

# 早期佛典禪修公式在不同文本中 所呈現之特質

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## 中文摘要

本文旨在探討佛教之禪修公式在早期佛典中(以漢譯阿含經和巴利尼柯耶為主)的呈現情形。文中選取了兩個公式作為討論的例子。這兩者皆取自於早期佛教中可能是最長、最核心的一個修行道架構。此道架構又可以用巴利《沙門果經》(DN2)所記載者為代表。

第一個要說明的公式為「初禪公式」，第二個用來舉例者則為「根門守護公式」。在「初禪公式」中我們發現 DN2 之描述，特別是在公式之前序句(introductory sentence)部份，與其他版本有一些出入。在比對的過程中我們採用了多元化的對象，包括應用漢、巴、梵語版本的《沙門果經》或相當經，以及其他與《沙門果經》無關但也是在描寫同樣道架構的阿含經類。

在比對中，我們著重平等看待各版本之間的差異和相同點，從分析這些異同點中我們提出幾點值得探討之處：為何 DN2

有其獨特的表達方式？其原因何在？這種異於它者的方式有甚麼根據和用意？為何各版本之間會產生異同？在排除了版本勘勘學的原因之後這些異同點的特徵顯現了某些更深刻的意義。其中譬如對禪修公式的傳播和使用，乃至對早期佛典的集成與傳播的理解具有某些提示。弄清這些特質，對我們回顧和了解佛典之傳誦（如口傳文獻、傳誦師、教義公式化、佛典編制體例原則等等課題）也許會有不小的幫助。這些意義在本文的第二個例子中也有所補充和說明。

透過以上兩個例子，我們可以找出一些禪修公式呈現方式的特質。筆者認為，若我們能夠以類似的方法去檢驗更多禪修公式的話，我們可以發現、累積到更多不同的特質，進而歸納出公式中一些重要的體例。本文結論所嘗試要表達的是：徹底的、多重的比對是必要和有用的。經過深度比對的結果，我們即可利用某些發現來檢討目前學界對佛典傳承史所提出的模式或假說。

# **Remarks on Buddhist meditation formulas occurring in various versions of early canonical texts. \***

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## **Introduction**

It is generally accepted that the early Buddhist canonical texts (i.e. Pali Nikāyas and Chinese Āgamas) were composed and transmitted orally during the early stages of their formation.<sup>1</sup> It is also pointed out by scholars that one of the typical features of this literature is that it contains many formulaic expressions, or

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<sup>1</sup> A brief discussion on this subject see O. von Hinüber 1990; R. Gombrich, 1990; L.S. Cousins, 1983 and S. Collins, 1992. An excellent summary to the evidence of the oral origin in early Buddhist texts is presented by M. Allon, 1997, pp. 1-8.

formulas.<sup>2</sup> These formulas, and some other fixed units of words, such as lists,<sup>3</sup> are frequently seen in such literature. They were applied as important devices in expressing the key concepts of doctrine, and in composing the main body of the Buddhist texts. They were particularly of great value in their mnemonic function.<sup>4</sup> This feature is very important to the studies of the transmission and formation of early Buddhist canonical texts - a complicated issue for modern scholarship. Although a few scholars have attempted to offer explanatory models to explain this issue,<sup>5</sup> the overall picture still remains unclear. However, recent research in this field has begun to suggest that the investigation of formulas in Buddhist texts might have important implications for our understanding of the subject. The aim of this paper is to contribute to such an endeavour, and it constitutes a preliminary report on my examination of a special type of formula - the Buddhist meditation formulas - through various sources. In the following sections, I

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<sup>2</sup> Gombrich, 1990, pp. 21-2; Cousins, 1983, p. 1; Allon, 1997, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> A comprehensive study on the lists and their significance in Buddhist literature is done by R. Gethin, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> The formulas and lists may well reflect the original and earliest form of the teaching or the words of the Buddha, as suggested by some scholars, though this speculation requires further extensive studies.

<sup>5</sup> The models suggested by Cousins, 1983; Gombrich, 1990 and Allon, 1997; are of particular useful.

will explain how I examine the formulas, and how I attempt to elucidate some of their most significant implications.

First, I would like to provide a simple definition of what I regard as meditation formulas: they are formulas that are relevant to meditation practice. In the Buddhist sense, meditation practice can be designated, in general, as specific categories of profound practice, such as *samatha* meditation (calming meditation) and *vipassana* meditation (insight meditation). Alternatively, it can mean a specific kind of technical practice, such as *satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness meditation). In my current usage, it is applied to an even broader range of Buddhist practice including *sīla* (moral conduct), *saṃādhi* (concentration) and *paññā* (wisdom) or *abhiññā* (higher knowledge). In other words, meditation practice here refers to the whole of the so-called 'threefold training'. The reason for embracing such a wide range of practice is that each of the trainings represents an essential stage of meditation practice, and all of them are equally important components of the complete Buddhist path to awakening. The present paper is concerned specifically with the range of meditation formulas found in one prominent path structure in the Pali Nikāyas and Chinese Āgamas, since this constitutes a typical expression of most of the important Buddhist practices. This particular path structure, which embraces the threefold training as a standard path to awakening, is found many times in early Buddhist texts. The most representative case is

to be found in the *Sīlakkhandha-vagga* of the Dīgha Nikāya (DN), particularly in the second *sutta* of the DN, the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* (DN2), where it is presented in its complete version. More than twenty kinds of different formulas are seen in this path structure,<sup>6</sup> and I will use two of them (the first *jhāna* formula and the *indriya-*

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<sup>6</sup> The full list of the formulas is listed as follows:

1. The arising of the Tathagata (*tathāgata uppajati*).
2. The obtaining of confidence in the Buddha's teaching (*saddham paṭilabhati*)
3. The accomplishment of *sīla* (*sīlasampanna*)
4. The restraint of faculties (*indriyesu guttadvāra*)
5. Mindfulness and Clear Comprehension (*satisampajañña*)
6. Contentment (*santuṭṭha*)
7. Dwells solitarily (*vivittaṃ senāsanaṃ bhajati*)
8. The abandoning of five hindrances (*pañcanīvaraṇapahīna*)
9. The gaining of first *jhāna*
10. Second *jhāna*
11. Third *jhāna*
12. Fourth *jhāna*
13. The inclination of mind to seeing and knowing (*nāṇadassana*)
14. The inclination of mind to mind-made body (*manomayakāya*)
15. Manifold supernatural power (*iddhividha*)
16. Divine Hearing (*dibbasotadhātu*)
17. The ability of knowing other's mind (*cetopariyañña*)
18. The knowledge of recollecting past lives (*pubbenivāsānussatiñña*)
19. Seeing beings passing away and reborn (*sattānaṃ cutūpapātañña*)
20. The destruction of the cankers (*āsavānaṃ khayañña*)

*saṃvara* or *indriyesu guttadvāro* formula) as my examples in the current paper.

In addition, I must explain how I define a ‘formula’. A formula is generally one passage, or a set of fixed sentences that expresses a specific meditation practice. It is sometimes difficult to precisely define a formula, and scholars have not been entirely consistent either with regard to their exact length, or in setting limits to the group of phrases they contain.<sup>7</sup> However, although the length of the formulas used in this essay do vary in these ways, with words, phrases, or even whole sentences, being added or left out in the different versions quoted, their status as formulas is relatively clear. Both the shortest ‘bare formula’ and its expanded versions will be treated as expressions of the same practice, and regarded equally as examples of the same formula. Indeed, the ‘variations’ in the formulas – the additional parts, and their wording – are themselves of primary interest in this investigation.

My examination of these formulas is based on an extensive textual and literal critical comparison, as well as doctrinal considerations. I attempt to investigate the same formula as they occur in many sources, including the Pali,

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<sup>7</sup> Cf Allon, 1997, pp. 9-15.

Sanskrit and Chinese versions.<sup>8</sup> The comparisons are made on two different levels. First, the same formula can be examined in various versions of the same text or context; I refer here to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, which is preserved in one Pali text (DN2), a Sanskrit (*Sanḥabhedavastu* or SBV) text, and at least two Chinese sources (*Amozhoujing* or DĀ20, *Jizhiguojing* or JZG), and the path structure this text reveals. Second, the various occurrences of the same path structure in different texts can be examined. For example, we may find it in the Majjhima Nikāya (MN), and its counterpart in the Madhyama Āgama (MĀ). Moreover, a similar formula, or sometimes the same formula, may also occur in contexts other than the path structure, thus providing a good opportunity for the comparison of different usages. In short, multiple methods of examination can be undertaken, including comparison between different collections of the canon (e.g. DN and MN, DĀ and MĀ), as well as inter-recensions (e.g. MN and MĀ) and inter-collections (MĀ and DN, MN and DĀ), and so on, and so forth. The implications of each method of comparison will be explained in the

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<sup>8</sup> The Tibetan versions have been left out simply because of the limited scope in this paper.



discussion, although I must emphasize that the extent of the comparisons made will necessarily be limited by the scope of the present work.

The following sections set out the details of the ways in which two formulas were examined and the results of the comparative studies through various sources.

### **Example 1: the introductory sentence in the first *jhāna* formula**

The first example I would like to present is the first *jhāna* formula. It is commonly known to Buddhist scholars that in Buddhist meditation theory the attainment of the first *jhāna* is usually gained after the abandoning of the five hindrances, and this is particularly clear in the path structure mentioned before. For instance, in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* (DN2), the first *jhāna* formula is stated after the description of the abandonment of the five hindrances (D I 73, 20-74, 12):

*tass' ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahīne attani samanupassato  
pāmujjam jāyati, pamuditassa pīti jāyati, pīti-manassa kāyo  
passambhati, passaddha-kāyo sukham vedeti, sukhino  
cittam samādhīyati.*

(When he sees that these five hindrances have been abandoned within himself, gladness arises. When he is gladdened, rapture arises. When his mind is filled with rapture, his body becomes tranquil; tranquil in body, he experiences happiness; being happy, his mind becomes concentrated. )<sup>9</sup>

*so vivicc' eva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi dhammehi  
savitakkaṃ savicāraṃ vivekaṃ pīti-sukhaṃ  
paṭhamajjhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.*

(Quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, he enters and dwells in the first *jhāna*, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought and filled with the rapture and happiness born of seclusion.)

The above formula can be divided into two parts: the first is an introductory sentence, and the second is the core content which is considered to be the main body of the formula.

A Sanskrit parallel to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* (or *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* in Sanskrit) in the *Saṅghabheda-vastu* (SBV)

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<sup>9</sup> By quoting the passage from DN2, I am using Walshe (1987)'s English translation. The English translation of MN and SN are taken from Bhikkhu Bodhi's works (1995, 2000). The English translation of AN is taken from Woodward and Hare (1932-1936) with some alteration.

of the Gilgit manuscript has recorded the formula in the following form (242, 20-243, 11):<sup>10</sup>

*imāni pañca nīvaraṇāni cittopakleśakarāṇi prahāya prajñā  
daurbalyakarāṇi vighāṭapakṣyāṇy anīrvāṇasamvartanīyāni.  
viviktaṃ kāmair viviktaṃ pāpakair akuśaladharmaih  
savitarkaṃ savicaraṃ vivekaṃ prītisukhaṃ prathamam  
dhyānam upasampadya viharati.*

A Chinese parallel to DN2, the twentieth *sūtra* of the Dīrgha Āgama (DĀ20), has the following statement of the formula (T01n1, 85b10):

自見未離諸陰蓋心、覆蔽、闇冥，慧眼不明。  
彼即精勤，捨欲、惡不善法，與覺、觀俱，離生喜、  
樂，得入初禪。

(Seeing for himself that the hindrances have not been abandoned, which are the obstacles of the mind, concealed, darkness and not bright of the wisdom-eye, he practises earnestly; secluded from the senses pleasures, evil and unwholesome states, he enters and dwells in the first *jhāna*,

<sup>10</sup> The passage of SBV is quoted from Gnoli (1977-8) with reference to Meisig (1987).

which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought and filled with the rapture and happiness born of seclusion. )<sup>11</sup>

Another Chinese parallel, the *Jizhiguojing* 寂志果經 (JZG), which is an independent translation (not included in the existing Dīrgha Āgama collection) of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* (or *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*), has preserved the following reading (T01n22, 274c08):

除五蓋、遠塵勞心力得智慧，而脫眾厄、刑獄、飢餓。已去愛欲、眾不善法，有想、有行，寂而清淨，行第一禪。  
(Abandoning the five hindrances, away from the defilements, the mind is able to gain wisdom, he has rid himself of dangers, prisons and hunger, [etc.] Secluded from the sense pleasures and unwholesome states, he enters and dwells in the first *jhāna*, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, tranquil and purified.)

All the above four cases presumably reflect the same text, but it is seen that although the main body (i.e., the second sentence) of the formula remains the same, the introductory sentence in DN2 is different from the other versions. Whilst the Sanskrit and Chinese

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<sup>11</sup> The English translation from the Chinese Āgamas is my own translation.

sources preserve a shorter sentence, which describes the nature of the hindrances (i.e. the obscuration of the mind and wisdom, etc.), DN2 contains a longer sentence, which expresses the gradual arising of the happy mind, from gladness to concentration. It seems that two kinds of introductory sentences are recorded in the first *jhāna* formula in different texts. For the convenience of comparison, and by applying the first key word from the sentence, I tentatively called the first the *pāmuja* fixed sentence (as seen in DN2), and the second the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence (as seen in SBV, DĀ, JZG).

Furthermore, a second observation can be made: in the introductory sentence (i.e., the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence), the Sanskrit and Chinese versions differ slightly in terms of the wording, particularly in the description of the hindrances. Some have more adjectives qualifying the hindrances, whilst others have fewer. Their occurrences can be recalled as follows (the underlined phrases represent the variant reading):

SBV:

*imāni pañca-varaṇāni cīttopakleśa-karāni prahāya prajñā-  
daurbalya-karāni vighātapaksyāny anīrvānasamvartaniyāni.*

DĀ20:

自見未離諸陰蓋心、覆蔽、闇冥，慧眼不明。

JZG:

除五蓋、遠塵勞心力得智慧。

MN and AN:

*so ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya  
dubbaliḥkarane*

Why is DN2 different from the others? What is the significance of this? And do the differences of wording in the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence tell us anything in particular?

These questions become even more compelling when we look at further occurrences. In the Pali accounts, the path structure, which is the same as DN2, is also seen in the MN(e.g. MN27) and AN(e.g. A II 208). They read the first *jhāna* formula in the following way (e.g. M I 179, A II 208):

*so ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya  
dubbaliḥkarane.so vivicc' eva kāmehi vivicca akusalehi  
dhammehi savitakkaṃ savicāraṃ vivekajaṃ pīti-sukhaṃ  
paṭhamajjhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.*

A Chinese parallel to the MN27, the MĀ146, agrees with the above reading (T01n26, 657c21):

彼斷此五蓋、心穢、慧羸。

離欲、離惡不善之法，有覺、有觀，離生喜、樂，逮初禪成就遊。

It is somehow surprising that the introductory sentence in the MN and AN does not follow DN2, but rather makes use of a form that is similar to the non-DN2 versions. In other words, MN and AN both apply the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence rather than the *pāmuḍḍa* fixed sentence as the introductory sentence to the first *jhāna* formula. It is of interest to ask why both MN and AN do not follow DN2, especially when they too are coming from the Pali tradition? And why is the expression in MN and AN so close to SBV, DĀ and JZG?

Many more examples throughout the Nikāyas and Āgamas can be enumerated, but these are sufficient for our discussion. On the basis of the aforementioned accounts, several points can be made:

1. There are variations between the same texts in various versions.
2. The variations are also seen between different collections in the same tradition, i.e., DN and MN.

3. Variant readings occur between different recensions: the Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese sources.
4. The main content of the formula remains the same in each version.

How are we to interpret all of these points?

One simple and usual way to explain them is that these texts were preserved by different Buddhist schools in different periods of time. For instance, the Pali source is believed to belong to the Theravadā tradition, SBV has a Sarvāstivāda origin, DĀ may be a product of the Dharmaguptaka, while the affiliation of JZG is uncertain. The variations are probably a result of changes occurring within each school, or simply speaking, each school has its own version of the text. Again, a simple reason for explaining the second point is that the difference between MN and DN versions may come from the *bhāṇakas* system. However, this general view, though plausible and useful, is not very satisfactory, since it does not tell us much about the real causes for the variations.

Another interpretation is that the variations originated perhaps from the fallibility of the redactor(s), the transmitter(s), the scribe(s) or even the translator(s) of the texts, and that the changes are made either intentionally or unintentionally. However, when we examine the above variations in detail, they do not seem to



involve 'corruptions' or 'errors' from the perspective of textual criticism.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, as we do not have definite evidence of an original root text from which all these versions and all the variations were later made, we need a methodology involving a complex study based on textual criticism, before we can obtain direct evidence that the redactor(s), etc., are to 'blame'. However, since surviving manuscripts of early texts and textual criticism are relatively rare, and no complete collections of manuscripts representing each tradition have so far been assembled, relatively little can be done through textual criticism to account for the variations.

Nevertheless, it is still possible to find significant clues in the existing published or printed versions of the Nikāyas and Āgamas. I will try to demonstrate a simple application of this in the following discussion.

From the above evidence, it appears that the arrangement of the introductory sentence in DN2 is unique, since other versions, including MN and AN, follow another seemingly more common

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<sup>12</sup> The common possibilities for the corruptions suggested by the textual criticism (though mainly based on manuscripts traditions) are: handwriting, changes in spelling and pronunciation, omissions, addition, transposition, context, the influence of Christian thought (or religious thought in general), deliberate activity of the scribe, etc., (Cf. Reynolds and Wilson, 1991, pp. 222-233) and they do not seem to apply to the variations seen in Buddhist texts, at least in explicit way.

type of introductory sentence. Is the usage in DN2 a deliberate interpolation? Or is DN2 correct in adding the *pāmuja* fixed sentence to the formula? In order to investigate these questions, I searched for the occurrence of the *pāmuja* fixed sentence (if at all possible a full list of occurrences) throughout the four Nikāyas and Āgamas, to see whether it is valid to put this fixed sentence in the place reserved for the beginning of the first *jhāna* formula.

I found that the main part of the *pāmuja* fixed sentence consists of the set phrase: *pāmujaṃ jāyati, pamuditassa pīti jāyati, pīti-manassa kāyo passambhati, passaddha-kāyo sukhaṃ vedeti, sukhino cittaṃ samādhīyati*. This set phrase is seen in many places, and I will call it the *pāmuja* set phrase. It appears in various contexts, and their occurrences will be summarised in the list below. Note that in the list I use the arrow '→' to refer to the sequence of the relevant phrases or themes that occur before or after the *pāmuja* set phrase, thus indicating the main points of the context in order.

1. *Pañca-vimuttāyatanāni* (D III 241-3, A III 21-3, T1, 51c; T1, 230c-231b)

Five practices (receiving teaching, etc.) → *so tasmim dhamme attha-paṭisaṃvedī ca hoti dhammapaṭisaṃvedī ca tassa attha-paṭisaṃvedino dhammapaṭisaṃvedino pāmojjaṃ jāyati* → **the *pāmuja* set phrase**

2. Nava-dhammā (D III 288, S II 31-2, A V 1-7, A V 311-7, T1, 485a-487c; T1, 572b-c; T1, 563c-564a)

*yoniso-manasikaroto pāmojjaṃ jāyati → the pāmujja set phrase → samahitena cittaṇa yathā-rūpaṃ pajānāti passati, yathā-bhūtaṃ jānaṃ passaṃ nibbindati, nibbindaṃ virajjati, virāgā vimuccati.*

3. The recollection of the Buddha, etc. (M I 37-8, S V 398, A III 285; V 329, 333-4, T2, 574a-c)

*so: buddhe ... dhamme ... saṅghe ... avaccappasādena samannāgato 'mhi 'ti labhati atthavedaṃ, labhati dhammavedaṃ, labhati dhammūpasamhitaṃ pāmujjaṃ → the pāmujja set phrase → (one of the below cases)*

- (1)MN: *Brahma-vihāra → liberation*
- (2)SN: *samāhite citte dhammā pātubhavanti, dhammānam pātubhāva appamādavihārī teva saṅkhaṃ gacchati*
- (3)AN: *ariyasāvako visamagatāya pajāya samappatto viharati, saryāpajjhāya pajāya avyāpajho viharati, dhammasotasamāpanno buddhānussatiṃ bhāveti*

4. Satta-bojjhaṅga (M III 85-6; S V 66-9; 332; 339)

*satisambojjhaṅga → dhammavicayasambojjhaṅga → viriyasambojjhaṅgo, āradhaviṇiyassa uppajjati pīti nirāmisā → pītisambojjhaṅgo, pītimanassa kāyo pi passambhati cittaṃ*

*pi passambhati → passaddhisam-bojjhaṅgo, passaddhakāyassa  
sukhaṃ hoti sukhino cittaṃ samādhīyati →  
samādhisambojjhaṅgo, so tathā samāhitam cittaṃ sādhuṃ  
ajjhupekkhitā hoti → upekhāsambojjhaṅga.*

##### 5. Individual account

M I 283: abandoning of covetousness, etc. → purified and  
liberated from evil states → **the pāmuḍḍa set phrase** →  
*Brahma-vihāra → āsavānaṃ khayā*

S IV 78: dwells with restraint over six faculties → **the pāmuḍḍa set  
phrase** → *samāhite citte dhammā pātubhavanti,  
dhammānaṃ pātubhāvā appamādavihārī tveva  
saṅkhaṃ gacchati*

S IV 351: good conduct → *Brahma-vihāra* → reflecting: *yañca  
kāyassa bhedaṃ param maraṇā sugatim saggaṃ lokam  
upapajjissāmīti* → **the pāmuḍḍa set phrase**

S V 156: bare formula of *satipaṭṭhāna* → inspiring sign → **the  
pāmuḍḍa set phrase** → reflecting on withdrawing: *so itī  
paṭisamcikkhati: yassa khvāhaṃ atthāya cittaṃ  
paṇidāhim. so me attho abhinipphanno. handa dāni*

*paṭisaṃharāmīti. so paṭisaṃharati ceva na ca vitakketi  
na ca vicāreti, avitakkomhi avicāro ajjhataṃ satimā  
sukhamasmī ti pajānāti.*

A I 243: harmonious company → beget much merit → dwell in  
*Brahma-vihāra (brahman bhikkhave vihāraṃ tasmim  
samaye bhikkhū viharanti) → yadidaṃ muditāya  
cetovimuttiyā pamuditassa pīti jāyati, pīti manassa kayo  
passambhati, passaddhakāyo sukhaṃ vediyati, sukhino  
cittaṃ samādhiyati*

D I 196: abandoning acquired self → defiling mental states  
disappear → purified states grow strong → *diṭṭhe va  
dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja  
viharissati → pāmujaṃ c'eva bhavissati pīti ca  
passaddhi ca sati ca sampajaññaṃ ca, sukho ca vihāro*

I do not intend to go further in explaining the details or minor differences in each occurrence of each category as listed above, but to sum up the main concern. The *pāmuja* set phrase is found in five categories of contexts, but none of them follows the *Sīlakkhandhavagga* by placing it in the intermediate location between the abandoning of hindrances and the attainment of the first *jhāna*. Therefore it seems that in terms of 'form' the above

occurrences do not support DN2's usage. However, a noticeable point is apparent, that some of the above accounts have revealed a relationship between the *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase and the *samādhī* practice. Although this relationship is unclear in the first category of the accounts, the following connection is clear from some examples (S IV 78, V 398) in the third and fifth categories: **the *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase → *samāhite citte dhammā pātubhavanti***. The second and fourth categories also make it clear that the *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase is a series of states leading up to *samādhī*. Additionally, in some cases the set phrase is preceded by *sīla* practice, followed by wisdom practice (e.g., *yathābhūtañānadassana*) and concludes with the result of liberation. As a consequence, the structure of *sīla*, *samādhī*, *paññā* and *vimutti* is clearly indicated, and there is no doubt that *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase signifies the *samādhī* practice. From this point of view, the expression of **the *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase → *samāhite citte dhammā pātubhavanti*** accords quite well with DN2's usage on the sequence of **the abandonment of five hindrances → the *pāmuḍḍa* fixed sentence → first *jhāna***. In other words, the *pāmuḍḍa* set phrase denotes a stage leading to *jhāna*, and is thus equivalent to the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence. For this reason DN's usage does not seem to be an accident, because the arrangement of the *pāmuḍḍa* fixed sentence seems to be as valid as the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence. If this is so, it would lead us to think of how the formula was formed. First, the main body of the

formula remains the same, but another fixed sentence was applied (*pāmuḍḍa* fixed sentence) to replace the more common fixed sentence (*nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence) on a possibly valid doctrinal basis. There is no contradiction involved in exchanging these two sentences, which may have been intended to make a specific point,<sup>13</sup> although the simple use of a preferred similar sentence is the more likely explanation. Second, the expression of DN2 implies that the meditation formula is not an entirely fixed and unchanged entity. The formula is a composition of different smaller units, each of which I refer to as a fixed sentence or set phrase. Relevant fixed sentences or set phrases are put together to constitute a formula. This information is probably not new to scholarship, but the formation of a formula in terms of smaller building blocks may reveal some message regarding how the oral tradition worked. Before we move on from here, let us briefly look

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<sup>13</sup> We may have some other doctrinal reasons to support this. In a private communication, Mr Lance Cousins has kindly offered me a solution that *pāmuḍḍa* pericope could be seen as an *upacārasamādhī* (in contrast to the *jhānas* which are *appanāsamādhī*). This is very profound but unfortunately I haven't had success to find direct evidence to prove this. In another occasion, Dr Rupert Gethin pointed out to me that DN2 has an emphasis on the progression of happiness in its context, and the *pāmuḍḍa* fixed sentence is a case in point to the arrangement. His comment is also a very good point for interpretation, though further clarification is needed.

at another point regarding the variation of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence as referred to earlier.

The expression of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence is basically about the hindrances that are described as the corruptions of the mind and the weakeners of wisdom. It is found that different wording of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence occurs in the SBV, DĀ, JZG and MN. At first sight, the differences seem to be trivial and unimportant. For instance, SBV differs from MN and AN only by the addition of two extra adjectives to the hindrances: tending to vexation and leading away from *nirvāṇa* (*vighāṭapakṣyāṇy anirvāṇasamvartanīyāni*). And DĀ20 has some adjective words about the obstruction and darkness of the hindrances (蓋、覆蔽、闇冥、慧眼不明) that are not seen in other versions. However, when we compare these differences to the occurrences of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence in other places in the Nikāyas and Āgamas, some interesting points do arise. This is especially true when we look at the chapter of ‘connected discourses on the factors of enlightenment’ (*bojjhaṅga-saṃyutta*) in the Saṃyutta Nikāya (SN, S V 63-140), where the description of the five hindrances, or occurrences of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence, are collectively brought together and displayed in different *suttas*. This is also the case in the Chinese Saṃyukta Āgama (SĀ), throughout which there is a scattering of occurrences. I do not intend to demonstrate each occurrence in detail here, but will summarise briefly. In this



particular chapter, we have recognised at least five main types of expression for the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence, each of which differs in the way in which it depicts the hindrances. Examples will be listed as set out below, and the Chinese parallels will also be listed as indicated by the equation symbol '='. It should be noted that the wording of the Chinese text corresponding to SN is not always directly comparable to the Pali accounts, though to a large extent they do agree with each other quite well.

Different readings of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence in the SN and SĀ:

1. S V 95 ( &A III 63):

*ime kho bhikkhave pañca āvaranā nīvaraṇā cetaso  
upakkilesā paññāya dubbhikaraṇā*

= 《雜含》SĀ707 (T2, 189c):

世尊告諸比丘：有五障、五蓋，煩惱於心、能羸智慧、  
障闕之分、非明、非正覺、不轉趣涅槃。

2. S V 96-7:

*ime kho bhikkhave pañca āvaranā nīvaraṇā cetaso  
ajjhārūhā paññāya dubbalikaraṇā*

= 《雜含》SĀ708 (T2, 190a):

何等為五？謂貪欲蓋，漸漸增長；睡眠、掉悔、疑蓋，漸漸增長。以增長故，令善心蔭覆、墮臥。

3. S V 97:

*pañcime bhikkhave nīvaraṇā andhakaraṇā acakkhukaraṇā  
aññāṇakaraṇā paññānirodhikā vighātapakḥhiyā  
anibbānasamvattanikā*

= 《雜含》SĀ706 (T2, 189c):

諸比丘！有五法，能為黑闇、能為無目、能為無智、能  
羸智慧、非明、非等覺、不轉趣涅槃。

4. S V 108:

*pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya  
dubbalikaraṇe sattabojjhaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvēthāti.*

= 《雜含》SĀ713 (T2, 191a) (This is the closest case to SBV):

斷五蓋，覆心、慧力羸、為障礙分、不轉趣涅槃  
(=*vighātapakṣyāny anirvāṇasamvartanīyāni*)；住四念處，  
修七覺意。

5. S V 115-7:

*etha tumhe bhikkhave pañcanīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso  
upakkilese paññāya dubbalīkaṇe mettāsahagatena cetasā  
ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharatha*

= 《雜含》SĀ743 (T2, 197b):

[不]斷五蓋，惱心、慧力羸、為障礙分、不趣涅槃；盡  
攝其心，住四念處；心與慈俱，無怨、無嫉。亦無瞋  
恚，廣大、無量，善修，充滿四方、四維上下、一切世  
間。

The above different expressions accord well with the differences seen in the SBV, MN&AN, DĀ20 and JZG. The expression in SBV is almost the same as SĀ713, and the equivalent terms of *vighātapakṣyāṇy anīrvāṇasaṃvartanīyāni* can be found in S V 97 (*vighātapakkhiyā anibbāṇasaṃvattanikā*).<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, MN&AN's expression is similar to S V 95, 96-7 and

<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that the Pali correspondent (S V 108) to the SĀ713 does not have the terms *vighātapakkhiyā anibbāṇasaṃvattanikā*. These terms occur in another text (S V 97). The Chinese correspondent (SĀ706) to the text in S V 97 has a slightly different wording in comparison to the Pali account as well. This is perhaps another notion in showing that the changeable and compatible wording can be exchanged between texts. Moreover, in identifying the corresponding relationship between SN and SĀ I follow Akanuma's catalogue (1929). The identification is usually indicated by the parallel context between two texts.

108, and DĀ20's phrases of 'obstructions, darkness, etc.' can also be found in many places under such terms: *āvaranā* (obstructions = 障), *andhakaraṇā* (making blind = 能為黑闇), *ajjhārūhā* (high over = 蔭覆), *aññāṇakaraṇā* (making ignorance = 能為無智), etc. This observable fact offers us an excellent example for explaining the differences in the above texts. Since many types of the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence with minor variation were recorded in the SN and SĀ, it is difficult to tell which of them is the earliest or original reading, but they are more likely to have existed more or less at the time when the canon was composed.<sup>15</sup> Simply speaking, it seems to me that the canon has collected most, if not all, of the possible expressions for the *nīvaraṇa* fixed sentence together, each of them being applied in a particular text or context,<sup>16</sup> and some repeatedly used in other texts. When we turn to the case of the non-DN2 *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* texts, the variation seen in different sources is not really a 'variant reading', because each type of reading is already seen in the canon. It seems as if the redactor of each version of the text has either picked one particular option

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<sup>15</sup> I do not claim that there was no time sequence for the occurrence of each expression, but I would argue that the sequence is relatively insignificant, because it is not seem to be the time difference of centuries, or before and after the Buddha's time.

<sup>16</sup> Perhaps some of these texts represent the original reference for a particular type of expression.

from the many available to apply in its use in his own text, or made a slight change according to his memory. In either case, he would have been clearly aware that the adding or exchanging of some descriptive words did not affect the meaning of the sentence, even if it did perhaps indicate a slight failure to memorise the exact wording of a particular expression, or it was due to a little confusion. If my speculation is reasonable, it reveals a feature of the formation of the fixed sentence as well as formula in Buddhist texts, which indicates a fixed structure and meaning, but permits a dynamic alteration in wording within a range of options. This is to be expected in an oral tradition, particularly sometimes when precise word-for-word memorisation is difficult to be achieved. However, under the principle of memorising major points, the preservation and transmission of the correct meaning will still be maintained.

The next example, which echoes the aforementioned aspects of the formation of the formula, will tell us more about the principle applied in the oral tradition.

## Example 2: The *indriya-saṃvara* or *indriyesu guttadvāro* formula

The second example I would like to present is a formula called the *indriya-saṃvara* or *indriyesu guttadvāro* formula, which concerns the restraint of the sense faculties when one is encountering the relevant sense objects (e.g., seeing a form with the eye).

Again, I will list the occurrences of the formula in each version of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* in the first place, followed by the other texts. The formula is read in each of the four texts (DN2, SBV, DĀ21 and JZG) as follows:

### 1. DN2 (*Dīgha Nikāya*, D I 70):

(1) *kathañ ca mahā-rāja bhikkhu indriyesu guttadvāro hoti?*

(2) *idha mahā-rāja bhikkhu cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimittaggāhī hoti nānuyyañjanaggāhī. yatvādhikaraṇaṃ enaṃ cakkhundriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhā-domanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati, rakkhati cakkhundriyaṃ, cakkhundriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati. sotena saddaṃ sutvā ... pe ... ghānena gandhaṃ ghāyitvā ... pe ... jivhāya rasaṃ sāyitvā ... pe ... kāyena phoṭṭhabbaṃ phusitvā ... pe ...*

*manasā dhammaṃ viññāya na nimittaggāhī hoti  
nānuyyañjañaggāhī. yatvādhikaraṇaṃ enaṃ manindriyaṃ  
asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjā-domanassā pāpakā akusalā  
dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati,  
rakkhati manindriyaṃ, manindriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati.*

(3) *so iminā ariyena indriyasaṃvareṇa samannāgato  
ajjhantaṃ avyāseka-sukhaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti. evaṃ kho mahā-  
rāja bhikkhu indriyesu gutta-dvāro hoti.*

英譯：

(1) And how, great king, does the bhikkhu guard the doors of his sense faculties?

(2) Herein, great king, having seen a form with the eye, the bhikkhu does not grasp at the sign or the details. Since, if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the eye, evil unwholesome states such as covetousness and grief might assail him, he practises restraint, guards the faculty of the eye, and achieves restraint over the faculty of the eye. Having heard a sound with the ear ... an odour with the nose ... having tasted a flavour with the tongue ... having touched a tangible object with the body ... having recognised a mind-object with the mind, the bhikkhu does not grasp at the sign or the details. Since, if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the mind, evil unwholesome states such as covetousness and grief might assail him, he practises restraint, guards the

faculty of the mind, and achieves restraint over the faculty of the mind.

(3) Endowed with this noble restraint of the sense faculties, he experiences within himself an unblemished happiness. In this way, great king, the bhikkhu guards the doors of the sense faculties.

2. SBV( *Saṅghabhedavastu*, 230, 11-16):

(1) *sa indriyair guptadvāro bhavati; nipakasmṛtir guptasmṛtimānasah sahavasthāvacārah;*

(2) *sa cakṣuṣo rūpāṇi dṛṣṭvā na nimittagrāhī bhavati; nānuyyañjanagrāhī; yato'dhikaraṇam eva cakṣurindriyeṇa asaṃvarasaṃvṛtasya viharataḥ abhidhyādaurmanasye loke pāpakā akuṣalā dharmāś cittam anusravanti; teṣāṃ saṃvarāya pratipadyate; rakṣati cakṣurindriyam; cakṣurindriyena saṃvaram āpadyate; śrotrendriyeṇa śabdān, ghrāṇendriyeṇa gandhān, jihvayā rasān, kāyena spraṣṭavyāni, mansā dharmān vijñāya na nimittagrāhī bhavati; nānuyyañjanagrāhī; yato'dhikaraṇam eva manaindriyeṇa asaṃvarasaṃvṛtasya viharataḥ abhidhyādaurmanasye loke pāpakā akuṣalā dharmāś cittam anusravanti; teṣāṃ saṃvarāya pratipadyate; rakṣati manaindriyam; manaindriyena saṃvaram āpadyate*

(3) **missing**



3. DĀ20 (*Dīrgha Āgama*, T1n1, 84c15-20):

(1) **missing**

(2) 目雖見色而不取相，眼不為色之所拘繫。堅固寂然，無所貪著，亦無憂患；不漏諸惡，堅持戒品，善護眼根。耳、鼻、舌、身、意亦復如是。善御六觸，護持調伏，令得安隱。

(Having seen a form with his eye, [he] does not grasp at the sign; [his] eye is not attached to the form. (He) is firm and calm, without covetousness and with no grief, evil states might not flow into [his mind]. Endowed with moral practice (\**sīlasampanna*), he guards the eye faculty properly, and thus for the ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. He controls the six contacts (\**phassa*), through restraint and taming he seeks to gain tranquillity. )

(3) 猶如平地駕四馬車，善調御者，執鞭持控，使不失轍。比丘如是，御六根馬，安隱無失。

(Just as a skilful charioteer, while driving a four-horse chariot on level ground, holds the reins and holds the whip to get the chariot under control; so too a bhikkhu guard the horse of the six sense faculties in safety without mistake.)

4. JZG (寂志果經, T1n22, 274b8-13):

(1) 根門寂定，心在安跡，諸根不亂，守護其心，救使無想在道。

(Tranquil the sense doors (\* *indriyadvāra-upasama?*), the mind is in a peaceful state. The sense faculties are undisturbed (\**avikṣipta-indriyā*). [He ] protects the mind(\**rakṣitasmti*) and tends to make it with the way without thought / consciousness. (i.e., he does not have any thought attached to the sense objects.)

(2) 目見好色，不想求以為好。斷截所受，奉行善本，其心內住，遠離內色，守護眼根。如是耳聲鼻香舌味身更，不以想求，亦無所著。除諸不可，棄療愚癡，斷不善法。其意內住，救使不亂，令心根定。

(Having seen a pleasing form with the eye, he does not think upon it as pleasing. He cuts off what was being felt/received and practices good conduct; his mind dwells internally (\**ajjhatam cittam saṇṭhitam*) and away from internal form; he guards the eye faculty. And thus [in the same way for] the [hearing of ] sound with ear, odour with the nose, flavour with the tongue, tangible objects with the body. He is not intent upon nor is he attached to [the sense objects]. He dispels the

unpleasant and ignorance. Cutting off the unwholesome states, his mind becomes steadied internally. He tends to be unconfused in order to settle down the mind faculty.)

(3) 其比丘奉是賢聖戒，第一知足，其心寂定，禮節根定。

(The Bhikkhu is endowed with the *ariya-sīla*, the contentment, and the tranquillity of the mind with the restraint of the sense faculties.)

The formula can be divided into three parts: (1) the introductory sentence, (2) the main body, and (3) the closing sentence. We can see that differences occurs in each part. The variations in the first two parts are of particular importance. The main points can be summed up as follows. First, in part (1), DN2 has a short sentence, which is a simple way of introducing the formula, whereas SBV presents an introduction with a sentence possessing further meaning, which is not seen in DN. DĀ does not have the first part, but starts from the second. JZG has a sentence, which is closer to SBV with even more additional words (see underlined phrases), and it is worth noting here, as will be illustrated later, that these words are another type of important expression to the same practice. Second, in part (2), the formulations in DN2, DĀ and SBV agree with each other quite well, while JZG's expression is interesting, as it seems to state an explanation that is not entirely identical with the expression in the

other three texts. For instance, its wording tends to highlight 'the non-attachment to the delighted forms, cutting off what was being felt/received,' rather than 'not grasping at the sign or the details.' In other words, there is a slight shift in the meaning. Finally, in the expression of part (3), DN2 has added an expression of the experience of the unblemished happiness in the practice; SBV does not have a closing sentence; JZG has a plain sentence, which is merely a repetition of the title of the formula and other practices; and it is interesting to see that DĀ20 has a simile attached to the main formula.

How are we to explain these variations, and what is their significance? Before we attempt to offer an explanation, let us look at some more examples in other texts.

The *indriya-saṃvara* formula also appears in MN and AN, in the accounts of the path structure. Its expression in MN and AN basically agrees with DN2.<sup>17</sup> However, a Chinese parallel to MN27, the MĀ146, states the formula as follows (T1n26, 657c3-9):

(1) 守護諸根<sup>18</sup>，常念閉塞，念欲明達，守護念心而得成就，恒起正知。

<sup>17</sup> Cf. MN27 (M I 180-1), A II 208, etc.

<sup>18</sup> This title reflects *indriya-saṃvara* rather than *indriyesu guttadvāro*.

(He guards the sense faculties, thinks of closing [them] constantly and tends to be luminous in mind. He achieves restraint over the mind and clear comprehension arises [in him] all the time. )

- (2) 若眼見色，然不受想，亦不味色<sup>19</sup>，謂忿諍<sup>20</sup>故... (the same as DN2)
- (3) **missing.**

MĀ146 clearly has a fixed sentence in part (1) of the formula, which makes it different from DN and MNs, but it agrees with SBV and JZG. The wording of this fixed sentence is worthy of discussion. The expression of the latter phrases (He achieves restraint ...all the time) is close to SBV and JZG, and the former phrase ‘thinks of closing [the senses] constantly and tends to be luminous in mind’ is neither seen in Pali nor Sanskrit versions. The idea of ‘closing’ is of particular interest, as it bears some similarity to JZG’s expression of ‘cutting off what was perceived’. This is clearly a variation between recensions (MN and MĀ). If we bring together all the other differences, we also see that there

<sup>19</sup> 味色, lit. ‘characterize the form.’ Chinese seems to translate a term from *vyañjayati* rather than *anuvyañjana*, because 味 is usually a translation for *vyañjana*.

<sup>20</sup> 忿諍, lit. ‘dispute’, Chinese seems to take up the third meaning of *adhikaraṇa*, see PED 27.

are variation between collections, such as MN and DN in part (3), and MĀ and DĀ in part (1); and that there is a similarity (or ‘correspondence’) between MĀ and SBV, JZG in part (1).

If we carry on and look at more occurrences in other texts that apply the *indriya-saṃvara* or *indriyesu guttadvāro* formula in contexts other than the path-structure, the picture becomes even more complicated.<sup>21</sup> I shall skip the details of these complications in this paper, and return to the questions raised earlier.

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<sup>21</sup> For example, in MN33, the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* (M I 223), a description of about eleven qualities (*ekādaśa-dhamma*) is seen. These qualities are referring to a simile of a cowherd who possesses eleven factors. The fourth factor is ‘he dresses wounds’ (*vaṇaṃ paticchadetā hoti*) and the *indriya-saṃvara* formula is applied to this factor. There are three Chinese parallels, SĀ1249, EĀ40-1 and one independent translation, the *Foshuo fangniu jing* (佛說放牛經), all of them have the same context as MN33. However, the wording of *indriya-saṃvara* formula differs in each text, as shown below:

Chinese parallel 1, SĀ1249 (T2, 343a2-4) reads:

云何不覆瘡？謂眼見色，隨取形相，不守眼根。世間貪憂、惡不善法，心隨生漏，不能防護。耳、鼻、舌、身、意根亦復如是，是名不覆其瘡。

Chinese parallel 2, EĀ40-1 (T2, 546b11-14) reads:

云何應護瘡而不護瘡？比丘！見色起想，聞聲愛著，思想形體，不知為惡，不護眼根，耳、鼻、舌、身、心，盡馳外塵，而不能護。如是，比丘！應護瘡而不護瘡。

And the *Foshuo fangniu jing* (佛說放牛經, T2n123, 547a) reads:

From the occurrences discussed so far it can be seen that the main body of the formula remains the same in most cases (except in the case of JZG, where there are some differences), the changes happen merely in the introductory part and closing parts. Next, it seems that parts (1) and (3) can be separated from the main body of the formula, partly because each of them is missing in some cases; yet in the case of SBV, JZG and MĀ, the expression of part (1) is strongly attached to the main body, which makes the main formula look larger. In fact, the sentence of part (1) in SBV, JZG and MĀ can be seen as a fixed sentence, which I called the *nipakasmṛti* fixed sentence. The absence of this sentence in DN2, as well as in MN&AN, does not mean that it is totally absent in the Pali source. One such account is found in the AN (A III 138):

*indriyesu guttadvārā viharatha ārakkhasatino nipakkasatino  
sārakkhitamānasā satārakkhena cetasā samannāgatā ti.*

(Live with the sense-doors guarded, being mindfulness of  
watching over, be wise in mindfulness, with the way of the

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云何比丘應護瘡而護？比丘！眼見色，不分別好惡，守護眼根，不著外色，遠捨諸惡，護於眼根，耳聽聲，鼻嗅香，舌嚐味，身貪細滑、意多念，制不令著，護此諸根，不染外塵，如吐惡見。如是，比丘！為知護瘡。

mind well watched over, possessed of a mind that is mindful on watch. )

It is interesting to note that in the above account a sentence similar to the *nipakasmṛti* fixed sentence is also used to refer to the practice of the restraint of the sense faculties.

It appears that this sentence is frequently used by many Chinese and Sanskrit sources.<sup>22</sup> Since it is incorporated into the *indriya-saṃvara* or *indriyesu guṭṭadvāro* formula, and cannot be separated from the main body of the formula, its omission by the DN2, MN&AN is worth noting. It may well be the case that the transmitters of DN, etc. have regarded the expression of part (2) as sufficient, and hence chose to omit the sentence, or that they

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<sup>22</sup> For example, the *indriya-saṃvara* formula in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (ŚrBh 9.13ff.) reads:

(1) *indriyasamvaraḥ katamaḥ. sa tam eva śīlasamvaraṃ niśritya āraṅkṣitasamṛtiḥ bhavati nipakasmṛtiḥ smṛtyāraṅkṣitamānasah samāvasthāvacāraḥ.*

(2) Similar to SBV

And the *indriya-saṃvara* formula in the *Mahāvastu* (Mvu III 52.3-15) reads:

(1) *tasmād iha kāśyapa evaṃ śikṣitavyaṃ. kiṃ tv ahaṃ ṣaṭsu indriyeṣu guṭṭadvāro vihariṣyāmīti āraṅkṣāsmṛtiḥ nidhyāpanasmṛtiḥ samavasthāvihārī ādīnavadarśāvī niḥśaraṇaḥ prajñō araktena cetasā samanvāgataḥ.*

(2) Similar to SBV.



simply preferred the shorter of the two options. In addition to this, a similar situation is found in part (3), where the attachment of a simile occurs in DĀ, but is missing in DN2, MN&AN. This simile, though is not expressed by DN2, etc., again, is not absent in the Pali canon. At S IV 176, a passage is employed to explain three kinds of practice: 'one who guards the doors of the sense faculties, is moderate in eating and intent on wakefulness' (*indriyesu guttadvāro, bhojane mattaññū, jāgariyam anuyutto*). The first practice is represented by the *indriya-samvara* formula (the same as part (2) of the DN2 expression), and a simile is added to the formula, which has exactly the same content as seen in DĀ20.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> S IV 176:

*seyyathāpi bhikkhave subhūmiyaṃ cātumahāpathe ājaññaratho yutto assa odhasatapato do taṃ enaṃ dakkho yoggācariyo assadammasārathi abhirūhitvā varena haṭṭhena rasmiyo gahetvā dakkhiṇena haṭṭhena patodaṃ. gahetvā yenicchakaṃ yadicchakaṃ sāreyya pi pacchāsāreyya pi evaṃ eva kho bhikkhave bhikkhu imesaṃ channaṃ indriyānaṃ ārakkhāya sikkhati. saṃyamāya sikkhati damāya sikkhati upasamāya sikkhati. evaṃ kho bhikkhave bhikkhu indriyesu guttadvāro hoti.*

(Suppose, bhikkhus, a chariot harnessed to thoroughbreds was standing ready on even ground at a cross road, with a goad on hand. Then a skilful trainer, a charioteer of horses to be tamed, would mount it and taking the reins in his left hand and the goad in his right, would drive away and return by any route he wants, whenever he wants. So too, a bhikkhu trains in protecting these six sense faculties, trains in controlling them, trains in taming them, trains in

With regard to part (2), the case of JZG is worth explaining. Its key idea for the formula stating ‘Having seen a pleasing form with the eye, he does not intent upon it as pleasing’, is not expressed by other versions. Again, it is found that a similar expression is not totally absent in the Pali source. At S IV 120, a formula is applied to explain the practice of ‘guarding the doors’ (*guttadvāra*, presumably the guarding of the doors of the sense faculties), and the formula reads just like a description of the concept of ‘does not intent upon delighted nor unpleasant form’.<sup>24</sup> Its key sentence, *cakkhana rūpaṃ disvā piyarūpe rūpe nādhimuccati, apiyarūpe rūpe na vyāpajjati*, supports JZG’s expression very well. This example provides more evidence that the expression of JZG that does not occur in DN2, etc., was not

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pacifying them. It is thus in this way, bhikkhu, that a bhikkhu guards the doors of the sense faculties.)

<sup>24</sup> *kittāvatā nu kho bho kaccāna guttadvāro hotiti. idha brāhmaṇa bhikkhu cakkhana rūpaṃ disvā piyarūpe rūpe nādhimuccati, apiyarūpe rūpe na vyāpajjati upaṭṭhitāya satiyā ca viharati appamāṇacetaso. tañ ca cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ yāthābhītaṃ pajānāti, yathāssa te uppannā pāpakā akusalā dhammā aparisesā nirujjhanti, sotenā saddaṃ sutvā ... ghānena gandhaṃ ghāyitvā ... jivhāya rasaṃ āyitvā ... kāyena phoṭṭhabbaṃ phusitvā ... manā dhammaṃ viññāya pīvarimpe dhamme nādhimuccati. apiyarūpe na vyāpajjati upaṭṭhitāya satiyā ca viharati appamāṇācetaso tañ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti yathāssa te uppannā pāpakā akusalā dhammā aparisesā nirujjhanti.*

necessarily unknown to Pali tradition, and hence not unique to non-Pali sources. Moreover, it may suggest that perhaps an exchange is happening in JZG in part (2) of the formula, in the sense that the transmitter of this text has chosen an alternative expression as his preference. In other words, at least two options were known to him, but he just happened to select the one that was different from other versions. The reason for the preference is not known, but it is not important since the main idea of the formula remains the same whichever option is used.

Lastly, we could add one example to show that extra words occurring in JZG and MĀ146 are not without their roots in other Buddhist texts. For instance, JZG and MĀ146 commonly express the concept of ‘no thought attached to [the sense objects]’ (JZG: 救使無想在道) or ‘thinking of closing [senses] constantly’ (MĀ146: 常念閉塞), and although it is not seen in the standard expression of the *indriya-samvara* formula, it is found as an important interpretation for the practice of the restraint of the sense faculties in many important Buddhist texts.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Cf. EĀ21-6 (*Ekottara Āgama*, T2, 603c22-27), EĀ 49-8 (T2, 802a3-7):

- (1) 云何比丘諸根寂靜？  
(What is the tranquility of sense faculties (\**indriya-upaśama*)?)
- (2) 於是，比丘若眼見色，不起想著，無有識念，於眼根而得清淨，因彼求於解脫，恒護眼根。若耳聞聲、鼻嗅香、舌知味、身知細滑、

意知法，不起想著，無有識念，於意根而得清淨，因彼求於解脫，恒護意根。

(Herein, a bhikkhu, seeing a form with the eye, he has not arisen a thought attached to it, without consciousness upon it he gains purification over the eye faculty. Because he is looking for liberation, he guards his eye faculty all the time. (and the same for other sense faculties)

Furthermore, with regard to No.6: MĀ's reading of 'thinking of closing [senses] constantly' (常念閉塞), see:

The *Visuddhimagga* 21:

*tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjatīti tassa cakkhundriyassa satikavāṭeṇa  
pidahanatthāya paṭipajjati.* (...he enters upon the way of closing that eye  
faculty by the door-panel of mindfulness.)

And the *Saundarananda* XIV 1:

*atha smṛtikavāṭeṇa pidhāyendriya-saṃvaram. bhojane bhava mātṛājño  
dhyānāyānāmayāya ca.*  
(Restraining of the senses by closing [them] with the door-panel of  
mindfulness ...)

Also, with regard to JZG's reading of 'tends to make it with the way of thoughtless' (救使無想在道) see MN138 (M III 225-6):

*cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na rūpanimittānusārī viññāṇaṃ hoti na  
rūpanimittassādagathitaṃ na rūpanimittassādasamyojanasamyuttaṃ,  
bahiddhā viññāṇaṃ avikkhittam avisaṭṭhaṃ ti vuccati. sotena saddaṃ  
sūtvā ...*

(Having seen a form with the eye, if his consciousness does not follow after the sign of form, is not tied and shackled by gratification in the sign of form, is not fettered by the fetter of gratification in the sign of form, then his consciousness is called 'not distracted and scattered externally' ... )

From the analysis of the three parts of the *indriya-samvara* formula in various texts, we found a common point that the missing or additional sentence is not totally absent or added in a particular recension of canon, as they can be found in one place or another in every version of the canon.

## Conclusion

This comparative study of parallel versions of two particular Buddhist meditation formulas in a group of texts belonging to different schools, and preserved in three different languages, reveals a number of interesting points between the parallel to the same texts or context, the collections of the canon (e.g. DN and MN; DĀ and MĀ), as well as variations between different recensions of the canon (e.g., Nikāyas and Āgamas).

Although a fuller understanding of the formation of meditation formulas from the comparison is waiting for further investigation, two important findings are obtained in this study: the *variation* and the *similarity* of the formulas in various versions of texts. First, the variation could occur anywhere, even within texts from the same tradition. The difference between DN and MN being a fine example here. Second, the variation is usually found in the secondary parts of the formulas, such as the introductory and closing parts, which are by their nature smaller units such as fixed

sentences and set phrases, the formulation of the main body remains the same. However, the wording of the main body of the formula sometimes undergoes slight changes, and the changes in the wording is sufficiently limited to suggest that it is neither arbitrary nor due to mistakes by the scribes. To put it another way, some extra words are seen in the formula in a particular version of a text in one tradition, but not in others. However, the missing words, or more precisely, the other ways of expression, can also be found in almost every tradition. In other words, the differences are not really 'variant readings', but look more like an alternative of several options, and the changing over of each option does not affect the main point of the formula. This phenomenon is of particular interest, because it may reflect some process of the oral transmission, or a kind of natural way of how the memorization works. Most importantly, the meaning of the formula has never been lost or altered. This in turn indicates that the overall structure of the formula is very similar in every version of its expression. In addition to this, the tendency to maintain the correct meaning, or even the exact wording, is frequently seen, suggesting that the precise wording really does matter. This concern further reveals that how much effort was made by every Buddhist tradition to preserve the literature in an accurate way. This was probably due to the traditional serious attitude of preserving the 'Buddha's words'.

Furthermore, this study has indicated that awareness of the Chinese and Sanskrit sources has played a crucial role in understanding the changes that have occurred in the formulas. Without examining the occurrences in these sources, we would not know that certain wordings were preferred by some traditions in the expression of the formulas. For example, we would not know that the combination of a particular fixed sentence and the bare formula was common outside the Pali tradition.

Finally, the present study is about a specific type of literary style in Buddhist literature (the meditation formulas in a sequential path-structure). The characteristics of this style provide a good foundation for us to begin to understand how some Buddhist texts were composed and transmitted, and even suggest a useful methodology for further research in the field. This would allow us to test the models proposed within recent scholarship on the composition and transmission of Buddhist oral literature. For example, I do not see much evidence from the meditation formulas that supports the features proposed by Lance Cousins, when he says that there is 'a strong improvisatory element' in early Buddhist texts.<sup>26</sup> On the contrary, the content of the formulas are

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<sup>26</sup> Cousins, 1983, p. 9.

quite tidy. They do not perform, or display the features of frequent variation that we might expect had they been improvised in the way that is sometimes to be seen within the narrative portion of these Buddhist texts. Moreover, Gombrich's proposal of a rigid, perhaps word-for-word, or verbatim model,<sup>27</sup> is not entirely applicable to the Buddhist formulas, because it cannot fully explain the 'changes', which do occur. However, further consideration of these matters is beyond the scope of the present paper.

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<sup>27</sup> Gombrich, 1990b, p. 24. He mentions that the early Buddhist texts were 'deliberate compositions which were then committed to memory, and later systematically transmitted to pupils.' And he suggests that such a feat of preservation has the Brahmins as the example, who had been preserving the Vedic literature word-for-word in an oral way for centuries.



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