my lord, do you say so oddly?”

So *mahAsatto*: The Great Being replied, “The people of Sivi are angry with me for the gift of the elephant. So, they are banishing me from the kingdom. Tomorrow I am going to make the great gift of the seven hundreds and the next day I will depart from city.” And the Great Being said:

*AhaM hi vanaM gacchAmi ghoraM vaLuMigAyutaM samsayo jivitaM meyham eka kassa brahAvane ti*: “Tomorrow, I will go to the terrible forest, infested with fierce wild animals. My life is at risk alone in the great forest.” Besides it would be hard to see the lovely Maddl with neither two beloved children nor my parents.

*Tama bramirAjaputti*: Then the princess Maddl who is beautiful in every limb, asked him thus: “What is the reason you say this odd thing? That is a wicked thing indeed to say.” “Great king, it is not right, for you to go away alone. Where you go, sir, I do too. Should the choice be death with you or life without you, such a death is better than living without you. It is rather better to die on a flaming fire, one burning mass, than living without you. Just as the cow-elephant follows her mate, the tusked jungle-elephant, as he goes on his conquering way over mountains and difficult passes, the rough places and the smooth; So, I am following you with our two children. I will be no burden or trouble to you.”

Then she narrated the region of the Himalaya as if she had already seen it:

*Ime kumara passanto maGjuke piyAbhAbine kilante vanakumbasmin na rajjassa sarissasi*: “When you see the children pleasantly chattering with their dear voices, playing among the bushes of the forest, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, pleasantly chattering with their dear voices, playing among the bushes of the forest, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, pleasantly chattering with their dear voices, playing among the bushes of the forest, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children...”
voices, playing in the lovely hermitage, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, decorated and hung with garlands in the lovely hermitage, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, decorated and hung with garlands, playing in the lovely hermitage, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, decorated and hung with garlands, dancing in the lovely hermitage, you will forget the kingship. When you see the children, decorated and hung with garlands, dancing and playing in the lovely hermitage, you will forget the kingship. When you see an elephant of sixty years, wandering lonely in the jungle, you will forget the kingship. When you see an elephant of sixty years, wandering at evening and in the morning, you will forget the kingship. When the elephant of sixty years, trumpets out as he heads a herd of young elephants, when you hear his roaring, you will forget the kingship. When you see the wild blossoms in the forest which is crowded with beasts of prey on every side, granter of desires, you will forget the kingship. When you see the deer come at evening, and the fauns dancing, you will forget the kingship. When you hear the sound of Sindhu River as it flows, and the singing of the fauns, you will forget the kingship. When you hear the cry of the owl as it flies hooting through the caverns of the mountain, you will forget the kingship. When you see the beasts of prey, the lion, the tiger, the rhinoceros, the buffalo, you will forget the kingship. When you see the peacock with its tail feathers dancing on the heights encircled by the peahens, you will forget the kingship. When you see the peacock with brightly colored tail, born from an egg, dancing surrounded by the peahens, you will forget the kingship. When you see the crested peacock with dark blue neck, dancing encircled by the peahens, you will forget the kingship. When you see an elephant of sixty years, wandering lonely in the jungle, you will forget the kingship. When you see an elephant of sixty years, wandering at evening and in the morning, you will forget the kingship. When the elephant of sixty years, trumpets out as he heads a herd of young elephants, when you hear his roaring, you will forget the kingship.
you see the trees blossoming in the winter, spreading their sweet smell, you will forget
the kingship. When you see the trees blossoming in the winter, the KuṬāja, and the
flowering Bimba tree, and the red lotuses, diffusing their scent, you will forget the
kingship. Y adA hemantike mAse : In the winter when you see the earth green and
covered with cochineal beetles, you will forget the kingship. Y adA hemantike mAse :
When you see the forest in bloom in a winter month, and the lotuses in bud, you will
forget the kingship. EvaM maddivanta vAsiBl viya etakA hi gAthA ti : Thus Maddī
described the Himalaya in these stanzas as if she lived there.

HimavaBBanA niThitA : This is the end of the section on the Himalaya, which contains
one hundred and thirty four stanzas.

Section Fourteen

DAnakaB : The section on almsgiving

Namotassatthu : May homage be to the Buddha.

Phussati pi kho devī puttassa me katukasAsanaM AgataM kim nu kho karoti ahaM
gantvA jAnissAmeti paṭichanna yogenA gantvA sirisayena gabbha dvAReThitA tesaM
sallApaM sutvA puttassa suBisAya cakarUBam paridevam paridevesi . SAdhavo : Dear
listeners, when Queen Phusati got the information about her dear son, she had a thought
as to what would happen to him. CintitvA : Having thought she made up her mind to go
to him and finding out what he intended to do. She went in a covered carriage. Standing
at the door of their chamber, she heard their conversation and lamented deeply.
The Buddha, the leader of men and gods described stanzas as to Queen Phussadl’s cries thus: 

*TesaM laAlappitaM sutvA puttassa suBisAya ca karuBaM paridevesi rAjaputti yasassinl* : “The famous Queen Phussadl, when she heard what the princes and her son said to one another, she lamented pitifully.”

And uttering stanza thus: 

*Seyyo visaM me khAyitaM pApatA papeyyaham rajjuyA pabbajjha miyyAham kasmA VessantaraM puttaM pabbAjenti adUsakaM* : “It would be better for me to take poison or jump down from a cliff, or hang myself with a rope. Why do they banish Vessantara, my guiltless son?”

*AjhAyikaM dAnapatiM* : “Why should they banish Vessantara, my son who is learned, very open-handed in giving without avarice; honoured by rival kings, renowned and famous? Why, when he is guiltless?”

*MAtApenti bharaM jantuM* : Why should they banish Vessantara my son who supports his parents and respects the elders of the family, as he is guiltless? 

*RagGohitaM devahitaM* : Why should they banish Vessantara, my son who always handed his support to the king, the queen, friends and relatives, even the whole kingdom, as he is guiltless? 

*SA phussatI* : After the mourning, she consoled the princess and her son; she went to the king and said thus: 

*Madhuniva palAtAni ambAva pati tA chamA evaM hessati te raThAma pabbAjenti adUsakaM* : “It is like honey that has drained away, and like mangoes that have fallen to the ground, your kingdom will be, should they expel the innocent.” 

*Hamso nikhlBa pattova* : “O king, it is like an old goose with crippled wings in a dried-up pond, you are to be lonely and die, deserted by your courtiers. 

*TaM TaM bhUmmim maharaja* : Let me tell this to you, mighty king, may you not misunderstand me: do not exile a man of no crime because of the command of the Sivi.”
TaM sutva: Hearing this, the King SaGayA replied to dear Phussadl thus:

DhammassA pacitim kummi sivInaM vinayaM dhajaM pabbiyemi sakim puttaM pABA piyataro hi me: “I do this honorably as a ruler due to the desire of the Sivi people to banish our son, who is dearer to me than life itself.” Phussati: Hearing this, the queen wept and said thus: Yassa pabbe dhajaggAni kaBikArAvA puppitA yAyante manuyAyanti svajje kova gamissati: “He wherever he went, in those days, was followed by banners like blossoming K’aBikArs and today is to go alone.” Yassa pubbe dhajaggAni kAAbi kArAvA nAnica: “He wherever he went, in those days, was followed by banners like a forest of K’aBikArs and today is to go alone. Yassa pubbe anikAni kaBikArAvA nAnica: He, wherever he went, in those days, was followed by an array of troops like a blossoming K’aBikArs, today is to go alone. Yo pubbe hatthInAyAti: He used to travel on an elephant, in a palanquin, in a chariot: who is the king going to travel on foot today? KatthaM candanalittango: “How, he who used to use sandal-scent perfume, and is awoken by dance and song, how does he wear rough skins, and carry the axe and pingo-load? KasmAnAbhi hariyanti: Why do they not bring yellow robes, or the garb of skins? Why do they not bind on the bark shirts as he enters the great jungle? KatthaM rucirA M dhArenti: How should these people exiled by the king, put on clothes, made of bark? How is Maddl going to wear a dress made of Kusa grass? She used to wear fine cloth from Benares and linens from Kodumbara. How will Maddl bear it when she has to put on clothes made of Kusa grass? VeyhAhi pariYAityvA: As she used to journey in a palanquin, in a chariot, how would that lovely girl make her way today on foot? YassAmudu tarAhaththA: The lovely girl with tender hands and feet always in comfort, how can the lovely princess go trembling into the wood? YasAmudu tarApAda: That lovely princess whose feet are so tender and always in comfort, even her golden slippers
would hurt her feet as she walks: today how can she make her way on foot?” Yassa itthi sahassAni: “She used to walk garlanded and attended by sixty thousand women; how can that lovely girl make her way to the forest today alone?” Yasa sivAyasutvAna: “She was frightened even at home when she heard a jackal howl: how can the lovely one trembling as she is, go to the forest today? Yasa indassa gotassa: “When she heard the scream of the owl, that kinsman of Indra, in her fear of the noise she shook like the goddess of drink: how can that lovely one, trembling as she is, go to the forest today? SakuBl hataputtAva: Like as a bird whose broods are slain, who sees the empty nest, I will suffer in pain when I come to this empty home. SakuBl hataputtAva: Like as a bird whose broods are slain, who sees the empty nest, I will be yellow and thin when I see no more my precious children.” SakuBl hataputtAva: Like as a bird whose broods are slain, who sees the empty nest, I will run here and there when I see no more my precious children. Kurarl atachApAva: Like an eagle whose young are slain, who sees the empty nest, I will suffer much pain when I come to this empty home. Kurarl hatasApA: Like an eagle whose young are slain, who sees the empty nest, who sees the empty nest, I will be pale and thin, if I see no more my children.

KurarI hatasApA: Like an eagle whose young are slain, who sees the empty nest, I will run here and thither if I see no more my precious children. SA nUna cakavAklva: Like as a ruddy goose in dried up pool, I will suffer long in pain when I see no more my dearest son. SA nUna cakavAklva: Like as a ruddy goose in dried up pool, I will suffer long in pain, I will be pale and thin if I see no more my precious children. SA nUna cakavAklva: Like as a ruddy goose in dried up pool, I will suffer long in pain, I will run here and there, if I see no more my precious children Evam ca me virapantiyA: And if
you banish the prince who is guiltless from the kingdom to the forest, in spite of my sore complaint, I think then I will die.

_TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha_ : In explanation the Teacher spoke thus: _TassA lAappitaM sabbA antepure ahu bAhApageyha pakkaBDum sivikaGGosamAgatA_ : When sixteen thousand women attendants heard the queen’s bewailing, a noise rose up in the harem: the Sivi girls together stretched out their arms and cried loudly. _Oroda ca kummAro ca vesiyA ca brAhmA_ : And wives and children lay in the prince’s palace like the wind blows down the trees upon the ground. Besides women, tradesmen and Brahmins, charioteers, mahouts, lifeguards, foot bearers, all joined the lamentation later."

_Atha mahAsatto_ : At that time, the Great Being bathed himself well, dressed and perfumed and took breakfast. Then he went where the ministers were preparing the gift of seven hundred. To explain this, the Teacher spoke thus: _Tato ratyA vivaA sUriyassuggamanam pati atha vessaAra rAja dAmanA dA tum upAgami_ : “Monks, when as night passed and day came, Vessantara the king rode on the graceful elephant surrounded by the many and began giving his great gift of seven hundred. _VatthAni vattha kAmanA_ : Give clothes to those who want them, toddy to the drinkers! Give food to those who are in need of it. Freely give presents! _MakiGci vanibate_ : Let no one cause disappointment to any beggars who came here. Filling them with food and drink, so that they would go on their way suitably honored! _Tesu mattsAkirantAva_ : In this way when he gave the gift, the people of the city of Jetuttara, from all four orders of the society, cried thus: “Vessantara, the lord, those who live in the Sivi kingdom are banishing you due to your gifts, and yet you are giving away even more,”
When they had their gifts, the recipients thought, “Now the king Vessantara has left us without support and gone into the forest, to whom shall we go in the future?” and they fell down as if their feet had been cut off. They roll here and there lamenting piteously. Regarding this the Teacher spoke thus: “So the beggars, tired and weary, gathered at the departure of the great king, who brought prosperity to the Sivi kingdom.”

\[
\text{Asesum vatta bho rukkham nAnAphaladharaM dumA yathA vessantaraM raThA pabbAjenti adUsakaM}
\]

: In banishing prince Vessantara from the kingdom, they have cut down a powerful tree which bears all sorts of fruit, though he is guiltless.

\[
\text{Acchesum vata bho rukkhaM} \quad \text{: In banishing prince Vessantara from the kingdom, they have cut down a strong tree, a fulfiller of every desire, though he is guiltless.}
\]

\[
\text{Acchesum vata bho rukkhaM} \quad \text{: In banishing prince Vessantara from the kingdom, they have cut down a tree with the pleasures of all one’s desires, though he is guiltless.}
\]

\[
\text{Ye vuDDhAyeca taharA} \quad \text{: Old and young, the middle aged, all stretched out their arms and cried loudly when the prosperous king of the Sivi left.}
\]

\[
\text{AtiyakkhaAvessa varA} \quad \text{: The overseers, the eunuchs and the women of the king’s harem stretched their hands out and cried loudly when the prosperous king of the Sivi leaves.}
\]

\[
\text{Itthlyo} \quad \text{: All the women in the city, the Brahmins, the wandering ascetics stretched their hands out and cried loudly when the prosperous king of the Sivi leaves.}
\]

\[
\text{HattArhA} \quad \text{: Mahouts, charioteers, Brahmins, beggars, and other mendicants stretched out their hands and cried aloud: “Is it right? The way the king Vessantara who made a sacrifice of his own city is driven out of the kingdom due to the command of the Sivi people.}}
\]

\[
\text{Satta hatthIsate datvA} \quad \text{: King Vessantara when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred elephants which wore every kinds of ornament, with golden harness and golden trappings, ridden}
\]
by village headmen carrying spikes and goads. *Satta assesate datvA* : King Vessantara when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred horses, swift steeds, from the Sindh, looked after well since birth, decked with every kinds of ornament, ridden by village headmen carrying swords and bows. *Satta assesate datvA* : King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred horses, swift steeds, from the Sindh, looked after well since birth, decked with every kinds of ornament, ridden by village headmen carrying swords and bows. *Satta asati sate datvA* : King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred chariots, fully accounted, with banners fluttering high, covered with leopard skins and tiger skins, bearing every kinds of ornament, driven by village headmen in armour with bows in their hands. *Satta itthlsate datvA* : King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred women who have long lash and lovely smiles, graceful hips and slender waists, each standing in a chariot. They are completely dressed and trinkets the color of gold, with golden necklaces. *Sattadhenusate datvA* : King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred milky cows. *Satta daslsate datvA* : King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away seven hundred maiden slaves and male servants. King Vessantara, when driven out of his own kingdom gives away elephants, horses, chariots and beautifully adorned women. *TadAsiyaM bhimsanakaM* : When the great gift had been given, there was a wonderful thing taking place which makes hair stand on end with the shaking earth. *MahAsatto* : The Great Being, after giving the great gift of seven hundred, then King and ministers, citizens and rich men, tradesmen and civilians gathered together and said that the Great Being, evenwhen he is driven out of the kingdom because of his gift, he cannot stop further giving.

*Tena vattaM* : In explanation to this the Buddha spoke in the Cariya-piṭaka thus:

*Atthettha vattatI saddo tumulo bheravo mahA dAnena tam nIharanti puna dAnaM adAtiso*
tī: “Monks there was a terrible thing to make the hair stand up when the Great Being giving the great gift of the seven hundred was driven out of from his own kingdom.”

Y ācākā: Beggars in every direction felt very sorry in great lament, as they can find no one to whom they would turn to in time of need like the Great One after his departure from the country.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: To make this clear, the Buddha preached thus: Te su mattA kilantA vasampatanti vanibbakA nikkhamante mahArAje sivinaM raTTavaDDhano: “There was great lamentation when the Great Being was banished from the kingdom of Sivi.” The deities told the kings of all India of Vessantara’s giving a great gift of noble maidens and other things. Therefore noble men (the Khattiyas), by the divine power came by carriage and took away a maiden or some other gift. Thus did Khattiyas, Brahmamas, Vessas, and Suddas and all took gifts from him till the evening. Then he returned to his dwelling place to get permission from his parents and that he would go at night. So, he went to his parent’s home in a beautiful chariot. Queen Maddl went with him to get permission from them to go with him. The Great Being greeted his father and told him that he was going.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: To explain this, the Teacher spoke thus: Amantayittha rAjAnaM saGgayamdhammikamvaraM avaruddhasi maM deva vankaM gacchAmi pabbataM: “He told the king SaGaya the righteous, Your Majesty, as you are banishing me, I will go to the Vamka Mountain. Yehi keci maharaja: Whatever beings, mighty king, and all who will be, go to the Yama’s house unsatisfied by material pleasures. So hAM sakke abhissasim: I have committed a sin against my own people because of the giving of the gifts in my own city. Therefore I am banished from the kingdom at the command of the people of Sivi. AghantaM paTisevissaM: I will
endure this misfortune in the forest, the home of fierce wild beasts, the haunt of the rhinoceros and the leopard. I am doing good deeds while you sink in the mud.

_Aththa mahAsatto_ : After speaking these four stanzas to his father, the Great Being proceeded to his mother to ask her permission to leave the kingdom with these words thus: _AnujAhi maM amma pabbajjA mama ruccati so ham sakke abhissasim yajAmAno sake pure:_ Dear Mother, may I take my leave because I have made up my mind to leave the kingdom. I have committed a sin against my own people by giving the gift of the elephant in my own hand. Therefore I am banished from my kingdom at the common of the Sivis people. _AghantaM paṬsevissaM:_ I will endure this misfortune in the forest, the home of fierce wild beasts, the haunt of the rhinoceros and the leopard. I am doing good deeds while you sink in the mud.

_TaM sutvA:_ Hearing this, Phusatl replied thus: _AnujAnAmi taM putta pbbajjA te samijhantu, ayaGca maddi kalyaBl, susaGGa tanumajhimmA, acchatamsaha puttehi kim araGGe karissati:_ “My son, I give you permission to leave with my blessing to your homeless life. _AyaGcamaddi:_ But let the lovely MaddI with graceful hip and slender limbs remain here with your children, for what is she going to do in the forest.

_Vessantaro rAjA:_ King Vessantara said thus: _NAhaM akAmA dAsimpi araGGaM netumussahe sace icchati anvetu sace nicchati acchatu:_ “I would not take even a slave into the forest without her will. If she like, let her come with me. Otherwise let her remain here.” _RAjA:_ On hearing what his son said the king began to plead with her. To explain this the Teacher spoke thus: _TamatthaM pakAsentosatthA Aha:_ _Tato subBhaM mahArAjA, yAcitum paṬpajjatha mA candanasamAcAre rajojallaM adhArayi:_ “Then the king began to say to his daughter-in-law, Let your body not cover with muddy dirt and dust which used sandal-powder. _KAsiyAnica dhArotvA:_ You used to wear fine Benares
clothes, do not wear clothes made of Kusa grass. It is joyless to live in the forest. Oh do not go beautiful lady!

Then the most beautiful princess Maddl replies, “To be without Vessentara I would not desire for any happiness.” The great king, prosperous to the kingdom of the Sivi’s told her, “Come Maddl, listen to what horrible things there are in the forest.

_Bahuktà pataNgA ca_ : There are many kinds of insects such as bugs, bees, and mosquitoes that would bite you and that would be very hard for you to live in the forest. Note your residence situated close to the river bank where there are snakes named goat-swaller, though they are poison-less but so frightful. If anyone or animal that may come close to them, they interweave their coils overpower and swallow it. 

_AggEpisatta_ : There are other dangerous animal called black-furred bears which may cause any danger to anyone who happened to see them and it is said that one could not get away even by climbing a tree. 

_MahimsA_ : On the other hand, there are buffaloes which have great sharpen horns wandering on the river bank of Sotumbara who might frighten you.

_DisvA miggAnA_ : When you encounter with the groups of wild cattle wandering in the forest, like a cow hankering after its calf, what is to be done Maddl? Seeing the frightful monkeys gathered together in the tree tops, you will be frightened, Maddl, because it will be a new sight for you. 

_YA tvaM sivAya sutvAnA_ : You are often frightened even in your own home when you hear a jackal howl. What are you going to do when you go to the Vamka Mountain? Why would you go to such a place? Even at midday when all the birds rest, the great forest is fully of noise”.

_Tamabhavi raJaputtl maddi sabhamg sobhanA_ : Then the beauteous princess Maddl spoke up and replied to the king thus: “I can bear all the terrors of the jungle you described. I am resolved to go. 

_KAsam kusaM pataKilaM_ : I will put my way through all
the hill and forest grass, through clumps of bulrush reed with my own breast and go in front of King Vessantara who is going to be an ascetic.

_BahUhi vata cariyAhi_ : She attracts a husband by many sorts of behaviour; by holding in her figure with corsets and stay of cow-bone. She carefully must tend to the fire, sweep out with water but in this world a life of a widow is terrible. I will go, great monarch. _AppissAhoti appatto_ : A man can take her by the hand and take her around against her will, although he may not eat her leavings. But in this world a life of a widow is terrible. I will go, great monarch. _Kesa gahaBamukkhepa_ : He can pull her by the hair or drag her on the ground. He may do much harm to her without lamenting. But in this world a life of a widow is so terrible. I will go, great monarch. _SukkachavIvedhaverA_ : A man pulls about the widow’s sons cruelly with blows and foul language though they are fair and proud of winning charm, as crows would peck an owl. For in this world a life of a widow is so terrible. I will go, great monarch. _Api GAtikulephite_ : “If she lives with wealthy relations, rich in bronze, she is free of abusing from her brothers and from the other women of her family. For in this world a life of a widow is so terrible. I will go, great monarch. _NaggAnadlanUdakA_ : A waterless river is bare; a kingdom without a king is not safe; Even if a widow has ten brothers, life is useless without a husband. For in this world a life of a widow is so terrible. I will go, great monarch. _Dhajo rathassa paGGabaM_ : A banner is the mark of chariot; smoke is a mark of fire; a king is for the kingdom; a husband is meant for his wife. For in this world a life of a widow is so terrible. I will go, great monarch. _YA daliddI daliddassa_ : A woman who shares her husband’s lot, in case of neither rich nor poor, is honored. The gods admire her because it is hard to do. _SA mikam anubandhissaM_ : I am always following my husband to put on the yellow robes. Without Vessantara, my husband, I
would not care to be a queen of all the earth. For in this world a life of a widow is so
terrible. I will go, great monarch. *Api sAgara pariyantaM:* Without Vessantara, I would
not consider even the great earth full of wealth and all kind of gems bounded by the
ocean. *KathaM nu tAsaM hadayaM:* What kinds of heart have they, those women who
only seek for their own comfort while their husbands are in woe?

*Nikkhante mahArAje:* I am following him at his departure, the great king, the
bringer of the prosperity of the kingdom of the Sivi, because he is able to give me all
joy and content. *Tamabravi mahArAjmaddim sabbamgasobhanaM ime te darahA puttA*
: Then the great king told the beauteous Maddl, “The beauteous lady, when you go,
leave us these two children, JAli and KaBhAjinA for they can do nothing in the forest. We
will keep and look after them well.” *Tamabravi raJaputti:* Then the beauteous Maddl
replied to the king, “My children JAli and KaBhAjinA are dearest to my heart, if they are
in the forest, they will bring joy to our miserable life.”

*Tamabravi maharaja:* The great king, the bringer of the prosperity of the Sivi
kingdom replied, “The children used to take fine rice and rich well-cooked meat. What
will the children do if they feed on wild-tree fruit? The children used to eat from the
well adorned golden silver dishes. And what will the children do if they have to eat with
the bare leaves? *KAsiyAni ca dhAretvA:* The children used to put on fine cloths from
Benares and linen from Kodumbara; how will they manage if they have to wear clothes
of Kusa grass and bark? *VeyhAhi pariyAyitvA:* The children used to tour about in a
carriage or in a palanquin. How will they do if they have to run on bare foot? *KUlTagAre
sayitvAna:* The children used to sleep in gabled chambers safely. How will the children
do when they have to sleep at the foot of a tree? *Pallankesu sayitvAna:* The children
used to sleep on a couch, with woolen covers and beautiful coloured clothes. How will
they do when they have to sleep on a bed of grass? Gandhakena vilimpitvā: The children are used to be scented with sandal-scent and its powder rubbed on their bodies. How will they do when their bodies are covered with dust and muddy dirt? CAmari mora hatthehi: The children used to live comfortably, fanned with cowries and peacock’s tail: how will they do when they are bitten by flies and mosquitoes?” EvaM tesaM salapanta naGoceva: When they talked, the dawn came and after the dawn the sun rose up. They brought for the Great Being an ornamented carriage drawn by four Sindh horses to the entrance of the palace. Maddl said good-bye to her parents-in-law, took leave of the other women and saying goodbye, she took her two children and went to take her place in the carriage before Vessantara.

TamathāM pakAsento satthA Aha: To make this clear, the Buddha said thus:

Tamabravi rAjustull maddl sabbanga sobhanA mAdeva paridevesi mAca tvum vimAno ahu yathAmayaM bhavissaM: The beauteous princess Maddl replied, “Do not lament, my lord, nor be perplexed so. Wherever we go, the children will go with us.” IdaM vavAna: With these words, the beauteous princess Maddl with her children followed him along the high road of the Sivi.

Tato Vessantararo rAja: The King Vessantara, having given the great gift of the seven hundred, paying reverence three times to both his parents said goodbye to them. Then ascending into the quick chariot drawn by great four Sindh horses, he set out with his wife and children to the Vamka Mountain. Tato: King Vessantara drove to a place where many gathered and said, “We are going. May all my kinsfolk be free from sickness?” AppamattA: Addressing these words to the crowd, the Great Being told them to be careful, to give alms and to do good deeds. As he set out, the Bodhisatta’ mother said, “Should my son want to give, let him give,” So she had sent him on both
sides carts filled with the seven sorts of jewels, laden with the seven precious things. So attano: On eighteen occasions he gave his gifts to beggars he encountered on the way, including even the jewelry he wore. TadA: When he had set out from the city, he turned round and desired to look upon it because of his longing, the area of earth covered by his carriage detached itself and turned round, so the chariot faced towards the city. And Vessantara beheld his parents’ home. And because of that very reason, there was an earthquake and other wonders.

Therefore the Teacher in explanation to Venerable SAriputta said thus according CariyatapiTaka: NikkhamitvA nagaA nivattitvA vilokite tadaA pi pathavI kampi sineruvan vaThaM sakAti: “When he turned round to look at the city he left, then the earth, wreathed by the woods of Sineru shook.” So Bodhisatto: Keep looking at the city, the Great Being induced MaddI to have a look too. Therefore he said thus: Igha maddi nisAmeti rammarUpamva dissati AvAAsaM siviseTThassa pettiKA bhavanaM mama: “Look, MaddI, see the lovely sight from where we just have come, the best home of the Sivi kingdom, my father’s palace.” Atha mahaA satto: Then the Great Being kept looking at the sixty thousand courtiers who were born at the same time as he, and the rest of the people, he sent them back. MahAsatto: As the Great Being drove the chariot, he said to MaddI, “My lady, look out if any suiter is following us,” SA maddi: And so MaddI sat watching. Now four Brahmins who were unable to come in time for the great gift of the seven hundreds had arrived at the city and inquired where the king was. When they heard that he had left the city after the giving of the gifts, they asked whether he had taken anything with him when he left. When they learned that he had gone in a carriage, they followed him with the intention of asking for the horses. Tato maddi
arocesi: Then Madd saw them approaching and cried, “Beggars my lord!” MahAsatto: The Great Being stopped the chariot, and they came up to him and asked for the horses.

TamathaM pakAsento sattha Aha: Explaining the Teacher spoke thus: TaM brAmaBA anvagamum tenam asse ayAcisum yAcito paTipAdesi catunaM caturo haye ti: “Then four Brahmins caught him up and asked for the horses, and at the right spot, he gave the four horses to the four of them.” After he had given the horses away, the yoke of the chariot remained in mid air. And no sooner the Brahmins had gone, then four gods in the guise of red deer came and drew the chariot to move on. Bodhisatto: Knowing that they were gods, the Great Being spoke this stanza to Madd, Inghamaddi nisAmehi cittarUpamva dissati migaro hiccavaBBena dakkhiBassAvahanti maM: “Look, Madd; see this wonderful thing, how these clever horses in the shape of red deer, draw me on!” Ime devaputta: But as he went on, there came another Brahmin and asked for the chariot. So, the Great Being took down his wife and children and gave him the chariot. And when he gave the chariot, the gods disappeared.

SatthA: To explain the gift of the chariot, the Teacher spoke to monks thus: Athettha paGcamo AgA so taM ratha yAcatha tassa taM yAcito dAsi na cassu pahato mano: “A fifth Brahmin came up to him and asked for the chariot. So he gave it to him, and he was in high spirit in giving without clinging.” Then King Vessantara took down his family and gave the chariot to the Brahmin who came on that account. Tato pathAya: From that time they all went on foot. MahAsatto: Then the Great Being spoke to Madd: “Madd, you carry KaBhAjinA, for she is young and light, but I will carry JAli, her brother, as he is heavier.” EvaGca: Then they went on their journey each carrying a child on their hips.
To explain this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: *Rājakumārapādāya rājaṃputti ca dārikaṃ sammādamāṇa pakkāmum āggaṃ āggaṃ piyāṃ vadati* : “The king carried the boy, the princess the little girl and so they went on their journey talking together kindly to one another.”

This is the end of the section on almsgiving, which contains two hundred and nine stanzas according to the Buddha’s preaching.

Section Fifteen

**Vannapave**: The section on entering the forest

*Namotassatthu* : May homage be to the Buddha.

*Tapātipatthe Agacchante manusse ditvā kuhīm vamgāta pabbato ti pacchanti manussā dūreti vadanti* : Whenever they met travellers coming along the road, they asked, “Where is Vamka Mountain?” *Manussā*: People whom they met replied, “It is far away.” *Tana vattum* : That is why the Teacher explained this to the *Sāriputta* as mentioned in the *Cāriyā Pīṭaka* thus: *Yadi keci manussā enti anumagge paṭipathe maggam te paṭi pucchāma, ‘Ku him vankaṭa pabbato* : “Whenever they met travellers coming along the road, we ask them the way, “Where is Vamka Mountain?” *Ta tattha amhe paśīṭvā kalunāṃ paridevasum dukkhaṃ te paṭi vedenti, ‘Dūre vankaṭa pabbato* : When they see us, the travellers felt sorry for us and give us sorrowful information, “Vamka Mountain is still far away.”
**Athasa kumaro**: The children cried with happiness when they see all kinds of fruit on the trees which grew on both sides of the road. By the Great Being the trees bowed down to the reach of his hands. He picked out the ripest fruit and gave it to the children. **SAMaddi**: When Maddi saw this, she cried out, “A miracle”. **Tena vuttaM**: Therefore, the Buddha explained this to Venerable **SAriputta** as mentioned in the **CAriyA PiTaka** thus:  

\[ \text{Yadi passanti pavane d'ArakA phalite dume tesA phAlAnaM hetumhi uparondanti d'ArakA} \]

“When the children see the trees full of fruit on the slope, they started crying for the fruit. Seeing the children crying, the tall trees being sorrowful bend down their branches to their hands and let them have the fruit. When the beauteous princess Maddi saw this wonderful sight, she cried out her approval in joy, this thing is so strange to make one’s hair stand on end. This is wonderful in this world; it is so strange to make one’s hair stand on end. By the power of Vessantara, the trees bend down low.” From the city of Jetuttara to the mountain named **SuvaBBagiritA** is a distance of five leagues; from there to the river **KonTimA** is another five leagues; from there to the mountain **AraGjaragiri** is another five; From there to the Brahmin village of **DuniviTha** is also five leagues; and from there to his uncle’s city is ten leagues; thus, the distance from the city Jetuttara is thirty leagues; But spirits shortened the journey so that they could reach his uncle’s city in one day.

**Tena vuttaM**: Therefore, the Teacher told this to Venerable wise **SAriputta**, thus:  

\[ \text{Sankhipimsu pathA yakkA anukampAya d'Arake nikkhanta divase neva cetaraThaM upAgamum} \]

“The Yakkas feeling pity for the children shortened the journey so that they could reach the kingdom of Ceta on the same day.” **TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha**: Explaining this to Venerable **SAriputta**, the Teacher spoke:  

\[ \text{TegantvA dlghamaddhAnaM cetaraThaM upAgamum iddhham phItaM janapadaM bahu} \]
mamsa surodanaM : “At last they came to the kingdom of the Cetas; a wealthy, prosperous country, rich in meat, drink and rice.” Then there lived sixty thousand Khattiyas in his uncle’s city. The Great Being instead of going inside the city sat in a hall at the city gate. Tasmin Kale : Then, Madd cleaned the dirt from the Great Being’s feet and massaged them. SAMaddl : Then Madd went out of the hall and stood there on the road to announce that Vessantara had come to the city. TaA : Therefore, the women coming in and out of the city saw her and came round. TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha : To make this clear, the Teacher told thus to the monks: Cetayo parivArisu ditvA lakkhaBa mAgataM sukhumAli vata eyyA pattikA paridhAvati veyhAhi pariyAyitvA sivikAya rathena ca sAjja maddi araGGasmin pattikA paridhAvattiti : “The Ceta women gathered round when they saw the beauteous lady who had arrived; See! This tender lady is journeying on foot. The noble lady used to travel around in chariots, in palanquins: Today Madd goes into the jungle on foot.” When the people saw Madd and Vessantara and their children, arriving without any protector at all, they went to inform the king. And then the sixty thousand Khattiyas weeping and lamenting came to see Vessantara.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha : In explanation the Teacher told the monks thus: TaM ditvA ceta pAmokkhA rodAmAnA upAgamum kacci nu deva kusalaM kacci deva anAmayaM kacci pita arogote sivInaM ca anAmayaM ko te balaM mahArAja ko nut e rathamaBDalaM : “When they see him, the Ceta chiefs came near with tears. We expect you are well, my lord; we expect you are healthy, my lord. Is your father well and so are the people of the Sivi? Where is your army, great king? Where is your royal chariot? You have journeyed that far without horses and chariot. Were you defeated by the enemies that you have come to this country?”
Atha: Then the Great Being told them why he is coming there thus: 

\[KusalaM ceva me sammA atho sammA anAmayaM atho pita arogo me sivInaM ca anAmayaM ahamhi kuGaraM dajjjaM IsAdantaM uruluhaM khetteyyum sabbayuddhAnaM sabbasetaM gajuttamaM\]  

"I am well, sir, I am healthy, sir. My father is well and so are the Sivi people. I gave away the savior elephant with tusks like poles, experienced in all battlefields, the best of all elephant, to some Brahmans. The rutting crusher of our enemies; covered with its white blanket, tusked, white as Mount KelAsa, with its cowries. Its white umbrella, its cushion, its keeper, its attendants; a noble bearer, a royal mount. That is why, the Sivi people were angry with me, and my father was distressed. So, the king banished me and I will go to the Vamka Mountain. Sir, do you know the place in the jungle where we are going to live?"

Tato: Then the princes replied thus: 

\[SvAgatante mahArAja atho te adurAgataM issarosi anuppatto yaM idhatthi pavedaya\]  

"Welcome, great king, welcome! You have arrived as the lord of all here. Let us know what your wish is, of vegetables, lotus sprouts, honey, meat, rice, raw and cooked. And enjoy it as you will, great king, because you come here as our guest."

TusvA: When the Great Being heard what they had been saying, he replied to the Ceta princes thus: 

\[PaTiggahitaM yaM dinnaM sabbassa agghiyaM kataM avaruddasi maM rAjA vaMkaM gacchAmi pabbataM okAsaM sammA j/AthA vane yattha vasAmhase ti\]  

"I accept what have been given out of your generosity with appreciation. But the king has banished me and I will go to the Vamka Mountain. Sir, do you know a place in the forest where we are going to live?"

The princes spoke thus: "Stay here, O mighty king, in the kingdom of the Ceta, until we go to inform him to win over the mighty king, the doer of the wealthy to the
kingdom of the Sivi. Then the people of Ceta will follow you happily, bringing what is suitable and form your attendants. This I would have you know.”

TaM sutVA: When the Great Being heard this from the sixty thousand princes, he replied them thus: \textit{MA vo ruccittha gamanaM raGGo santika yAcitum nicchApetum mahArAjA mahArAjA rA} \textit{pi kattha nissaro : “Do not go to inform the king, to win the great king, because the king has no power in this affair. The Sivi people, army and townsfolk, are so angry and likely to kill the king because of me.”}

The princes replied: “If that kingdom is holding so terrible things, you can rule this region among the Ceta. This kingdom is prosperous rich with strong people and great. Make a decision, Great king, to rule this kingdom.” The Great Being spoke: “Hear me, sons of the Ceta! I do not wish to stay to rule this kingdom because I am a banished man from the kingdom to go forth. The Sivi people one and all would not be pleased if the Cetas give me a kingdom because I am an exiled man. If you do it, there would be created an unhappy thing to quarrel with the Sivi people because I do not like war. I accept what you have given me out of your generosity. I will go to the Vamka Mountain for I have been banished by the king. Do you know, sir, a place in the forest where we are going to live?”

Thus the king declined many requests for the kingship and those chiefs gave him a great honor. As the Great Being did not wish to enter into the city, they decorated a hall where he was, and preparing a great bed, he was looked after well with tight security all around. He stayed in a hall under their protection for a day and a night. The next morning after breakfast on various fine foods, he left the hall attended by the princes. The sixty thousand nobles went with him for fifteen leagues. Standing at the entrance of the wood, they described the fifteen leagues of the way which remains to go
on thus: *Taggha te maya makkhAma yathApi kusalA tathA rAjisi yattha samanti Ahutaggl samAhitA* : “Truly, we will tell you where the virtuous and the royal ascetics are, who have offered in the sacred fire and where all tranquillity is. That rocky mountain named GandhamAdana, Great king is, where you have to live with your wife and children. With sorrowful faces and weeping, the Ceta directed the road direction, ‘Go straight on from here to the northern, great king. There, most honored, you will see the lovely Mount Vipula with its cool shade, thickly covered by clumps of trees of various kinds. Passing it, sir, you will see Ketumad River which is deep and torrential. There you will see water full of fish like the finny carp where you can drink, bathe and let your children refresh and play. Then you will see, great sir, a noble banyan tree, full of sweet honey, growing upon the pleasant hill. Then you will see, great sir, Mount NAlinka with flocks of many kinds and frequented by fauns. To the north, there is Mucalinda Lake covered with lotuses and white water-lilies. Like a lion looking for meat, which plunges into a thicket, the forest is dense like a cloud, green with grass, full of trees in flowers and trees full of fruits. There, up in the trees flowering in their season, countless birds of various colours answer one another, singing with their lovely chirpings. Passing the difficult terrain of the mountain and the rivers, you will see a lotus lake surrounded by KaraGja and kakudha trees. Its copious waters between accessible banks is thronged with fish like the finny carp. It is regular and square, sweet and fragrant. There build a leaf-hut a little to the north and from the hut, you have to go forth in search of food.”

*Evan te rAjano* : After describing his journey of fifteen leagues, the princes took leave of him. But to prevent any danger that Vessantara might meet on the way he took, they directed an experienced and watchful Ceta at the end of the forest to stop all those going and coming. And then they returned to their own city. *TasminkhaBe* : Then
Vessantara with his wife and children arrived at Mount Gandhamādanā and spent a time there that day. And then they set out facing to the north, they passed by the foot of Mount Vipula and rested on the bank of the river Ketumati to eat the well cooked meat and honey provided by a forester. After eating they presented him a golden needle, and they took a bath and drank. Then with calmness of mind, they crossed the river and rested there for a while at the foot of a banyan tree which stood on the top of the mountain. Having eaten its fruit they left there and reached Mount Nālīṅkā. They went around it and reached the banks of the Lake Mucalinda to its north corner. From there they entered the thick forest by footpath just wide enough for only one at a time. Passing through that, they arrived at the square lotus pond laying at the east of the rivers and hard territory of the mountains.

*Tasmin khaBe sakkassa bhavanaM uBhA kAraM dase ti* : At that moment, Sakka, king of gods, looked down and saw what was happening. Having a thought that at the Great Being’s entering the Himālaya Mountain he should have a place to live in, so he gave order to Vissakamma to go and build a hermitage on a pleasant spot on the mountain of Vamka. *Tattha bhUmmim bhAge* : Vissakamma went and built two hermitages with two covered walks and places to live for night and day. One hermitage was about twenty six feet long standing in the east. This was meant for the Great Being to live and engage his ascetic practices. The other one was about thirty six feet, big and clean standing beside the former on the south. This was meant for Maddī his wife and their two children to live in. Alongside of the covered walks, he planted groves of plantain with many kinds of flowers and made ready all things necessary for hermits. And he wrote, “Should anyone wish to become a hermit, this is for him.” After driving
away the spirits and the wild animals and all harsh-voiced beasts and birds, he returned to his own dwelling.

Tadā : Then the Great Being saw a path and he knew that it leads to the hermitages’ settlements. Leaving Maddī and his two children at the entrance of the hermitage, he himself went in. And he saw the writing and was assured that Sakka had given it to him. He opened the door and entered. There he placed his bow and sword taking off his clothes. He wore a hermit dress and came out of the hut holding a hermit’s walking staff. He walked up and down in the covered walk and then went up to his wife and children with serenity and the quietude mind as if a Pacceka Buddha.

Maddi hAsa tassa pAde patītvA: Maddī fell at his foot in tears.

MahAsatto : And then with him she entered the hermitage, she went to her own hut and wore a hermit dress. After dressing themselves, they dressed the children with hermit clothes. Thus the four noble hermits found a place in the Valley of Vamka Mountain. Tasmin kAle : At that time Maddī asked a boon from the Great Being: “My lord, you are not to go in search of wild fruit. You look after the children and stay here and I will do that.”

Then she brought wild fruit from the jungle and feed all three. Then the Great Being also asked her for a boon, Ito pathAyā: “Maddī from now on, we are ascetics and a woman is a stain on a life of renunciation. In future do not approach me at an unacceptable time”. Maddī consented rightaway.

Puna ca paraM : Due to the power of the Great Being’s compassion, even the animals for three leagues in every direction began to live in harmony with one another. Queen Maddī gets up early in the morning and prepares food and drinks and brings water for cleaning their mouths and provides them tooth-brushes. Maddī sweeps the
hermitage and after that she leaves the two children with their father and she goes into the jungle with a basket, a spade and a hook. Filling her basket with wild fruit and roots, Maddl returns in the evening and places the fruit in her hut. After the children’ taking a bath, the four of them sit at the door of the hut and take the fruit and wild roots. *Atha* : Then Maddl goes into her own hut with the lovely children. *Te cattAro khattiYA* : The four noble members of the family, in this way, lived for seven months in that *HimAlaya* Mountain.

*Vanapave sakABoam nitaM* : This is the end of the section on entering the forest (*Vanapave*) which contains fifty seven stanzas.

Section Sixteen

**Jujauk : The section on the Brahmin**

*Namotassathu* : May homage be to the Buddha.

*TadA kalingarAThe dunnaviTha brAhmaNo bhikkhAcariyAya kahApaNa satAM labhitvA ekasmim brAhmaNa kule thapetvA puna dhanaM pariyesanatthAya gatoti.*

*SAdhavo* : Dear listeners, When the Great Being, as an ascetic was living in the thick jungle of Vanga Mountain keeping his ascetic practices then there lived a demerit Brahmin, from the Brahmin family, who lived in a big city called Baranas. His father’s name was GopA*la and his mother’s is aged Canda and his uncle was Govinda. A child was born to them on Sunday at night on the fourth of July so that he was given a name JUjauk or JUjaka. He lived in a Brahmin village called DunniviTha (Foulstead) in the
kingdom of Kalina. Bhikkha cariyAya-He lived on begging from here and there, far and near in the villages and the cities. So, he had obtained a hundred KahApabas, gold coins. Ekasmim brAhmaBa kule ThapetvA: He left it to a certain family, which has a daughter, named Amitatta, to take care of. Then he went away again for begging more wealth. TasmiM cirayante: As he was away for a long time, as if he were dead, that family spent all that money. When JUjaka came back to take his KahApabas, he found out that they were not able to give it back to him. He insisted them to return it to him again and again shouting, cursing and frightening to kill them if they could not pay him back the next day he would take their daughter with him. Since they could not give him back his KahApabas, they gave him their daughter, Amitatta. So tAM labhitvA: After that he took Amitatta to a Brahmin village called Dunnimitha, in the kingdom of Kalinga and they lived there. The old Brahmin lived happily promising to earn more wealth to look after her. SA: Hearing that Amitatta was pleased and took good care of the old Brahmin, AGGe taruBo brAhmaBA: when other Brahmins saw her dutifulness and excellent conduct, they upbraided their own wives, “See, she looks after that old Brahmin well even though he is old. Why are we neglected?” Te imaM amitattaapannaM: At that time, the wives of the other Brahmins decided to drive Amitatta away from the village because of Amitatta’s living here and looking after the old Brahmin well. So, they were reproached by their husbands that made them gathering together at the riversides and anywhere else to abuse Amitatta.

Nadl udaka hAriya: When Amitatta went to fetch water, the other brahmans’ wives tightening their fists, clenching their teeth, shaking their heads, and some of them making noisy sound and the other staring at her they shouted at her saying angrily that,
“You are so young and beautiful are you not ashamed of yourself to wed an old Brahmin?”

_TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha_: To make it clear, the Teacher explained to the monks thus: _Ahu vAsi kalingesu jUjako nAma brahmaBo tassAsi daharA bhariyA nAmanAmitattApanA_: “Once there lived in Kalinga a Brahmin called JUjaka who had a young wife named AmitattA._ TAan tam tattha gatA vocum_: The other women who had gone to the river to fetch water, surrounded her and abused her terribly with their excitement saying, _AmitattA nUna te mAte_: “Your mother and father are cruel, who gave you to a worn out old man though you are so young. _Ahitam vata te GAti_: Your family makes a bad plan secretly for you by giving you to a worn out old man though you are so young. _Dukkha DaM vate te GAti_: Your family creates a cruel plan secretly for you and gave you to a worn out old man though you are so young. _PApakaM vata te GAti_: Your family makes an evil plan for you secretly and gave you to a worn out old man though you are so young. _AmanApavAsaMvasi_: Your family plans a hardship for you secretly and gave you to a worn out old man though you are so young. You live a hurtful life, being so young and living with a worn out old man, death is better than your life. _AmanApavAsaMvasi_: Your parents surely could not find another husband for you although you are beautiful, they gave you to a worn out old Brahmin, though you are so young. _Duyi ThaM te navamiyaM_: You must have sacrificed wrongly on the ninth lunar day or not attended the fire offering that they have given you to a worn out old man although you are so young. _SumaBe brahmaBe nUna_: You must have reviled ascetics, Brahmins, virtuous or learned man and hermits, so that you are to live with a worn out old man though you are so young. _Na dukkaM ahinA daThaM_: There is no suffering like being bitten by a snake nor suffering like being pierced by a sword. The
suffering of being touched by the old brahmin’s moustache is moreful hurt than being bitten by a poisonous snake, the suffering of the kisses and the breasts cared by the old Brahmin is more hurtful than holding hot charcoals; the hugging of the old Brahmin is more hurtful than being pierced by a sword and suffering indeed to see a worn out old husband. Natthi khiDDanatthi rati: There is no fun with an old Brahmin, no delight, no pleasant talk. His laughter is ugly to see. YAla ca daharo daharA: When young men and young women talk together in private, whatever woes harbor in their hearts melts away. DaharAtvam rUpavati: You are young and comely attractive to men. gaccha Gaikule accha: Go home and stay with your family. What joy does a worn out old man give you?"

SATAsam santikAparibhAsam rabhivA: Suffering from their shootings, cursing and mockery at her, the young beautiful AmitattA was extremely unhappy. She took her water-pot and returned home, full of tears. When the Brahmin heard his wife crying on the way back to her home from the riverside, he was so upset. He asked the causes of her crying, thus: “Dear, did you go to the river early, quarrel with the other women there and were hurt? Or were you bitten by poisonous insects by the riverside? Or did you slip on the way and break any limb? Or did a snake on the wayside bite you? Or did any poisonous insect bite your hand when you were carrying water pot? Or were men trying to disturb you on the way home? Please tell me what is happening?”

Tassa aroceti: Then AmitattA told the old Brahmin, who is good for nothing, thus: Ambho braAhmaBo: Sit here and listen to me, I will tell you that when I went to riverside to fetch water, the Brahmins’ wives, young and old alike, shouted and cursed at me angrily. Then she told him in stanza thus: “Na te brahmaBa gacchAmi nadim udaka
hAriyA thiyo maM paribhA santi tayA jiBBena brAhmaBa : I am not going to fetch water for you, as you are old, O Brahmin, and the women mock me”

The old Brahmin was unhappy when he heard what his wife told him. He insisted his wife tell him who was cursing and shouting at her. In so doing, he described further the group of women, whom he thought to have insulted to his wife in this way: I Kham, the woman who is ugly to see and speaks harsh words; the black fat woman who has no shame of herself and used to fight with a group of men; Sura Brahmin’s daughter who is ugly in every limb and ugly to see; the evil woman who used to carry a bag on her shoulder, wandering in villages because her husband has run away from her and she is still looking for another man; the blind woman, the wife of Surabhl, who is always bitten by her husband; the greedy woman who is much indebted and always teases men; the evil, huge faced woman who has been divorced seven times; the evil woman who became pregnant by the headman of the village when her husband died; the woman who speaks too loudly to be heard; the shopkeeper woman who always uses harsh words; the woman who sells fish using harsh words and her fish is never sold; the red clothed woman who always snaps back and everyone is afraid of encountering her.

JUjaka said: “Do not fetch water for me, do not serve me, I am going to fetch water. Do not be angry my lady.”

The Brahmin girl replied: NAhAMB hi kule jAhAYAM tvam udaka mAhare evaM brAhana jAhAhIna te vacchAhAhM ghare : “I was not born in the kind of family to let you go to fetch water. Brahmin, listen to this. I am not living with you in your house. If you do not bring me a slave, surely I am not going to stay with you”.
Then Brahmin Jūjaka said: 

*Natthi me sippaThānaM vA dhanaM dhaGgaM ca brAhmaBahBi kutohaM dAaM dAsim vA AnayissAni bhotiyAahaM bhotim upaThissaM mA bhoti kupitAahu*: “Dear Brahmin girl, I am quite old and have no ability of doing hard work on the fields to produce corn. I have no education of doing various crafts, such as blacksmiths, artists, and carpenters, writers and traders to earn money. I am only a beggar who ever feed on begging here and there. How can I get a slave for you my lady? I will serve you myself. Do not be angry my lady”

Then the Brahmin girl replied: 

*Ehi te ahamakkhissaM yathAme vacanaM sutaM esa vessantaro rAヴァvanke vasati pabbate*: “Come and sit here, Brahmin, I will tell you what I have heard. King Vessantara lives in the Vamka Mountain. Go there to Vessantara, husband, and ask him for a slave, boy or girl. He will surely give you what you crave.”

*Jūjakopi*: Having heard what the Brahmin girl had said; the old Brahmin Jūjaka was unhappy fearing of departing from his beautiful wife, Amitatā. So, he said:

*JiBBo hamasim dubbalodlgho caddhA sudaggamo mA bhoti paṭdevasi mA ca tvaM vimanaahu ahaM bhotiM upaThissaM mA bhoti kupitAahuti*: “I am old and not strong enough. The road is long and rough. But do not worry, my lady and do not be depressed. Do not be angry my lady. I will serve you myself.”

Then the clever Brahmin girl planned for the old Jūjaka to go there forever and she said: 

*YathA AgantvA sangAmaM Ayuddho va parAjito evameva tuvaM brahme AgantvA va parAjito*: “You are like a soldier who is beaten without fighting, even without marching to the battle, just as what you are like, Brahmin, before you go. 

*Sace me dAsaM dAsim vA nAnayissasi brAhmaBa*: Unless you bring me a slave, girl or boy, Brahmin, I will tell you this; I will not live with you and will go tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. 

*AmanApaM te karisAmi*: I will make you unpleasant things for you and
then you will be painful. *Nakkhatte utupubbesu* : When you see me with fine clothes at the festivals and holidays, enjoying myself with other men, you will be disappointed. Your grief would make your hair much whiter when you no longer see me old man.”

*TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha* : Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke in stanza thus: *Tato so brAhmaBo bhito brAhmaBliyA vasAnugo aTTito K AmaRAgena brAhmaBim eta dabhavi* : Then the Brahmin, frightened and subjected to the Brahmin girl, tormented by his love said to his wife, AmitattA thus: *PAh eyyaM me karohi tvam* : “Get ready what is necessary for my journey, Brahmin girl, make some cakes, sugar cakes and honey cakes, and barely food for me. I will bring a pair of those children to be your slaves who will serve you night and day unwearied.”

When AmitattA heard what the old Brahmin had said, she was very happy and quick preparing the necessary provisions such as cakes, sugar cakes, honey cakes, fish, rice, beef, pork, water pot, a walking stick. She prepared a lot of things for the old Brahmin as she was afraid that he might starve on the way to the thick forest. Having prepared, she informed the Brahmin. The next day, the old Brahmin, fearing of his wife AmitattA's going away from home, he did repair about the weak places in the house and mended the door. He went to the forest to collect firewood and fetched water from the river to fill up the bowls and dishes. Having provided everything for his wife, the old Brahmin put on his ascetic clothes and warned her not to go out at improper times and to take special care until he returned. Then he put on his shoes and hung his bag of provisions from his shoulder. After walking round his wife three times, he went off eyes full of tears.

*TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha* : In explanation to the monks, the Teacher spoke: *IdaM vatvA brAhmaBabandhu paTTi mUGci upAyAAnA tato so mantAyitvAna bhariyam*
katvA padakkhiBaM pakkAmi : “When he had said this the kinsman of Brahmin put on his shoes and after giving his instructions he walked round his wife from the right direction. So, the Brahmin went off, dressing in holiness, with eyes full of tears to the prosperous city of the Sivi on his way to find slaves.” When he came to the city he asked the assembled people, “Where is generous Vessantara?” Explaining this the Teacher said: “When he arrived at that place, he asked the assembled people, “Where is King Vessantara? Where can I see the Prince?” The people who were assembled replied: “The Prince was undone by too much giving to people like you, Brahmin. He has been exiled from his own kingdom and is now living on the Vamka Mountain.

Tumhe brahmaBe : The Prince was undone by giving too much to people like you, Brahmin. He has taken his wife and children and is now living on Vamka Mountain.” Then people were angry and said: “You have ruined our king and yet you have come back again. Just stand here!” They gathered together in every direction. Some with rods and sticks, some with various weapons in hands, they chased him away so that he lost his direction. But divine spirits guided him into the right road for Vamka Mountain.

TamathaM pakAsento satthA Aha : Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: So codito brAhmaBiyA brAhmaBo kAmagiddhimA aghantaM paTisevittha vane vALumigA kiBBe khaggadIpi sevite : “Urged by his wife, greedy for his pleasures he endured hardship in the forest, where fierce wild beasts, rhinoceros and the leopard roamed. AdAya beluvamDandaM : Taking his staff and begging bowl and other water pot, the old Brahmin entered the great forest where he had heard was the granter of desires.

TuM paviThaM brahAraGGaM kokA naM parivArayum vikkandi so vippanaTho dUre panthA apakkami : When he was in the great jungle, wolves surrounded him, crying
out; he strayed far from the path and was lost.” Then that Brahmin, unrestrained in his lusting for enjoyment, lost himself on the way to the Vamka Mountain.

He spoke the stanzas thus: *Ko rAjaputtaM nisabhaM cayanta maparAjitaM bhaye khemassa dAtAraM ko me vessantaraM vidU*: “Who can tell me about royal Vessantara, the Prince all conquering the great mighty king who gives security in time of fear? *Yo yAcatAm paTihAsi*: Who can tell me about the great mighty king Vessantara? He is like the earth, for those he is a refuge for those in need, as the earth is for her creatures. *Yo yAcatAm gati Asi*: He is like the ocean, for those in need go to him, as the rivers flow to the sea. Who can tell me about the great mighty king Vessantara? *KalyAbatittaM sucimam*: He is like a safe and pleasant lake, with fresh and cool water, that is suited to drink. Its surface dotted with lotuses and sprinkled with the pollen from their filaments. Who can tell me about the great mighty king Vessantara? *Assathamva pathe jAtA*: He is like a great fig-tree growing by the road providing the weary with its cool shade, and easing their fatigue. Who can tell me about the great mighty Vessantara? *Ambam iva pathe jAtA*: He is like a lovely mango tree growing by the road, providing the weary with its cool shade, and easing their fatigue. Who can tell me about the great mighty king? *Evamca me vilapato paviThassa brahAvane ahaM jAnanti yo vajjA tAyA so ekavAcAyA pasave puGGaM anappakaM*: Now I have entered this great forest, who can answer to my complaint? I assure you with that one word will generate great merit.

*Ta sataM paridevana sadA sutVA*: Now the Ceta, the hunter who had been left as a guard was walking in the jungle, on his hunting, and heard his mournful cry. He thought, “This Brahmin is shouting to find out where Vessantara lives. He cannot be here for any good purpose. He, no doubt, will ask for Maddl or the children. I am going to kill him right here.”
So, he approached him drawing his bow and threatened him with the words, “Brahmin, I will not let you live!”

TamattaM pakAsento satthA Aha : Explaining to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: Tassa ceto paTissosi araGGe luddako caraM tumhe hi brahme pakato atidAnena khattiyo pabbAjito sakA raThA vamke vasati pabbate : “Walking in the forest the hunter Ceta heard him. The Prince was undone by too much giving to people like you, Brahmin. He has been exiled from his own kingdom and lives on the Vamka Mountain. The Prince was undone by too much giving to people like you, Brahmin. He has taken his wife and children and now is living on the Vamka Mountain. Akicca kArI dummedho: “You are wrong, old stupid Brahmin, to come to this great forest to be dead.” Tassa TayAham nadassAmi jItiiaM : You stupid man, you do wrong coming to the wilderness from his kingdom, looking for the Prince, like a crane looking for a fish in water. So, I will kill you on this very spot with my arrow. When I shoot it will drink your blood. I will split your head and cut out your heart with its strings, and make a sacrifice to the birds of the road with flesh, Brahmin. After cutting out your heart, Brahmin, I will make an offering of your flesh and your fat and your head. It will be a fine sacrifice, a fine offering of your flesh, Brahmin, and you will not be able to take away the wife and children of the King.”

So tassa vacanaM suTvA : When the Brahmin JUjaka heard the words of the Ceta, the hunter, which frightened him to death, he tried to tell lie to escape from it. He said, Avajjho braAhmaBo dUtosa cetaputte suBohi me tasmA hi dUtaM nah anti esa dhammo sanantano : “Listen to me, Ceta, a Brahmin messenger is holy, so no man will kill him, that is the rule of ancient time. The people of Sivi are all repented, his father desires to see him; his mother is not strong enough and she will lose her eye sight soon. Listen to
me, Ceta, I come as their messenger. I am going to take Vessantara back. Tell me, if you know where he is.”

Then the Ceta was pleased to hear that he had indeed come to take Vessantara back home. He tied up his dogs and called the Brahmin to climb down. He made him sit among the branches and he spoke this stanza, *Piyassa me piyo ḍUtō paṢ咕paṭṭaṁ* dadAmi te imaGca madhuno tumbaM miggasatthiGca brAhmaBa taGca te dasa makkhissaM yattha sammati kAmadoti* : “I love the messenger of the Prince and I will give you ample food, leg of deer and pot of honey too. And I will tell you the place where to find the generous giver of the desires lives peacefully.”

*JUjaka pabbam niṬhitam* : This is the end of the section on *JUjaka*, which contains seventy-nine stanzas according to the Buddha’s teaching.

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**Section Seventeen**

*Cullabon* : The section on the small forest

*Namotassatthu* : May homage be to the Buddha.

*Evagcetaputto brAhmaBaM bhojetvA pAtheyyassatthAyA tassa madhono tambaGceva pakkami gasatthiGca datvA brAhmaBamagge thapetvA dakkhiBa hatthaM ukkhipitvA mahAsattassa vasanto kAsaM Acikkhanto Aha* : Listen devotees, about the young hunter who was assigned to look after the entrance to the forest, which the old Brahmin had entered. When he had fed the old Brahmin and provided him a gourd of honey and a roast thigh of deer and various things for his journey, Ceta showed him the
way to the place where the Great Being, Vessantara was living. He said, *Esa selo mahAbrahme pabbato gandhamAdano yattha vessantaro rAjA saha puttehi sammati*: “Sir Brahmin, see there the rocky mountain, called *GandhamAdan* where the king Vessantara lives peacefully with his wife and children. Looking like a Brahmin with the ascetic’s dress with matted hair, and garment of animal skin, with hook and sacrificial ladle, he sleeps on the ground reverencing the sacred fire. *Ete nlla padissanti*: You can see there, Brahmin, the trees with many kinds of fruit, like lofty black mountains with their dusty peaks in the clouds. *Te padUmA*: There bushes, and creepers, Sal and many and other trees, sway in the wind like drunken men for anyone to see, Brahmin. *Upariduma pariyAyesu*: Brahmin, above and around the trees, the flock of birds such *najjuha* birds and cuckoos fly in flocks from tree to tree and sing. *SakuBBA*: Thronging among the branches and foliage, they greet the passer-by, delighting the newcomer, giving pleasure to those who reside there, where the king Vessantara lives peacefully with his wife and children. Looking like a Brahmin, with the ascetic’s dress, matted hair and garment of animal skin with hook and sacrificial ladle, he sleeps on the ground reverencing the sacred fire, Brahmin.”

*Tato uttarampi assamaDaM vanento Aha*: Then the clever hunter Ceta described the hermitage in greater detail thus: *AmbA kavitthA panasA sAlA jumbo vibhitA havItakI AmarakA assathA padarA ni ca*: “Brother, Brahmin, I will narrate these to you to listen. There are mango trees, wood-apples, bread-fruit tree and Sal tree, rose-apples, yellow and Bo, golden tin-took, myrobolan, the banyan trees and jujubes. Plenty of figs growing low, banyans, and *Kapitthanas*; The honeycomb and sweet grapes; one can pluck for oneself as much as one can eat. *AGatha pupphitA ambA*: Brahmin, there are some beautiful mango trees in bloom, others in bud; some of them are ripe, and
others are yet not ripe, they are the colour of a frog. *Athethha haThA puriso*: A man can stand under the trees and pluck ripe mangoes, and both the ripe and unripe fruit is of a wonderful colour, taste and sweet smell. *Ate’va me acchariyaM*: It makes me cry aloud to see the great and wonderful sight that likens the pleasure garden of Nandana Grove where the divine beings dwell. *VibhAdikA nALikerA*: Palmyras and coconut-palms, studded with many coloured flowers as the sky is studded with stars, stand like woven garlands in a dense grove of date-palms, showing above it like the tips of streamers. *Kim sukAvAriyo*: There are *KuTajas*, and *KuTha* and *Tagara* shrubs, blooming trumpet flowers, *punnAga* trees and mountain *punnAgas*, flowering ebony. *UddAla* trees, and *somarukkhas*, and many aloe trees, *putthajIvas*, and *kakudhas*, and flowering asanas. *KuTaja* roots, smelly *salalas*, *asoka* trees, *kosamba*, bread-fruit and *dhava* bushes, and *Sal*-trees are there, covered with flowers like a threshing floor with straw. *TassA vIdUre pokkharaBI*: Not far from there, there is a pond covered with lilies, blue and white, as in the divine pleasure and happy garden, Nandana in *TaVatimsA* heaven. *Attheththa puppha rasamattA*: And there the cuckoos make the hills re-echo as they sing, intoxicated with the liquor of the blooms in the seasonal flowering trees. *Bhassanti makarandehi*: On the lotus leaves, the honey nectar falls drop by drop, and there the wind blows from the south and the west. So, the hermitage is dotted with the pollen from the lotus filaments. *ThUIA sighATakA cettha*: There grow strong water-plants, and two kinds of rice; there are fish and tortoises gliding to and fro; and there are many crabs. *Madhum bhiseti savati*: And from the lotus, drips juice like honey and from the lotus stalks juice like milk and ghee. *Surabhl taM vanaM vAti*: A sweet-scented wind moves in the forest, suffused by many smells, and sheered the forest with the fragrance of flowering branches. Bees are flying around the flowers thronging with their hum.
And there are birds with various kinds of colours, singing out to one another, cheerily with their companions.

_NandikA jIVaputta ca jIVaputta piya ca no putta piya nanda dijA pokkharA BlgharA:_ Brahmin, _Pathama sakUBA:_ the flock of birds that came first is called NandikA birds because they have sweet and soft voices greeting the Great Being with his wife and children cheering them up day and night. _JIVaputta ca dutiya sakUBA:_ The second flock of birds flying to the place where the Great Being lives, they are sitting on the trees nearby and chatting to one another saying, “Dear Lord, may you live long and happily, practicing your ascetic practices and may you look after your children and wife.” That is why that second flock of birds is called JIVaputta. _JIVaputta piya Ajino tatiya sakUBA:_ The third flock of birds, with beauty by birth, which come to settle down on both sides of the PokkharABl pond, wish the Great Being with his wife and children to live long and happily together until the end of life. That is why it is called JIVaputta birds. _PiyAputta piya nanda catuttha sakUBA:_ The fourth flock of birds gathered together on the branches of the trees and wish the Great Being, his wife and children to be free from illness and suffering. That is why it is called PiyaputtA piya nanda Brahmin, all of them come to settle down around the pond PokkharaBl.

_Asamo:_ “Like woven garlands stand, looking like the tops of flags, fragrant with the scented beautiful flowers. _YathA vessantaro rAjA:_ There, Brahmin, where the king Vessantara lives peacefully with his wife and children, dressed like a Brahmin with matted hair and garment of animal skin, with hook and sacrificial ladle, sleeping on the ground reverencing the sacred fire. _EvaGcetaputto yathA vessantaro rAjA vassinaThAne:_ JUjaka was delighted to have description about the place where King Vessantara lived from Ceta and he saluted the Ceta in this stanza: _IdaGca me sattubhattaM madhonA_
paTsamyutaM madhupiBDikA ca sukAyo sattubhattaM dadAmi te : “Dear young hunter Ceta, I will give you this food, cake of mine, together with honey and well made honey cakes.”

TAMSuvA cetaputto Aha : Having heard that, the Ceta replied: Tuyheva sambalaM hotu nAhaM icchAmi sambalaM itopi brahme gaBhAhi kaccha brahme yathA sukhaM : “Keep the food for yourself; I do not want provisions. Take, Brahmin, some from here too, and go where you want comfortably. AyaM ekapadI eti : There is a narrow path which leads straight to the hermitage where the seer Accuta grey with dust and with dirt between his teeth dwells. DhArento : Looking like a Brahmin, with the ascetic’s dress, with matted hair and garment of animal skin with hook and sacrificial ladle, he sleeps on the ground reverencing the sacred fire, Brahmin.” Go there and ask him, Brahmin, he will tell you the way.”

TamattihaM pakAsepto satthA Aha : Explaining this, the Teacher spoke thus: Idam sutvA brahmaBabandhu cetaM katvA padakkhiBam udaggacitto pakkAmi yanAsi accuto isiti : “When he heard this, the old Brahmin walked round Ceta towards the right and went with high spirit in search of the seer Accuta.”

CullavaBBanA niThiTAr : This is the end of the section on the small forest, which contains 35 stanzas.

Section Eighteen

Mahåbon : The section on the great forest
Namotassatthu: May homage be to the Buddha.

Gacchanto so bharadvAjo addasa accutaM isim ditvAna taM bhAradvAjo sammodiisinA saha. Sadhavo: Dear Listeners, BharadvAja, then went along until he saw the seer Accuta and greeted him politely. Kacci nu bhoto kusalaM kacci bhoto anAmayaM kacci uGsena yApesi kacci mUlaphalA bahU: “I hope you are well, sir; I hope you are healthy sir; I hope you are able to live collecting food and there are roots and fruit enough to eat. Kacci DaMsA makasA: I hope there are few gadflies and mosquitoes and I hope creepy crawlies do not bite your feet and swallow you. ValamigA: I hope you encounter no harm in this forest thronged with wild beasts.”

Tapasso: The ascetic replied to the Brahmin, greeting thus: KusalaM ceva me brahme atho brahme anAmayaM atho uGchena yApemi atho mUlaphalA bahU: “I am well, Brahmin; I am healthy, Brahmin; I am able to collect food and there are enough food and fruits to eat. Atho DaMsA makasA ca: There are, Brahmin, few gadflies and mosquitoes and many creepy-crawlies, big and small, they do not bite my feet and swallow me and I encounter no harm in the forest thronged with wild beasts as I have been practicing loving kindness. BahUni vassapUgAni: Brahmin, I have lived here in this hermitage for many years and I have never come across any harmful sickness.”

SvAgatante mahA brahme: Welcome and warm welcome, great Brahmin, come inside and wash your feet, sir. TindukAni piyAtAni: Eat, Brahmin, the best food, honey like fruit, tindukas and piyAlas, madhukas and kAsunAris. Idampi pABlyaM sltaM: Here is cool water fetched from a high mountain cave. Drink it, great Brahmin as you wish.”

JUjako Aha: The old Brahmin replied the ascetic thus: PaDiggahitaM yaM dinnaM sabbassa agghiyaM kataM saGayassa sakaM puttaM sIvIhi vipavAsitaM tamahaM dassana mAgato yadi jAnAsi samsame: “I take what is offered out of your generosity, sir. I come
here to see the son of Sa\textsuperscript{g}\textsubscript{ja}ya, who has been exiled by the Sivi people. Tell me if you know where he lives.”

\textit{T\textsuperscript{A}pa\textsuperscript{s}o}: The ascetic replied the Brahmin thus: \textit{Na bhava\textsuperscript{M} iti pu\textsuperscript{Ga}tha\textsuperscript{M} sivir\textsuperscript{Aj}assa dassana\textsuperscript{M} ma\textsuperscript{G}Ge bhava\textsuperscript{M} patthayati ra\textsuperscript{G}Go bhariya\textsuperscript{M} patibbata\textsuperscript{M} ma\textsuperscript{G}Ge ka\textsuperscript{B}h\textsuperscript{Aj}ina\textsuperscript{M} d\textsuperscript{As}im \textsuperscript{J}\textsuperscript{A}lim d\textsuperscript{As}a\textsuperscript{M} ca kcchas\textsuperscript{i} :} “You honour has no good intention to go to see the king of Sivi. I think your honour desires the kings devoted wife. I think you want K\textsuperscript{a}Bh\textsuperscript{Aj}in\textsuperscript{A} and J\textsuperscript{A}li as slaves. Or you would take the mother with her children away from the forest. The Prince has no wealth here, no enjoyments or grain, Brahmin.”

\textit{T\textsuperscript{a}M sutv\textsuperscript{A}J\textsuperscript{a}ka Aha}: On hearing this \textsuperscript{U}j\textsuperscript{a}ka replied: \textit{Akuddh\textsuperscript{A}r\textsuperscript{U}poh\textsuperscript{A}m bhoto:} “I am not angry with you, sir. I come here not for begging. It is a good thing to see the noble men; it is pleasant to stay by them. \textit{Adi\textsuperscript{Th}a pubbo}: I have never seen the king who has been exiled by the people of Sivi. So, I come to see him. Tell me if you know where lives.

\textit{So tassa vacana\textsuperscript{M} sutv\textsuperscript{A}:} Having heard that, the ascetic Accuta believed him. “Good I will tell you; only stay with me today.” So, he gave him various fruits to eat and the following day, he stretched out his hand to show him the way: \textit{Esa selo mah\textsuperscript{A}brahme pabbato gandham\textsuperscript{Ad}ano yattha vessantaro r\textsuperscript{A}\textsuperscript{J}A saha puttehi. sammati}: See there, great Brahmin, the rocky mountain called Gandham\textsuperscript{Ad}ana, where the king Vessantara lives peacefully with his wife and children. \textit{Dh\textsuperscript{A}rento br\textsuperscript{A}hraBava\textsuperscript{B}Ba\textsuperscript{M}}: Looking like a Brahmin, with the ascetic’s dress, with matted hair and garment of animal skin with hook and sacrificial ladle, he sleeps on the ground and worships the sacred fire, Brahmin. \textit{E\textsuperscript{t}e n\textsuperscript{a}l\textsuperscript{a} padissanti}: You can see there, Brahmin, the trees with many kinds of fruit, like lofty black mountains with their dusty peaks in the clouds. \textit{Te pad\textsuperscript{U}m\textsuperscript{A}}: There bushes, and creepers, Sal and many another trees, sway in the wind like
drunken men for anyone to see, Brahmin.” *Upariduma pariyAyesu* : Brahmin, above and around the trees, the flock of birds such as *najjuha* birds and cuckoos fly in a flock from tree to tree and sing. *Saku BBQ* : Thronging among the branches and foliage, they greet the passer-by, delighting the newcomer, giving pleasure to those who reside there, where the king Vessantara lives peacefully with his children. *Yattha VessantararAjA* : Looking like a Brahmin, with the ascetic’s dress, with matted hair and garment of animal skin with hook and sacrificial ladle, he sleeps on the ground and worships the sacred fire, Brahmin. *KareraimAjA vitaka* : The foliage of the pepper trees is sprinkled in that fair spot. The land is filled with green grass. No dust rises up there. *MayUrarglvasankasa* : The grass rich in colour like a peacock’s neck, soft as cotton to the touch, grows everywhere no higher than four fingers’ height. *AmbA JuBUp kaphithAca* : Mangoes, wood-apples, rose-apples and low ripe figs; that fine forest produces delight with fruit yielding trees. *Veluriya vABA sannibha* : There flowing water about the Himavana Mountain, sweet, clean and fragrant, the colour of lapis lazuli, disported up and down with schools of fish. *TassA vidUre pokkharaBi* : Not far from there, there is a lovely lake covered with white and blue lotuses just like the heavenly Nandana Grove, the Garden of Delight. *TIBi uppalajAAtAni* : There are three kinds of lotuses, Brahmin, in that pond, some are blue, some are white and some are red.” *EvaM caturasa pokkharaBi vanetvA* : After describing the square lotus lake, the ascetic Accuta went on to describe the Lake of Mucalinda thus: *KhemAva tattha padumA setaso ganadhike hi ca kalambakehi saGchanno mucalindo nAma so saro* : There the lilies are like linen and a pond called Mucalinda is full of white and blue lotuses. *Aihettha padumA phullA* : There, you see the full-blown lotus flowers out in number, both in summer and winter;
water is high to the knee. *Surabhi sampawai*nti: A fragrant wind blows bearing with it various flowers and bees are set bustling all around by the flowers’ fragrance.”

\[220\] *MahAvagganani Thita*: End of the section on the great forest, which contains eighty stanzas.

Section Nineteen

*KumArapan*: The section on the children

*Namotassatthu*: May homage be to the Buddha.

\[221\] *JUjakopipaccusata pasena kathita magena gatvayAvacaturassa pokkharaBl*
tiramantvA cintesi. *Sadhavo*: Dear listeners, pay attention to the special description about the KuammmArapan. *JUjako pi*: When JUjaka came to the square lotus pond pointed out to him by the ascetic Accuta, he thought: *Ajja*: “It is too late today, because MaddI will by now have returned from the forest. I will have a rest here. *MAtumo itthyo nAma*: Women are always a hindrance to a beggar. I will go the hermitage tomorrow when MaddI has left for the jungle to collect fruits and beg for the children from Vessantara and set off quickly with them before she returns.” *Athassa*: Then, he climbed a mountain ridge not far from there and slept in a comfortable place. *TaM pannarattim paccusakAle*: That night, at dawn of the next morning, MaddI had a bad dream, and the dream was like this: *Eka puriso*: “A black man wearing two saffron robes and with red garlands adorning his ears came the hermitage, threatening her with a weapon in his hand. He came into the leaf hut and clutched MaddI by the hair and dragged her out and threw her down on the ground. When she shrieked, he dug out her eyes, cut off her arms...
and cut open her breast, took her heart, dripping with blood and set off’. *SapbhUgjītvā*

Maddl woke up, scared and thinking: “I had a bad dream which was quite strange to me. I have only Vessantara here to interpret my dream. So, I will ask him about it.” Then she went to the Great Being’s hut and knocked at the door to wake him up.

*MahAsatto*: The Great Being asked: “Who is it?” “It is I, Maddl, my lord.” she replied. *Badde amhAkaM*: “My lady, why have you broken our agreement and come at an improper time?”

*Deva Maddl*: Maddl answered: “My lord, it is not improper desires which bring me here, but I had a bad strange dream. Please tell me the meaning of that dream.” After she had told him, *MahAsatto*: the Great Being understood the dream and knew that he would fulfil the perfection of giving and that the next day, there would come a beggar to beg for the children from him. He made up his mind to console Maddl to send her away.

So, he said: “Your mind must have been restless because you were lying uncomfortably, or because of indigestion, Maddl. Do not be upset.” So, he consoled her and sent her to go back to sleep. *SavibhAAtAya rattiyA*: In the morning, when she had done all her household tasks, she embraced her children and kissed them and warned them to be careful since she had had a bad dream last night. Then she gave them to the charge of the Great Being, to take care of them. She took her basket and tools, wiping away her tears she went in search of roots and fruits in the forest, which was frequented with wild animals.

*JujaKo*: JujaKā was aware that Maddl must have gone to the forest by then, coming down from the mountain ridge, he went off along the narrow path leading to the hermitage. *MahAsatto*: The Great Being came out of his hermitage and sat down on a stone slab, *SuvaBBa paTImAviya*: like a golden image. He sat there thinking: “The
beggar will come now,” looking at the path by which he would come, like a drunkard eager for a drink, while his children were playing at his feet. So maggaM olokento : Watching the road, the Great Being saw the Brahmin coming and almost visibly taking up the yoke of liberality, which had been laid aside for seven months, he cried in joy: “Brahmin, come then!” and with great happiness, he addressed Prince JAlï in this stanza: UThehi JAlï patiTha porABaM viya dissati brAhmaBaM viya passAmi nandiyo mAbhi kIrareti: “JAlï, arise and stand up! I see a sight from the past. I see a Brahmin coming back again and happiness fills with me.”

TuM sutVA : Hearing this, JAlï replied: AhaM pi Tâta passAmi yo so brAmava dissati attthiko viya AyAti atithI no bhavissatIti: “I too, see a man who looks like a Brahmin, father. He comes like a beggar and he will be our guest.”

VatvACa panna : With these words, JAlï paid him respect and rising from his seat, he went to welcome the Brahmin and offered to take his bags. So brAhmaBo : When the Brahmin saw him he thought: “This must be Prince JAlï, the son of Vessantara. I will speak harshly to him right away.” So, he clapped his fingers at saying: Apehi apehi : Go away, go away! KummAto : Thinking that the Brahmin was terribly rough and wondering what the matter was, the boy looked at his body and noticed eighteen human deformities. BrAhmaBo : But the Brahmin came up to the Great Being and greeted him politely thus: Kacci nu bhoto kusalaM, kacci bhoto anAmayaM, kacci uGChena yApetha, kacci mulaphalA bahU : “I hope you are well, sir; I hope you are healthy sir; I hope you are able to live by collecting food and there are roots and fruit in plenty to eat. Kacci DaMsA makAsA ca : I hope there are few gadflies and mosquitoes and I hope creepy crawlies do not bite your feet and swallow you. VALamiga : I hope you encounter no harm in this forest thronged with wild beasts.”
Bodhisatto : The Great Being replied the Brahmin’s greeting thus: Kusalam ceva me brahme atho brahme anAmayam atho uGchena yApemi atho mUlaphalA bahU : “I am well, Brahmin; I am healthy, Brahmin; I am able to collect food and there is plenty of food and fruits to eat. Atho DamsA makasA ca : There are, Brahmin, few gadflies and mosquitoes and many creepy-crawlies, big and small, they do not bite my feet and swallow me and I encounter no harm in the forest thronged with wild beasts as I have been practicing loving kindness. Satta no mAse vasataM : We have lived a sorrowful life in this forest for seven months, and we have seen you as the first godlike Brahmin with walking stick and sacred fire and water-pot. SvAgataMte mahA brahme : Welcome and warm welcome, great Brahmin, Come inside and wash your feet, sir.” TindukAni piyAtAni : Eat, Brahmin, of the best food, honey like fruit, tindukas and piyAlas, madhukas and kAsunAris. Idampi pAblyam sltaM : Here is cool water fetched from a high mountain cave. Drink it, great Brahmin as you wish”.

VatvAna ca panna : With these words, and realising that the Brahmin would have come here with a purpose, the Great Being asked him right away about his need. So, he spoke this stanza: Atha tvam kena vaBBena kena vA pana hetunA anuppatto brahAragGaM taM me akkhAhi puccha toti : “What reason and what purpose bring you to the great forest? Please tell me these?”

JUjako Aha : JUjaka replied: Y athA vArivaho pUro sabba kAlaM na khlyati evaM taM yAcitA gacchim putte me dehi yAcito ti : “As a full river never runs dry, your generosity is ever great and just as the rivers, ganga, yAmunA, aciravadi, sarabhU and mahl which are the places for beings and living being to depend on, and as you are never tired of giving, I have come here to beg for your two children to be my slaves.”
TaM sutvA: Hearing this, the Great Being was delighted at heart and spoke like one who sets in the outstretched hand a purse of a thousand pieces of money, he cried out, making the mountain resound. DadAmi na vikampAmi issaro naya brAhmaBa pAto gatA raüpatti sAyA ucchato ihiti: “I give, and do not hesitate. Brahmin, take them as their master. But the queen went out in the morning and she will be back from gathering food in the evening. Ekarattim: Stay here for one night, Brahmin, and go in the morning when she will have washed them and anointed them with scent and adorned them with garlands. Then when you go, you will get them hung with many kinds of flowers, anointed with every perfume, and carrying an abundant variety of roots and fruit to eat on the way.”

Jujako: Juja replied: Na vAsamabhi rocAmi, gamanaM meyha ruccati, antarAyopi me assa, gacchaGGeva rathasabha: “I would rather go now for I do not wish to stay. There may be impediments for me on the way. I am going, mighty monarch. Na he’tAyAca yoginAm: Women are not open-handed. They are troublemakers. They know all kinds of cunning spells and they always take things in the wrong way. So, I am going, mighty monarch. DaddhAyA dAnaM dadato: You have made up your mind to give a gift, so do not let me encounter their mother. She would create problems. I am going, mighty lord. “Amaniayassu” : Call your children; do not let them see their mother. Such merit you gain because of giving a gift with resolve is increased. Call your children; do not let them see their mother. Giving a gift to someone like me, mighty lord that makes a man go to heaven.”

Vessantaro: Vessantara replied: Sace tvam nicchase duThum mama bhariyAm patibbataM eyyakassapi dassehi jAli kA BhA jinaM cubho: “If you do not want to see my beautiful and devoted wife, let JAli and KABhA be seen by their grandfather. When he
sees these children with sweet speech, he will be full of joy, pleased and delighted and will give you much wealth.”

Then Jûjaka replied: *acche danassa bhayAmi rAjaputta suBohi me, rAjadaBDAya maM daijA vikkineyya haneyyavA* : “I am afraid of stealing. O Prince, pay me attention. The king may punish me or may slay me or may sell me. Disadvantaged of both wealth and slaves I should be despised by my Brahmin wife.”

Then Vessanatara said: *ime kummAre disvAna maGjuke piyabhABine, damme Thito maharaja, jIVnaM raThavaDDhano laddhA pltisomanassaM bahum dassati te dhanaM* : “When he sees these fair children of sweet speech, the great king of Sivi who always does the right thing for his kingdom, will be very pleased and delighted and will give you wealth in plenty.”

Hearing this, Brahmin Jûjaka answer: *NAhantampi karissAmi, yaM maM tvam anusAsati, dArakeva ahaM nessaM brAhmaBlyA paricArake* : “No, I will not do as you recommend me. I will take the children to be my wife’s servants.”

*Tassa pharUsa vacanaM sutvA* : Hearing these harsh words, the children rushed behind the hut, and then ran away from there to hide in a clump of bushes. Even there they were afraid of Jûjaka coming to drag them out, they ran here and there trembling. They could not stay calm in one place until they reached the square lotus pond where they put their strong bark clothes, and they slipped into the water and stood there concealing themselves in the water with a lotus leaf over their heads.

*SamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha* : In explaining this to the monks who were freed from all kind of defilements, the Teacher of gods and men, who lead beings out of the circle of birth and death, preached thus: *Tato kumara byathitA, sutvA luddassa*
When the children heard what the cruel Brahmin said, they trembled here and there.

When Ujākā could not see the children, he reproached the Bodhisatta and said:

“O Vessantara, you gave me the children just now but when I told you that I would not go to the city of Jetuttara, instead to take them as my wife, Amitattā’s servants, you gave them a signal to run away, while you sit here like an innocent one. There is no bigger liar than you are in the world.” The Great Being was moved to hear this and knew that they must have run away and said: “Do not worry, Brahmin; I will fetch the children.” So, he arose and went behind the hut; and knowing that they must have fled to the great forest; he followed their footprints to the lakeside. When he saw that their footprints leading to the shore of the lake, he knew that they must have gone into the water, standing there by the side of the lake, he called out: “Jāli, my dear,” and spoke these two stanzas:

\[
\text{Ehi tūta piyaputta puretha mama pāramim hadayaM me’bhi siGcitha,}
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\[
\text{rotha vacanaM mama : “Come here my dear son, fulfil my Perfection. Come to}
\]

consecrate my heart and do what I hope. \(\text{YAnanAvA} \): Be my ship to carry me crossing over the circle of birth and I shall cross and will be free and make the world with its gods cross too. Jāli dear! He called out. \(\text{Jāli kumMāro} \): When the boy heard his father’s voice, he thought thus: “Let the Brahmin do with me what he will; I will not quarrel with my father.” He raised his head and having removed the lotus leaves, he climbed out of the water and threw himself upon the Great Being’s right foot; embracing the ankle and wept. Then the Great Being asked him, “Where is your sister, my dear?” He answered, “Father, all creatures take care of themselves in time of danger.” The Great Being realized that the children must have made a bargain together, and so he called out, “Come Kābhā, my dearest!” He spoke two stanzas:
Ehi amma piyadhiti piyA me dA
na para
ma

ha
daya
mama : “Come here my dear daughter, fulfil my Perfection. Come to consecrate my heart and do what I say.” Be my ship to carry me crossing over the circle of birth and I shall cross and will be free and make the world with its gods cross too.” When she heard her father’s voice calling her, she too thought thus: “I will not quarrel with my father” and in a moment, she came out and threw herself on her father’s left foot clasping his ankle wept like the boy did. TesaM asu
Bl : Their tears fell upon the Great Being’s feet, which were the colour of a lotus, his tears fell on their backs, which were the colour of golden slabs. Aiha mahAsatto : Then the Great Being raised his children up and comforted them saying: “My son, JAli, do you not know that giving makes happiness?” “So, help me to attain my aspiration.” and then standing there, he set a price on the children, as one sets a price on cattle with instruction to his son, “Dear JAli, if you wish to become free, you must pay the Brahmin a thousand pieces of gold. Bhagini : But your sister is very lovely and if anyone of low birth were able to buy her to make her free by paying a certain amount to the Brahmin, there would be different rank in the marriage. It is none but a king who is able to give one hundred of everything. Therefore, if your sister wishes to be free, she can pay the Brahmin one hundred male slaves, one hundred female slaves, one hundred elephants, one hundred horses, one hundred bullocks, and one hundred gold coins.” Eva
M-Thus putting a price on his children and comforting them, he took them back the hermitage. Then he took water in a pot and calling the Brahmin to come near, he poured out the water and made an aspiration to attain omniscience. As he poured out the water, he made the earth resound with the words, “Omniscience is one hundred times, one hundred thousand
times more precious than my son!’” and to the Brahmin, he gave this precious gift of his children.

_Tamattha M pakAsento satthA Aha_: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: _Tato kumara AdAya jAlin kaBhAjinaM cubho brAhmaBassa adA dAnaM sivInaM rathavaDDhano ti_ : “Then the foster king of Siva faithfully and gladly gave the children, _JAli and KaBhA_ as the best gift to the Brahmin. _TadAsiyam_: Then there was a terrifying thing, then there was something to make your hair stand on end, as he gave away the children, the earth shook. _TadAsiyam_: Then there was a terrifying thing, then there was something to make your hair stand on end, when the foster king of _Sivi_ raised his folded hands, gave those precious children as a gift to the Brahmin, the earth shook.”

_TadA_: At that time, the earth, two hundred forty thousand yojonas (leagues) in length, was trembling with frightening noises; and the ocean was flooded everywhere. Then the King of gods, Indra while sitting in his heavenly seat at his abode, surveyed the earth and knew that the Great Being was giving children to the Brahmin. He gave his approval by making thousands of showers of rain. _AkAla vijulatA_: “There was untimely lightening everywhere and signs of thunderstorms as if they would take place everywhere; and all sorts of creatures were frightened and trees in the Himalaya Mountain were moving when the Great Being gave his children to the Brahmin. Then the Great Being told this to Brahmin, “Brahmin, it does not mean that I do not love my children and give them to you; I love them more than any other thing, but Enlightenment is more worthy then the lives of _JAli and KaBhA_, so, aiming to obtain enlightenment, I have given them to you.” 36

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36 This marked paragraph has not been mentioned both by PTS and Richard Combrich’s translations.
When the Great Being had given the gift, he was pleased, thinking that he had made a good gift. He stood there watching his children. Jūjaka went into the jungle and biting off a creeper, he tied the boy’s right hand with it and to the girl’s left hand and drove them away. He beat them with the end of the creeper. *TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha:* In explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: *Tato so brahmaBo luddo lataM dantehi sindatiya labAyA yatthe bandhitvA labAyA anumajjatha:* “Then that cruel Brahmin bit off a creeper. He tied Jāli’s right hand with that creeper and KābhA to the left, and he hit the children with it.” *Tato so:* Then, with a walking stick and a rope of creeper in hand, the old Brahmin drove them by beating them in front of their father’s sight.” *TesaM:* Where they were beaten, the skin was cut and the blood ran, and where they were beaten, they pushed each other back to back. *Athetha udakantsmim:* But the Brahmin stepped on an uneven ground and fell. *TesaM kumMaArA naM:* So, the children slipped off the light tie with their soft hands and ran back to the Great Being crying.

*TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha:* Explaining this to the monks, the teacher spoke: *Tato kumMaArA pakkAmmum brahmaBassa pamUGciya assu puBBehi nettehi pitaraM so udikkhati:* “Then the children were free from the Brahmin and they ran off. The boy stared at his father’s face with eyes full of tears. *Vedhavassa jAlInI:* Shaking like a leaf of a fig tree in the wind, the boy embraced his father’s feet and having made his respects, he spoke these words: *AmmA ca tAtA nikkhantA tvam ca no tAtA dassasi yAvA ammampi passemu athano tAtA dassasi:* “Father, mother is out and you are giving us away. Please wait until our mother comes back, and then give us away.” “Father, before our mother going into the jungle in search of fruits and wild roots, she left many cautious words with us; that is not to go into the thick jungle, and to stay near to you
until she returns as she had a dream of a nightmare last night. Then our mother gave a hug to both of us in her breasts and full of tears, she instructed you to take care of both of us. Now why are you giving us away to the Brahmin while our mother is away?”

AmmA ca tAta nikkhA: Father, please wait until our mother comes back. Mother is out in search of fruit and wild roots and has not yet come back. When we have seen our mother and taken much fruits, then give us aways if you will. Aya m brAhmaBo : Let this Brahmin sell us or kill us as his will.”

Api ca kho : This Brahmin has eighteen signs of deformations. balanka pA do : His feet are huge like the feet of an elephant. Andhanakho : His nails are dirty, his flesh hangs slumped down. dIghuttarA Tho : His upper lip is long, dirty with spit and he has a broken nose. ka lAro : His teeth stick out like the teeth of a pig. bhagganAsako : He has a broken back. bagga pitthi : He is pot-bellied, hunch-backed, and visA cakkhu ko : his eyes are crossed. Loha massu : His beard is red like the bears of a brawn; valInA M : his skin is wrinkled and freckled; viko to : his legs tremble when walking. bhahAkharA : He is very tall like a cruel devil; aji Anica : wearing a skin of a tiger; amanusso : he is inhuman and horrible. Koci : Is it a man or a ghoul who feeds on flesh and blood, who has come from the village to the jungle to ask you for us, father? How can you look on as we are taken off by an ogre?” AsmAnu te yadAyAM : “Your heart must be as hard as stone or strongly bound with iron, if you do not care that we have been tied up by a Brahmin greedy for money, excessive and ferocious, who drives us along like cattle. Idheva acchaTM kaBhA : But let KaBhA remain here anyway as she does not understand anything. She cries like a fawn who has wandered from the herd and longs for its mother’s milk.”
EvaM putte  : When the children, JAli and KaBhA, were crying piteously, the Great Being said nothing but sat sadly with eyes full of tears on his face outside the hermitage looking at the children crying. Tato : then the boy, grieving for his parents, spoke thus: Na me idaM tathA dukkhaM labbhA hi pumunA idam yanca ammaM na passAmi taM me dukkhaaraM ito : “This is not so unbearable, for a man can tolerate it, but that I am not going to see my mother again, that is much more painful. This is not so unbearable, for a man can tolerate it, but that I am not going to see my father again, that is much more hurting. SA nuna kapA ammA : My poor mother will cry for a long time when she cannot see her daughter, the beautiful KaBhA. So nUna kapaBo tAto : My poor father will cry for a long time when he cannot see his daughter, the beautiful KaBhA. SA nUna kapA ammA : My poor mother will cry for a long time, until midnight through dawn in the hermitage, and her tears will run dry like a river, when she is not able to see her beautiful daughter, KaBhA. So nUna kapaBo tato : My poor mother will cry for a long time, until midnight through dawn, in the hermitage and his tears will run dry like a river when he cannot see his beautiful daughter. Ime te jambukA rukkhA vedisA sindhuvAritA vividhAni kaBhe : All these different trees, these rose-apples and vedisas and sinduvaras. Today, we go away from these following the Brahmin. AssathA : All these different fruits, these figs and bread-fruits, banyans and kapitthanas. Today we go away from all of these, following the Brahmin. Ime tiThanti arAmA : There are gardens which the king of gods made, and a river with cool water where we used to bathe. Today we go away from all of these, following the Brahmin. VividhA ni pupphajAtAni : All these kinds of flowers growing up on the mountain, that we used to wear, today we go away from all these. VividhA ni phalajAtAni : All these kinds of fruits growing up on the mountain that we used to eat, today, we go away from all these. Ime no hatthikA
Assa These toy elephants, horses and oxen with which we used to play, today we go away from all these.” EvaM vilapantiya: When he wept like this with his sister, the greedy Brahmin, JUjaka, after hanging his bag on a branch of a tree, came quickly and tied them and took them off again beating them.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explaining about the old Brahmin leading the two children through the thick forest, to the monks the Teacher spoke thus:

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\text{NlyamAnA kumMarA te pitaraM etadabravum ammaM arogyaM vajjaSi tvagca taTa sucI bhava} : \text{As they were led away by the big eared Brahmin, the children spoke to their father, “Hope our mother well and may you be happy, father!” They cried following the Brahmin. }\]

HatthikA Aha: “When you give these toys, of elephants, horses and oxen of ours to our mother, it will lessen her grief. Ime no hatthikA assA Aha: When mother sees these toys elephants, horses and oxen of ours, she will be able to control her grief.”

Ata mahAsatto: Then, a great pain arose in the Great Being for his children and his heart grew hot. He trembled violently like an elephant seized by a maned lion, or like the moon caught in the jaws of Eclipse, feeling unable to bear it, he went into the hut, tears streaming from his eyes and cried pitifully.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: Tato vessantaro raJAdAnaM datAna khattiyo paBBasAlaM pavisitvA kalunaM paridevayi ti: “Then the prince of noble birth, Vessantara, having given that gift, went into the hut and wept piteously.” And the Great Being uttered his lamentation in stanzas thus:

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\text{KaM nvajjacchAtA tasitA uparucchanti dArAkA sAyaM sivesanAkAle ko ne dassati bhojanaM} : \text{“When at morning or at eve for food at evening, at bedtime in hunger and thirst, the children will cry: Who will give us food? }\]

KaM nvajjacchAtA tasitA: When at morning or at eve for food at evening, at bedtime in hunger and thirst, the children will
cry: Mother, we are hungry. Give us food. Who is going to give them food like their mother? Who is kind enough to call them to meals like their father?” My beloved children used to go in a nice chariot and were never soiled with dirt but today they are driven by the old Brahmin with their swollen feet. They used to sleep well with their mother inside the hermitage and had no difficulties but today they have to sleep in the jungle on bare ground, on the sand that would itch them and hurt their soft skin as well.

*Katha M katha M*: How will they manage walking along the rough road without shoes and their feet swollen? Who will hold their hands and lead them tenderly so? Who will carry the two children, JAli by the right and KaBhA by the left hand, and saying: “Come dears. *Katha M nu so*: How could he not feel ashamed of himself beating those two innocent children in front of me? That Brahmin is shameless. *Yo pi me dAsi dAsassa*: There were many slaves or other servants when I was king of Sivi, with the idea of shame, but no one treated them so, even the lowest.

Yet the evil Brahmin scolds and beats my dear children in front of me. As I resolved to the perfection of Enlightenment, though I see them beaten and threatened, I stand helpless like a fish caught in a trap.” *Atha mahAsatto*: Then these thoughts came into the Great Being’s mind, through his love for his children. He could not bear the pain of thinking how the evil Brahmin would cruelly beat his children and he resolved to go and chase him and kill him and bring the children back. But a second thought convinced him that this was not possible. Giving a gift and then to repent because the suffering of the children was too great: that was not the way of the righteous. And the two following stanzas contain the reflections, which throw light on that matter. *Adu cApaM gahetvAna*: “No! With my bow and my sword girded on my left side, I will bring my children back for I suffer when they are beaten. *AThA nametaM dukkharUpaM***
It is certainly painful to me that my children are beaten. But, who, knowing what is expected of good men, regrets a gift once it has been made?"

So kira: According to the tradition, that has been practised by the Bodhisatts, the Great Being is aware of giving away, namely, dhana pariAg, giving wealth away, aGga-pariAg, giving away of the very own, jvita-pariAg, giving one’s life away, putta-pariAg, giving one’s own children away and bhAriva-pariAg, giving one’s wife away. These are the greatest donations of all. If a person is not able to give away these five things, he can not become an Enlightened One. AhaM panna: As I have heard, to be in the group of Bodhisattas one has to give away wife and children. If not, one will not able obtain Enlightenment. Having compassion towards his children, the Great Being thought to himself thus: “O, Vessantara, after giving your beloved children away to be the slave of the Brahmin, why do you regret and feel angry to run after the Brahmin and kill him? Why do you regret after giving your children away?” Then the Great Being made up his mind thus: “Let this Brahmin do to the children as his will, whether he wants to kill them or sell them or to make them be his slaves.” Then the Great Being brought his emotions towards his children under control and sat in meditation.

JUjakopi: The Brahmin, JUjaka, however, drove on the children, beating them with the end of the creeper. Then the boy spoke lamenting thus: SaccaM kireva mAhamsu narA ekacciY idha yassa natthi sakA mAtA yatthA natthi tattheva so: “Men indeed speak the truth when they say: “He who does not have his own mother is as good as dead. Sister, KaBhA, we are pleased to stay with our father while our mother, Maddl is away, but our father had not protected us and allowed the cruel man to beat us. He
does not come and take us away when we are crying. He does not look after us when we are bored, nor give us food in hunger and give water to us when thirsty. However, our mother, whenever she comes, she always hugs, strokes our hair and kisses us affectionately. She keeps us happy and entertains us and gives us food when hungry. She is always ready for us whenever we are thirsty and she bathes us and we are well looked after. Our father has no compassion towards us. O dear mother! Where are you?

_Ehi kaBhe_ : Come my lovely sister, _KaBhA_ let us die for life is nothing to us. Our daddy, generous in giving, has given us away to a cruel, greedy and ferocious Brahmin who drives us along like cattle.”

_Ime te JaMbukA rukkhA vediA sindhuVAritA viVidhA nI rukkhajAtAnI tAnI kaBhe jAhAmAse_ : All these different trees, these rose-apples and vedisas and _sindhuvAras_. Today, we go away from these following the Brahmin. _AssatthA panAsA ce’me_ : All these different fruits, these figs and bread-fruits, banyans and kapitthanias. Today we go away from all these, following the Brahmin. _Ime tiThanti arAmA_ : There are gardens which the king of gods made, and a river with cool water where we used to bathe. Today we go away from all these, following the Brahmin. _ViVidhA nI pupphajAtAnI_ : All these kinds of flowers growing on the mountain, that we used to wear, today we go away from all these. _ViVidhA nI phalajAtAnI_ : All these kinds of fruits growing on the mountain that we used to eat, today, we go away from all these. _Ime no haTthiKa AssA_ : These toy elephants, horses and oxen with which we used to play, today we go away from all these. _Punnapi_ : Then the old Brahmin stepped on an uneven patch of ground and fell again and the children got free from the ties. The children, trembling like chickens who have been struck, ran away without stopping, back to their father.
TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explaining this to the monks who have no
defilements, the Enlightened One, the teacher of men and gods, totally free from
defilements, worthy of paying homage spoke thus: *Nīyya manA kumAra te brAhmaBassa*
*pamUcicya tena tena padhAvimsu jAlī kaBhAjInA cubho*: “When they were led away, the
old Brahmin slipped at one place and fell down so that the children, JAlī and KaBhA,
escaped from the Brahmin and ran back to their father crying while the Great Being sat
merely watching.” *JJUjako pi*: JUjaka got up quickly and followed them, the stick and
the creeper in his hand, spitting like a fire at the world’s end, he caught up with them
and, angrily shouting, “You are too clever at running away!” He tied their hands and
took them back.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: the Teacher of men and gods, who puts an end
to all sorts of defilements, explained to the monks thus: *Tato so rajju mAAdAyA*
*dAbDaGcAdAyA brAhmaBo Akotayanto te neti sivi rAjAssa pekkhato*: “Then, holding a
creeper and a stick, the old Brahmin dragged them away beating them while their father,
the Sivi prince watched.” *EvA niyAmAnA*: When they were led away from the
hermitage into the forest, KaBhA turned around to look at her father and cried out to him
that she was going to die in the forest. *Tamattham pakAsento satthA Aha*: the Buddha,
the Enlightened One, told the monks thus: *TaM taM kaBhAjInA’voca ayA mA mA tAtA
brAhmaBo laTiya paTikoTenti ghare jAtA Mva dAsiyA M*: Then KaBhA spoke to him thus:
“Dear father, this ugly Brahmin beats me with a stick and creeper and all my back is
bruised as though I were a slave who had been born in his house. *Na cAyA mA brAhmaBo*: Dear father, this shameless old Brahmin, is not a real one because Brahmins are good
and have kind hearts. This is a demon, disguised as a Brahmin, who is leading us away
to eat us. Why you have no compassion towards us and you just watch as we are driven
away by a demon?" *Daha* *Rَا kummArārikā* : As his little daughter was led away sobbing and trembling, extreme grief arose in the Great Being and his heart grew hot. He breathed through his mouth for he could not breathe through his nose and tears like drops of blood poured from his eyes. Then he thought: “All this pain comes from affection, and no other cause; I must control this affection and be calm.” He put away that grief by the power of his knowledge, and sat down in his usual position.

*Giridvāre asampate* : Kābhā sobbed loudly as she walked, before they even reached the mountain pass: *Ime no pAdakĀ dukkhA, dlgho addhA suduggamo nice co lambate sUriyo, brAhmaBo ca tareti no okandA mase bhUtAni pabbatAni vanAni ca* : “Our feet hurt, the path to go is long and hard; the sun is sinking low, and the Brahmin drives us on and on.” We call out to the spirits of the mountains and of the forest; we bow our heads to the spirits of the lake and the accessible rivers and all. Grass and creepers, plants, mountains and woods, please wish our mother well and healthy. This Brahmin is taking us away. On the other hand, tell our mother that we left in the early morning and we are hungry and our feet are hurting and swollen and that he beats our backs with a creeper and a stick. Please sir, tell our mother, Maddī that if she wishes to follow us, let not make her delay”.

*AyaM ekapadī eti, ucum gacchi assamaM, tame vA nupateyyAsi, api passesi ne lahum* : “This narrow path, which leads toward the hermitage. If she follows it she will not miss us. After gathering fruit and roots from the forest, and seeing the hermitage empty, lady ascetic, you will be so remorseful. *AtivelaM nu ammAya* : Our mother went into the thick forest to search of fruit and roots that delays her and makes her late and she does not know that a greedy, excessive and ferocious Brahmin tied us up with creepers and drives us along like cattle. *TAta JAlī* : Dear brother, JĀli, should we see our
mother today, back from her search of gathering fruit and roots in the evening, she
would give the Brahmin fruit mixed with honey. Then, after his sweet meal, he would
not make us rush speedy. *SuBA ca vatano pAdA* : our feet are hurt and swollen, the
Brahmin is speedy us so much. He cruelly beats us with a creeper and a stick along the
way, and it is indeed to hard, dear brother.” *Iti tattha vilapimsu, kumara mAhu giddhino ti* : When the two lovely children, JÄi and KBhA, were led by the old Brahmin into the
great forest, they cried all a long the way as they longed to see their mother.

*KumMara pabbaM niThitaM* : This is the end of the description on KumMaraPan,
the section of King Vessantara gives away his two children to the old Brahmin, which
has one hundred stanzas.

Section Twenty

*Maddl* : The section on Maddl

*Namotassatthu* : May homage be to the Buddha.

*YaM pana tAM raGGaM mahApathavI uBBAdetvA braHmaBssa piyaputtesu dinnesu
yAva brohma lokA eka kolaharaM jAtuM ahosi* . *SAdhavo* : Dear listeners, pay attention to
the special description about Maddl. When the king gave away his dearly beloved
children to the old Brahmin, in order to gain the Enlightenment, the earth made a great
uproar that reached even to Brahma’s heaven. *Te pi nA bhijItA yadayA* : Then those
spirits who live on Mount Himavat, their hearts breaking on hearing the lamentation of
the children as they were driven by the Brahmin, spoke to one another thus: “If the
princesses, Maddl comes back to the hermitage early and when she dose not see the children, she will ask Vessantara and find out that they have been given away to the old Brahmin. She loves them so much that she will run after them and will fall into danger”. So they instructed some divine beings in shape of a lion, a tiger, and a leopard to obstruct Maddl’s way not to let her pass until sunset so that she might get back by moonlight. In this way they were protecting her from the attacks of lions and other wild beasts.

_Tamathāṁ pakasento sattha Aha_: Explaining this to the monks, the Enlightened One, the Teacher of men and gods, spoke thus: _Tasaṁ ālappitāṁ sutvā tayo vālā vane migā śīho byaggho ca dīpi ca idāṁ vacana mabhavum_: “Hearing the children’ cries, three wild animals in the forest, a lion, a tiger and a leopard, spoke thus: _Māheva no_: “Let not the princesses, Maddl return from gathering food this evening but let no wild beasts in the forest in our territory harass her. _Migā_: If the wild beast, Siho: a lion or a tiger or a leopard were to attack the beautiful lady, Prince Jāli will die and so will KaBhā; _ubhayeneva jlyetha_: then the princesses would lose both her husband and her two children.”

_Atha te tayo devaputto_: Then three deities agreed to carry out the instructions of the god. They took the form of a lion, a tiger and a leopard. They went and laid down by the side of the road along which she would come. _Athā_: Then Maddl was thinking thus: “Last night I had a bad dream, so, I will collect fruit and roots and go back to the hermitage in good time.” Trembling she searched for the fruits and roots. But her spade fell from her hand, the basket slipped from her shoulder, and her right eye throbbed and left eye saw no clear sight. And trees bearing fruit seemed bare and bare trees seemed to be bearing fruit and she did not know the directions, which one was the east, the west,
the north and the south. She completely lost her bearings. She thought: “What is happening today? This is strange; it has never been like this before.” “What is happening to my children and my beloved husband?”

Having thought thus, she spoke: *K acabitikaM me patitaM dakkhiBkkhl ca phandati aphalA phalino rukkhA sabbA muyhanti me disA* : “My spade falls from my hand, my right eye throbs and my left eye is unclear. Trees bearing fruits are bare, *SabbadisA* : and I lost all direction.” *TassA sAyabha kAlasmim* : When she returned to the hermitage in the evening, the Sun had set and wild beasts stood in her way. It was hard indeed for her to find her way. *YaGca mUlaphalaM* : “The hermitage is far away, and the Sun hangs low in the sky. And what they have to eat is the fruit and roots I am bringing here for them. My prince is sitting alone in the hermitage and tries to cheer up the hungry children when he does not see me returning.”

*Te nUha puttakA meyhaM* : In the evening, my children will be like babies thirsty for milk. My children are waiting for me. *Te nUha puttakA meyhaM* : They come to meet me like young calves running to their mother. How wretched and miserable I am. *Te nUha puttakA meyhaM* : In the evening, my children will be like people who are thirsty for water. How wretched and miserable I am. *Te nUha puttakA meyhaM* : They come to meet me when I am near the hermitage. How wretched and miserable I am. *EkAyano ekakapatho* : There is only one way, one path with ponds and pits around. And I can see no other road which leads to the hermitage. *MigAnamatthu rAiano kAnanasmin mahabbalA dhammena bhAtaro hota, maggaM me detha yaCita* : O wild animals, the powerful kings of the forest, I worship you. You are my brother in righteousness. I request you to let me go on my way to see my husband and children. *AvaruddhassAhaM bhaRiyA* : I am the wife of exiled and glorious prince Vessantara who stayed in this forest leading the life of an ascetic. I will
never desert him, just as the loyal Sita never deserted Rama. *Tumhe ca putte passatha*: You can see your children at evening time. So, give me my way. I hope to see my children, JAli and Kabha. *Bahum cidaM mUlapalaM*: There are plenty of fruit and roots here to eat. I will give you now half of it. I request you to let me go on my own way. *RAja putl ca no mAte*: My mother is a princess and my father is a prince. You are my brothers in righteousness, so, I request you to let me go on my own way”. *Atha te tayo devaputtoo*: Then the three gods realized that it was time for her to go and rose up and went off.

*TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha*: Explaining this to the monks who have no defilements, the Teacher spoke this stanza: *TassA jAAlappamA nAya bahum kAruGa saGhitaM sutvA nelapatim vAcaM vALA panthA apakkamum*: “Hearing Princess, Madd’s gentle, sweet and sorrowful words, the animals were full of compassion toward her. They let her to go on her own way.”

*TadA ca pana uposatho*: When the animals had gone, she returned to the hermitage. Now it was the night of full moon. However, when she came to the end of the covered walk, she could not see the children in the places where she used to see them. So, she cried speaking thus: *Imamhi naM padesamhi puttaKA pamsukuBitA paccuggatA mAAM tilhahtA vacchA bAI Ava mAatarA*: “This is the place where the children used to come to see me covered with dirt, like baby calves running to their mother cow. *Imamhi naM padesamhi puttaKA*: This is the place where the children used to come to see me covered with dirt, like young geese see their mother, flying over a lake. *Te migA viya okkaBBA*: Like little deer with their ears pricked up, with joy and happiness, jumping and rushing about in every direction, they used to see me. But today, I cannot see the children JAli and Kabha. *Chakalimva migim cchApA*: I left the children behind,
like a nanny-goat leaves her kids, like a bird freed away from its cage. I went out bravely like a lion look for meat, but today I cannot see the children, JAali and KAabhA.

*IdaM nesaM padakkantan*: Here are their traces, like the track of an elephant on a hill and castles made of sand scattered around the hermitage. But today I cannot see the children, JAali and KAbhA. *VALukAyapi okiBBA*: All covered with sand and dirty hands, the children used to rush around here in all directions, but I cannot see either of them today.”

*Ye maM pure paccudenti*: They have always come out to meet me when I returned from the distant forest, but today I cannot see the children JAali and KAbhA.

*IdaM nesaM klanakaM*: Here are their playing toys they have dropped and a yellow vilva fruit, but today, I cannot see the children JAali and KAbhA. *ThanAca mayhime pulA*: My breasts are full of milk, and my heart bursts. But today, I cannot see the children JAali and KAbhA.

*Ucchange ko vicinAti*: JAali used to sit on my lap choosing fruits, KAbhA hangs from my breast. But today, I cannot see the children JAali and KAbhA.

*Yassu sAyabha samayaM*: At evening time, they used to play on my lap but today I cannot see the children JAali and KAbhA.

*Ayam so assamo pubbe*: Once this hermitage became our meeting ground but today it seems to be the spinning ground when I cannot see my children.

*KimidaM appasaddo va assamo*: Why is the hermitage so quiet today? *KAkolA pi na vassanti*: Even the crows are not cawing. My children must be dead! *KimidaM appasaddo va assamo*: Why is the hermitage so quiet today? Even the very birds make no sound. My children must be dead!”

*Iti vilapantiyA mahAsatassa santikaM*: Lamenting in this way, she came up to the Great Being and placed her basket of fruit. When she saw him sitting in silence and no children with him, she spoke thus: *KimidaM tuBhi bhUtosi api ratteva me mano sakuBApi vassanti matA me nUna dArakA*: “Why are you silent? I feel that I am dreaming
again. Even the birds are not singing. My children must have been slain! 

*Kimi*: Why are you silent? I feel that I am dreaming again. Even the crows make no cawing. My children must have been slain! 

*Kacci nu me eyyaputta*: Noble sir, you have been looking after the children at the hermitage, cannot you see that wild beasts have eaten them or has someone led them away in the deep forest? 

*Adu te pahitA dutA*: Have you sent the children off with a message to their grand parents or are they sleeping? Or have they wandered out far away, to play their games? Please, I beg you to tell me. 

*NevAsaM kesA dissanta*: I cannot see KABhA’s hands and feet nor JAli’ hair or his hands or feet. Did a bird swoop down? Or who has carried them away?

*EvaM puttepi*: Though princess Maddl was lamenting in this way, the Great Being made no reply. 

*Atha*: Then she asked thus: “Lord, why do you not speak to me? What have I done wrong? And she spoke thus: 

*IdaM tato dukkhatara sallaviddho yatha vaBo tayyajja putte na passAmi jAli kABhAjinaM cubho*: “This is indeed the worst pain. Like a poisoned arrow has struck my heart, because I cannot see my children JAli and KABhA. 

*Idam pi dutiyaM sallaM*: This is a second poisoned arrow that struck my heart as I cannot see my children and you do not speak to me. 

*Ajja ce me imaM rattim*: If you do not explain me tonight, O prince, in the morning, you will certainly see my death after all life has gone”.

*Atha*: Since Maddl loved her children very much, the Great Being thought to ease up her pain for the children by harsh words, he spoke thus: 

*NUna maddl varArohA rAjaputti yasassIBI pAto gatAsi uGAcchAya, kimidaM sAyA mAgatA*: “Maddl, famous royal princess blessed with beauty, you went out this morning into the forest to collect food. Why have you come back so late this evening?” He further said that: “Maddl, you are so beautiful and eye-catching, in the forests, there live a lot of people like ascetics and
magicians. Who knows what you have been doing in the forest and in the caves. You went to the forest early, why do you come back late? Married women do not behave like this; leaving children and going into the forest. You had better ask yourself what was happening to your children or what your husband would think. But you left in the morning and came back in the evening and are lamenting now.  

ManussA sibirait: Old women, they live with their sons and daughters or their nieces and nephews and even a widow lives alone, never journeying at night like you. 

MaGe: As I learnt from the ancient saying: leaves a forest because it has no caves; a fish swims from one pond, as it has no good shelter; a pupil leaves from his teacher due to lack of ability to teach; a bird flies to another tree to seek a better shelter; an elephant moves to another forest which it lacks of branches and leaves for it to live on. 

MaGe: I think that you do not love your husband and children, leaving the three of us in hunger, you went into the forest in the morning alone and return only at night. This is your fault. I am the Sivi king, who is able to order people to kill you in the city of Jetutattara, with the announcement to the people to see the woman who betrayed her husband like you.”

SA tassa vacanaM sutvA: Hearing his harsh words MaddI said thus: 

Namu tvim sadda massosi ye saram pAtu mAgatA sithassapi nadantassa byagghassa ca ni kujjitaM : “Did you hear the noise of the lion roaring and the howl of the tiger who came to the lake to drink water? 

Ahu pubba nimittaM me: There came a time for me when I knew nowhere in the forest, my spade fell from my hand, and my basket slipped from my shoulder. Then, trembling and so afraid, I worshiped every direction. I prayed to each direction that there might be security there. 

MAhe va no rAjaputto: And let not the prince be killed by a lion or a leopard. Let not my children be seized by bear or wolf or hyena. 

Tayo vAlu: A lion, a tiger and a leopard, these three animals blocked my path so
that I have come home so late. Why do you say that I betrayed you by enjoying with men in the forest, neglecting you and the children?” *Atha*: Then, having spoken to her, the Great Being spoke no words till before sunrise.

*Tato pathAyA*: Then, MaddI continued her great lamentations thus: *AhaM patiGca putte ca Aceramiva mABavo anuThitA divArattiM jathinl brahma cArinl*: “As a young pupil looks after his teacher day and night, I look after you and the children by living the pure life of an ascetic with matted hair. *AjinA* paridahitvA*: Putting on the ascetic antelope skin, sleeping on bare earth, cleaning the hermitage in the early morning, taking a spade and basket and going to the forest day and night to collect wild food is my love for you and my children. *Idam suvABBa harindaM*: I brought you the golden turmeric for you to play, the yellow vilva fruit and many ripe fruits from the forest. *Idam mULAli vattakaM*: Eat with your children, prince, this lotus bulb and stalk, and these roots from the lily and water plants, all mixed with honey. *PadumA jAlino dehi*: Give JAli the red lotus and the white to your daughter, K aBhA. Watch them dancing in their beautiful garlands. Call your children out, O king of Sivi. *Tato kaBhAjinAyapi*: Then, listen the sweet voice of K aBhA as she approaches the hermitage. *SamasukhadukkhA’mhA*: Sharing the same joys and sorrows, we both went into exile from the kingdom of Sivi to stay in the forest and live on wild fruit and roots. Are you not showing me my children, J Al i and K aBhA? *SamaBe brahmaBe nUna*: I must have committed sins against wandering ascetics, Brahmins, virtuous and learned men somewhere in the world, because today I cannot see my children, J Al i and K aBhA. *EvaM viya pamAnAya saddhiM mahAsatto kiGci nathesi*: The Great Being did not reply to her crying. *TasmIM nakathante*: When the Great Being was silent, she went out crying by the help of the moon light to look for her children in the places where they used to play,
among the rose apples, to the forest caves, to the riversides, and there lamenting she said thus: *Ime te jaMbhA rukkhA devisA sinduvArikA vividhAni rukkhajAtAni te kumara na dissare*: Here are all these different trees, the rose apples and veidas and sinduvaras, where children used to play with, but I cannot see them today. *Ime tiThanti ArAmA*: Here in this garden, there is the river with cool water where they used to play. But today I cannot see my children. *VividhAni pupphajAtAni asmiM uparipabbate yAnassu pubbe dhAriMsu tekumArA na disare*: Here are different flowers growing up on the hill, which they used wear but today I cannot see my children. *VividhAni phalajAtAni*: these different fruits, figs and bread fruits, banyan and kapitthanas, but I cannot see my children. *Ime no hatthikA assA*: Here are the elephant and horse toys and these oxen of theirs with which they used to play, but today I cannot see my children. *Ime sAma sasolUkA bahukA kadallmigA yehi’ssu pubbe kliMsu, te kummArA na disare*: Here are the dark hares, and owls, and lots of antelopes with which they used to play, but today I cannot see my children.

*Ime haMsA ca koGCaca*: Here are the swans and herons, and the peacocks with their various coloured feathers which they used to play with, but today I cannot see my children. *SA assam pade piye putte aditvA*: When she could not see her beloved children in the hermitage, she went out into the deep forest and looked for them here and there so, she said thus: *ImA tA vanagumbAyo pupphitA sabbakAlikA yatthassu pubbe kliMsu te kumara na dissare*: Here are the thickets which are always flowering, where they used to play but today I cannot see my children. *ImA tA pokkharaBl rammA*: Here are the lovely lotus lakes covered with mandAlaka, lotus and palaka plants, with the cries of the ruddy geese, where they used to play, but today I cannot see my children.” As she was looking for her children everywhere again and again, but could not see them, she
returned to the Great Being who sat sadly without looking at her. Then she said thus:

*Nate kaThAni bhinnAni nate udakamAhadaM aggipi tena hAsito kinnu mandova chA\text{\textasi}*

“You have not chopped the fire wood. You have not brought water. You have not lighted the fire. Why are you brooding and doing nothing? *Piyo piyena sangamma* :

When we meet together even my tiredness disappears but today if I cannot see my children J\text{\textA}li and K\text{\textA}h\text{\textA}, I will die.”

*Ev\text{\textA}M putte pi mahAsatto tuBhi bhUtosi nIsIdi* : When she did lament and questioned him about her two children, the Great Being sat keeping silent to her words.

*SA\text{\textAs}miM na kathento* : When he did not speak to her, she was overcome with grief and trembling like a hen which has been struck, she searched the children at the places repeatedly like in the thick forest, at the river sides, in the caves and even at the bottom of the cliff. Then she came back to the Great Being and spoke thus: *Na kho no deva passAmi yena te nIyatA mata kAkopi na vassanti matA menUna d\text{\textArakA}* : “I cannot see where they are lying dead, my Lord. Even the crows are not cawing. I have no doubt that my children must have been slain. *Na kho deva passAmi* : I worship you, my Lord, where you let my children die, which animal bravely killed my children to eat. I have been looking for them everywhere, in the forest, under the trees, at the riversides and even in the caves but I cannot see them. My children must have been slain. *SakUBA* : Even various blocks of birds are not singing to cheer up their children. My children must have been slain.”

*Ev\text{\textA}M putte pi mahAsatto kiGci na kathesi* : Even to all these words, the Great Being made no reply. Then she was so sorrowful that made her only think of her children she went back quickly to the forest at the same places where she had been for the third time. Throughout the night she looked for them in the places they used to play
to a distance of fifteen leagues. The night sky grew light, and as the sun rose, she came back and stood before the Great Being. She lamented.

*TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha*: Explaining how much she loved her children to the monks, the Teacher of men and gods spoke thus: *SA tattha paridevitvA pabbatAni vanAni ca punadevassamaM gantvA sAmika santike rodi*: “When she had finished searching everywhere, in the hills and the woods thoroughly, she returned to the hermitage and cried before her husband: *Na kho no deva passAmi yena te nIhatA matA kAkolApi na vassanti matA me nUna dArakA*: I cannot see where they are lying dead, my Lord. Even the crows are not cawing. I have no doubt that my children must have been slain. *Na kho deva passAmi*: I worship you, my Lord, where you let my children die, which animal bravely killed my children to eat. I have been looking for them everywhere, in the forest, under the trees, at the riversides and even in the caves but I cannot see them. My children must have been slain.”

*Iti maddI varArohA rAjaputtI yasassinI bA hA pageyha kanditvA tatheva patitA chamAti*:

So, when the beautiful, famous, attractive, princess Maddl, the daughter of the King of the MaddarAt country, could not see her children anywhere from the search, she worshiped the Great Being stretching out her hands to his feet; gave a cry, and fell down on the ground on that very place. *Attha mahAkatto*: Then, thinking that she was dead, the Great Being was very sorrowful indeed with the idea that Maddl died in a remote place where there were no people at all. Should she have died in the city of Jetuttara there would have been a state funeral by the kingdom. He thought that he was alone in the forest: what should he do? Then being worried about her, he arose to find out how she was. When he put his hand on her heart, he felt warmth. He raised her head and placed
it on his lap with eyes full of tears and sprinkled her with the water saying, “Please get up, dear; come back to me; it is not a place for you to come and die here in this forest. Come back to me and don’t stay in the deep forest. Let your consciousness not remain in the forest and with tigers; let not your consciousness be with cruel wild oxen; let your consciousness not be wandering; let not your consciousness be not far away in the forest; *durato* : let not your consciousness remain in a faraway thick forest; let not your consciousness remain in the caves crying; *Agato*: let your consciousness not remain with demon and spirits; let your consciousness not remain in the palm forest; let your consciousness not remain in the Himalaya mountain; let your consciousness not remain. Please get up; please come back. Let your consciousness not wander in the Himalaya mountain and come back quickly; let your consciousness not be a bee or an insect; let your consciousness not cry in the forest; let your consciousness not be an elephant to eat young bamboo. Let your consciousness come back to you, wherever you are. Here in the thick forest, why do you leave me alone? Today you die in this forest and I have no one to help me. Who will help me to cut firewood? Who will come to lift your head and wash your face? Who will come to bath you and comb your hair? Who will beautify you with beautiful earrings and prepare a place? Who will lament for you here? If you were dead in the city, the relatives, fathers and mothers, subjects and all from the two cities, Jetuttara and Maddarāj, would mourn and lament for you. They would make a golden coffin for you with different kinds of precious jewel. I would ask people from the two countries to build a big pavilion as a state funeral with decoration pictures such as deer, various kinds of birds, dragons, horses and elephants, tigers and lion, group of young men and women, beautiful clear sky, creepers, white lotuses. With a big pile of red sandalwood, at the door of colourful pavilion, I would draw pictures of divine
beings standing and holding flowers in hands. I will ask people to hold scented flowers; some of them to hold umbrellas; and some of them would hold beautiful feather of peacocks at your funeral my dear. And I would make it a happy occasion with people enjoying themselves, dancing and beating drums, with various kinds of music. I would ask some of them to clap their hands, some of them to play different kinds of games. I would make fire rockets to shoot at the top. In the west, I would make pictures of men holding fire on the back of elephants; in the north, I would ask them to make a picture of a divine king and queen ridding on horse back just as to go upwards into the sky with no certain direction. When the pavilion catches fire, the horse will descend and then divine females will run up so that there will be fire everywhere. And in the east, I would ask them to make pictures of birds of fire like peacocks dancing and coming down from the top as if stars were shining in the sky. Then I would enjoy looking at the beautiful flame. If you had died in the city, I would ask people to make arrangement like I have mentioned. This would be called a state funeral for you, dear. But today, if you die in the thick forest, I can find no one to come here. I cannot leave you here nor can do anything except cry. This is your destiny of dying in the forest. Dear, why do you leave me here? I don’t mean that I hate you and let you die in this forest. I cannot live without you as my heart is burning like fire. When our father, the king of Sanjai comes and takes us back to the city and then when I don’t see you, I will lament and suffer a lot without you to the city and when I don’t see you, I will lament and suffer immensely without you. There are various kinds of sufferings in this world but none hurts like being away from you.

_BahujanA:_ When people do not see you and your children, they will ask where you and your children have been. Then I will lower my face down, replying sadly that
you are dead, you are dead. Please dear come back to me and look after our hermitage. Come back and talk to me and dress your colourful clothes made of antelope skin and talk to me with your sweet voice. Please come back and do not leave me alone, mourning.

Get up my dear; get up my lovely; please get up and come back; come back to your children, JAli and KābhA; get up beautiful lady with your golden cheeks. Come back and talk to me as I have been mourning for a long time. Get up and change your clothes and comb your hair with a knot. Come back to me. I do not hate you. Even in the whole country of India I do not think that I am able to find a beautiful and precious lady like you. No one can compare with you in this world. Do come back and talk to me. I never forget sorrow. Do come back and talk to me with your lovely voice. Let your consciousness come back, wherever it is; let your consciousness not be conceived in any womb of a woman; come back to me my heart. Let your consciousness stay nowhere; if it is in the forest and in the caves or in the river, please return quickly. If your consciousness is being a bee or an insect, tasting the honey of flowers or being reborn in the heavenly abode, do return to me soon; if your consciousness is being reborn in the lower world like dragons, do not forget to come back to me dear; let your consciousness not stay in the forest nor in the caves of the mountains; let your consciousness not remain with fish and tortoises in the river; let your consciousness not stay in the hole of a stony mountain; let your consciousness not stay with cattle or elephant; do return to ease up your grief and be cheerful. Do return to the place where you are now and enjoy your life with me and do not die before me, dear. My dear! Even if your consciousness draws in water, I will save it; even if your consciousness is in the earth deep about seven steps, I will dig it up to save it. The Great Being spoke
like this, continually asking her to be conscious again with tears on his face. “Oh! I am alone, sorrowful indeed,” spoke he. Though the Great Being was sorrowful indeed, he could calm himself down with awareness and, sitting there, spoke, “My special lovely Maddl dies as she does not want to stay but I have to make sure that she is dead.” Thinking thus, the Great Being put his right hand on her breath. Then he felt the warmth of her heart. He got a pot of water and splashed it on her face and watched her. When the Great Being splashed water on her face, she regained her consciousness due to the power of merit of his meditation which he had been practicing about seven months in the forest as ascetic without touching Maddl once.

\[ Paṭṭi \ pako \ thokaM \ kaḷaM \ vitināmetvā \ dāraka \ kuhiM \ gataM \ : \] After a little while Maddl regained consciousness and rose, and modestly she asking him thus: “Lord, where have the children gone? I have not seen them.” \[ Mahāsato \ pi \ : \] The Great Being replied thus: “My lady, Maddl, I have given them to an old Brahmin as slaves and he has led them off”.

\[ TamatthaM \ pakAsento \ satthA \ Aha \ : \] In order to explain about Maddl who was looking for children in the great forest to the listeners, the Teacher spoke thus: \[ Tayyajja \ pattaM \ rājaputtiM \ udakena \ bhisciṣṭha \ assatthanān \ vidviṣaṇa \ athanaM \ eta \ dabravi \ : \] “When the princess had fallen near him, he sprinkled water on her face with his hand touching her breasts, then she regained consciousness and asked “Lord, where have you kept the children, I have not seen them anywhere in the hermitage.” \[ Atha \ : \] At that time, the Great Being replied her thus: “My lady, when you were away, an old Brahmin came and I have given them to him as slaves in his house”. Then, the Lady asked, “When I asked you, why have you kept silent and let me wander around weeping all night?”
Then the Great Being replied her thus: *Adi yeneva te maddi dukkhā makkhā tumicchisam daliddo yacako vuddho brahmaṇo ghar agato* : “At first, my lady, Maddl I did not want to tell the sad news when you returned from the forest. There was a needy old, poor Brahmin who has nothing and suffering from poverty, came to the forest regardless of hardship along the way to our place, and because I hope to obtain the Enlightenment, though I love our children, I have given them to an old Brahmin as his slaves. He had led them away when you were not here. So, you have no time to hug and kiss them, nor do you have time take them on your tight and take care of them. Do not worry and grieve too much, Maddl. We are ascetics and we are alive and healthy, we shall see our children one day”. When a good man beholds people coming to beg, he would give his possession like, grain or cattle, valuable belongings what were available in the house, even his own children as a gift to them. Be happy with me, Maddl, because the children are the very best gift. *Maddi pi kho* : When the attractive Maddl heard what the Great Being had told her about the donation of the children to the Brahmin for the obtaining of the Enlightenment, she was pleased with him and replied in stanza thus: *Anumodami te deva puttane dānāmattamaṃ data cittam pasadehi bhīyyo dānām dado bhava* : “My lord, I am pleased with you, you have given the children away, as they are the best gift. Please keep your mind calm and do more gifts. *Yo tvum macchera bhūkesu*: O great king, among men who are greedy, you who make Sivis kingdom prosperous gave a gift to an old Brahmin”.

Having heard what Maddl had said, The Great Being replied, “Maddl, why do you say so? If my mind had not been serene after I gave the children away, the wonderful miracles would not have taken place.” Then he narrated her about the miracles starting with roaming of the earth. Then, rejoicing at the gift, Maddl cried out
thus: “When, Great Being, I was looking for fruits and roots in forest in the afternoon, there were many wonderful miracles happening; the earth roamed, and the sound reached the three heavens. There was frightening sounds from all sides and the mountains gave echo to their agreement. Then Nārada and Pabbata rejoiced with you; all the thirty three gods with Indra at the head together rejoice.” As the Great Being describing his action, and then Maddl saying thus: “Great king Vessantara, the gift was indeed given well.” she praised the gift and sat down sharing his joy.

_TamattaM pakAsento satthA Aha_: Then, the Enlightened One, the teacher of men and gods, in explaining about the beautiful Maddl, the daughter of the king of Madda country, who came to stay at the hermitage in the forest, rejoiced in the gift of the children, to the monks thus: _Iti maddl varArohA rA japutti yasassinI vessantarassa anumodi puttake dAnamuttaM_: “Thus Maddl, the beautiful and lovely princess rejoices with Vessantara, said thus: children the best of the gifts”.

_MaddipabbaM niThitaM_: The end of the section on Maddl, consisting of ninety stanzas.

Section Twenty One

_Sakkapan_: The section on Sakka

_Namotassatthu_: May homage be to the Buddha.

_Evantesu aGGamaGGaM sammodanlyaM kathA kathentes_: Devotees, ladies and gentlemen, young and old, pay your attention attentively to the teaching about the description on _Indra_, the king of gods. _Tesu tvisu khattiyesu_: when the two noble born,
King Vessantara and Maddl talked together happily in this way, *atha sakko* : then Sakka thought to himself thus: “*hiyo* : Yesterday, Vessantara gave his two children as donations to JUjaka, which made the earth shake. *IdAni koci* : and today, a low person may come and ask for the virtuous Maddl, and the king will be left lonely, helpless and without any support. *Tato* : Then, I will take the form of a Brahmin and ask for Maddl in order to help him to reach the peak of Perfection so that Maddl cannot be given away to anyone else. *YanUnAhaM* : Having taken the guise of a Brahmin, I, *Indra* will reach the hermitage where Vessantara is and ask for Maddl. Without hesitation, the Great Being will give his precious wife to me. Then I will return her to him and go back to the heavenly abode *TAvatImSA*.” Having thought thus, *Indra* came to the hermitage at dawn.

_TamatthaM pakAsento sattha Aha* : Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: *Tato rattyA vivasAne sUriyassaggamaM pati sakko brAhaNavabBena pAto tesaM adissatha* : “When the night passed, early, towards sunrise, *Sakka* appeared to them taking the form of a Brahmin”. *Tha tVA ca panna* : Standing there, the Brahmin, *Indra* asked for Maddl saying thus: *Kacci nu bho to kusalA kacci bhoto anAmayaM kacci uGGena yApetha kacci mUlaphala. BhahU kacci DIsa makasA ca appameva sarIsapA vane vAlumiga kaNNe kacci hiMsA na vijjati* : “I hope you are well, sir. I hope you are healthy, sir. I hope you can live on gathering food and that there are plenty of roots fruits. I hope very few gadflies and mosquitoes and creeping things. I hope no wild creatures disturb you in this forest.”

_EvaM putte* : Having been thus greeted by a Brahmin, the Great Being replied thus: *KusalA ceva no brahme atho brahme anAmayaM atho uGGena yApema atho mUlaphalA bhahU_ atho DIsa makasA ca appameva sarIsapA vane vAl migAkiNNe hiMsA mehyaM na vijjati. KusalA rogA* : “We are well, Brahmin. *AnAmayaM* : We are
healthy, Brahmin. **Yapetha**: We can live by gathering food. **M̄Ulaphala**: There are plenty of roots and fruit. **DaMsAca**: Very few gadflies and mosquitoes, **sirasapA**: creeping things, **vAlugA**: and no wild creatures in this forest disturb us. **Satta no mASe vasataM**: We have lived a sorrowful life here in this forest for seven months. **IdaMpi dutiyaM salaM**: You are the only second Brahmin, with a goat-staff in the hand to reach this forest, whom we have seen. **SwAgataM te**: Welcome, O Brahmin, welcome. Come inside and wash your feet. **TinDukAni piyAlAni**: Eat, Brahmin, the honey fruits, the tindukas and *piyalAs, madhukas and kAsAmAris*. Take the best I have. **IdaMpi pA nyaM stA M**: And this cool water that MaddI brought from a cave high hidden on a hill, drink it Brahmin as you wish”.

**EvaM mahAsatto**: Having greeted him in this friendly way, the Great Being asked him why he had come there thus: **Atha tvum kena vABBena, kenaVA pana hetunaAnuppatosi brahAAGGa tA M me akkhAhi pucchitoti**: Why do you come and for what purpose have you come to the great forest? Please reply me what I ask you?” **Atha**: Then, **Sakka** answered thus: “Great Being, I am an old Brahmin, and I have no one to look after me or to cut firewood, to draw water or to cook me food. I have been suffering a lot so that I have come here to ask you for your wife MaddI. Give her to me.” Then **Sakka** spoke this verse to narrate the intention of the Great Being clearly thus: **YathA vArivAho pUro sabbAAlA M na khlyati evaM tA M yACitAgacchiM bhariyA M me dehi yACito ti**: “As a full river never runs dry, I have come here to beg you. I ask you to give me your wife.”

**EvaM vutte**37: Having heard this, the Great Being did not reply, “Yesterday I gave my children to an old Brahmin. How can I give MaddI to you and to be left alone.

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37 I have come across many words like wrong spelling “EvaM putte,” Which the last word should be “vutte”
in the forest?” But free from attachment and ties, he clings to nothing as if putting a purse containing a thousand pieces of gold coins in an outstretched hand; he uttered this stanza, making the mountain resound: DadAmi na vikAmi yaM maM yacasi brAhmaBa santaM nappaTguyhAmi dAna me ramatI mano: “I give what you ask from me a beautiful MaddI, Brahmin. I do not hesitate. I do not keep back what I have and my mind takes delight in the gifts. EvaGca pana vatvA: Having said that, the Great Being took a jar of water and pouring the water over his hands. He gave his wife to the Brahmin on that day.

TamattaM pakAsento satthA Aha: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus:

MaddIM hatthe gahetvAna udakassa kamaBDaluM brAhmaBassa adA dAnaM sivInaM raThavaDDano: “Then the king of Sivis took the pot of water in one hand and taking MaddI by the other, he gave her as a gift to the Brahmin. TadAsi yaM bhiMsanakaM: “Then there was a frightening thing, there was something to make your hair stand on end. The earth quaked when he gave up MaddI. Neva’ssa MaddI kuT: MaddI did not frown; she did not get irritated nor feel sorry. She was silent under his gaze, thinking, He knows what is best. Atha mahAsaito: When MaddI was thinking, the Great Being talked to the Brahmin, Indra thus: “Look, Brahmin, omniscience is a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand times dearer to me than MaddI. IdaM me dAnaM: May this gift be the means of realization of omniscience.” Tena vuttaM: He made the gift with these words. This is said: JAiM KaBhAjinaM dhitaM MaddIM deviM patibbataM cajjamAno na cintesiM bodhiyA yeva kArABA: “I was not afraid to give away JAi and my daughter KaBhA and my devoted wife the princess MaddI, all for the sake of Enlightenment. Name dessA ubho puttA: I do not hate my faithful wife MaddI or my
lovely children. But Enlightenment is more precious to me and that is why I gave away even those who were precious. *Atha mahākatto* : Then the Great Being looked at Maddl’s face wondering at her feelings. When she was looked at, she asked why he looked at her and, like a lion roaring she uttered this stanza : *Koṃārī yassaḥām bhariyā* : I have been his devoted wife since I was sixteen, and he is till my master and my lord. Let him give me away or sell me to whomever he wants; let him kill me!" *Atha sakko* : Then Sakka knowing their noble intention spoke in their praise.

*Tamatthaṃ pakāsento sattha Aha* : The Teacher explained it to the monks thus: *Tesaṃ sankappa maḍḍaḥya devindo eka dabrabi sabbe jittaṃ te vaccaḥya ye dibba ye ca mānusa* : Knowing their resolve, Sakka, the king of gods said, “All obstacles, both human and divine, have been overcome. The earth sounds for you, and the sound has reached the three heavens. There was lightening from all the directions and the mountains echoed in agreement. *Naṛada* and Pabbata delight at it with you; *Indra* and *Brahma* and *Pājāti*, *Soma* and King *Vessantara* and all the Thirty Three gods are pleased, for he does what it is hard to do. *Duddādaṃ* *dadamaṇaṃ* dukkaraṃ kamma kubbataṃ asanto nānu kubbanti sataṃ dhammo durannayo tasma sataṅga ca asataṃ nānā hoti ito gati : “Evil men do not imitate those who do what is hard to do, those who give that it is hard to give. The way of the good is hard to follow. For this very reason, good and evil men follow different courses after this life. The bad are born in the hell below and the good end up their lives in the heavenly abode. *Yamettaṃ* : While, Great Being, you live in the forest, you have given away your devoted wife and lovely children. May these meritorious deeds bear fruit for you in heaven when you have taken the journey to *Brahma’s* abode.”
EvaM mAṣa: When thus Sakka expressed his sympathetic joy, he thought thus:

“Now, without any further delay, I should return her back to him and then go,” he said

stanza thus: DadA bhoto bhariyaM MaddI ca sabbangasobhanaM tvāgceva MaddI ca channo MaddI ca patinA saha yAtha payo ca sankho ca ubho samAṇa vaBBino evaM tuvaM ca MaddI ca samAṇa mana cetASa: “Sir, I give you back Maddl, your devoted and lovely wife. You belong with her and she belongs with her husband. Just as milk and a conch-shell are alike in colour, so you and Maddl are alike in heart and thoughts. Avaruddhettha: You both, of noble birth, of high birth on your mothers’ and fathers’ sides, were exiled to the forest here. Live in peace and in a hermitage, so you may do meritorious works by giving again and again. I am Sakka, the king of gods. I have come here to bless you. Make a choice, Great king, I am going to grant you eight wishes.”

Kathenteyeva: When Indra, the King of the Gods, finished his talk with the Great Being, he rose in the air, and stood there, blazing like the early morning sun to reveal his identity and then granted a wish. Making his choice, the Great Being said: VaraM ce me ado satta sabbabhUṭa namissara pita maMa anumodeyya ito pattaM sakAM gharaM Asanena nimanteyya pAthametaM varaM vare: “Sakka, the king of gods, if you have granted me a wish, this is the first wish I make: “May my father be pleased to welcome me from here to my kingdom. May he make me a king! PurisassA vadhaM na roceyyaM: May he consent to no man’s execution even if he has committed a serious crime. May I free the executers from death! This is the second wish I make. Ye vuddA ye ca darahA: May the young, the young and the middle aged find in me for their support in life. This is the third wish I make. ParAdāraM na gaccheyyaM: “May I not go after others’ wives; May I be content with my own. May I free from female domination. This
is the fourth wish I make. Putto me Sakka jAyetha: May my son, O Sakka, born to me, live long. May he conquer the earth with justice! This is the fifth wish I make. Tato rayyA vivasAne: When we return to the kingdom, at the end of the night towards the sunrise, may heavenly food appear. This is the sixth wish I make. Dadato me na khlyetha: “May my wealth never end. May I never regret giving. By giving, may I have a peaceful mind. This is the seventh wish I make. Ito vimuccAmanAhA M: At the end of this life, may I go to heaven and reach a higher state and may I never be reborn again. This is the eighth wish I make.”

TassataM vacanaM sutvA: When Sakka, the king of gods heard his words, he replied, “Indeed soon your father will come to see you.” EvaM mahAsatto: After encouraging the Great Being, Sakka returned to his own abode.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: explaining about this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: IdaM vatvAna mAghavA devarAjA sujampati vessantare varaM datvA saggAkAyA M apakkamiti: When Sakka, the king of gods, SujaMpati the Bountiful One, had said this, and had given Vessantara his wishes, he returned to the heavenly assembly.

Sakka pabbaM niThitaM: End of the section on Sakka consisting of forty-three stanzas.

Section Twenty Two

MahAraj: The section on the Great King

Namotassatthu: May homage be to the Buddha.
Sadhavo: Listen, devotees, friends, young and old about the Great Being and MaddI who lived happily together in the hermitage which had been built for them by Sakka, the king of gods. 

JUjako pi: But the old JUjaka with two children, JAli and KaBhA, journeyed sixty leagues. Deities looked after them. Suriye: When the sun set, the old Brahmin tied the children to a tree and made them lie down on the bare ground. SayaM: But he himself, in fear of fierce of wild animals climbed a tree and lay down in a fork of the branches. 

Tasmim khaBe: Then a god would come to the children, taking a form of Vessantara and a goddess in the form of MaddI. They untied the children, rubbed, washed their hands and feet and dressed them. They gave them food to eat and put them a heavenly bed to sleep on, and at dawn they would make them lie down just as they had been tied up and then they would disappear. Thus with the help of the gods, they went on their way without suffering. Due to the prompting of deities, JUjaka made up his mind to go to the kingdom of the Kaliingas and within fifteen days came to the city of Jetuttara. 

TaM divasaM: That day, just before dawn, SaGjaya, the king of the Sivis, had a dream, and his dream was thus: The King was sitting in the great hall of judgement; a man brought him two lotuses and placed them in his hand. The king hung them to his ears and their pollen fell down on to his lap. SapabhUGjitvA: When he awoke in the morning, he asked his Brahmins what it meant. They replied that the relatives of the king who had been away for a long time would return. TadA: That morning, after eating delicious and fine foods, the king sat in the hall of judgement. TasminkABe: At that time, the deities brought the old Brahmin there and put him in the royal courtyard so that the king looked round and saw the children and said: KassetAM mukha mAbhAti
hemaM vuttattamagginA nikkhaMva jAta rUpassA ukkAmukha pahaMsitaM : “Whose face is that which shines like gold refined in fire, like a golden coin beaten in the furnace?”

Ubho satisa paccangA : Their bodies and appearances are similar. One is like JAli and the other one is like KaBhA SihA vilAvA : They are both alike. They are a pair of lions coming out of a cave. These children seem as if made up of gold. EvaM rAjA : When he praised the children in these three stanzas, the king sent one of his ministers to go and bring them to him and he said to the Brahmin, thus: Kuto nu tvum bhAradvAja ime Anesi dArake ajja raTha manuppatu kuto Agacchasi braHmaBa ti : “Good BhAradvAja, from where have you brought these children?”

“JU jakopi : Old JUjaka replied: MeyhaM te dArakA deva dinna vittena saGaya ajja pannarasA ratti yato laddhA me dArakA : „My lord, SaGaya, the man who gave me the children was pleased. They were given to me two weeks ago.” The king asked: Kena vA vAcapeyyena sammoGAyena saddahe ko tetaM dAnama dada puttakA dAnamuttaM : “By what sweet word or word of truth did you make him believe you? I do not believe that you received them lawfully. Who gave them to you as a gift? Children are the very best gift.” AthassA : Being afraid of execution, then the cruel and evil old Brahmin lied thus: Yo yACataM paTIhsA bhUtAnaM dharabriva so me vessantarA rAjA putte dAsi vane vasaM : “He who was a refuge for those needy, as the earth is for its creatures. It was Vessantara, the prince, who gave me the children while he was residing in the jungle. Those who are in need would go to him as the rivers flow into the sea and it was Vessantara, the prince who gave me the children while he was residing in the jungle.”

Tam sutvA : When the ministers heard this, they criticized Vessantara, the ascetic thus: Dukkada vaTbho raGGo saddhena gharamesinA kathaM nu puttakA dajiA arGGe avaruddhako : “It was wrong for the king to do this if he were at his own home. How
could he give his children away while he had been exiled to the forest? O listen to me, all who have gathered here how Vessantara, the prince gave away his children while he was residing in the forest. He might give away a male or a female slave, giving away a horse or an ass-cart, or giving away a trumpeting elephant. But how could he give away his own children?"

_TaM sutvA_: When the boy, JAli, heard this, he could not bear the criticism of his father and as though raising his arm on behalf of Mount Sineru smitten by the wind, he spoke this stanza: _Yassa natthi ghare dAso asso cassa tarIratho hatthl ca kuGjaro nAgo kiM so dajiA pita maha_: "When a man has nothing in his house like a slave, a horse, ass-cart, an trumpeting elephant with long trunk, grandfather, what can he give except his children?" _RAjA_: The King SaGjaya replied: _DAnamassa pasaMsA na ca nindAman puttaAkathaM nu hadayaM AsI tumhe datvAvanibbake_: "I appreciate your father’s gift and do not blame him, JAli my child. But how was his heart at the time he gave you to the beggar?"

Then JAli replied: _Dukkhassa hadayaM AsI atho uBhampi passasi rohiBheva tambakkhl pita assUni vattayi_: "Grandfather, hadayaM: my father’s heart was in pain and it was burning. His eyes were red like RohiBI’s and tears fell down." _IdAini_: JAli continued the description of his sister, KaBhA’s crying near her father in this stanza: _YoM taM kaBhAjinA vo ca ayaM maM tAta brahmaBo laThiYA paTikoTeti ghare jAtaMva dAsiyaM_: This is what KaBhA spoke: _Tata_: "Father, this Brahmin tied and hit me with a creeper and lead me away as if I were a slave born in his house. _Na cAyAM_: This is not a real Brahmin, father, because Brahmans are righteous men. This is a demon taking a shape of a Brahmin who is taking us away to eat. _KiM nu tAta udikhiasi_: How can you
just watch us as we are driven away by an ogre? My sister whose face was full of tears, turned back and talked to our father while running after the old Brahmin.”

_Atha:_ When the king saw that the Brahmin did not let them free, he spoke this stanza: 

\[ RAjaputtI ca vo mA\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}} \ RAjaputto ca vo pita pubbe me ankAm\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}Ru\textbf{\textit{\textsc{b}}}ha kinnu ti\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}Thatha ArakA. \]

\[ MA\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}A : “Your mother is a princess. \textbf{\textit{\textsc{p}}}itA : Your father is a prince. You used to climb on to my lap. Why do you stand there far away now?” \]

_JAli kum\textbf{\textit{\textsc{m}}}\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}_: The boy replied to his grandfather thus: 

\[ RAj\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}} put\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}I ca no mA\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}A rajaputto ca no pita d\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}A MayaM br\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}h\textbf{\textit{\textsc{m}}}Ba\textbf{\textit{\textsc{s}}}A t\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}Ma ti\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}Th\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}M\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}} ArakA : “Our mother is a princess, our father is a prince but we are slaves to this Brahmin. Therefore we stand far away”

On hearing, the king spoke thus: 

\[ MA sam\textbf{\textit{\textsc{m}}}e\textbf{\textit{\textsc{v}}}aM av\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}c\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}th\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}} Deyha\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}} sadayaM mama cit\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}\textbf{\textit{\textsc{y}}}A\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}Mva me k\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}\textbf{\textit{\textsc{y}}}o Asen\textbf{\textit{\textsc{e}}} sukhaM labhe. \textbf{\textit{\textsc{s}}}am\textbf{\textit{\textsc{m}}}A : “Do not say that my dearest. Because my heart is burning as if my body were on a blazing fire and I do not sit comfortable on my seat. Do not say that, my dearest, and it increases my sorrow. We shall buy you back with a price and you will no longer be slaves.” \]

_Kim\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}g\textbf{\textit{\textsc{g}}}hi\textbf{\textit{\textsc{y}}}A\textbf{\textit{\textsc{M}}} hi vo t\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}A_: “When your father gave you to the Brahmin, dear boy, what did the price he put on you? Tell me the truth so that I will pay the Brahmin.”

Then _JAli_, the boy replied thus: 

\[ Sa\textbf{\textit{\textsc{h}}}as\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}g\textbf{\textit{\textsc{g}}}hA\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}M hi maM t\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}A, br\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}h\textbf{\textit{\textsc{m}}}Ba\textbf{\textit{\textsc{s}}}A p\textbf{\textit{\textsc{i}}}ta ad\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}} atha kaBh\textbf{\textit{\textsc{a}}}j\textbf{\textit{\textsc{i}}}nA M kaGGaM hat\textbf{\textit{\textsc{t}}}hinA ca satena ca ti : “When my father gave me to the Brahmin, he put on me a price of a thousand gold coins, grandfather, and he put the price on his daughter of hundred elephants etc and a hundred gold coins.”

Ordering the Brahmin to be paid, the king spoke: “Hurry, steward, and pay the Brahmin. Give him as the children’s ransom a hundred male and female slaves, a hundred cows, a hundred elephants, a hundred bulls and a thousand gold coins.” The king also gave the Brahmin a seven-storied palace, and a large retinue. The Brahmin
gathered together his possessions and went up into his palace, where he feasted on fine food and lay down on a huge couch. \textit{tadā}: At that time, the children were bathed, fed and made pretty and the king SaG̣aya, took J̄al̄i on to his lap and likewise the grandmother, Phussadī took KaBh̄A.

\textit{TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha}: In explaining this to the monks, the Teacher said: \textit{NikkiBīvA nahApētvA bhojāityvA dArake samalankaritvA bhaBDēna ucchange upavesayaM}: When the children had been redeemed, they were bathed, fed with fine food and adorned with ornaments and they took them on to their laps. When the children had been bathed and dressed in fine clothes, and wearing all kinds of jewellery, the king took them on to his lap and questioned them. When he had taken them, decked with tinkling earrings, garlands, and all kinds of adornments, on to his lap, the king spoke thus: \textit{Kacci ubho aroga te j̄ali m̄Apīt̄A tava kacci uGchena yApenti kacci m}"UlaphaA bahU: “I hope both your father and mother are well, J̄al̄i. I hope they can live by collecting food and there are plenty roots and fruits. “I hope there are few gadflies and mosquitoes and creepy crawlies, and that they have come to no harm with wild beasts in the forest.” \textit{AtA te}: When J̄al̄i heard what his grandfather asked him, he replied: “Both my father and mother are well, great king. They can live by collecting food and there are plenty roots and fruits. There are few gadflies and mosquitoes and creepy crawlies, and they have no danger from wild beasts in the forest. \textit{KhaBantA lukalamBAni}: By collecting the fruit of the trees in the wind and sun, my mother has become thin and pale like a delicate lotus which has been picked. It was because of her wanderings in the great forest, in the jungle haunted with wild beasts, frequented by the rhinoceros and the leopard, my mother’s hair has become thin. She digs up \textit{Auka} and \textit{kalamba} roots, \textit{billi} and \textit{takkala} tubers; she seeks jujubes, marking-nuts and \textit{vilva} fruits,
and give us them to eat. We do not eat during the day, but in the evening we sit together
and eat all whatever she brings when she returns carrying wild roots and fruit. She
arranges her hair into the ascetic’s matted plait and with her armpits stained with sweat,
wearing the clothes made of animal skin, she sleeps on the ground and reverences the
sacred fire.”

EvAM JAl kummAro Aha : Having described his mother’s pitiful state, he
reproached his grandfather with this verse: PuttA piyA manussAnaM lokasmin udapajjisu
na hi nUnamhAkaM eyyassa putte sanehA ajAyathati : “Children are dear to their parents
in this world but for his children, our grandfather has no affection.” Tato : Then, the
king acknowledged his mistake and spoke: Dukka TaGca hi no putta bhUna haccaM kataM
mayA yohaM sivInaM vacanA pabbAjesi madUsakaM : “I committed an evil thing, my
boy, like killing an innocent one, when I banished an innocent man at the voice of the
Sivis. YaM me kiGci idha atthi : Whatever the possessions I have here, money or grain,
let Vessantara return and reign as king in the kingdom of the Sivis.”

Then the boy spoke: Na deva meyhaM vacamA ehiti Sivisuttamo sayameva devo
gantvA siGca bhogehi atrajaM : “The king of the Sivis, the best of the Sivis, will not
return just by my word.” The boy insisted that his father would say: “if you, grandfather
do not go to the forest yourselves with ministers and all kinds of people, instead of
coming back, my father will make me an ascetic again. So, grandfather, I request you to
go to the forest yourself and bring back your son to the city to rule the kingdom.”

Then King SaGjaya instructed his General for preparations: “Prepare the army of
infantry, chariots, horses and elephants and ask the citizens, Brahmins, royal chaplains
to come with me” Tato saThisahassAni : Then let sixty thousand fine looking fighting
men quickly assemble, fully equipped and decked out in various colours, some putting
blue, some dressed in yellow, some with red turbans, some wearing white. Make them quickly assemble, fully equipped and decked out in various uniforms. Let all the tattooed men be at on guard; some of them tattooed in red or other colours; some of them tattooed from waist to bottom and some of them with a tiger picture on their back; on their faces; pictures of dragons around their thighs. They speak harsh words as if they were strong and bravery. He arranged the army into two groups; the army of huge elephants with long trunks who used to defeat the enemy in the battle, who have no fear at all and ready for battle, go first. And let the various kinds of army come after me; arrange twelve thousand army, young and old to guard both at the sides of the road. Just as that haunt of great crowds of animals, the snowy sweet-smelling peak of GandhamAdana, which is covered with various kinds of trees and with heavenly plants, spreads radiance and perfume to all the quarters, so make them quickly assembled and fully decked to follow me. Tato nAgasahassAni yojayantu catuddasa, suvaBBa kacchAmAtangA hema kappanavAsasA ArulA gAmaBlyehi tomarakusa pABibhi khippa mAyantu sannaddhA hatthikhandhehi dassitA: Monks, when the king SaGjaya had redeemed his grandchildren, he wanted his son Vessantara to come back to rule the kingdom and he ordered his ministers thus: “Ministers, you go with the drum and beat it to let all the people, in the country including inside and outside armies, to know and to get ready with their preparations. Then let men harness fourteen thousand elephants of independent will, with golden ribbons and golden trappings. “The elephants are ridden by village headmen carrying pikes and goads. Let the mahouts quickly assemble, fully equipped, conspicuous on the elephants’ backs.” Then let saddle fourteen thousand Sindh horses, thoroughbreds by birth, swift mounts.

About the details of the horses and the skills of the horsemen.
“Ridden by the village headmen carrying short-swords and bows. Let the riders quickly assemble, fully equipped and decked out on the horses’ backs. Then let men yoke fourteen thousand chariots, with wheel-rims expertly fashioned in iron and borders inlaid with gold. Let them put up the banners there and put on leather and chain-mail. Let the strong-bowed archers draw their bows. Let the charioteers quickly assemble, fully equipped in their chariots.”

EvaM rAja: When the king had given details of his plan in this way, he ordered them to clear the road, which his son would take from the city of Jettutara as far as to the Crooked Mountain; it should be arranged even for a width of eight usabhas. Giving various directions for the decoration of the road, he spoke thus: Laja olokirA puppA mAlAgandhavilepanA agghiyAni ca tiThantu yena maggena ehi: “Ministers, mamaputto: on the road where my son will take, orAkirA puppA: let puffed rice be scattered and various kinds of flowers, garlands, perfumes and ointments, and let gifts of hospitality be offered. GaMe game sataM kumbhA: On the road where my son will take, let each hamlet bring a hundred jars of wine to be placed on the way-side in each village. MMsam pupAni ca: On the road my son will take, let meat and pancakes, cake and junket, together with fish, be placed by the way-side. On the road my son will take, let ghee and sesame oil, curds and milk, panic seed, rice and plenty of toddy be placed by the roadside. Let there be chefs and cooks, dancers, mimes and singers, players of castanets, of jar-drums and bass-drums; and let there be comedians. Let them play all kinds of lutes, drums and kettle-drums. Let conches be blown; let the one-skinned drums sound out.” Let them strike tambours and cymbals, play conches, and lutes with their resounding strings, and many other kinds of drums.”
EvaM rAjA: Thus the king described the preparation of the road. TadA: Then old Brahmin JuJaka enjoyed the possessions, which had given to him by the king of the Sivis. As he was attracted to a hundred ladies who were equally beautiful in his palace, they all could not escape from his kisses. Each of them was trying to feed him each kind of dishes of curry and rice. As he was hungry, he took everything and anything given to him and ate deliciously and greedily. He had never tasted such tasty food in his life. Having eaten too much and not able to digest the food, he suffered terribly from indigestion. He was lying down, crying, shouting, crushing his teeth until his mouth and eyes became abnormal. Then traditional physicians were sent for. They went to bring physicians from the distant villages. They approached various physicians but could not succeed. They tried to call a physician, Kham Pan. The answer was that he was out to buy a horse. Then they tried to bring a physician Phl Pha; however, he was out looking after his paddy field; a physician called DevadA was not free as he was making a fence; one physician, Ngo, was not well and unable to go; a northern village physician was busy mending the fish nets; a southern village physician was quarreling with his wife and did not answer. As they were unable to bring any physician, they came back home and suddenly they met with an old learned physician who had completed three Vedas and was clever in reading others’ future. He read thus: This old Brahmin’s destiny is coming to an end as he has been suffering from his stomach ache and no one is in the position to help. BahUjanA: Then people told the Brahmin thus: “There is a learned and clever seer who has completed the art of calculation. He said that your day is coming to an end.” Having heard that, the old Brahmin, frightened of death, was sweating, crying, shouting and cursing. He took various kinds of indigenous medicine but they could not make him better at all. Instead his stomach became bigger and bigger. At last, he died of
indigestion there where he lay. This is because of his love for his beautiful wife named Amittã who was left behind as a widow. Besides, he had to leave behind all things given to him by the king SaGjaya. He left all his wealth, such as horses, elephants, cows, palace, male and female slaves, gold coins, beautiful ladies without enjoying them, special wealth, fine clothes, relatives, elephants with big and long trunks, a special horse, a white buffalo, and a huge bull called Usabha. He died within seven days while enjoying the wealth in the palace. He left his beautiful wife Amittã who asked him to go out to find slaves for her. But as for Amittã, she enjoyed her life with a couple of young men and at the later time she became the queen of the Kalinga country.

Tadã : Then the king of the Sivis kingdom, was informed about the old Brahmin’s death. He ordered them to bathe him with fragrant water, make a beautiful coffin, and lay him down on a fine and beautiful piece of cloth. The coffin was well decorated with gold and silver. The coffin was made according to the custom of that time. Then he asked the wise prophet that when the suitable time to carry out the Brahmin’s funeral was. Having calculated, the wise prophet replied that the next day was the best of the week. So, the King SaGjaya ordered his subjects to carry out the Brahmin’s funeral on that day. The king allowed his subjects to enjoy themselves, some of them singing, dancing, and playing various kinds of lutes. Young men and girls were chatting; clapping, together happily. Young and old alike took spirits and making a big gathering on that day. They decided to cremate the old Brahmin according to the custom of that time.

Puna divase : The next day, to carry the corpse of the old Brahmin, the ministers who were knowledgeable at this particular occasion, arranged many kinds of people. They arranged some of the lame to carry the corpse and those were poor in eye sight to
lead the way. The blind were to hold the string. The plump men, with big stomachs, were asked to beat the drums. The poor were given the task of singing traditional songs. Crooked people played cone. Abnormal mouthed men played lutes. Men with deformed hands were to hold umbrellas and the deaf were to beat the drums. In this way, they carried the corpse. The procession of the funeral was followed by crying people but indeed those who were crying felt indifferent toward the old, poor and greedy Brahmin. After some time, they came out of the city and reached the jungle. Right at that place, they quarrelled each other saying: “Where are we going to take this old Brahmin to? We cannot put him near water, as we have to eat fish; we cannot place him near the paddy field, as the spirits of the field may become angry; we cannot keep him at a rest house, as we are afraid of his ghost; we cannot lay him under a fig tree as children used to play under it; we cannot put him at the ant-hill, as we expect to have mushrooms; we cannot carry him to a remote area as we are tired and lazy; we cannot place him near the village as our children and wives may fall ill; we cannot put him under a coconut tree as it will yield no fruits; we cannot keep him near the bush of the bamboo, it will produce no young bamboo stalk; we cannot place him near the well as we have to make use of water; we cannot put him at a water fall as we have to bathe. So, where shall we keep this old Brahmin then?”

“But there is a thorn tree with a lot of branches which crows used to take shelter in and passing their waste down as deep as our knees. Therefore, we shall throw him there.” Manusso: People were thinking of inviting monks to come and perform the last funeral rite for the old Brahmin. Having thought thus, they went to invite a monk from the southern temple, but the monk refused to come as he was suffering from a leg pain. Then they went to the northern temple but the invitation was turned down as the monk
was not used to performing the funeral rite. They went to invite a monk of the western
temple, but he was not courageous enough as he was afraid of ghosts. They went to
invite a monk of the eastern temple but he did not accept as he knew nothing of the
rites. Then they went to invite a blind monk but he repeatedly said he was not free. They
went to invite a Lao monk again he told them that he was not strong enough to come.
They approached a Mein monk to invite him but he told them he was not speaking; they
approached a Burmese monk who told them that he was not coming. At last, they
approached an Indian monk whose ears were big, with crooked back, whose few teeth
were left, with uneven chin and big breasts, unclean, abnormal eyes, brown eyes brows
and who had difficulty sitting down and getting up. He was not only holding only a fan
made of duck and hen feathers, but he wore a cap and shoulderd his alms bowl using a
fish net. That is why; he was called “Phra Khi Rauk Mauk Yang,” “A Useless and
untidy monk” who lived not far nor near the city. Having accepted the invitation, he
asked them to wait for him. Knowing nothing about the teaching but wanting to collect
more wealth, he took a fan, an alms bowl, a walking stick and followed them with
difficulty. Sometimes he even slipped and fell down on the road and hurt himself. At
last, he reached the place where he was invited and saying: “Old Brahmin, I am coming
to receive your funeral rite cloth”. He knocked the coffin of the Brahmin with his
walking stick. Then he led people to observe the precepts thus: “Namo : Do not steal
others’ property but leave them all for me; DaSa daSai : Leave all male and female
slaves, horses and elephants behind for me. BuddhaM sarabaM : Leave all your gold and
silver and clothes for me. PanAtipAtA : Leave all cattle behind for me. VeramaBi : Leave
all beautiful and lovely young ladies for me to enjoy each and everyone of them.
SurAme : Fill spirit into bottles and put them into my alms bowl.”
Having said that, he started his chanting thus: *KokikA kusalA dhammA KAkiko paThicolo dhammo kAkilesikA dhammA appatiliMsikim dhammim dukkhe kusale dhamme adukaken kusalen dhammen* : After finishing his chanting, he transferred merit to the poor Brahmin thus: "*Kusalaung dhammaung abyaunggataung dhammaung* : This is *Mai Kum*; this is *Mai Daung* and this is *Mai KA Sa Laung*. Oh! Old Brahmin, you die not to go to heaven but to the hell and live there for ten million years."

Hearing the monk’s wish for the old Brahmin, all young ladies and men stared at the monk and laughed wholeheartedly until their stomachs and chests became hurt. As a result, tears rolled down along their cheeks and they shook their whole bodies enjoying their laughter. Because the monk could not master precepts and he himself knew nothing except eating and sleeping. However, when he was laughed at, the monk became angry and quickly took the cloth from the Brahmin’s coffin which was meant for him as a donation. He ran away from the crowd to the forest as he was chased by people shouting behind him. Then the corpse was burned, the flame was up high and nothing remained.

_TadA_: When the king had the funeral rite performed, he asked his people to beat the drum in the town to inquire about the relatives of the Brahmin _JUjaka_. The drum was beaten and beaten at every nook and corner. As they found out that no relatives of him, all his wealth reverted to the king. _Sattame divase_: After a week, the king assembled the whole army with the guidance of _JAl_i to show the way. The king started off his journey with that great retinue.

_TamattaM pakA sento satthA Aha_: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: _SA seno mahatI Asi uyyutto sivAhinl jAlino magganAyena vankaM pAyAsi_

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38 _Mai Kum_ is a kind of a tree which young leaves can be cooked or by making them sour salad, which add good taste. _Mai Daung_ is a tree with thorns around the trunk and branches but _Mai KA SaLaung_, which I have never seen so that I will not able to explain it here.
There was a great force, the army of the land of the Sivis, which journeyed towards the Crooked Mountain with Jāli as their guide to show the way.” TadA : At that time, the Kalinga country being prosperous with the help of the white elephant, which the king Vessantara gave them, learned that the king of the Sivis was planning to welcome back his son, king Vessantara, they returned the white elephant to the king SaGāya on that very day. So nAgo : The elephant, Paccaya was very pleased at the thought of having the opportunity to meet his owner king Vessantara again so that he made a loud sound.

Tena vuttaM : So it is said: KoGcaM nadati mAAtango kuGaro saThihAyano kacchAya baddhamAnAyA koGcaM nadati vAraBo : “The sixty year old elephant of independence gave loud sound and went forth; while its harness was being tied on, the elephant trumpeted. AjAṇīya hasiyan : The horses and the elephants echoed their sounds throughout the Sivis country until the country covered with dust. There was a great force, the army of the land of the Sivis which journeyed towards the Crooked Mountain with Jāli as its guide to show the way. Tena cattAro khattiyA : The four noble births, grandfather and grandmother and two grandchildren, went through the great forest, a mass of branches thronged with birds, full of flowers and fruitful trees. There, a lot of trees in season were full of flowers; many colourful birds sing sweetly songs in answering each other with their beautiful chirpings.” Monks, after several days and nights travelling, people completed sixty leagues and reached the region where the king Vessantara lived.

MahAraṇa pabbaM nīṭhitaM : End of the section on the Great King, which consists of sixty-nine stanzas.
Section Twenty Three

Chakhatti: The section on the six nobles

Namotassatthu: May homage be to the Buddha.

JAli kumAropi muccalinda saratire khandhA vAraM nivAsApetvA cuddasaratha sahassAni AgatamaggA bhimukkho nevaTha pApetvA tasmim padese slhabyagghadlpI khaggAdlsu ArakkhaM susaM vidahitAti. SAilha vo: Listen, all devotees, to the explanation how JA\lli leading the army to the great forest called Himavana. There the body J\lli instructed them to pitch camp on the bank of the Lake Mucalinda, and to position the fourteen thousand chariots facing the way they had come. He appointed guards in various spots to prevent wild animals like lions, tigers and rhinoceroses.

Tasmim khaBe: At that time there was a great noise, from the horses, elephants and chariots and everything else throughout the forest. Atha mahAsatto: Then the Great Being heard it while living in his hermitage, he wondered thus: “These enemies have killed my father and now they have come to deal with me.” saying this he called Maddl and climbed up the mountain until he could look down on the army.

Tamat\thaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: TesaM sutvAna nigghosaM bhIto vessantar o ahu pabhataM abhiruhi\tvA bhIto senaM udikkh\ati: “Having heard the noise they made, Vessantara was afraid and out of fear, he climbed up the mountainside and looked down on the army.” And then he called Maddl thus: Ingha maddi nisAmehi nigghoso yAdiso vane A\AnlyA hasiyanti dhajagg\Ani ca dissa: “O Maddl, come here and listen what the great noise of horses,
elephants and army with long procession there in the forest. Thoroughbreds whinny, and I can see the tops of banners. They must be hunters who will snare the flock of forest deer in nets, or catch them in pits, and with loud shouts will use their sharp weapons to kill all the best of them. Though we have done nothing wrong, we fell to the power of our enemies and were exiled into the forest. And now look as we are powerless, will be the creatures of the slaughter.”

SA tassa vacanaM sutvA: Having heard what he said, Madd looked down at the army and knew that it must be their own army and she uttered this stanza to comfort the Great Being: AmitA nappasAheyyum agglva udakaBBave tadava tvAM vicintehi api sotthi ito siyA: “Don’t worry and don’t be sad, my dear king. No enemy can hurt you, as fire cannot overcome a flood. Concentrate on that. This ministers and army who are approaching us here now may be from the father king who comes to invite us to return to the kingdom. So, don’t worry and be happy. When the king of gods, Indra, in the shape of a Brahmin came to the hermitage, he granted wishes saying that your father, the king of the Sivis will lead his ministers and army to welcome you back to the kingdom.”

Atha mahAsatto: Then the Great Being heard what Madd’s said, he was reminded the words given by the king of gods, Indra. He came, out of, down from the mountain with her and sat down together at the door of the hermit hut looking at the way they were coming.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: In explaining this to the monks the Teacher spoke thus: Tato vessantaro rAja orohitvAAnA pabbatA nisldi paBBasAAYAaM dalAhaM katvAAnA mAAnasaM : “Then the king Vessantara came down from the mountain and sat in his hermit hut, making his mind firm.” At that time, the king SaGjaya called the queen
and said thus: “My dear lady, PhusatÌ, if we four of us go together at once there will be much weeping and mourning. That is why, I am going first and then you follow when you think our excitement is under control, with many attendants. And after some time, JÀli and KaBhÀ may follow.” He made them turn round his chariot to face the way they came and set guards in places against wild animals. Then he started off on the back of a richly caparisoned elephant surrounded by his ministers to see his son.

\textit{TamatthaM pakAsento sattha Aha} : In explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke:  \textit{Nivatt a yitvAna rathaM vuTThpetvAna seniyo ekM araGGe viharantaM pita puttaM upAgami} : “He sat his army in array, his chariot turned back, he went to see his son who has been living lonely in the forest. Climbing down from the back of the elephant, putting one robe on one of his shoulder, he paid respect by upraised his hands, surrounding by the ministers, he went to give the throne to his son.” \textit{Tatthaddasa kumAraM so} : Then he saw the beauteous prince who was fearless and sitting in the hermit hut in good concentration. \textit{TaGca ditvAna} : When Vessantara and MaddÌ saw their father coming towards them with excitement to see his son, they went out to welcome him and greeted him. Then MaddÌ paid her respect to her father in-law laying her head to his feet and spoke: ‘I am MaddÌ, your daughter in-law, bow down at your feet in greeting, Mighty King.’

\textit{SaGjeyyo} : The king SaGjaya looked at his son and then embraced them there and caressed them with his hands. \textit{Tato} : Then, the king cried and lamented for great sorrow. When his sorrow was overcome, he spoke kindly to them thus: \textit{Kacci vo kusalM putta kacci putta anAmayaM kacci uGechena yApetha kacci mUlaphala bahU} : “I hope you are well, my son; I hope you are in good health, my son. I hope you can live on gathering
food and I hope there are plenty of roots and fruits. I hope there are few gadflies and mosquitoes and creepy crawlies. I hope no wild animals would harm you in the forest.”

Attha mahAsatto pitu vacanaM sutvA Aha : Having heard the words of his father, the Great Being replied thus: Atthi no jlvikA deva : “My Lord, the life we live here is quite hard for us. We live by gathering as best we could and to eat what we could glean a needy man as a charioteer schools a horse. As the poverty has been our master, we are not only poor but tamed. But we are getting thin as we have missed seeing our mother and father because we led our life of mourning in exile in the jungle, O mighty king.”

EvaGca pannavatvA : After saying this, the Great Being asked the news of his children thus: Yepi te siviseThassa dAyAdA pattamAnasA jAli kaBhAjInA cubho brAhmaBassa vasAnugA accAyikassa ruddassa yo ne gAvova sumbhati : “But JAli and KabhA, who were the best of the heirs of the Sivis, I have given them to the Brahmin who is cruelly and ferociously and drove them away like cattle. If you know anything of these royal children, please tell us. Give us relief in no time as a physician tries to make a man bitten by a snake.”

TadA : At that time, having heard the queries of Vessantara, the king SaGaya answered thus: Ubho kuMArA nikkItA jAli kaBhAjInA cubho brAhmaBassa dhanaM datvA putta mA bhAyI assasa : “I have bought back both JAli and KabhA, your beloved children, as you set them the price from the Brahmin. So, do not be anxious, my son, and do take comfort.” TaM sutvA mahAsatto : When he heard this from his father, the Great Being was greatly pleased and spoke pleasantly with his father thus: Kacci nu tA ta kusalA : “I hope you are well, father. I hope you are in good health, father. I hope, father, my mother’s eyes are not sore because of the weeping.”
Then the king Sañjaya replied thus: *KusalāM ceva me putta atho putta anāmayaM atho ca putta te mAtu cakkhu na pariyaṇati:* “I am well, my son. I am in good health, my son. And your mother’s eyes not sore because of the weeping.”

*Mahāsatto:* Then the Great Being asked thus: *Kaccī arogāM:* I hope the kingdom all is well, the countryside at peace and there is no short of rainfall as I lived in the kingdom. I hope your carriage is in good order; I hope you mount carries you well. I hope there are plenty of elephants, horses, cows and bulls and goats as I lived there.”

*Tato:* Then king Sañjaya replied thus: “My kingdom all is well, the countryside at peace and there is no short of rainfall as you lived in the kingdom. On the other hand, my carriage is in good order, my mount carries me well. And there are plenty of elephants, horses, cows and bulls and goats as you lived there.”

*Phussati pi kho:* When they were friendly exchanging words in this way, Queen Phusatū made up her mind that by then they would have removed their grief and anxiety, she made her way to her son with a great company.

*TamatthāM pakāsento sattha Aha:* Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: *IcchēvaM mantayaṇāṇāM mAtA nesaM adissatha. RAjaputtī giridvāre pattikā anupāhana :* When they were talking together in this way, they saw their mother, the queen, approaching barefoot to the door. Seeing their mother coming with eagerness to see her son, Vessantara and Maddī went out to welcome her and greeted her. Maddī paid respects bending her head to her mother-in-law’s feet: “I, Maddī, your daughter-in-law, bow at your feet in greeting, noble lady.” *Dve khattīyā:* When the two children, now safe and well, saw Maddī from far away, they cried out and ran to her like young calves running to their mother.
Explaining this to the monks the Teacher spoke thus:

MaddīGca puttakā dītvā dūrato sotthi mAgatA kandantA mAbhidhAviMsu vacchabAlAva mAlaraM : When Maddī saw her children at a distance and knew that they were safe, she cried out running to meet them and the children did the same as if the young calves thirsty of milk run to their mother. She sprinkled them with streams of milk from her breasts. She shook, and with aloud cry fell unconscious, and lay stretched on the ground.

KumĀro pi : The children, because of their love of their mother, ran quick to her and fell unconscious on top of their mother. Tasmin khaBe : At that moment, two streams of milk from her breasts flowed into their mouths. Sacce- If they had not received milk from their mother’s breasts, they would have died right at that moment. Vessantaropi : When Vessantara saw his beloved children, he was not able to control his emotion, he lost his consciousness and fell down right there. King SaGāya and Queen Phusāl also being unable control their emotion; they fell down right at the spot and did so the sixty thousand ministers born at the same time as Vessantara. And none of them could bear this piteous sight and the whole hermitage was like a grove of sal-trees devastated by the storm.

Tasmin khaBe : At that time, the mountain roared, the earth quaked, the great ocean heaved and the six heavens of sensual pleasures were in uproar. Atha sakko : At that moment, Indra, the king of gods, say that six nobles were lying senseless together with their retinue, and realized that no one could stand up and sprinkle anyone with water. He caused a lotus-leaf shower called Pokkhara rain. Therefore, he made a lotus leaf shower to fall on the group of six nobles, and those who wanted to be wet were made wet and not a single drop to those who did not want to be wet. That rain was like the rain that falls on a clump of lotus-lilies. The six noble persons were restored to their
senses, and all the people cried out thus: “It is a miracle, for the pokkhara rain fell on
the group of kinsfolk and the great earth quaked.”

_TamattaM pakAse nto satthA A ha_: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher
spoke thus:

_SamAgatAnaM GAtInaM mahAghos o ajAyatha pabbatA samanAdiMsu mahl pakampitA ahu_: When the family was reunited together there was a great uproar. The mountains roared
and the great earth quaked. There was a great pokkhara rain when the prince Vessantara
was together with his family. When the grandchildren, daughter in law, son, and king
and queen were united, at that time there occurred a fearful thing which makes your hair
stand on end. _PaGcalikA tassa yAcanti rodantA bherave vane vessantaraGca maddiM ca
sabbe raThA samAgatA tvim nosi issaro rAjA rajiAm kAretha no ubho ti_: All the people
who come out together from the kingdom paid respect to the prince Vessantara and
Maddl in the forest and unanimously requested them to be their lord and king to rule the
kingdom.

_Chakkhattiya pabbaM niThitaM_: This is the end of the section on the six nobles, which
consists thirty-six stanzas.
Section Twenty Four

**Nagon** : The section on entering the city

**Namotassatthu** : May homage be to the Buddha.

_TaM sutvA mahAsatto pitarA saddhiM sallApanto imam gAthA mAHA_ : _MahAsatto_

When the Great Being, who had been an ascetic practicing meditation in the forest, heard their invitation of his father and all the subjects, _sallApanto_ : he wanted to make sure to his father so that he addressed thus: _Dhammena rajjaM kArentaM raTHA pabbAjayittha maM tvA Gca jAnapadA ceva negAmA ca samAgatA_ : “Father, you and the country people and the city men were furious and gathered together to exile me from the kingdom though I had done nothing wrong, simply giving away the white rain bringing elephant which was my own, while I was ruling the kingdom righteously. Why do you come today to invite me to return home to be a king? I am not worthy for that. So, father, I request you to go back to reign in the kingdom after seeing your son.”

_Tato raJA attano dosAM khamApento Aha_ : Then King SaGjaya heard this and realized that it was his own fault; he asked pardon of his son saying this stanza: _DukkataM ca hi no putta bhUnahaccaM kataM maYA yo ham sivInaM vacaNA pabbAjesiM adUsakaM_ : “My beloved son, do not linger about the past, if I did not listen to the voice of the people as they arose together asking me banishing you because you gave away the white elephant which brings prosperity for the kingdom, you might have been killed. As I listened to the voice of the people, without considering much, it was a great sin indeed to banish the innocent man at the command of the Sivis. Please do pardon me for doing that, my precious son.”
RAJA: Having explained what he had done wrong in the past, King Sāgāya begged him to dispel his own grief, he spoke this stanza: *Yena kanači vaBBena pitu dukkhaM udābbhe mAtu bhaginiyA cApi api pABehi attano*: “One should remove a father’s grief in whatever form, or a mother’s or a sister’s, uncle’s and ante’s, teachers’ and tutors’ and relatives’ even ready to give his own life. TATA: Precious son, do leave your ascetic life and do not make the forest as your home, nor moon and stars as your light. Do not put on clothes made of tiger and lion skins; do not live on fruits and roots in the forest. Do not suffer yourself by observing precepts in the jungle. I request you and my daughter-in-law to give up your ascetic life, a pot of water and clothes made of animal skins to wear fine clothes. I request you, my son, to consider the welfare of subjects and me and to forget the past. Do accept my invitation to return home.”

*Bodhisatto pi*: The Great Being, willing to rule the kingdom, he did not even consider much to show the sign of accepting the invitation as to reveal the fault of his father in the past. So, he told his father thus: *Dhammena rajA*: what had been said before for the second time. At that moment, King Sāgāya urgently requested him to return to rule the kingdom for the second time. *MahAṣatto*: The Great Being accepted the invitation of his father saying thus: ‘SAIhu: Well done’. ATHA: Then, the sixty ministers who was born at the same time with the Great Being, ascetic, realized that the Great Being gave his agreement, they cried thus: “This is the time to wash, mighty king. Wash off the dust and dirt!”

*ATHA mahAṣatto thokaMkAlaM*: At that time, the Great Being who was clever with vocabularies, asked them to wait for a little while and then he went into his hermit hut and took off his hermit’s clothes and prepared himself. Then he came out of the hut and said: *IdA navamAse aDDDmAsaG ca*: For nine and a half months, I have lived
here in this hut made by Indra, king of the gods, leading and practising the life of the ascetic, and the earth quaked when I attained the ultimate of perfection by my giving.’ After saying, he had circled the hermit hut three times in gratitude and worshiped it with the five-fold prostration and stood there in front of them. *Atha sAkkappAdayo kesa massu kammAdIni kariMsu:* Then, the barber shaved his beard and the other attendants completed his toilet. Therefore, when he was anointed as a ruler of the kingdom, he shone in all his jewellery and adornments radiantly like the king of gods.

*Tena vuttaM:* Therefore, it is said to the Venerable SAriputta thus: *Tato vessantaro rAjA rajojallaM pavAhahi, saBBaM vuttaM caritvAna rAjavesaM adhArayi:* Then King Vessantara washed off the dust and dirt. *cajiTvAna:* After giving up hermit requisites, the hut, counting beads and a walking stick, an alms bowl and a pot of water, as if the divine had prepared. He looked splendour. *AthassA mahaA ahosi:* At that time, whenever he looked the place quaked, those skilled in auspicious words uttered them, they took up all kinds of musical instruments and there was a noise like thunder in the depths of the great ocean. *HatthI ratanaM alankaritvA upannAyimsu:* The finest elephant was well decorated and let it up and he wore a fine sword and mounted that finest and well-decorated elephant surrounded by sixty ministers born at the same time who wore various kinds of jewellery.

*Tato maddimpi nahApesuM sivikaGGA samAgatA:* Then they also bathed Queen Maddl and adorned and sprinkled the water of consecration on her head, when they poured blessing water they cried: “May Vessantara protect you!”

*TamattaM pakAsento satthA Aha:* Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke: *SIsantAto sucivattho sabbA bharaBa bhUsito paccayaM nAgamAruyha khaggaM bandhi paranapaM:* Monks, there was a time when king Vessantara had bad luck and
exiled into the great forest leading a life of ascetic, however it was a fortunate time for him when he came back to rule the kingdom, enjoying kingly pleasure. When he was washed the whole body, he was putting on clean clothes and all various kinds of ornaments, he climbed up the finest elephant and bound on his sword.

*Tato saThisahassAni yodhA*: Then sixty ministers, all fine looking men, born at the same time with him surrounded the lord and made him happy. *Tato maddimpanhApesuM sivikaGGA samAgatA*: After that, the Sivis maidens together washed Maddl and cried: “May Vessantara protect you, and JAï and KaBhA and atho pi taM mahArAjAsaGJayo abhirakkhatu: may the great king SaGjaya look after you”

*IdaM ca paccayaM laddhA*: For that reason, and because of their misfortune, they celebrated in the lovely mountain glen. For that reason and because of their misfortune, the beautiful lady was full of joy and delight and happiness to reunite with her children. For that reason and because of their past bad luck, the beautiful lady was full of joy, delight and pleased with her children. “My beloved children, I had not collected much fruits and roots in the jungle but I was blocked by tigers and lions I was nearly killed when you were led by the old Brahmin. *AgatA*: There was a silence when I returned to the hermitage, I worried and was looking for you everywhere but I could not see both of you even on your father side. Then I asked where you had been but he just merely stared at me and kept silent. I was frightened and thinking that you were sleeping; or you were killed by tigers; or carried by lions to be eaten; or crumbed by elephants and bitten by a snake. I had been looking for you anywhere; such as riverside, in the forest, in the cave and drawn in the river so on and I found you in no place. I had been looking for you everywhere again and again for I could not find you then I prayed your father to tell me but silence was the answer. I was sad and sorrowful indeed and my voice did not come
out at all. As a result of walking long, shouting and crying, I was unconscious right on
the ground. When your father saw me unconscious, he brought me sprinkled water on
my face so that I regained my consciousness back. Only then he told me the truth that
you had been given away to a Brahmin. I cried and cried till my face was fully of tears
and no happiness for me at all. I dreamed of carrying both of you to bed; kissing you;
sometimes I dreamed of you as if you were with me sucking from my breasts for milk;
sometimes I saw you as if you were here with me taking fruits and roots by the evening;
sometimes I felt as if you welcomed me saying, “Our mum has come, our mum has
come”. But indeed I saw you nowhere and I cried the whole night and day. I used to see
that when I was about to go to the forest in search of fruits and roots, both of you asked
me to come back soon and you always welcomed me when I returned. Then you hugged
me sucking my breasts for milk and sometimes I felt as if you were talking together
near me. Since the time you left me behind, I made determination, “if I do not die, may I
reunite my children and my wish has been fulfilled now.”

EvaM pltitA hutvA : Removing grief and ful of happiness and joy, Maddl took
both of her children on to her laps and said thus: EkabhättA pure AsiM niccaM thabhDilasA
yinl iti metaM vattaM Asi tuyhaM kAmA hi puttakA : “I only ate one meal a day and
always slept on the stony ground, and that my vow for love of you my children. Your
father too ate one meal a day and always slept on the stony ground, I got up early in the
morning preparing water and toothpaste and all, I went to the forest in search of fruits
and roots to serve only your father everyday. I had been suffering a lot living without
you, my beloved children and I cried whenever the time of taking meal without seeing
both of you. TaM me vattaM samidhajjaM : Today that vow I had made is rewarded and
now I am reunited with you, my beloved children. MAtujaMpi ca : May that vow made
by your mother protect you and Pitujampi ca: the vow made by your father protect you through out your life, my children. Atho pi tam maharaja: May your grandfather, the king of the Sivis protect you, my children. PuttakA: My beloved children, yaM kaGcitta kataM puGGaM: whatever meritorious deeds, I and pitucca: your father have performed, Sabbena tena kusalena: by all that merit and truth, may you live long and free from death.”

Phussati pi kho devl: Queen Phusat arranged boxes full of fine clothes and jewellery and her attendants to send them to her daughter-in-law to wear in the future. Ito pathAya: From that day onward let Madd my daughter-in-law wear fine clothes and various jewellery and then she made those boxes sending to her.

TamatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: KapPA sikaGca koseyyaM khomakodumbalAnica sassyu sBuHya pAyesi yehi maddi asobhatha: Phusat sent her daughter-in-law garments of cotton, silk, linen, and clothes made of kodumbara, which made Madd more beautiful. Phusat sent her daughter-in-law, a golden necklace, a bracelet, and a jewelled zone, which made Madd more beautiful. Phusat sent her daughter-in-law linen, a necklace, and choler all of gems, which made Madd more beautiful. Phusat sent her daughter-in-law a tiara and a jewel for her brow, and gems of many colours, which made Madd more beautiful.” “Phusat sent her daughter-in-law a brooch, a girdle, trinkets and jewels for her feet, which made Madd more beautiful. When the princess looked at the jewels, she was radiantly like a goddess in Nandana. SIsaBhAtA sucivatthA sabbAankAra bhUsiTA asobhatha rAjaputtl tAvatIMsa va accharA: Bathed the whole body and putting on fine clothes and various kinds of jewellery, the princess was as beautiful as a heavenly nymph in the heaven of the thirty three gods.
asobhatha: Like a plantain tree blew the wind in a grove of many coloured creepers, the princess looked beautiful with lovely lips. Like a brilliant-feathered bird that flies the airy ways, the princess looked more beautiful with her lovely red lips. 

Tussa ca naganamesum nativuddhavat gajam sattikkham sarakkham IsAdantam uruham: “They brought her a fine young, mighty and strong elephant, with tusk like poles, unruffled by sword or arrow. 

Sammadinagam: Maddi climbed up on the fine young mighty and strong elephant, with tusk like poles unruffled by sword or arrow. 

Iti te ubho: When the preparing was ready, they both, with a great pomp, made their way to the camp. 

Saggaya raja: King Saggaya after anointing his son, stayed in the mountain arranging mountain and various kinds of sports for one month with twelve brigades. Young and old alike enjoyed much in the forest so that they even did not want return home. Mahasattassa tejena: by the power of the Great Being’s meritorious deeds, wild animals in the forest became tamed and wild animals and birds harassed no one in the great forest.

TamatthaM pakasento satthA Aha: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus:

Sabbamhi taM arGGamhi yAvantettha migA ahU vessantarassa tejena nAGGamaGGam viheThayuM: It was because of the power of loving kindness of Vessantara, all animals in the forest without harassing one another, lived peacefully. 

Sabbamhi taM araGGampi: It was because of the power of loving kindness of Vessantara, no birds in the jungle harassed each others. 

Sabbamhi taM araGGamhi: All animals, birds, beasts and all the creatures in the jungle met sorrowfully together in one place on the departure of Vessantara, who made the kingdom of the Sivis prosperous.”
All birds there throughout the jungle met sorrowfully together in one place on the departure of Vessantara, who made the kingdom of the Sivis prosperous. *SubbaMhi taM araGGamhi* : All animals there, throughout the jungle about three leagues, sorrowfully did not make sounds on the departure of Vessantara, who made the kingdom of the Sivis prosperous. *SabbamhitaM araGGaMhi* : All birds there throughout the jungle about three leagues sorrowfully did not make sounds on the departure of Vessantara who made the kingdom of the Sivis prosperous. They say: “From now on, the preyed birds, which are quite brave, will look for their meats, and we dare not sing freely and loudly as we had done. We will suffer a lot after the departure of Vessantara, who made the kingdom of the Sivis prosperous.”

*SaGayya narindo* : When king SaGaya, the lord of men, had done one-month sports in the jungle, he sent for his army commander to ask him whether the road his son would take had been decorated. When the commander informed him it had completed and it was time to move, *Vessantarassa ArocApetyA senA AdAyanikkhami* : he sent word to Vessantara and he departed with his army. *MahA satto* : Surrounding by a great company, the Great Being journeyed the sixty leagues along the decorated road from the heart of VaMkà hill or Crooked Mountain to the city of Jetuttara.

*TumatthaM pakAsento satthA Aha* : Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus:

*PaTiatto rAjamaggo vicitto puphasanthato vasi vessantaro rAja yattha yAva jetuttarA purA* : The royal road from where Vessantara lived to Jetuttara was ready with decoration scattering flowers. King SaGaya caused them arranged the road, which the Great Being would take to return home, with various decorations and arrangements, such as water, kinds of drink, meals and food at both sides of the road, at the gates, at
the rest houses and at villages. Those young and old who did not consume drink, they took only meat and sugar cane juice; those who liked drink, they rushed into the rest houses and drank till they became drunk and could not control themselves falling down to the ground. Everyone enjoyed his best saying that he did enjoy his past luck, as they had to pay nothing but just taking whatever they wanted when the Great Being came home. The road, thus decorated with various kinds of eatable things, and sorts of drink from the VaMka Mountain to the kingdom, Jetuttara was like the heavenly road.

_Tato sathisahassAni yodhono:_ When the king Vessantara, the maker of the Sivis kingdom prosperity, returned the kingdom, sixty thousand fine looking fighting men accompanied him on all sides. _OrodhAca:_ When the king Vessantara, the maker of the Sivis kingdom’s prosperity, returned to the kingdom, women and children, merchant and Brahmins, accompanied him on all sides. _HatthArohA anikaThA:_ When the king Vessantara, the maker of the Sivis kingdom’s prosperity, returned the kingdom, the mahouts and charioteers, guards, and bear foot soldiers, accompanied him on all sides. When the king Vessantara, the maker of the Sivis kingdom prosperity, returned the kingdom, well armed leather clad soldiers wearing skull-helmets, with swords in their hands, went in front of the prince to guard him to Jetuttara. It took two months for the king to pass the road of sixty leagues, and then he reached the kingdom of Jetuttara and entered the city, the place that had been well prepared to welcome him and six of the nobles went to the palace.

_TamatthaM pakAsengto satthA Aha:_ Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke thus: _Te pAviMsu puraM rammaM bahUpAraatoraBaM upetaM annapAnehi naccagitehi cUbyayA:_ When the six noble families took two months to reach the city, people in various places welcomed and presented them with many kinds of presents on
the way. They were accompanied with all sorts of music and playing, singing and dancing. *UpetaM annapAnehi* : At that time, in the kingdom of Jetuttara, there were plenty of meal and food, such as fish and meat prepared in many ways, fried fish and meat, toasted fish and toasted meat, cooked fish and meat, rice and rice-cruel and besides, there were plenty of fruits with different taste. *NaccagItehi* : There were many kings of music and drum beating everywhere, flutes were played too and some danced and some sang when the Great Being returning the kingdom. *VittÅ jAnapA AsuM* : Country men, with their children, and grandchildren from all directions in every village, gathered together to welcome the Great Being, the bringer of prosperity to the Sivis kingdom when he returned home. *Celukkhepo pavatthettha* : People were so happy that they welcomed the Great Being with various flags and many kinds of flowers and gifts when he returned to the palace. *Nandi pavesi* : The king ordered them to beat the drum to inform people in all directions to set free the animals by giving them money and no more slaughter; monkeys and birds became tamed and lived among the people in harmony. The prisoners were set free to live their lives happily when the bringer of prosperity to the Sivis’ kingdom arrived.

*Se nagaraM pavitha divase yeva* : On the very day the Great Being entered the city, he thought to himself towards the dawn thus : *Sve vibhAsA yaratiyA* : When the night passes and at dawn, the beggars will come as they have heard that I have returned. What shall I give them?” *TasmiMkhaBe* : At that moment, Sakka, the king of god’s thrown became hot. He noticed and realized the reason for it. So, he caused a rain of the seven kinds of jewels like a thundershower, filling the ground to the east and west of the royal palace as high as waist. *Sakko* : The king of gods then caused the rain of the seven kinds of jewels to fill the whole city up to knee height. *Punna divase* : The next day, the
Great Being ordered his ministers to let people have those possessions fallen into their own compounds. Avasesā: those fallen on to the roads had been collected and put it into his treasuries with the treasure from the grounds of his own house. So, he always had enough wealth to distribute to the needy in future.

Tamatthaṃ pakAsento satthA Aha: Explaining this to monks and the people, including King Suddhodana and his relatives, when he was residing at the monastery of Nighodha, the Buddha, the Teacher of the three worlds spoke thus: JAtarUpa mayaṃ vassaṃ devo pAvassi tavade Vessantare pavīthamhi SivInaṃ raThavaDDhano: “When king Vessantara came back to the kingdom to rule it for the second time, the kind of gods caused a rain of the seven kinds of jewels like a thundershower, filling the ground to the east and west of the royal palace as high as waist and he caused the rain of the seven kinds of jewels to fill the whole city up to knee height. From that day onward the Great Being continued his practice of giving things to the needy and never lacked offerings.

Tamatthaṃ pakAsento satthA Aha: Explaining this to the monks, the Teacher spoke:

Tato Vessantaro rAjA dAnaM datvAna khattiyo kAyyassa bhedaṃ sappanGGo saggAṃ so upapajjAtAti: When the maker of the prosperity of the Sivis’ kingdom came back to the city, the king of the gods, Indra, made a rain of gold fall on that place. After so much giving and at the end of his life, the mighty king Vessantara was reborn in the heaven of Tusita waiting to be born in the human world and became the teacher of men and gods, who taught beings freedom from defilements. SatthA imaM gAthA sahassa paTmaBdDitaM mahAvessantara dhammadesanaM AharitvA jAtakaM samodhAnento osana gathAṃ Aha: When the Teacher of the world had completed this discourse of the Vessantara JAtaka
with its thousand stanzas to the monks who were free of defilements, He identified the characters in this *JAtaka* thus: *Lobhenupento jUjako tadA so pApAtibhAro ahu devadatto amittatApannA jUjakachAyA abhUtavAdl ahuciGcAmA*ni. JUjako: The old greedy man named JUjaka, who was like a demon, who was afraid of wife’s running away; who lived in the village of DunaviTha running after worldly pleasure; entering into the forest and asked for the prince JAli and the princesses KaBhA, became cruel Devadat (Devadatta) who tried to kill the Buddha and was swallowed alive by the earth. He has been suffering in the AvicI hell for a long time.

*AmittatApanA*: The young and beautiful wife of the old Brahmin named AmittatA who knew no gratitude at all and planned for her husband to go away from her, in this life, was reborn as a brave and sinful CiGcamA. Persuaded by the wrong view holders as a plot, she came to where the Buddha was and accused him of a father of a baby that was about to be born among the people. As a result, she was suffering from the bottom of the Avicl hell under where Devatatta was. CetAbhidhA: The clever hunter, Ceta who had been assigned by the king of Ceta kingdom to be the doorkeeper in order to prevent any enemy to reach prince Vessantara, became Channa, who accompanied the Buddha to AnomA River when he renounced the world to become an ascetic.

*IsI pavarO*: The ascetic, Accuta who lived in the deep forest lonely close to the prince Vessantara and practiced ascetic practices, aiming to get rid of suffering, became Venerable SAriputta, the right hand chief disciple of the ThAthaGata.

*Sakko*: The king of gods, Indra who took the shape of a Brahmin coming to the forest to ask for the beautiful Maddl to help Vessantara to fulfil his generosity, became the meritorious Anuruddha who possessed divined eyes. *Visukammo*: The clever god, Visukam who was sent to the earth by king Indra to build two ascetic huts for the Great
Being to meditate, became Mahā Moggallāna, the great disciple of the Tathāgata. Kattā: The minister, who quickly arranged the road for the prince Vessantatara to come back home, became Mahā Kassapa, the great disciple of the Buddha, who was famous for practising austere practices. Paccaya nāgo: The great white elephant, born at the same time with the Great Being, and was given to the eight Brahmins, became the horse, Kabdaka on whose back the Tathāgata rode to renounce the world. Amaccho: The able and brave minister, who knew right and wrong, and was sent by King SaGjaya to give information the prince Vessantara’s exile, became the Venerable KArudAyI who led the way to Kapilavattu.

Rāja: The king of the kingdom of Kālinka, who sent eight Brahmins to ask for the rain bringing white elephant, became the Venerable Ānanda, the attendant of the Buddha. Atha brahmaBA: Of the eight Brahmins, RAma who led the group, became Venerable KoBdaGGa who was the first disciple of the Buddha; the second Brahmin JUjà was Venerable Assaji; the third Brahmin, LakkhaBa became Venerable Bhaddiya; the fourth Brahmin, JotimAntA became Venerable VAMpatti; the fifth Brahmin, YaGGa became Venerable KiMbila, the arahat; the sixth Brahmin, SujAtA became Venerable SihaN, the seventh Brahmin, YAma became Venerable Ambuta and the eight Brahmin became Kullila;

Caturo devaputto: The four divines who took the shape of the four deer became Venerable UpAlí who kept good discipline, meritorious Venerable SIMball who honoured by men and gods; wise Venerable MahĀkaccAyana and Venerable Upagutta respectively. Tayo devaputto: The three deities that took the shapes of a big lion, a spotted tiger and yellow tiger to block Maddl for her way to retune home in time, became the novice SumaBa, who conquered the king of the dragons, Venerable
Kappina, who was expert in the teaching of the Buddha and Venerable Kappinananda respectively. The deity who took the shape of the king Vessantara and looked after the prince JĀli all the way became Venerable JUMBUPATTI, and the goddess who disguised herself as Maddl and looked after the princess, KĀBHĀ, became the learned BhikkhuNI, KHEMA.

**SāGaya nāmo**: King SāGaya, the father of Vessantara, who listened to his subjects, after a couple of births and deaths, became King Suddhodana, the father of the Gotama and the leader of SĀKYA people.

**Phussati pikho devī**: The queen Phusati, after getting ten wishes from Indra, came to earth and became the mother of Vessantara. After death she was born in the Tusita heaven and enjoyed her life there for four thousand years. As her life span expired in the heaven, she was reborn in the city of Kappilavutthu as the queen who gave birth to me (the Buddha). After giving birth to me, she was reborn in the heaven as a man named MahAMAYADEVAPUTTA.

**Maddl susobhā**: The beautiful Queen Maddl blessed with beauty, the daughter of King MaddarAJ, became the beautiful YasodharA, the mother of Venerable RAHULĀ.

**JĀli kummaropī**: The prince JĀli, my son who spoke sweetly with grandfather and rarely crossed became my own son, Venerable RAHULĀ.

**KĀBHĀbhidhānā**: But the lovely princesses, KĀBHĀ, the sister of JĀli, who was beaten and driven by the cruel Brahmin, was not reborn in the same family with JĀli because when she was beaten and driven by the old cruel Brahmin; she was very angry and cursed that she would never be reborn in such an inhuman family who gave her away to the old cruel Brahmin. Instead she was reborn as the daughter of the wealthy **Kappina**, who was expert in the teaching of the Buddha and Venerable Kappinananda respectively. The deity who took the shape of the king Vessantara and looked after the prince JĀli all the way became Venerable JUMBUPATTI, and the goddess who disguised herself as Maddl and looked after the princess, KĀBHĀ, became the learned BhikkhuNI, KHEMA.
family in the city of Sāvatthi. As she was the queen of beauty, she was given the name of Uppalava. No man could resist her beauty. So, most of the men, such as the sons of the generals, ministers and wealthy men, wanted to win her love by presenting her valuable things. As she knew the danger of men’ fighting among each other only to win her love, she became a Bhikkhuni named Upalava who mastered the Tipiṭaka and got rid of all defilements. Ye rājA macchA: Sixty thousand ministers and all the people at that time, after their death, became my followers, bhikku, bhikkhunī, upāsaka and upāsikā.

Yo Vessanataro rājA: King Vessantara, after fulfilling his perfection for four aeons and one hundred thousand years, aiming to gain Buddha-hood, was reborn as the prince Siddhattha, Aham evaM lokanAtho: became I, the Tathāgata who was the Teacher of the three worlds. Tumhe bhavantA: You all, ladies and gentlemen, ministers and nobles who gathered here and listened to the teaching, do honour to this VJ well for your better lives. You all, whoever, want to gain comfortable life and reach the ultimate happiness (Nibbana), try to get rid of all kinds of defilements by offering and listening to all the gathā (stanzas) in every section. Do it faithfully by offering one thousand lamps or candles; one thousand flags and one thousand banners; one thousand lotuses and various kinds of flowers; one thousand portions of rice balls and various fragrant sandalwood and other kinds of offering things in order to meet Phra Sriariyametteyya who is to be the next Buddha. Do perform meritorious deeds diligently without interruption. Hence, your wishes would be fulfilled.

NagarakaBdaM niThitaM: The end of the section on entering to the city which consists of forty nine stanzas.

End of the story of Vessantara.
Aniong Vesā : The section on the good results of Vessantara

Namotassatthu : May homage be to the Buddha.

SAdhavo sukkhakAmAnaM pathentometteyyya dassanaM vesantaraM sunitvAna dinetaM pariThitaM : “Dear listeners who want to be free from all sorts of suffering in this life and the life after until obtaining Nibbāna, the ultimate happiness, and indeed want to see the future Buddha, Ariyametteyya, faithfully listen to the excellent teaching of the Buddha which is known as MahĀvesantara-jĀtaka containing a number of stanzas counted as one thousand in all, within a day”. Ye catu sutvAna sakkaccaMsu pUjAsasi : Whoever listens to the teaching called the Vessantara jĀtaka faithfully, as a result of listening it; he will depart from the human world and will be reborn in heaven. Tato cutvA tAvatiMsA : When the life of that person in heaven comes to an end, he will be reborn in human world and will lead a happy, comfortable, prosperous, healthy life and will get everything whatsoever he wishes. KaBDapUjAkaravayeke : Whosoever venerates this Vessantara jĀtaka faithfully, will never be born in the world of suffering or hells. When he dies, he will be reborn in heaven”.

Tena vuttaM : Therefore, Scholars utter thus: DasavaraM labbhitvA yejanA pUjAyanti mahantena puñña vipAkena sabbaMkAmaM samijjhanti : “Dear listeners, whoever offers, venerates and listens to the teaching called Dasavara, the first section of the Vessantara jĀtaka containing nineteen stanzas, intentionally and faithfully avoiding greed, hatred and desire, will be reborn in the human world and will be in a
better place than others. Wherever he is reborn, he will lead a happy, prosperous, healthy and wealthy life”.

*KuTAgAredasampanno* : Whoever takes *Dasavara* for his veneration, wherever he is reborn, will lead a happy, prosperous, healthy and wealthy life, surrounding by a number of retinues.

*HimavannA labbhitvA puJAyanti* : Whoever faithfully and intentionally sponsors the teaching called *HimavannA* the second section of the *Vessantara JAtaka* which contains one hundred and thirty-four stanzas with fragrant materials, he will gain whatever he wishes.

*Surabhi bhariyaM puttaM* : Whoever sponsors and venerates the teaching called *HimabAn* whenever he is born in the human world, he will gain many things such as good family, full of animates and inanimate objects and he will never encounter enemies and will lead a happy and prosperous life.

*DAnakaBdaM labbhitvA puJAyanti* : Whoever faithfully sponsors and venerates the teaching called *DAnakhan* which is the great offering section containing two hundred and nine stanzas; they will be wealthy, healthy and prosperous in this life and the life after. *DAsAdAsIsattasataM* : He will have seven hundred maids, servants, animate and inanimate objects, treasures, clothes, edibles and gems as the result of the offering of the teaching of *DAnakhan*.

*VanapavesakaBdaM labbhitvA puJAyanti* : Whosoever sponsors and venerates the teaching called *VannapavesakanDa* which contains fifty-seven stanzas, whenever he is reborn, he will be powerful and respected by the people. He will be surrounded by various retinues, wise and brave. He is like the king *Cakkavatti*, Universal Monarch.
\textbf{JUjakapabbaM labbhitvA puJiAyanti} : Whosoever sponsors and venerates the teaching called \textit{JUjaka pariccheda}, which contains seventy nine stanzas, he will be reborn in a prosperous family such as a royal and wealthy family. He will be attractive and will be appreciated by people who see him. On the other hand, if he wishes to obtain the five kinds of worldly things, his wishes would be fulfilled.

\textbf{CuLavaBBanA labbhitvA puJiAyanti} : Whosoever respectfully and intentionally sponsors and venerates the teaching called \textit{CuLabon}, which contains thirty-five stanzas, without ignorance nor miseriness, when he dies from the human world, he will be reborn in a high place which will have a beautiful garden, a fine pond with pure and cool water, where the ground is smooth and wide, full of fragrant, peaceful and comfortable things and full of edible things.

\textbf{MahAvaBBanA labbhitvA puJiAyanti ye puggalA} : Whosoever respectfully sponsors and venerates the teaching called \textit{Mahabawn} which contains eighty stanzas, as a result of good deeds of offering this teaching, he is reborn and blessed with a good field, a nice house decorated by various colourful things and also blessed with animate and inanimate objects. In addition, there will be a beautiful garden, clear lake, many kinds of colourful flowers. He is peaceful, comfortable, wealthy, and healthy and enjoys many sorts of edible things.

\textbf{KummArapabbaM labbhitvA puJiAyanti} : Whosoever sponsors and venerates the teaching called Kumarapan, the excellent section of the \textit{VJ} which contains one hundred stanzas about a foolish Brahmin who did not understand and went to beg for two children of Vessantara, at whatever time he is reborn, he will never be in a world of suffering. He will lead a happy, prosperous, healthy, wealthy life and he can even become a universal monarch.
Maddlpabbam labbhitva pujayanti ye puggala: Whosoever faithfully sponsors the teaching called Maddl which contains ninety stanzas, the excellent section that the Buddha preached, he will lead a prosperous, comfortable, healthy wealthy life here and hereafter.

SakkapabbaM labbhitvA yejanApUjeti: Whosoever women, men or clergies who faithfully sponsor and listens to the teaching called Sakkapan which consists of forty-three stanzas about the king of gods, Indra, who formed himself as a Brahmin coming forward to beg for Maddl, a lovely wife of Vessantara, that person when she departs from the human world, he is reborn in a superior heavenly state and proceed onto a better state. When he is reborn in the human world, he will lead a happy life, superior to others, for example; will be good looking, have a pleasant voice and please everyone who happens to see him. He will be wealthy and he will be able to use his wealth for meritorious deeds as much as he wants and he will please friends and deities too. When he departs from the human world, he will be reborn in a heavenly abode surrounded by a number of deities.

MahArAja pabbaM labbhitvA pUjAyanti: Whoever faithfully sponsors the teaching called MahArAja pabbaM which is the eleventh section of the Vessantara JAtaka consisting of sixty-nine stanzas about the king SaGeya. King SaGeya paid a reward to a Brahmin to obtain his grandchildren return to his kingdom. Those people whenever they are born will live peaceful and happy lives, full of wealth and will never meet with danger. They and will gain all the requisites, animate and inanimate objects and be surrounded by DasAdAsI (various retinues) as fruits of offering the section called MahArAja in the teaching of MahAvessantara.
Whoever faithfully sponsors and listens to this teaching, in the Mahārāvessantara within the section named Sakkhatiya which narrates about the six noble members and consists of thirty-six stanzas, will be reborn with wealth and lead a peaceful life. In any travel he makes, he will be respected, out of danger and will please the people who see him.

The ladies and gentlemen who faithfully sponsor and venerate the teaching Mahārāvessantara, the section of Nagarakan consisting of forty-nine stanzas about the king Vessantara returning to his kingdom, will never be born in a suffering world. This is the result of the meritorious acts of offering and venerating this teaching. It will follow that they will be reborn in a wealthy family or royal family, be powerful and gain much wealth. They will be surrounded by uncountable retinues and gain animate and inanimate objects.

Whoever has offered and venerated the teaching Vessantara, as has already been mentioned, will enjoy a good worldly life as well as heavenly and will never depart from his lovely family and relatives.

The scholars had said as Dear listeners, please listen carefully everyone who is born in this world with faith and wisdom has the ability to judge what is right and wrong as to the nature of human beings, therefore as the faithful one has offered the excellent doctrine of the Buddha that had been said as the “Excellent Teaching” that should be paid respect and veneration, this will bring one to a happy state and that person will never go to a world of suffering such as Abhaya loka.
Kandapuja labhita: Whoever has offered any one of the sections of Vessantara is said to receive equal merit. For those who have attentively and faithfully listened to this teaching from the beginning to the end without missing any part of it, because of the value of listening, will carry one result. The value of offering will carry another; both are included in the Pañca-mavatthu-kiriya: Scholars have considered that in order to obtain both of these two worthy of merit, both listening and offering, one has to listen respectfully to receive its merit. Scholars have considered thus: if the Pañcakhandha or five aggregates of that person has vanished in the heaven world or Tāvatimsa and taken birth in the human world, he is said to be born in an upper family such as Royal or Brahmin or wealthy family, and will never be born in a lower family. Aṅgapacangasamana: On one hand anyone who offers this excellent doctrine is said to receive good personal characteristics such as an attractive, smart appearance and pleasant voice that is pleasing to everyone who sees him including men, and deities. He will never born as a disabled person. He is said to be a wise and intelligent one. These kinds of higher fruits will only follow for the person who made the effort of venerating and offering this excellent doctrine. Yam kigci ThitakaMma khippameva samijGati: Conversely, anyone who has been offering this excellent doctrine, if he wishes to be a Universal monarch (cakkavatti ruler) or to become a future Buddha, Sammasambuddha or Paccekabuddha Asītisāvaka or Arahant or if any woman wishes to be the mother of a Bodhisatta who will be a Buddha, or if she wishes to be a Bhikkhunī or a beautiful woman similar to Visākha or Upalavāṇṇā, or wishes to be a wise and intelligent person, her wishes will be fulfilled. Parivaje rAjadande: Anyone who has offered this VJ is said to be freed from the penalty of the king that is Rājadanda, and will never be killed by any other wild animals such as lion, tiger or elephant and they will have no need to fear.
In addition such a person will never be killed by the poison of others. On the contrary he will lead a peaceful and long-life free from all kinds of sickness and difficulties. 

\textit{ApAyaGca tubhya\textit{M puttaM} :} On the one hand, he will never be reborn into the four states of suffering that is \textit{AbhayabhUni}. \textit{DlghAyugA sadA hontu :} Anyone who has offered this excellent teaching will be fulfilled and blessed by the five aspirations Dhamma. They are \textit{Ayu :} long life, \textit{vaBBa :} pleasant appearance, \textit{sukha :} happiness, \textit{bala:} smart, strength and \textit{patibhAna :} knowledge. \textit{CakkhusotAghAnaGca :} Whoever has offered and venerated this excellent teaching when taking \textit{Patisandhi} reunion for the next birth he is said to have a very pleasant physical body such as clear eye-sight, bright-ears, a good looking face, strong teeth, pure and white, and enjoy fortuitous worldly lives.

\textit{SAmisis\textit{Ani dantA :}} In addition, anyone who has offered this \textit{Vessantara JAtaka}, when he reborn, is said to have a very pleasant character \textit{Lakhanakicca} and will have very nice teeth with no smell, be smart, have a pleasant figure and a pleasant voice.

\textit{Uparasayathagandha\textit{M mukkha\textit{M vAyanti :}} On the one hand, \textit{Ye jane :}} whosoever has offered this \textit{Vessantara JAtaka}, the excellent teaching, in his future life, is said to have very pleasant teeth and mouth, while talking it will produce a very pleasant perfume, spread to all directions, similar to the scent of flowers. He is intelligent and masters many languages. \textit{NavasahassasabbakArabhUsitA :} Anyone who has offered faithfully and with clear intention to the teaching of the \textit{Vessantara JAtaka}, after death, he is reborn where wealth, animate and inanimate objects are provided for him before his birth; such as a thousand elephants; decoration with gold and jewellery; and nine thousand horses; and various courageous retinues surround to him and he will lead a
very luxury life. On the one hand, if he will have nine thousand, fifteen year old beautiful maidens with beautiful clothes who are ready to serve him.

*YaMyaMisasikAmAnaM* : Anyone who offers this *Vessantara JAtaka*, wherever he is reborn, either in the human world or in heaven, he will be prosperous and his wish will be fulfilled. *YadA ariyameteyyo buddhohesanti anAgate kaBdapUJa tarenevadasanaGcajanuttamaM* : Listen ladies and gentlemen when Sri ariyametteyya, Any one who offers or sponsors this excellent teaching, as a result of that wholesome deed, he will meet the future Buddha, Ariyametteyya when Ariyametteyya is reborn in the human world and achieves enlightenment at the root of Bodhi-tree, for the well-being of men and gods.

*Tena vuttaM* : Therefore these stanzas are declared by the scholars thus *KaBDapUJaKArayeva Ō nisaMsa-mahAphalaM cavityAna tena puGGena deva loke ramantite iti* : Listen ladies and gentlemen; *ye janA* : Anyone who wishes to be benefited, has to offer this teaching, by preparing in the following way: preparing a thousand balls of rice and a thousand flowers, a thousand bottles of fragrance, a thousand candles and a thousand flags, as one can find. They are for the decorations and offerings when a recital ceremony of this *Vesantara JAtaka* is taking place. This *Vessantara JAtaka* is preached by the Buddha and consists of thirteen sections. All the thirteen sections have to be completed within a day, starting with the first section, *Dasabawn*, the ten wishes from the king of the god (*Indra*); *HimabAn*; about the king Vessantara giving the white elephant away to the Brahmins; *Dãnakhan* about the generosity of the king and the leaving of the palace; *Vannapave* mentioning about the life of a poor Brahmin leaving home; *Cuţlabawn*, about an ascetic; *MahAbawn*, about the forest where the hunter *Jetaputta* showed the way to a poor Brahmin; *Kumarapan*, about king Vessantara
giving his two children to the Brahmin Jūjākā; Maddīl, about Maddīl’s suffering in losing her two lovely children and how she searched for them; Sakkapan, describing how the king of the gods who disguised himself as a Brahmin coming forward to beg for Vessantara’s wife; Mahāraj, about the king Saṅjeyā redeeming his grandchildren from the poor Brahmin Jūjākā; Sakkhati, the section about the six members of the royal family reuniting; Nāgara, the section about King Vessantara returning to the city.

Young and old who pay attention and listen to this teaching, from the beginning to the end, as a result of wholesome deed PuGGakiriyAvatthu, of listening to this teaching, they will benefit with innumerable results. Such devotees, when they depart from the human world will be reborn in the heaven surrounded by various deities with different kinds of entertainments. Santhika-dhammadesanA sotapaTphala tini pApuBiMsu : Those who faithfully pay attention at all time, sponsoring and listening to this teaching to the end, and those who practice charity, morality and meditation, they will be able to attain the state of Sotapanna, patimagga phala arahanta. This will be the result of wholesome deeds they have performed.

MahAvessantara pUjAnisaMsAsamatA : This is the end of the teaching on the beneficial results of sponsoring and venerating the MahAvessantara.
Section Twenty Six

Vipak Vesan : The section on causes and effects of Vesantara

Namotassathu : May homage be to the Buddha.

JAtAdivase yevA vanassapukAsa carinikArenuka agiverAsamumukaM sabba vassati
hatthlyehikA anitAmaNgala satthljAno thapetvA pakAmitappaM mahAsatassa paccayaM
katvA uppanata paraMmayo tena kurissa : “Dear Listeners,” this teaching is on the
consequences of King Bodhisatta Vesantara and his wife, MaddI and his two children;
JAli and KaGhA as stated in the MahA-jAtaka. Scholars narrate this teaching to us in the
following way: “When the Bodhisatta Vessantara was taking birth in the human world,
there was a white beautiful elephant which came from the sky and it became the
auspicious elephant for the Bodhisatta. This white elephant later became a fine horse
called Khandhaka on which the Prince Siddhatha rode when he renounced the world.
This was the consequence of forgetting to pay back a debt of a penny of silver to the
Bodhisatta in the past life. Once his debt was settled, he departed from this world and
was reborn as the leader of the deities in the heavenly world. YasmA : whatever the
causes and TasmA : therefore one should not take anything of others’.

On the other hand, the Buddha, in his last birth as King Vessantara, gave away
his white elephant to a group of Brahmins. The subjects of the country did not agree
with this action and reported their objection to his father, King SaGeyya. Vessantara
was, therefore, forced into exile. This is a consequence of his past actions and are
recounted in the following way: AtitekAle : Once the Bodhisatta was born as a powerful
king called JUmbUnarAjA He fought against the neighbouring kingdoms to extend his
empire. The kings of the neighbouring countries not only surrendered their lands but
their families had to flee from their homes and were forced to live in the jungle. The Bodhisatta, later, gave them permission to return to their own countries. The Bodhisatta, out of compassion and loving kindness, handed power back to the kings to maintain their duties and responsibilities to rule once more their own lands. They returned to their kingdoms happily. The consequence of this was that the Bodhisatta, in the life of king Vessantara, was forced into exile and later welcomed back to his kingdom.

The next important point is the story of Brahmin Jujaka and the story of JAli and KaGhA. In a past life, these two children were born in a poor family. They were employed as cow hands who looked after the ox of a millionaire. There was an agreement that the millionaire would give them two items of clothing if they looked after his ox up to 15 days. It happened that the Brahmin Jujaka was himself born as the ox of that millionaire.

On the morning following the agreement, the children carried out their duties by tying the ox with ropes. They started beating it. In the evening, they drove the ox home and set it free to relax and let it fed with grass. However, they did not let the ox eat in the day time for 15 days.

Having performed their duties, the millionaire gave them two items of clothing. Once they received them, they returned home. On the way home, they happened to meet a monk. The monk had no robes to wear because his robes were stolen by thieves. Taking this good opportunity, the children offered their clothes to the monk. As a result of the good deed of offering the clothes to the monk, they were reborn in a wealthy family and finally they were reborn into a royal family called JAli and KaGhA. When the
Brahmin Ujåka came forward to beg for the two children, he started tying and beating them. In the evening, he released them and the deities came to look after and feed them. Now, the past action of Madd will be told. There were, at that time, many fruits that Madd could collect near to her house. However, she had to go and find the fruits and roots in a distant area. The reason for this was due to her past life.

Madd was born in a wealthy family; she was so beautiful so that her farther built a seven storey house for her to live in. The Bodhisatta, that time, was born into another family but he renounced the world and led an ascetic life in the jungle. One day, the ascetic wished to have some tasty fruits and he meditated deeply and entered into a trance. By the power of his meditation, he descended into her garden. At that time, the princess was visiting the garden accompanied by her retinues. The ascetic saw the princess. When the princess returned, the ascetic followed her to the palace. The people could not prevent them from meeting in this way. This was due to their past actions. They had friendly talks in the palace and the next morning, the ascetic left. From that day on, the ascetic, after collecting fruits, would go to the palace and present the fruits to the princess. He then taught her the doctrine. After both their deaths, they met together for many lives until they were reborn as King Vessantara and Queen Madd. Thus the reason why Madd had to go deep into the deep jungle looking for fruits was the result of receiving fruits brought from a distant jungle by the ascetic. Next we will tell the story of how King Vessantara gave his two lovely children away without telling his wife but blamed Madd for being late returning home.

The reason was that in a previously life, King Vessantara and his wife, were incarnated as a couple of white cat-fish. They had two children. One day, the male fish went out searching for food but was trapped in a fisherman’s net. The fisherman who
caught him put the fish into a pot and went on to find more fish. The Bodhisatta, the male white cat-fish, wanted to be freed from death. He made a wish. Due to his perfection of his past actions through good deeds, the seat of the king of gods (Indra) became hot. This made Indra review what was happening in the human world. After viewing, Indra came down to the human world and adopted a form called Nava. He said to the fisherman the following: “Dear fisherman, if anyone happens to eat this white cat-fish, he will be demolished, you better release it”. The fisherman released the cat-fish and arrived home safely but it was late in the evening.

In the day time, his wife had worried and had waited for her husband to return home. As a result of him not returning, she hid her children in a safe place. When her husband returned home and asked her where the children were, she replied angrily: “Thou leave home in the early morning and just come back late in the evening; thou don’t have any worry about the family or thou secretly have a relation with others”. When the Bodhisatta did not see his children, he fainted and felt down to the ground. He was about to die. When his wife saw the terrible thing happening, she rushed for water and spread it over his face. Then the Bodhisatta regained his consciousness and asked her: “Where are our children?” Only then, she brought the children to him. When the fish and his wife died, they were reborn and lived together life after life until the life of Vessantara and Maddl. The past actions which Maddl had performed affected her.

This is the end of the teaching concerning the causes and their effects influenced on the life of MahAvessantara.
Appendix I

Tai-Khun Script Transcription

This Tai-Khun script transcription is extracted from *The PAdaeng Chronicle and The Jengtung State Chronicle Translated*, 1981 by Saimong Mangrai, a Cambridge University graduate. He made use of this script when he translated *The PAdaeng and The Jengtung State Chronicles*.

### Consonants

| ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง | ง |
| k | kh | g | gh | gh | Ng |
| c | ch | j | jh | jh | G |
| T | Th | D | Dh | B |
| t | th | d | dh | n |
| p | ph | f | b | f | bh | m |
| y | r | l | v | s | L | M |
| hN | hn | hm | hy | hr | hl | hv |
### Vowels

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#### Combination form

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#### Samples

- tok ong pom kō bōk lōD hlōng lōn kōm
- kök kōD köp mō mōng hmōn hlōm kō, pok
- tôD tôn cōm rek jeng geD ren phep dem
Appendix II

Programme of the recitation of the Th. VJ
sponsored by Loong Nan Darn & Nang Seng and family
at Wat Duya, Kengtung
February 21-23, 2006,


Parts of the Th.VJ and the recitors assigned to recite them

Day One

1. *Parâni*, by a novice, son of Sai Yi and Nang Seng Arm, Kung Kyaung
2. *U'Bhassa*, by a novice, son of Loong Nan Hong and Nang Kham, Pha Karn
3. *Suttanta*, by a novice, Phra Keau, a resident monk of Wat Duya
4. *Vinaya*, by a monk, Mun Charrng La, a resident monk of Wat Duya
5. *Abhidhamma*, a novice, son of Loong Nan Sarm Laut and Nang Seng, Naung Tarng
6. *Pathama Malai*, the first part, by a monk of Wat Mong Li Peang Chai
7. *Pathama Malai*, the rest part, by monk of Wat Nong Pha
8. *Dutiya Malai*, the first part, by a newly ordained monk, son of Sai Seng and Nang Seng, Warn Pok Dai
9. *Dutiya Malai*, the rest part, by a newly ordained monk, son of Loong Seng Doung, Warn Pok Nuo
10. *GathA Phuk Tuan*, the first section of the first stanzas, by a monk of Wat Jeng Yeun
11. *GathA Phuk Tuan*, the first section of the rest stanzas, by a monk of Wat Som Mai
12. *GathA Phuk Song*, the second section of the first stanzas, by a monk of Wat Jeng Ngarm
13. *GathA Phuk Song*, the second section of the rest stanzas, by a monk of Wat Wat Ho Khong
14. *GathA Phuk Sarm*, the third section of the first stanzas, by a monk of Wat Ashok
15. *GathA Phuk Sarm*, the third section of the rest stanzas, by monk of Wat Jeng Khum
16. *Vipak Vesan*, by a novice, a son of Loong Nan Hong and Nang Kham, Warn Maun Ruo
17. *Anisong Vesan* by a novice, son of Lung Ain, Warn Nong Kar
Day Two

18. Dasapon Kao, the first parts of ten boons, by a novice, son of Sai Tip and Nang Peng Hom, Warn Par Charm
19. Dasapon Kao Song, the second parts of ten boons, by a novice, son of a novice, son of Sai and Seng and Nang Seng, Warn Pok Mai
20. Dasapon Kao Pai, the last parts of ten boons, by a novice, nephew of Nan Kaup and Pa Seng, Warn Kung Kyaung
21. Himapan Kao, the first section of the Himavana forest, by a novice, son of Nang Seng Tu, Warn Sai
22. Himapan Song, the second section of the Himavana forest, by a novice, son of Sai Yi and Nang Seng Arm, Warn Kung Kyaung
23. Himapan Pai, the last section of the Himavana forest, by a novice, son of Sai Nong and Nang Kham Pan, Warn Hau
24. Danakan Kao, the first parts of alms-giving, by a novice, son of Nan Naon and Nang Tip, Warn Yarng Kean
25. Danakan Song, the second parts of alms-giving, by a novice, son of Sai Tip and Nang Pin, Warn Yarn Hauk
26. Danakan Sarm, the third parts of alms-giving, by a novice, son of Sai Chai and Nang Arm, Warn Lai Kang
27. Danakan Pai, the last parts of alms-giving, by a novice, son of Sai Seng and Nang Aou
28. Vanapave Kao, the first parts of Vanapavesana, by a novice, son of Sai Lio, Warn Pok Tai
29. Vanapave Pai, the last parts of Vanapavesana, by a novice, son of Sai Mung and Nang Arm, Warn Pok Noa
30. Jujauk Kao, the first parts of Jujaka, by Phra Lung, a resident novice of Wat Duya
31. Jujauk Song, the second parts of Jujaka, by Mun Charng La, a resident monk of Wat Duya
32. Jujauk Pai, the last parts of Jujaka, by Phra Keau, a resident novice of Wat Duya
33. Chullapon Kao, the first parts of the small forest, by a monk of Wat Warn Da
34. MahAbon Kao, the first parts of the big forest, by a monk of Wat Dhammodaya
35. MahApon Pai, the last parts of the big forest, by a monk of Wat Kong Mu Kham
36. KumArapan Kao, the first parts of the section on children, by a monk of Wat Mong Li Peang Chai
37. KumArapan Song, the second parts of the section on children, by a monk of Wat Dhammodaya
38. KumArapan Sarm, the third parts of the section on children, by a monk of Wat Kong Mu Kham
39. KumArapan Pai, the last parts of the section on children, by a monk of Wat Som Kham
Day Three

40. Madd I Kao, the first parts of Maddl, by a monk of Wat Nong Pha
41. Madd I Song, the second parts of Maddl, by a monk of Wat Warn Pok Noa
42. Madd I Sarm, the third parts of Maddl, by a monk of Wat Pha Karng
43. Madd I Pai, the last parts of Maddl, by Phra Long Sai, a resident novice of Wat Duya
44. Sakkapan Kao, the first parts of Sakka, the king of gods, by a monk of Wat Som Siri
45. Sakkapan Pai, the last parts of Sakka, the king of gods, by a monk of Wat Ashok
46. MahArAj Kao, the first parts of MahArAja, by a monk of Wat Ho Kong
47. MahArAj Song, the second parts of MahArAja, by a monk of Wat Jeng Khum
48. MahArAj Pai, the last parts of MahArAja, by a monk of Wat Wawkut
49. Chakhatti Kao, the first parts of the six nobles, by a monk of Wat MahAbodhi
50. Chakhatti Pai, the last parts of the six nobles, by a monk of Wat Jeng Larn
51. Nagon Kao, the first parts of entering the city, by a monk of Wat Jeng Yeun
52. Nagon Song, the second parts of entering the city, by a monk of Wat Jeng Ngarm
53. Nagon Pai, the last parts of entering the city, by a monk of Wat Som Siri

Midday is listening to a talk, usually, on the benefit of being the sponsors of the ceremony by a senior monk and sharing merit to mark the completion of the Th. VJ recitation.
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