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The Early Buddhist Tradition and Ecological Ethics

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ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with ecological ethics, and examines the contemporary ecological crisis from the perspective of early Buddhism. Through an examination of early texts (mainly the Pali Canon) it asks to what extent ecological ethics has formed part of the teachings of Buddhism and whether contemporary ecological concerns can be integrated into this tradition. A range of divergent opinions held by modern authors are critically reviewed in the first section, followed in section two by a discussion of nature in the light of the Buddhist evaluation of existence. Section three considers the adequacy of the doctrine of Origination in Dependence as a basis for ecological ethics, and section four discusses early Buddhist spirituality and ethics in the context of ecological concerns. Section five is devoted to evaluations of nature versus civilization and section six discusses the status of animals. The conclusion is that early Buddhism was impressed not so much by the beauty of nature as by its sombre aspects. It seeks not to transform or subjugate nature but to transcend it spiritually through detachment. However, although Buddhism does not romanticize nature it does not mean it is altogether impossible to establish an ecological ethics on the basis of the early tradition.

I. Preliminary Considerations

In writing this paper[1] I do not conceal that I am most concerned about what is called the "ecological crisis" or the destruction and deterioration of nature, and I readily admit that personally I sympathize with the attempts among adherents of contemporary religions to support what is often called "ecological ethics", viz. an ethics based on the conviction that man is responsible for the preservation of nature, i.e. of intact ecosystems and bio-diversity—a conviction I do indeed share though I shall not be attempting here to prove its validity. Such a conviction seems to presuppose that intact nature and bio-diversity are regarded as a *value*, and in my opinion they ought to be regarded as a value not only from an anthropocentric point of view, i.e., because they may be indispensable (or at least useful or enjoyable) to *man* (though this is doubtless better than nothing), but rather, and primarily, for their *own* sake, in their *own* right. And what we need today, in view of the damage already done, is not just protection of nature as a kind of by-product but rather active protection and even restoration of nature based on the acceptance of the intrinsic value of natural beauty and diversity, and of the fact that other species—both animals and plants—have no less right to existence than man.[2]

Yet, as a scholar, and as one at that whose field is philology and history of ideas, I cannot avoid asking to what extent ecological ethics is, and has always been, an element of the religious tradition concerned, forming part of its body of teachings or doctrinal system and expressing itself in the actual behaviour of its adherents, or to what extent and in what way ecological ethics is, at least, in tune with, and susceptible of being integrated into, this tradition, i.e., in my case, *Buddhism*. Such a question may also suggest itself to thoughtful or hesitating believers, or to an attentive observer of the countries where Buddhism is dominant. For the ecological situation in some Buddhist countries is indeed far from being satisfactory. It may well be that this has come about *in spite*

of Buddhism, due to other reasons, including Western influence. But it cannot *a priori* be excluded either that Buddhism, or rather certain facets of Buddhism, may somehow be co-responsible for the situation.

In fact, among Buddhists as well as Buddhologists there seems to be considerable disagreement with regard to whether Buddhism does or does not favour an ecological ethics.[3] This disagreement exists also with regard to the more conservative forms of Buddhism, i.e. Theravāda and similar but now extinct schools like Sarvāstivāda, and with regard to the text corpus some redaction or other of which constitutes their respective canonical basis. It is this corpus of canonical texts, especially its, roughly speaking, pre-Abhidharmic layers, that I have in mind when speaking of the "Early Buddhist tradition". Since Theravāda is the only living representative of this tradition, the Pāli canon will naturally be the most frequently (but not exclusively) adduced source.

Especially among Buddhist authors, both Asian and Western, many have come to adopt positions that favour an ecological interpretation of Early Buddhism, though often in a more or less anthropocentric perspective.

A prominent example for a mainly *non*-anthropocentric perspective is the American Buddhist JOANNA MACY.[4] According to her, the original, genuine teaching of Buddhism is a theory of universal interconnectedness, mutual conditioning, or radical interdependence of *all* phenomena, which comes close to the modern general systems theory, and, by dismanteling the separate, continuous ego-self, leads to identification with and responsibility for the whole world, humans as well as all other beings. The more so since one aspect of universal interconnectedness is, for her, the relationship of all beings in terms of the modern theory of evolution,[5] which MACY prefers to the traditional Buddhist doctrine of rebirth, with which, she thinks, the Buddha himself, too, was not much concerned.[6] Nor has she any sympathy for the idea of *nirvāṇa* as an escape from the world, because this would imply a devaluation of the world and a weakening of our feeling of responsibility. Accordingly, she emphasizes that, in contrast to a certain tendency

among Theravāda Buddhists and especially Western interpreters, original Buddhism (as well as early Mahāyāna) is not escapist but world-affirming, aiming at an awakening which "puts one *into* the world with a livelier, more caring sense of social engagement".[7]

Another example is the Japanese scholar NORITOSHI ARAMAKI.[8] As I understand him, he maintains that the Buddha, in contrast to the Jainas, said yes to bodily existence and hence to the food chain and to nature as it actually is, and that it is due to this affirmative attitude to bodily existence that *ahiṃsā* is considerably less strict in Buddhism than in Jainism.[9] Accordingly, ARAMAKI, too, seems to reject the idea that in Early Buddhism *Nirvāṇa* aims (at least ultimately) at escape from this world.[10]

But there are also opinions to the contrary. E.g., IAN HARRIS[11] has tried to collect evidence, mainly from the Pāli Nikāyas and Vinaya, showing that the Buddhist attitude towards nature is predominantly negative. He admits that "it is not inconceivable that historical scholarship may, in the future, reveal that early Buddhists did live in harmony with their surroundings" and that "their doctrinal position may well have contributed to this harmony". But he stresses that this does not mean that they were "environmentalists" in the sense of a "conscious attempt to critically appraise and counteract the adverse by-products of the scientific enterprise", and he argues that the transformation of "the traditional attitude of good natured benevolence and decorum directed towards a radically unstable natural environment ... into an ethic based on the ultimate value of nature" as advocated by some contemporary Buddhist authors means "a significant doctrinal shift", nay, "the transformation of a ... traditional system of thought" into "liberal Christianity".[12]

While HARRIS appears to argue from a Christian background, NORIAKI HAKAMAYA[13] emphatically rejects all kinds of ecological interpretations of Buddhism from what he claims to be *the* Buddhist point of view. For him, *true*[14] Buddhism *negates* nature. To be sure, for HAKAMAYA "nature" mainly means nature as the creative origin and true essence of things and beings, as the basis of the latter's life in the sense of a substantial soul or Self,[15] and negating this does look much like traditional

Buddhism. But for HAKAMAYA not having a soul seems to mean, in the case of natural beings *including animals*, not to be living, sentient beings at all, at least from the metaphysical point of view. Only in the case of man, lack of a substantial soul does not imply insentience because he alone can *think.* If I understand Hakamaya correctly, he takes this to be the essential message of the twelve-membered formula of dependent origination, connecting it with the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*.[16] Thus, man is the master of this world.[17] Yet, he should not destroy it and even have compassion with animals (for according to HAKAMAYA there is no reason why a *thinking* person should be insensitive to violence), but in any case for HAKAMAYA human interests come first.[18]

It would thus seem that the sources for our knowledge of Early Buddhism are not sufficiently explicit and unambiguous on the issue of ecological ethics; for otherwise such a wide divergence of opinions would hardly be explainable. Actually, in former times environmental problems, if existing at all, were hardly understood as such, and at any rate did not exist in such a conspicuous form as today. Hence, we cannot expect the early texts to contain fully explicit statements with regard to this issue.[19] But on the other hand even in those times there must have been some attitude towards nature. Hence there may well have been some kind of spontaneous, unreflected ecological ethics, or at least evaluations and attitudes that offer a suitable basis on which it might be established today. For, today the Buddhist tradition, like any other, cannot avoid facing the problem. If it is to remain a living tradition, it has to supply answers to new vital questions,[20] and it may have to accommodate its heritage to the new situation by means of explication, re-interpretation, re-organization or even creative extension or change. One of these questions is doubtless whether or not an ecological ethics is required (or at least desirable), and I for one do not see how it could be answered in the affirmative unless intact nature and natural diversity are accorded a positive *value*.

From a traditional Buddhist point of view, it might, however, be argued that, to be sure, nature ought to be preserved as intact as possible,

but that from the Buddhist point of view an explicit ecological ethics, based on imparting *value* to nature, is *superfluous*, because a behaviour that keeps nature intact is the spontaneous, *automatic* outflow of the moral and *spiritual self-perfection* to be accomplished by every person individually; or that such an ethics would even be doomed to *ineffectiveness* because the present state of nature is a kind of automatic objective reflection, or collective karmic result, of the moral and spiritual state of (human) beings, and that it cannot therefore be influenced directly by ecological activism.

To the latter argument I should reply that at least in Early Buddhism the karma doctrine as well as the idea that the physical world is somehow dependent on man's moral behaviour are not meant to justify fatalism but, on the contrary, intended to encourage endeavour on the part of the individual. To be sure, what is encouraged is, in the first place, moral and spiritual endeavour, but since karma is explicitly regarded to be only one cause among others,[21] there is also room for direct influence on one's own as well as on the global situation. Actually, this is shown by the present, *actively and directly* man-made, destruction and pollution of nature. Hence, there is no reason why it should not be equally possible, to a certain extent at least, to counteract this destruction in an equally direct manner. That the individual by himself feels *comparatively* helpless with regard to what happens in the world at large does not mean that active environmental commitment is *absolutely* futile.

As for the first argument, I do not deny that the spiritual perfection of individuals may have an automatic ecological effect. But at least as far as Early Buddhist spirituality (as I for one understand it from the texts) is concerned, I shall try to show that what follows from it spontaneously would seem to be, above all, only a largely "passive" ecological attitude, emerging as a kind of by-product, hardly an "active" one based on positive value, perceived to inhere in intact nature and in natural diversity as such, which is, however, what is most required in the present situation. Besides, even if spiritual perfection were to culminate, auto-

matically, in ecological behaviour and action, it may not be possible any longer to wait until the spiritual perfection of a majority of people has sufficiently advanced or even reached completion. It would, of course, be so much better if people behaved and acted in such a way spontaneously, due to spiritual perfection, but will there ever be enough perfected people, and do we indeed have that much time left? As in the case of the moral commitments (like not killing living beings) which are taken up right at the beginning by both monk and lay person, it may be necessary to *motivate* as many *ordinary*, imperfect people as possible to commit themselves to ecological behaviour, and even action, *here and now*.[22]

Hence, in my opinion the present situation requires an ecological ethics based on according a positive value to nature intact and to natural diversity. The aim of this paper is to investigate—once more but still in an admittedly preliminary way—the Early Buddhist tradition from the point of view of the actual or possible relation of this tradition to an ecological ethics. Though this may not be my job, I have also dared to include a suggestion how and on what conditions such an ethics, if desired, could best be established in such a way that the essentials of tradition are not jeopardized. Thus, my investigation comprises three levels: 1. *description* of the pertinent Early Buddhist teachings and attitudes, 2. their *critical evaluation* from the point of view of ecological ethics, and 3. my own *constructive suggestions.*

Unfortunately, even mere description is not without problems because it involves selection or condensation and is hardly separable from *interpretation.* Actually, divergence of opinion with regard to the Early Buddhist attitude to nature or ecological ethics is partly due to fundamental disagreement with regard to the understanding and interpretation of central teachings and attitudes of Early Buddhism and to the exegesis of the pertinent texts. Such disagreement is no doubt favoured not only by the ambiguity of some texts but also by a certain complexity if not heterogeneity of the corpus of canonical texts, showing as they do different layers and strands. Thus, divergent interpretations may also result from emphasis on different strands or teachings, and may be reinforced

by declaring some to be original, authentic or true, while others are regarded as later or even as deviations. But in the absence of a commonly recognized stratification of the earlier portions of the canonical texts, what is considered original or true Buddhism is easily influenced by the interpreter's own thinking or predilection. I therefore prefer, for the present purpose—which is not concerned with the origin or development of Early Buddhism but with the attitude, to nature, of the tradition, and especially its authoritative canonical texts, as a whole[23]—to deal with this tradition simply as one made up of several strands, or rather spiritual and didactic levels and contexts, which, to be sure, are not entirely unrelated but ought not to be mixed up by over-systematization either, and therefore will be discussed separately, one by one.

To be sure, I too presuppose, to some extent, the validity of *my* interpretation, and understand some of these strands or contexts to be more central to Early Buddhism than others (and I must, for the time being, confine critical discussion of divergent views to a few very preliminary hints, mostly in notes). But I have at least tried my best to let my description/interpretation not be influenced by my personal concern. I understand and acknowledge that believers may feel the need for, and hence tend to create the myth of, an *identity* of their re-interpreted, reorganized or creatively extended or changed tradition with the original one, and may not like, or even strongly resent, the scholar pointing out differences. But as a historian of ideas bound to the modern historical sense I feel obliged to clearly keep these levels apart[24] (and even believers should perhaps not lose sight of the fact that unacknowledged historical facts may easily become a weapon in the hands of critics). I therefore ask the reader to distinguish sharply between, on the one hand, my *description* of what I understand to be *traditional* Buddhist views and, on the other, my *critical evaluation* of these views in terms of ecological ethics and, finally, my *constructive suggestions* how on this basis active ecological ethics in the modern sense might be established. The first may be found historically correct or not, the second adequate or not, the third acceptable or not, or even superfluous. But in any case these differ-

ent levels should be kept apart and judged separately.

II. Nature in the Context of the Ultimate Evaluation of Existence

Let me, then, start with what I for one cannot but understand to be the *ultimate* evaluation of existence in Early Buddhism, ubiquitous as it is in the Sermons and closely connected with, and emphasized in, the central spiritual context of detachment and release.[25]

The first Noble Truth, which according to tradition[26] was part of the Buddha's first discourse, is well-known: Birth, old age, disease, dying,[27] separation from dear things or persons, etc.—all this is *dukkha* (Skt. *duḥkha*): painful, disagreeable, ill, entailing suffering. Life is connected with, or at least constantly threatened by, pain, suffering,[28] and is inexorably, sooner or later, ended by death.[29] Even the superficially pleasant[30] things which are the objects of desire often involve more suffering and disadvantage than pleasure.[31] It is only in certain states of meditative concentration that this situation can be temporarily surmounted.[32] But in a more basic sense, the whole world (*loka*),[33] *all* conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*),[34] all constituents of a person as well as of the external world,[35] and even the states of meditative concentration,[36] are unsatisfactory or ill (*dukkha*),[37] in an *objective* sense,[38] just on account of their being *impermanent* (*anicca*) and subject to decay (*vipariṇāmadhamma*).[39] As such, they are not one's Self (*attan*) nor one's own (*attaniya*, *mama*, etc.)[40]—because this would imply lasting and free disposal of them[41]—but something alien (*para*, *aññā*),[42] and hence of no real value and concern, just like grass, pieces of wood or leaves (*tiṇa-kaṭṭha-palāsa*) in a park.[43]

This evaluation seems to start from *human* existence, but it is, of course, equally applicable to *animal* life. I for one do not remember any canonical text that affirms the food chain universe in the same way as Vedic and Hindu sources[44] sometimes do. Eating may have to be accepted as inevitable for survival,[45] but this does not exclude that it is at the same time detested,[46] and that the natural situation of killing and

eating the weaker and of the domination of the strongest is deeply abhorred, not only in society[47] but also in nature.[48] Therefore, I do not think that it is correct to derive, from the acceptance of the necessity of body and food for human existence (which is usually considered to be the only one in which liberating insight can be attained), an *ultimately positive* evaluation of nature characterized by the food chain. Even the less violent aspects of nature—vegetation, landscape and the elements—though hardly if ever viewed in terms of suffering or struggle for survival, cannot claim *ultimate* value in view of the fact that they too are ultimately ill or unsatisfactory (in an *objective* sense) just on account of their *impermanence*.[49]

Therefore, the ultimate analysis and evaluation of existence in Early Buddhism does not seem to confer any value on nature, neither on life as such nor on species nor on eco-systems. The ultimate value and goal of Early Buddhism, absolute and definitive freedom from suffering, decay, death and impermanence, cannot be found in nature.[50] But not in a civilized or artificial world either. For the goods and achievements of civilization, too, are, apart from usually benefitting only a minority, often a cause of suffering for others, especially for animals, and are, at any rate, impermanent. Even from an optimistic outlook technological progress will never succeed in abolishing suffering completely, let alone impermanence, to which even god Brahman and the luminous divine beings who abide in still higher spheres are subject.[51]

Thus, the ultimate analysis and evaluation of existence in Early Buddhism does not motivate *efforts* for *preserving* nature, not to mention restoring it, nor efforts for transforming or *subjugating* it by means of technology. It only motivates the wish and effort to *liberate* oneself (*vimutti*) from *all* constituents of both personal existence and the world—a goal to which this analysis is itself conducive by arousing weariness (*nibbidā*) and detachment (*virāga*).[52] And, at least if compassionateness (*kāruññatā*) and caring for others (*anukampā)* are sufficiently strong,[53] as in the case of the Buddha, it may motivate the person who has attained liberation (or is on his way to it) to help others to do the same,[54]

by teaching[55] or just by being a model.[56] It goes without saying that in view of the ultimate evaluation of existence as unsatisfactory the need to liberate oneself (or others, for that matter) from it is considerably increased by the fact that one's existence in the world is, in Early Buddhism, generally understood as perpetuating itself through a virtually endless series of rebirths (*punabbhava*) and re-deaths—either in this world or in (ultimately impermanent and hence unsatisfactory)[57] yonder heavens and hells—i.e., as *saṃsāra*.[58] Definitive release from *dukkha* does, then, not merely mean freedom from frustration, sorrow and fear arising from wrong attitudes[59] or even (by access to certain forms of meditative concentration) from physical pain in this life, but, above all, release from rebirth[60] and its implications (ageing and dying) and imponderabilities.

III. Origination in Dependence and Ecological Ethics

In order to attain liberation, it is necessary to gain insight into, and eliminate, the forces by which one's existence in the world, more precisely: reiterated existence, rebirth, is kept going. According to the second Noble Truth, the main cause is Desire (*taṇhā*, *tṛṣṇā*).[61] Freedom from rebirth is hence attained by extinguishing Desire, especially desire for (further) existence.[62] According to other texts,[63] desire is, in its turn, ultimately rooted in Non- or Misunderstanding (*avijjā*, *avidyā*). Desire is hence removed through the removal of *avijjā* by means of Insight. This causal nexus is elaborated in the twelve-membered formula of Origination in Dependence (*paṭiccasamuppāda*, *pratītyasamutpāda*),[64] which is thus—similar in this regard to the karma doctrine—concerned, at least originally, with the destiny of *individual* beings[65] (primarily, doubtless, human beings), pointing out that the causes for rebirth as well as, for that matter, for liberation are found within each individual itself, so that it is the individual's own business to make a change or go on as before. I for one fail to see how this analysis of the presuppositions of individual bondage and liberation could, without a radical re-interpretation,

provide a basis for *ecological* ethics based on an intrinsic value of natural diversity and beauty.

To be sure, the canonical texts contain also applications of the principle of Origination in Dependence which are not expressly, or not at all, related to rebirth, as, e.g., psychological or physio-psychological explanations of how feelings[66] or desire[67] arise, or the explanation of how unwholesome behaviour like violence, quarrel and lies originate from Desire.[68] In some Sermons, people's moral status or morally qualified actions are regarded as influencing even the situation of the external world,[69] and the external world has, in its turn, certain influences on living beings.[70] But it is, as far as I can see, only later on (especially in Chinese Hua-yen Buddhism)[71] that Origination in Dependence was even developed into a principle of universal *inter*dependence and interrelatedness. As such it seems, to be sure, to resemble the structural principle of scientific ecology (though closer scrutiny would seem to be required). But as far as I can see even such a principle does not necessarily entail an ecological ethics as I understand it.[72] To be sure, universal interrelatedness would mean that any change I (or we) bring about has influence on everything in the world including myself (or ourselves). But does this preclude that one (or mankind) might try (and to a certain extent even successfully try) to exploit the causal network for one's (or mankind's) own advantage, at the cost of others, as in modern technology? And even if universal interdependence and interrelatedness were of such a kind that this won't work, at least not in the long run, wouldn't it at best entail an anthropocentric ecological attitude—one which preserves intact eco-systems and bio-diversity only because and to the extent they are indispensable for *man*'s survival, or at least for his happiness, or spiritual perfection—unless it is supplemented by attributing a positive *value* to nature as it is, in its own right?

Anyway, the idea of a *mutual* dependence, inter-connectedness or interrelatedness, *here and now*, of *all* things and beings does not seem to be expressed in the canonical texts of Early Buddhism.[73] They only teach that not only suffering and rebirth but all things and events, except

Nirvāṇa,[74] arise in dependence on *specific* (complexes of) causes and conditions, which in their turn have also arisen in dependence on causes and conditions, without any primary, absolute cause at the beginning. There are, to be sure, instances of explicitly stated *mutual* causality,[75] but they are *special* cases.[76] This holds still good even when, in the Abhidhamma, most of the elements of the twelve-membered formula of Origination in Dependence are stated to condition one another mutually,[77] for this statement is only made in the context of a drastic Abhidhammic re-interpretation of this formula as referring to one single moment of mind (*ekacittakkhaṇa*).[78] Even the afore-mentioned (p. 13) occasional references to the influence of human moral behaviour on the external world, which inevitably has repercussions on people, are still a far cry from universal interrelatedness. What seems to come closest to the latter is the idea that in the course of the beginningless *saṃsāra*, all *living* beings have already been one another's relatives.[79] But this idea is hardly meant to imply that there is a causal interdependence between all living beings *here and now*. It does have an *ethical* significance, but, as I shall point out later, hardly a *deliberately* ecological one.

IV. Early Buddhist Spirituality and Ethics in Relation to Ecological Ethics

But let us first return to the cessation of suffering and to the fact that the decisive factor for this is the elimination of Desire, or greed. Greed is no doubt one of the foremost causes of environmental destruction: especially greed for consumer goods or objects of social prestige, but also greed for sexual pleasures or propagation if it leads to an excessive growth of human population. Hence, there can be no doubt that the elimination and even diminution of greed is ecologically beneficial.

This holds good for other Buddhist virtues as well: e.g., for being content with little,[80] being moderate in food[81] and making full use of things,[82] as antidotes against luxury, overconsumption and wastefulness,[83] and for mindfulness (*sati*)[84] and vigilance (*appamāda*) as antidotes against

thoughtless and careless behaviour. And it holds no less good for the practice of dismantling the notions of Ego, Self and Mine, especially with regard to one's body and mental factors as well as with regard to external phenomena, which leads to detachment[85] and to the elimination of egoism, possessiveness and conceit.[86]

But it should be kept in mind that such attitudes are spiritual practices and *ascetic* virtues, especially of the monk, and, primarily at least, intended to increase his *own* spiritual perfection or purity. *De facto* they may have contributed to a sound ecology, but at least in Early Buddhism they do *not* seem to have been *motivated*, expressly and primarily, by considerations of ecological ethics in the sense of consciously preserving species and eco-systems as such. To expressly motivate them by this purpose means to adapt them to a new situation, which is legitimate but requires attributing a positive *value* to nature-as-it-is.

Likewise, renouncing sexual intercourse and propagation, as demanded of monks and nuns, may, perhaps, have had an attenuating effect on population growth but was hardly motivated by such a purpose. The same holds good for the fact that even in the case of lay followers Early Buddhism, as far as I can see, does not push for maximum propagation.

The most pertinent elements of Early Buddhist spirituality and practice in our context are doubtless the attitudes of not killing or injuring living beings (*ahiṃsā*, etc.), friendliness (*mettā*, *maitrī*) compassion (*karuṇā*) or compassionateness (*kāruñña(tā)*)[87], caring or sympathy (*anukampā*), and concern (*(anud)dayā*).

Non-injury (*ahiṃsā*) appears to have started, in the Brāhmaṇa period, as a way of protecting oneself from the vengeance of injured animals (and plants) in the yonder world,[88] and probably also from the vengeance of their congeners in this very life.[89]

Friendliness (*mettā*), too, has a Vedic background of self-protection, though not so much from revenge than from spontaneous aggression. For it is derived from Skt. *mitra*, which in Early Vedic sources means "alliance", especially between different tribes.[90] Such an alliance

implied a peace-treaty and, usually, some form of co-operation, and could even develop into friendship, just as the ally (also *mitra*) could eventually become a veritable friend, and it is this nuance which became the primary meaning of the word in the later language. At least in later Vedic texts we can find the idea that an alliance or peace/friendship treaty could even be concluded with natural beings.[91] In Buddhism, emphasis is on cultivating a mental attitude of *friendliness* or even loving kindness[92] toward all living beings, but the idea of the protective function of alliances or peace-treaties[93] has remained alive even in connection with the Buddhist attitude of friendliness (*mettā*), which is in fact considered to serve the purpose of calming, or protecting oneself from, dangerous creatures.[94]

On the other hand, compassion (*karuṇā*), caring (*anukampā*) and concern (*(anud)dayā*) do not seem to derive from, or have the function of, self-protection;[95] for compassion is usually an attitude primarily directed towards *feeble*, suffering creatures, not so much towards strong and dangerous ones; and caring (*anukampā*) is an emotion one normally feels for *beloved* persons like one's children.[96] Significantly enough, HARRIS[97] does not mention compassion and caring in this context.

His treatment of friendliness (*mettā*) as a spiritual exercise also would seem to require a few corrections. He states that "there is little evidence in the canon, or its associated commentaries, to suggest that *mettā* may be extended to other beings simply as an expression of fellow-feeling"[98] and that Buddhaghosa even discourages meditators "from extending loving kindness to animals or other non-humans".[99]

The latter assertion would seem to be based on a misunderstanding of the passage adduced[100] which merely discusses the question with what kind of persons one should *start* the exercise. To be sure, animals do not play a prominent role in Buddhaghosa's treatment of the matter, and it is interesting that what is dealt with in detail is rather *mettā* practised *by animals* (actually the Buddha in former existences) *towards* wicked *human beings*.[101] But nevertheless in the unlimited form of the exercise referring to *all* living beings[102] animals are, of course, included among

its objects, belonging as they do to the category of "beings in evil states of existence" (*vinipātika*).[103]

As for the other assertion, namely that there is little evidence in the canon and its commentaries that loving kindness may be extended to other beings simply as an expression of fellow feeling, it is counter-evidenced by *VisM* 9.10 (cp. also *ŚrBh* 427,21 ff.) where friendliness or loving kindness towards all sentient beings is based on the "Golden Rule", i.e., on the awareness that like oneself other sentient beings, too, seek happiness but dislike pain, want to live but are afraid of death. What else is this than fellow-feeling?[104] And there are plenty of canonical passages arguing similarly for not killing and not injuring.[105] And what about Buddhaghosa[106] advising the meditator to consider, for the sake of arousing loving kindness, the fact that in the beginningless *saṃsāra* all beings have already been one's father, mother, etc.?[107] Actually, in a later publication,[108] HARRIS himself states that this kind of interrelatedness "leads to a strong feeling of solidarity with all beings".

To be sure, in many passages the exercise of friendliness, etc., is said to be rewarded by rebirth in heaven.[109] Besides, an important (and in Early Buddhism probably the most important) function of this exercise, too, is the spiritual *purification* of the meditator's mind,[110] and as the first of the four Unlimited [meditations] (*appamāṇa*) *mettā* starts, as is well known, a series culminating in equanimity or imperturbability (*upekkhā*, *upekṣā*).[111] However, I do not think that these features contradict or annul the above-mentioned genuinely ethical aspect.[112] Proclaiming friendliness, etc., as a means for attaining heaven is, rather, simply another thread of the texture, another strategy for stimulating people[113] to practise this kind of exercise. And cultivating friendliness, etc., for the sake of purifying one's own mind does not mean that they have no impact on the meditator's practical behaviour.[114] And that the exercise of the four Unlimited meditations culminates in equanimity or imperturbability (*upekkhā*) may, to be sure, mean that *upekkhā*, which is very much akin to detachment, is the state that comes closest to liberation.[115] But although there seems to be a certain tension between *upekkhā* and

the other states[116] (and although it does not seem to be possible to dwell in different states at the same time, just as one cannot dwell in different *jhāna*s simultaneously), the culminating position of *upekkhā* can hardly mean that the preceding states, or sympathy and concern, for that matter, are, at least in the end, once for all superseded by *upekkhā*. On the contrary, the example of the Buddha himself shows that even in the liberated person *upekkhā* is not considered to prevent compassionateness, friendliness, sympathy and concern for others from re-emerging.[117]

Yet—and in this regard I agree with HARRIS[118]—even in their primarily ethical form, i.e. when they are not, or at least not in the first place, cultivated for the sake of one's own advantage nor even for one's own spiritual purification but simply the expression of some kind of fellow-feeling, friendliness, compassion, sympathy and non-injury do not yet constitute ecological ethics. For they are, primarily at least, directed towards *individuals*.

To be sure, the Vedic precursor of friendliness (*mettā/maitrī*), alliance (*mitra(dheya)*), is primarily concluded with other tribes, and in the case of animals, species or classes may be regarded as corresponding to tribes. In the verses of the *Ahirājasutta* or *Khandhaparitta*,[119] friendship (*metta*, neuter!)[120] is in fact declared to exist, on the part of the monk, with what is termed *families* of snake-kings (*ahirāja-kula*)[121] in the prose, and with what one may call rough *classes* of animals, viz. such as have no feet, two feet, four feet and many feet.[122] And even in the preceding prose part of the *Sutta*, where *metta-* (adj.) qualifies "mind" (*citta*) and obviously has the usual Buddhist meaning of "friendliness" or "benevolence", it is still extended towards these *families* of snake-kings. It is tempting to *develop* this feature into an ecological interpretation of *mettā*, i.e., into a concept of *mettā* as entailing an appreciation and protection of species *as such*.[123] But *historically* the transition from an alliance or a peace- or friendship contract with wild animals (or nature) to a concept of *mettā* explicitly including in its aim the protection of species *as such* is, as far as I can see, problematic. Alliances or friendship contracts with tribes, or species of animals for that matter, are hardly made because of

a positive evaluation of these tribes and species *as such* or of their *diversity*, but rather because these tribes or species are composed of virtually dangerous individuals (or, of course, because one needs allies against others). And it seems doubtful that this idea was, in the course of its transformation into the Buddhist attitude of friendliness, at any point developed in such a way as to take classes or species of animals not merely as groups of individuals but as deserving to be *valued* (or at least accorded a right of existence) *as species*.

Another interesting context to be taken into account in this connection is the Buddhist ideal of kingship. For according to the *Cakkavattisīhanādasutta*[124] the ideal king is expected to protect both social groups of people and "quadrupeds and birds" (*miga-pakkhī*), which in this context might well refer to the animal population as a collective unit,[125] or, in analogy to the social groups, even to two rough *classes* of animals. There may in fact be a possibility that social groups as well as the animal population are to be protected *as such* in order to maintain the "resources" of the kingdom; or, from a less profane point of view, to keep the cosmos in order (a notion which may lend itself to ecological re-interpretation). But this is hardly an originally Buddhist idea[126] but rather evokes a Vedic or Hindu background.[127] From a typically Buddhist ethical point of view, protection would rather refer to the totality of *individuals* constituting the social groups and the animal population.

Likewise, Aśoka's 5th Pillar Edict stating that he in fact put various *species* of wild animals[128] under protection may, to be sure, suggest some kind of conservationist intention.[129] But similar prescriptions are found in the (definitely non-Buddhist) *Arthaśāstra*,[130] the classical Indian treatise on politics. They are thus not specifically Buddhist either. Rather, they seem to be inspired by the Hindu Dharma texts,[131] the motives of which require special investigation. This does not of course exclude that Aśoka's prohibition of killing these species was not also, and perhaps in the first place, motivated by the *Buddhist* attitude towards animals which had first led him to recommend *unrestricted* abstention from killing animals.[132] But from *this* point of view it may well be that

even in the 5th Pillar Edict he aims not so much at conservation of *species* as at minimizing the killing (and injuring) of *individual* animals, by prohibiting at least unnecessary, useless and disproportionate[133] killing,[134] and by enjoining, for this purpose, complete protection of such species as were (harmless and?) not edible or, for religious or other reasons, not usually eaten nor killed for satisfying some other need.[135]

Thus, on the whole the Buddhist attitude of *ahiṃsā* and still more obviously that of friendliness, compassion, etc., is, albeit unrestricted (i.e. encompassing *all* living beings), yet primarily directed towards *individuals*. Hence, in the case of animals, too, non-violence, friendliness, sympathy, concern and compassion envisage the *sentient individual*, the concrete subjects of life and of sensations (especially pain),[136] *not species* or eco-systems, nor even individuals *as representatives* of species. The value at stake in *this* spiritual context[137] is the life (and happiness) of the *individual*, not the transindividual continuity of the species or of life as such, or of nature as a whole.

To be sure, in a world where eco-systems are still intact and no species threatened by extinction, not to kill or injure individuals, i.e., just letting natural beings in peace, is probably the best thing one can do from the ecological point of view; the more so since non-injury is not prescribed merely with regard to "useful" animals but with regard to *all* animals including such as are noxious or a nuisance to man;[138] and still more so when, as with the Jainas and, to a certain extent, even in early Buddhism[139], also plants and even the elements are included. But even so the primary, conscious motivation is not an ecological one, one expressly aiming at the full preservation of species or eco-systems. The Early Buddhist concept of non-injury may admit of a gradation in terms of the intensity of suffering caused by killing or injuring different kinds of animals, or in terms of the amount of effort and aggressiveness involved on the part of the perpetrator,[140] but it would hardly make a difference of value between individuals belonging to ecologically detrimental, over-represented species on the one hand and such as are on the verge of extinction on the other. It would even come into conflict with

ecological considerations in cases where such considerations might favour the killing of certain animals, e.g., such as belong to species artificially introduced into another continent where they may severely disturb the balance and endanger native species.

Occasionally, however, an ecological element is in fact introduced even in the context of non-injury; e.g., when the *Vinaya* rule prohibiting monks from injuring plants is motivated by pointing out that they are the *abode* of insects and other animals;[141] or when even lay persons are enjoined not to pollute water inhabited by tiny animals;[142] or when a disciple endowed with supranormal power is dissuaded by the Buddha from turning the earth upside down because this would jeopardize or derange the animals living on her.[143] Such cases show that there was, albeit only sporadically, an awareness of the fact that animals may also be killed, injured or caused to suffer in an indirect way, by destroying their habitat, and that this too ought to be avoided. But even in these cases what counts is the (indirect) protection of *individual* animals, not of species.

The *de facto* ecological importance of not killing animals lies, above all, in the fact that it is the basic commitment also for *lay* Buddhists. Of course, the effect depends on how seriously such a commitment is observed. To be sure, there is always some gap between norm and reality,[144] even in traditional Buddhist countries, let alone countries which have been influenced by modern Western norms or ways of behaviour. But there are also aspects inherent in the Buddhist understanding of not killing and not injuring which may have contributed to the ecological problems in some Buddhist countries and ought to be clearly envisaged (and balanced).

The most important of these aspects is the tendency of Buddhism to keep life *practicable*. This tendency is in tune with the principle of the Middle Way: no licence, but no exaggerated self-mortification and squeamishness either. This allows the monks to concentrate on their *spiritual* perfection, and the lay people to observe the moral essentials and accumulate good karma without being bothered by excessive and irre-

mediable qualms. In this sense, for Buddhist *monks*, non-injury is not as strict as for Jaina monks (who are, e.g., not even allowed to drink fresh, unboiled water because it is regarded by them to be alive, whereas Buddhism has discarded this idea and the ensuing restriction).[145] As for *lay* people, their life is kept practicable[146] by confining non-injury, by and large, to *animals*, whereas plants may be utilized more or less freely,[147] and there is a tendency to ignore and, later on, even deny their sentience.[148] Even so, problems remain. E.g., peasants, when ploughing, can hardly avoid killing dew-worms, etc., and they may have serious trouble with animals destroying the harvest. Still more difficult is the situation for fishermen, hunters or butchers, especially in areas where meat or fish is an indispensable element of diet. In such cases, tensions between norm and reality are inevitable. The reaction of Early Buddhism (to be inferred from the traditional situation in Theravāda societies) seems to have been to ignore the tension or live with it (or, at best, try to compensate for it by meritorious deeds) as far as agriculture is concerned, but to avoid occupations directly and primarily based on killing animals and leave them, as far as possible, to people outside or on the margin of the Buddhist society.[149] In Mahāyāna (and Tantric) Buddhism, however, there is a tendency to solve the problem by providing means for annulling bad karma,[150] e.g. purificatory rites, or by turning to a supramundane Saviour like Amida-Buddha. To be sure, considerations of practicability are unavoidable, still more so in view of the modern knowledge about protozoa. But one ought to be aware of the danger that in order to facilitate practicability one may easily arrive at reducing inhibitions too much, to the extent of entirely undermining the commitment not to take life, including its *de facto* ecological effects.

Another problem is that (in contrast to Jainism) Buddhism, in tune with its ethics of intention and at the same time in favour of practicability, stresses avoiding *intentional* killing,[151] which somehow overlaps with *direct* killing.[152] This is an extremely important point in the context of ecological ethics since most of our contemporary pollution and destruction of nature is *un*intentional (often even unforeseen) and *in*direct. As I

have already pointed out, there is occasional awareness of the problem in the sources, but on the whole such awareness appears to have been somewhat underdeveloped. This becomes obvious also from the unrestrained way pesticides have been used in most Buddhist countries,[153] or from the lack of inhibition in using cars.

The issue of unintentional and indirect injuring is extremely important also in connection with the modern system of *consumption.*[154] The modern consumer of meat and fish, e.g., does not himself do the killing and can even be sure that the animal is not killed for him personally. Nevertheless, as a buyer he keeps the system going and is hence indirectly responsible for the killing and also for the (often much worse) tortures and ecological ravages which are often connected with the rearing of animals or with catching them (e.g. by drift-net fishing).

Anyway, we can state that there are a considerable number of elements in Buddhist spiritual and everyday practice which, if taken seriously, *de facto* contribute to the preservation of a sound natural environment. But they do not establish unimpaired nature and maximum diversity of species as a *value* in itself (and hence may not be sufficient for motivating *active* conservation or even restoration). Nor does it—as I have tried to show above—appear possible to establish such a value on the level of the *ultimate* evaluation of existence in Early Buddhism.

V. Intramundane Evaluations of Nature

However, the situation may change if we descend to the level of *intramundane* evaluation. For even though we have to admit that the world as a whole is ultimately ill, unsatisfactory, it obviously includes conditions of *relatively* increased or reduced suffering, and perhaps also conditions which favour or impede spiritual progress. From these points of view, it would seem possible that preference is given either to nature or to civilization. Actually, the Early Buddhist sources do suggest preference, but it varies; there are obviously different, almost contradictory strands.

One strand is unambiguously *pro-civilization*. The ecologically orientated reader may indeed be somewhat shocked when finding, in quite a few places in the Buddhist canon, a cliché describing ideal intramundane conditions in terms of a thoroughly civilized world: densely populated, one village close to the other, with 80,000 wealthy, big cities full of people.[155] At the same time, wild nature is often abhorred as dangerous, weird and disagreeable,[156] and wild animals, especially beasts of prey, as something one does not want to come into contact with.[157]

This view reflects the ideal of a world thoroughly adapted to *man*. It is openly hostile to wild nature and hardly offers any basis for its protection. It is rather a primarily anthropocentric strand regarding nature as something to be warded off,[158] manipulated[159] and, as the above cliché suggests, even dominated, and it may even have favoured the rather uncritical adoption of the nature-dominating modern Western civilization by some Buddhist countries.

But it is not specifically Buddhist. Rather, it seems to have been the common ideal of peasants and townspeople in early India[160] (and not only there)[161]. As such, it has been adopted by Buddhism, or perhaps rather: tolerated, and made use of in certain didactic contexts. Actually, it accords with or has been adapted to Buddhist cosmological principles in so far as the ideal situation is regarded to be connected with *moral* (not technological) progress,[162] whereas the breakdown of civilization and natural calamities (like drought) are considered to be caused by human immoral behaviour.[163]

Even passages like the verse which declares planting groves and parks, but also constructing wells and dams, to be particularly meritorious[164] seem to refer rather to cultivation, not to re-establishing nature. As far as the "pro-civilization strand" has an ideal of nature, it is indeed *cultivated* nature, nature shaped by *man* according to his wants and predilections: groves, gardens, well-constructed (!) ponds.[165] Sometimes, even the trees are imagined to consist, ideally, of precious metals and jewels.[166] Such an attitude need not necessarily create ecological problems, but will inevitably do so if interference with nature is too violent

or too extensive and neglects the needs and rights of our fellow-beings, as nowadays.

Yet, even in the context of this strand one may occasionally come across passages in which real nature forms part of the ideal surroundings: trees, flowers, birds, ponds and rivers with fishes and tortoises; and sometimes there is even a stress on *diversity*[167] or even completeness[168] of *species*. But even in such passages mostly those elements of nature and bio-diversity are selected which *man* finds beautiful and innocuous[169]. Even so, these passages would seem to have been influenced by, or participate in, another basically secular but more literary strand of evaluating nature, viz. the poetic description, and even romanticization, of natural beauty—a strand which has been much more influential in connection with what I am going to call the "hermit strand" to be dealt with below.[170]

There are, however, also texts (like the *Aggaññasutta*)[171] where the process of civilization is rather negatively evaluated and understood as the result of moral *decadence.* But this does not entail, in this strand, a positive evaluation of nature, let alone wilderness. The primeval, unspoilt state is, on the contrary, described as one of pre- or trans-natural, "ethereal" existence. It seems to fit in with this view that in other sources[172] a *positive* intramundane development—due to a collective progress in morality and spiritual practice—is depicted as characterized by the disappearance of *both* nature *and* civilization: first, *animals*—at least wild animals[173]—vanish from this earth (because after having consumed their karma they are reborn as humans). After some time, *human beings*, too, disappear, because all of them are reborn in a *luminous heaven* due to having practised suitable meditation. Finally, even plants and the whole earth vanish.

This concept gives the impression of a kind of intramundane reflection or echo of the ultimate Buddhist analysis of existence, entailing a pointed awareness of the dark aspects of civilization as well, and conceiving an ideal state, even on the *intramundane* level, as something radically transcending both nature *and* civilization.

On the other hand, there are plenty of canonical texts which show an essentially different attitude towards wild nature and would seem to constitute yet another strand, which I call the "hermit strand".[174] It too is not specifically Buddhist, a similar ideal occurring also in Hindu sources.[175]

The hermits are monks (or, occasionally, nuns)[176] who, for the sake of meditation and spiritual perfection, retire from the noisy bustle and allurements of the cities and inhabited places into solitude[177], and they find it, primarily, in the wilderness (*arañña*, Skt. *araṇya*), under trees,[178] in mountain caves or woodlands, or at least in the open air (*abbhokāsa*).[179]

That the reason why hermits prefer the wilderness is primarily solitude and undisturbedness, becomes clear from the fact that among the places suitable for meditation we find also empty houses and charnel grounds (*susāna*). This may even indicate that in these texts too wilderness is rather a dangerous and weird place,[180] and this is explicitly confirmed in some passages, e.g., by pointing out the danger of being threatened by poisonous or wild animals.[181] But the hermit may even render these dangers constantly threatening his life spiritually fruitful by systematically contemplating them in order to intensify his spiritual effort.[182] Or he tries to *overcome* his fear by appropriate meditation,[183] or has already succeeded in doing so.[184] Nor do the texts suppress the fact that life in the wilderness involves various hardships, like being pestered by gadflies and mosquitoes,[185] or at least foregoing the comforts of civilization and culture.[186] But what the hermit should learn, or has already learnt, is precisely to endure such things without becoming displeased[187] and to abandon all wants and desires.[188]

In this way, wilderness can, *in spite* of its dangers and inconveniences, be *evaluated positively*. Having become free from fear, irritation, desire and possessiveness, the hermit will be truly happy precisely in the solitude of the wilderness and may even enjoy the *beauties* of nature,[189] in spite of their impermanence,[190] and without falling a prey to the emotions or destructive patterns of behaviour they arouse in worldly people.[191] In a sense, the bliss of meditative absorption and spiritual re-

lease experienced by the hermit radiates to the surroundings in which it has been (or may be) attained and imparts a positive value to them.

That the wilderness is especially suitable for spiritual perfection does not of course mean that this perfection will be attained there automatically. As one text[192] puts it, there live, in the wilderness, also people who are anything but spiritually advanced: uneducated, foolish people, greedy people with evil desires, and madmen. Without the right spiritual attitude and effort, life in the wilderness is futile. Occasionally[193] the suitability of the wilderness for spiritual perfection is even restricted by stating that it holds good for *some* persons only, whilst others may attain it more easily in inhabited places or cities. And truly liberated persons are said to be not affected at all by any sensations, be it in inhabited places or in the wilderness.[194]

In another Sermon[195] the monk is recommended a kind of Middle Way: On the one hand, he is exhorted to patiently endure heat and cold, hunger and thirst, gadflies and mosquitoes, and physical pain. On the other, he is allowed to counteract them by making modest use of the basic achievements of civilization like clothes, lodging and medicine, and is even advised to avoid dangerous places and dangerous animals.

A similar inhomogeneity in the evaluation of wild nature can also be observed in connection with *nuns*: In the *Bhikkhunīsaṃyutta*[196] nuns are reported to have fearlessly retired into dark forests and attained spiritual perfection. In the *Vinaya*,[197] however, they are prohibited from living in the wilderness because of the danger of being raped.[198]

Thus, the intramundane evaluation of nature in the canon is rather ambivalent. To be sure, in those early days the wilderness was still farspread and cultivated land limited, as one *Sūtra*[199] puts it. There was still enough room for hermit life. Nowadays, however, the expansionist dynamics of the pro-civilization attitude—visible already in the old sources—has almost completely succeeded in putting an end to wilderness and leaves little room for solitary, quiet life in unspoilt nature. Yet, as mentioned before it is, precisely, undisturbed, unspoilt nature—the wilderness—that is usually regarded as the most favourable environ-

ment for *spiritual* progress and *true* happiness. This seems to imply an—intramundane—*positive evaluation*, and what is positively evaluated here is not so much individual animals and plants but rather the *whole ambience*. Primarily, to be sure, as a place of solitude and silence, but, at least occasionally (as in some verses of the *Theragāthā*), also in its *beauty*, as the harmonious unity of landscape, plants and animals. This seems to coincide, to some extent, with what we call "nature" in the sense of an eco-system, along with the species of animals and plants belonging to it. If this is correct, this strand would indeed furnish a viable basis for ecological ethics including *active* protection and even restitution of ecosystems, and it seems that monks influenced by this strand have been playing an increasingly important role in the ecological movements in at least some Buddhist countries.[200]

To be sure, the motivation would still be a subtly anthropocentric one: to preserve and even restitute intact natural areas as places most suitable for *man's* spiritual perfection. But one could add that animals, too, would profit from an increase of human spiritual perfection because it would entail a reduction of ill-treatment of them by man. Besides, nowadays even many Buddhists who are not hermits are probably inclined to expect maximum secular happiness for *all* sentient beings not from a nature-destroying civilization but from a harmonious co-existence with nature (and there is no reason why a purely intramundane evaluation belonging to the past should be kept if it runs counter to the requirements of the present).

VI. The Status of Animals

Still, even against this attempt to establish ecological ethics on the intramundane level, one serious objection can be raised: the objection that the positive evaluation, in the "hermit strand", of (wild/intact) nature as an ambience might seem to have, more or less, lost sight of *suffering* in nature. The more so since in many canonical texts, and mostly in those which may be characterized as rational discourse, *animals* and

existence as an animal are so *negatively* evaluated that efforts to preserve them appear highly problematic.

According to these texts, animals are, firstly, *intellectually inferior*. Though they have some capacity for thinking (*manasikāra*), they lack the faculty of insight (*prajñā*).[201] Hence they cannot understand the Buddhist doctrine and cannot attain liberation, unless they are, in a later existence, reborn as men, which is regarded to be possible but very rare.[202]

Secondly, animals are not just subject to suffering like man, but subject to *much more suffering*; their existence is considered to be *extremely* unhappy,[203] not only because they are exploited and tortured by man[204] but *also in nature itself*, where the weaker one is threatened and devoured by the stronger,[205] and, moreover, because at least many of them live on disgusting food or in uncomfortable places.[206] In contrast to rebirth as a human, rebirth as an animal is hence usually regarded as an *evil* rebirth.[207]

Thirdly, animals are considered to be (for the most part at least) *morally* inferior or even wicked,[208] because of their promiscuity including even incest,[209] or precisely because the stronger devours the weaker.[210] The latter argument is, by the way, adduced as a reason why rebirth of an animal as a human is so rare.

Such a negative evaluation of animals and animal existence is no doubt extremely unfavourable as a basis for an active *ecological* ethics. To be sure, the commitment not to take life prevents Buddhists from killing animals once they are there. But if animal existence is in fact such an unhappy state, why should we make any effort to perpetuate it? If the presence of many animals and few humans means that the world is in a bad condition,[211] should we not welcome the present growth of human population[212] and decrease of (at least wild) animals, and should we not be glad if, for some reason or other, animals were to disappear entirely from this world, just as there are none (at least no real ones) in the later Buddhist paradise Sukhāvatī?[213] Would it not be rather cruel and selfish to preserve them for our own spiritual progress, let alone our happiness, if even by an increase of our spiritual perfection we cannot

essentially ameliorate their sombre situation because it is inherent to their status?

On the one hand, one could, from the traditional Buddhist point of view, rejoin that the number of beings to be born as animals cannot depend on external factors like man-made pollution or deforestation, etc., but is solely determined by the previous karma of those beings themselves. This would mean that a decrease in the total number of animals would have to be either merely apparent or somehow the result of a preceding large-scale moral and spiritual improvement, and can also in future be achieved only in this way. Hence, at least as long as such a large-scale improvement has not taken place, there may be good reason to argue that in the sense of the Golden Rule it is part of everybody's moral duty to preserve the world in an agreeable condition not only for future generations of humans but also for the beings to be reborn as animals. This would, by the way, even coincide with one's own interests since—in view of the complexity of karmic processes—few persons can exclude the possibility that either they themselves or their friends and relatives may be reborn in one of these groups, so that protection of intact eco-systems would even amount to protecting what may be one's own future abode.

On the other hand, apart from this, the idea of the extreme unhappiness of animals would, it too, seem to be a wide-spread preconception of the peasants and townsmen of those days, met with in Jainism and Hinduism as well[214]—a preconception which may be rooted in frequent bad treatment of domestic animals and in the civilization strand's fear of wilderness. To that strand we can probably also attribute the idea of the wickedness of (at least certain wild) animals. Both of these ideas seem to have been adopted or utilized by Buddhism for didactic purposes. Their main aim is not to make a statement on animals but to warn against the evil consequences of bad karma and to underscore the necessity of maximum moral and spiritual effort.[215] I suggest that in an age where establishing an ecological ethics has become imperative, they ought to be de-dogmatized by being relegated to their specific didactic contexts.

For, though animals have doubtless to suffer, the assumption that they have to suffer more than man appears unwarranted, at least as long as their natural situation is not additionally aggravated by man.

Actually, in another strand of the Buddhist tradition—in the *Jātaka* (together with its commentary) and related texts—animals are often viewed quite differently.[216] I admit that this view is a more popular one and not specifically Buddhist either, but it is not therefore necessarily less appropriate, and it has exercised a considerable influence on the feelings and attitudes of lay Buddhists.[217] As is well-known, in these texts animals are described as being both unhappy and happy, stupid and prudent, bad and good. They are even susceptible to religious admonition.[218] To be sure, these texts largely anthropomorphize animals. But in not regarding them as particularly unhappy and wicked creatures they seem to come closer to the truth.

The evaluation of animals in these texts shows some affinity to the hermit strand. In fact, this strand stands out quite frequently in the *Jātaka* and related texts; in a pre-Buddhist setting, to be sure, but nevertheless mostly in connection with ascetics exemplifying such virtues as the Buddhist compilers too wanted to inculcate. In some passages,[219] nature around the hermitage (*assama*, *āśrama*) is described as, and expressly called,[220] lovely and beautiful, abounding in a variety of blossoming and fruit-bearing trees spreading delicate odours and inhabited by various kinds of birds and quadrupeds, and embellished by ponds and rivers with clear water and full of lotus-flowers, fishes and other aquatic animals. The emphasis on variety of species (which are enumerated in great detail)[221] is conspicuous.

This kind of description of nature around the hermitage is obviously closely related to the romanticizing strand of nature description in secular poetry mentioned above (p. 25). It is current in non-Buddhist literature as well,[222] and in the *Jātaka* similar descriptions can also be found of the forest inhabited by animal heroes.[223] There can be little doubt that it too depicts nature mainly from a *human* aesthetic point of view.[224] Even the inclusion of fierce animals like lions, tigers, bears,

boars and crocodiles does not contradict this since they would rather appear to be envisaged—from afar, so to speak—in their majestic beauty. Hence, a positive evaluation of intact nature and bio-diversity, but tacit omission of the violence and suffering involved in nature as it actually is.

Yet, some passages show that suffering and violence in nature may not simply have been ignored. One passage,[225] e.g., stresses that in the forest around the hermitage there is plenty of food also for the animals (thus suggesting that in nature food is often scarce). As for violence, the idea is rather that around the hermitage there is an *exceptional* situation in that violence has been neutralized or *overcome*[226] by the (non-violent) spiritual power or irradiation of the hermit, especially by his practice of friendliness or loving kindness (*mettā*). Not only in the sense that by practising loving kindness the hermit protects *himself* from the aggressiveness of dangerous creatures, i.e. renders them non-aggressive towards *himself*. Rather, by his spiritual power[227] and irradiation of friendliness or loving kindness[228] the hermit affects, so to speak, the animals around him so that they abandon even their natural *mutual* enmities and to become friendly and non-aggressive even towards *one another*. Thus peace not only *with* nature but also *within* nature.[229]

To be sure, this is a vision of an ideal state of nature, disclosing dissatisfaction with nature as it actually is, i.e. as involving violence and suffering. But at the same time it does not regard animals as hopelessly miserable. It presupposes that *as animals* they may be happy and good, and may even advance spiritually, at least under the influence of human spiritual perfection.[230]

Such a view of animals would tally well with arguing for ecological ethics for the sake of maximum spiritual progress and intramundane happiness of *all* living beings, not merely of human beings. I do not know to what extent a modern Buddhist is ready to subscribe to such a view of animals; but it would anyway be sufficient to abandon the idea that animals are wicked and the idea of their irremediable, extreme unhappiness, and to admit that under natural conditions animals, though,

to be sure, not living in a paradise and by no means free from suffering, may, after all, not be so extremely unhappy, at any rate not more than an average human being.

VII. Conclusion

My impression is that Early Buddhism, at least its primarily monastic tradition as we know it from the canonical texts, was, on the whole, impressed not so much by the—undeniable—beauty of nature as by its—equally undeniable—sombre aspects: the struggle for life, killing and being killed, devouring and being devoured, greed, suffering, and especially by the ubiquity of decay and impermanence. But the reaction is not effort towards a violent transformation or subjugation of nature but rather effort towards transcending it spiritually. On the ultimate level, Early Buddhism does not merely negate nature (as HAKAMAYA puts it) but rather all mundane existence, nature as well as civilization.

Spiritually, this entails, above all, *detachment*, including abstention from all self-assertive violence. The world of the food chain and of struggle for survival and power is, as far as I can see, *not* appreciated by Early Buddhism, neither emotionally nor morally. Usually it is simply *avoided*, kept at a distance as much as possible: theoretically, by a tendency to restrict sentience to animals, practically, by avoiding killing, living on almsfood, and ultimately by attaining *Nirvāṇa*. Occasionally, it is said to be partially neutralized by radiating friendliness or by exceptional spiritual power. According to some (non-Theravāda) sources, violence in nature is, in individual cases, accepted but at the same time neutralized by means of self-sacrifice (as in the story of the hungry tigress,[231] or that of king Śibi and the dove[232])[233].

Thus, Early Buddhism does not, on the whole, romanticize nature. I am far from taking this to be a weak point, provided that the same sober and critical attitude is applied to civilization. Nor do I take it to mean that it is altogether impossible to establish an ecological ethics on the basis of the Early Buddhist tradition. For, apart from the fact that

many of the attitudes connected with or conducive to detachment as well as friendliness, compassion, etc., are *de facto* ecologically beneficial, it may not be impossible to establish a value-based ecological ethics in a similar way as the value-based ethics of *ahiṃsā*. In the latter case, individual *life* is established as an inviolable value although it is something that on the level of ultimate evaluation of existence one wants to get rid of, or at least does not strive to retain. This prevents a Buddhist from the short-circuit of misinterpreting the *ultimate* valuelessness of life as a permission to destroy life wilfully (by killing living beings, including, normally, oneself), or even to kill out of compassion (as is, however, occasionally allowed in Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism)[234]. Should it not be equally justified to establish—in line with the evaluation of nature in the "hermit strand"—*nature* too, on the *intramundane* level, as a value to be preserved, in spite of its *ultimate* valuelessness, in order to prevent the latter from being misinterpreted by deriving from it the permission to exploit and destroy nature relentlessly for our own short-term advantage or for any other reason? And would it not be reasonable, at least for lay persons, to supplement this abstention from damaging with circumspect active engagement for conservation and even restoration of nature, just as abstention from taking individual life is supplemented with cautious help motivated by compassion and loving kindness?

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Abbreviations

A *Aṅguttaranikāya* (PTS ed.)
Ap *Apadāna* (PTS ed.)
AKBh *Abhidharmakośa,* ed. PRADHAN, Patna 1967
Aṣṭ *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā,* ed. P.L. VAIDYA, Darbhanga 1960
BCA *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of Śāntideva, ed. P.L. VAIDYA, Darbhanga 1960
BN = SCHMITHAUSEN, *Buddhism and Nature ...*
BN Proceedings = Buddhism and Nature, Proceedings ...
D *Dīghanikāya* (PTS ed.)
Dhp *Dhammapada* (PTS ed., quoted by verse number)
DBhSDaśabhūmikasūtra, ed. J. RAHDER, Paris 1926
It *Itivuttaka* (PTS ed.; quoted by page number)
Ja *Jātaka* (PTS ed.)

Jm *Jātakamālā* of Āryaśūra, ed. P.L. VAIDYA, Darbhanga 1959
M *Majjhimanikāya* (PTS ed.)
MBh *Mahābhārata* (crit. ed.)
Mil *Milindapañha* (PTS ed.)
MSA *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, ed. S. LÉVI, Paris 1907
n. = note (used only in references to other works cited in this article)
note = endnote in the present article
Plants = SCHMITHAUSEN, *The Problem of the Sentience of Plants ...*
S *Saṃyuttanikāya* (PTS ed.)
Śikṣ *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (ed. C. BENDALL)
Sn *Suttanipāta* (PTS ed., quoted by verse number unless indicated otherwise)
ŚrBh *Śrāvakabhūmi* of Ācārya Asaṅga, ed. K. SHUKLA, Patna 1973.
T *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Buddhist Tripiṭaka in Chinese)
Th *Theragāthā* (PTS ed.; quoted by verse number)
Ud *Udāna* (PTS ed.)
Upasenasūtra ed. in: E. WALDSCHMIDT, *Von Ceylon bis Turfan*, Göttingen 1967, 339-344.
Uv *Udānavarga*, ed. F. BERNHARD, Göttingen 1965
Vi *(Mahā-)Vibhāṣā*(*-śāstra*): *T* vol. 27
Vin *Vinayapiṭaka* (PTS ed.)
VisM *Visuddhimagga* (ed. WARREN/KOSAMBI)

Notes

[1] The present paper is a revised and annotated version of a lecture I had the honour to present at the Universities of Colombo and Peradenia in Feb. 1994. It is an elaboration and reconsideration of parts of *BN*, to which the reader is referred for more details, documentation and pertinent literature. I take the opportunity to thank all those who by their questions and critical remarks caused me to rethink various issues, as well as to my friends M. Maitrimurti, S. A. Srinivasan, E. Steinkellner and A. Wezler for valuable suggestions. It is not their fault that the result is still preliminary in many regards, but since I shall not have a chance to improve on it in the near future I submit it for discussion as it stands, hoping that it will at least contribute to an increasing awareness of some of the problems involved in the issue.

[2] I admit, of course, that *in concreto* there are numerous cases of conflict, some hardly soluble, especially if microbes, like smallpox or malaria viruses, are taken into consideration. Yet, even microbes would seem to have essential functions in the ecological balance (e.g. limiting populations in number or distribution), so that man, if he—understandably, from his point of view—decides to extinguish some of them, may have to compensate for this by voluntary self-restriction.

[3] For a survey and an attempt at a typology see HARRIS 1995b.

[4] Cp. esp. MACY 1991a, and 1991b/1994. Cp. also HARRIS 1995a, 201; 205 f.; 211 n. 55—As for linking Buddhism with ecology, cp. already ALDOUS HUXLEY, esp. *Island*, London: Grafton Books 1976 (1st ed. 1962), 247-249. Like J. MACY, he approves of a world-affirming, engaged form of Buddhism (Mahāyāna, with strong Far Eastern and Tantric features) and criticizes Hīnayānists or *śrāvaka*s as escapist "*Nirvāṇa*-addicts" (*Island*, 87), but as far as I can see he is less explicit as to what, in his opinion, original Buddhism was like.

[5] See note 79.

[6] MACY 1991a, 163.

[7] J. MACY, "The Greening of the Self", in: BADINER 1990, 61.
[8] ARAMAKI 1992.
[9] Ibid., 9-11.
[10] Ibid., 8 (below).
[11] HARRIS 1991; cp. also 1994.
[12] Ibid., 111.
[13] See HAKAMAYA 1990 and 1992. For a critical discussion of the former paper, see *BN* §§ 61 ff., to which HAKAMAYA has replied in the second paper, pp. 365 ff. and 378. A detailed response to this reply would, however, exceed the limits of this paper. For the time being, I can only repeat that according to my understanding HAKAMAYA's Cartesian view of animals is absolutely incompatible with both the canonical texts and the later Buddhist tradition, disastrous in its ethical consequences (as can be seen in modern Western animal mass production and animal experiments, based on the Cartesian premises), and plainly counter-intuitive at that.— For a very useful summary of the larger framework of HAKAMAYA's (and S. MATSUMOTO's) "Critical Buddhism", see PAUL L. SWANSON in: *Numen* XL.2/1993, 115 ff., esp. 126 ff. Cp. also HARRIS 1995a, 199 f.
[14] Not "genuine", as I misunderstood in *BN* § 63.2: cp. HAKAMAYA 1992, 366 f.
[15] HAKAMAYA 1990, 380; 1992, 378.
[16] HAKAMAYA 1992, 369.
[17] HAKAMAYA 1990, 399.
[18] HAKAMAYA 1992, 378.
[19] On the problem of anachronism, see P. PEDERSEN in: BRUUN/KALLAND 1995, 266 f. and 268.
[20] Asian Buddhists, and Hindus too for that matter, sometimes argue that they are not obliged to search in their own tradition for answers to the problems provoked by modern technology because these problems have been created not by them but by the West. But since almost all of their countries have, for whatever reason, come to join the business, they have also come to share the problems, whether they like it or not, and hence have to come up with solutions. Of course, it is up to them whether they

prefer to develop these solutions on the basis of their own tradition or to borrow them from the West, just like the problems.

[21] *S* IV 230 f.; cp. also *A* II 87 and III 131.

[22] Cp. also MACY 1991b, xii (1994, 13). At the same time, GÓMEZ (1992, 46) is certainly right in stressing that in Buddhism action cannot be separated from self-cultivation and that the first thing to do—before engaging in public activism—is to adapt one's own life-style to ecological requirements. But this, in its turn, requires a corresponding mental attitude and *motivation* (cp. *Dhp* 1-2: *manopubbaṅgamā dhammā ...*; *A* II 177: *cittena ... loko nīyati ...*).

[23] J. MACY, e.g., may take my paper, should she find it worth reading, as an attempt to establish ecological ethics even on the more difficult basis of what she would call an escapist deviation, in parts of the Buddhist tradition, from the original teaching. Personally, I do indeed appreciate her creative adaptation of Buddhist teachings to the requirements of the ecological crisis we are faced with, and I wonder if the Buddha, were he among us today, would not teach in a similar way. All the more it is that I regret that, as a historian of ideas, I cannot help expressing reserves with regard to the extent she not only identifies her own understanding of Buddhism with the teaching of the *historical* Buddha but also interprets the transmitted canonical texts accordingly, even such as clearly point to another direction (cp. also note 53), and often in a way which I for one cannot but find unacceptable from the philological point of view. For a few examples, see notes 58, 73, 74 and 76.

[24] This would even hold good for traditional elements that are both time-bound and marginal to the message of a religion (as, e.g., certain geographical or mythological conceptions that were current at the time of the rise of Buddhism) but are hard to accept for modern, esp. Western, people, and are therefore liable be reinterpreted or replaced. Even in such cases, the historian has to insist on the difference, but at the same time has to be aware of the fact that maintaining such conceptions in a cultural ambience where they are common belief is different from sticking to them, as something to be taken literally, in the completely differ-

ent context of the modern world.

[25] It may well be that the strand I have called the "ultimate evaluation of existence" is a kind of (perhaps somewhat over-emphasized) negative corollary to a more original spirituality that focussed less on the sufferings, dangers and imperfections of the world and existence in it than on the possibility of attaining, in this very life, a state in which one is, in some fundamental sense, no longer subject to, and afraid of, its threats and frustrations. But I for one find it hard to determine to what extent such focussing on the positive goal of "*Nirvāṇa* in this life" actually involved an evaluation of nature substantially different from that of the strand focussing on the unsatisfactoriness of existence and the world where it takes place. To be sure, a person who directly focusses on blissful or at least peaceful meditative states may have less problems with enjoying a pleasant natural surrounding than one who tries to overcome attachment by contemplating the all-pervasive unsatisfactoriness of the world. But even the former could hardly attribute *ultimate* value to animal existence unless he either puts up with the suffering of animals or takes them to be like perfect saints, unaffected by pain and free from fear and worry—an idea which will hardly be found in any text of Early Buddhism. Thus, if these two strands differ in their attitude towards nature, this difference may not be one of ultimate evaluation but rather one of emphasis or explicitness motivated by a difference of spiritual approach.

[26] *Vin* I 10. For the text-historical problems of this text see VETTER 1988, XXVIII ff.; 1995, 213 ff.

[27] For grammatical reasons (WACKERNAGEL/DEBRUNNER, *Altindische Grammatik* II,2 § 82), I prefer to take *maraṇa* as an action noun ("dying"; otherwise VETTER 1995, 222 ff.), but I do not deny that none the less death as a state of which one is afraid is also envisaged.

[28] *Sn* 574 (*maccānaṃ jīvitaṃ ... dukkhena saṃyutaṃ*). Cp. *Th* 709 ff. and *Upasenasūtra* §§ 14 ff.—A long list of all kinds of painful and disagreeable events or experiences: *Mil* 196 f.—The concept of "life" (*jīvita*, *āyus*) does not appear to be applied to (final) *nirvāṇa* (after death),

whereas expressions like *amata/amṛta* ("[state] without dying"), may, to be sure, refer to a spiritual state attainable in this life but would seem to be inapplicable to (*saṃsāric*, or biological) life as such.

[29] *Sn* 575 ff.; *Dhp* 135; 148; *Uv* 1.8 ff.; *A* III 71 ff.

[30] This aspect is by no means denied because otherwise attachment to them would be inexplicable: cp., e.g., *S* II 171 ff. (14.32-34); III 27 ff. (22.26-28); IV 7 ff. (35.13-18).

[31] E.g., *M* I 91 f. (*app'-assādā kāmā bahudukkhā ...*); 130; *Dhp* 189; *Sn* 60 f.

[32] Cp. the formula of the four *jhāna*s/*dhyāna*s (e.g., *M* I 21 f.), which are sometimes designated as "agreeable states in this life"(*diṭṭhadhamma-sukhavihāra*, e.g. *M* I 33; *A* II 23; 36).

[33] *A* I 258 (*loko anicco dukkho vipariṇāmadhammo*); cp. *S* I 133 (*sabbo ādīpito loko ...*).

[34] *A* III 443.

[35] E.g., *Vin* I 13 f. and *S* III 22 (22.15: the five *skandha*s); *S* II 170 (14.31: the four elements; cp. 14.35-36); IV 1 ff. (35.1 + 4: internal and external *āyatana*s).

[36] Thus explicitly texts like *M* I 435 f.; III 108; cp. I 89 f. Such an evaluation may, however, not have been acceptable to all strands of Early Buddhism (cp. notes 25 and 39).

[37] Occasionally, more drastic expressions are used, like "afflicted" (*upadduta*, *upassaṭṭha*: e.g. *S* IV 29; *Th* 1133), "aflame" (*āditta*: *Vin* I 34; *S* IV 19 f.; cp. I 133; *Th* 712), "[like] hot ashes" (*kukkuḷa*: *S* III 177), "disease" (*roga*: *S* II 175; III 167; 189), "ulcer" (*gaṇḍa*: *S* III 167; 189), "comparable to a murderer with his sword raised" (*A* III 443), etc. In contradistinction to some other schools (the Gokulikas acc. to *Kathāvatthu-aṭṭhakathā* 58,1; cp. also *AKBh* 330,9 ff.), *Kathāvatthu* II.6 stresses that this should not be taken to mean that all *dharma*s are exclusively painful or arouse none but such feelings and to exclude that at least some of them (in spite of their impermanence) possess also agreeable features (cp. also *S* II 170; 173 f.; IV 10 f., etc.).

[38] As I understand it, in (this strand or spiritual context of) Early Bud-

dhism, "illness" or "unsatisfactoriness" (*dukkhatā*) is ascribed to both internal and external things or constituents-of-existence on the mere ground of their impermanence. This means that *dukkha* in this sense is an intrinsic, objective, "ontological" characteristic of things. Therefore, it would *not* seem to be taught as qualifying things only on condition that a person is subject to *attachment* to them, so that for an awakened person free from attachment impermanent things (especially things of nature) would no longer be *dukkha* (and would therefore be open to *positive* evaluation in an *ultimate* sense). It is rather precisely because one has, once for all, realized the intrinsic *ultimate* unsatisfactoriness of the constituents of a person as well as of external things that attachment to and identification with them is entirely abandoned and cannot arise again. On the other hand, it may, to be sure, well be precisely this freedom from attachment and possessiveness due to comprehension of their impermanence and *ultimate* unsatisfactoriness that enables the awakened person to adequately *appreciate* beautiful, pleasant things on the *intramundane* level (as will be elaborated below in connection with the "hermit strand"), *in spite* of their impermanence and ultimate unsatisfactoriness, simply because such a person takes (and even systematically contemplates) them as they actually are, viz. as impermanent, subject to decay and not one's self or one's own, and does not approach them with egoistic or unwarranted expectations, and hence is not subject to distress and frustration (or *dukkha* in the psychological sense of *domanassa*) at their disappearance or decay (e.g. *S* II 275 [21.2]; *Vi* 540c25-27 [*Sūtra* quotation]).

[39] It ought to be kept in mind that awareness of unsatisfactoriness based on impermanence is cultivated for the sake of *detachment* from the constituents of the person and the world. For this reason, the logical consequence that even liberating insight itself would, on account of its being, as a state of mind, impermanent, turn out to be *dukkha*, i.e. unsatisfactory, may not have been recognized from the outset. In later Abhidharma, some schools have decided to except the states of supramundane liberating insight even from objective, "ontological" *duḥkhatā*. In view of the

fact that at least most of these schools nevertheless understood these states as impermanent mental events (cp. already *S* II 60; *A* V 9 f.), this decision implied that the "ontological" *duḥkhatā* could no longer be grounded on mere impermanence but required a different basis. At the same time, it would seem to have enabled the Yogācāra conception of the Buddha as a continuum of *mental* factors (*citta*s and *caitta*s) free from *all* kinds of *duḥkhatā* and continuing for ever. (Cp. L. SCHMITHAUSEN in: *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Supplement III.2, 1977, 918 ff.)

[40] See note 35; cp. also *S* III 33 f. (22.33-4); IV 81 f. (35.101-2); 128 f. (35.138-9).

[41] *Vin* I 13.

[42] *S* III 167 (22.122); IV 50 (35.80).

[43] *S* IV 128 f.; cp. *Th* 717; *Upasenasūtra* § 17.

[44] E.g., *Manusmṛti* 5.28-30; *Kauṣītaki-Upaniṣad* 2.9. For further details cp. BRIAN K. SMITH, "Eaters, Food, and Social Hierarchy in Ancient India", in: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 58/2, 177 ff.

[45] Cp., e.g., *D* III 130; *S* IV 104 (*yāvad eva imassa kāyassa ṭhitiyā*).

[46] *S* II 98 f. (food compared to the flesh of one's only son); *A* IV 46 and 49, etc. (notion that food is disgustive, *āhāre paṭikūlasaññā).*

[47] Cp. *Sn* 935-936 + *Mahāniddesa*; *D* II 58 f.

[48] Expressly so *M* III 169 (cp. *T* vol. 1, 761b24 f.) and *S* V 456 (cp. *T* vol. 2, 108c15-17); cp. also *Mahāniddesa* (p. 408) on *Sn* 936b; *T* vol. 3, 467b18 ff.

[49] *Th* 1133; *A* IV 100 ff.; *S* II 170 (14.31) and 174 f. (14.35-36); *T* vol. 1, 137c10 ff.; cp. *BN* n. 68. The impermanence of vegetation and landscape is emphasized also at *ŚrBh* 483,2 ff.—Cp. also the drastically negative evaluation of nature in a canonical text quoted *Vi* 541a14 ff., where Śāriputra is provocatively addressed by a drunken non-Buddhist ascetic with a verse in which the latter states that after having satiated himself with meat and wine, he now perceives the herbs, trees and mountains on the earth to be like a mass of gold; Śāriputra replies that he, in his turn, having satiated himself with the transphenomenal state (*ānimitta*) and

having always cultivated concentration on emptiness (*śūnyatāsamādhi*, i.e. on all *dharma*s being neither self nor mine), he perceives the herbs, trees and mountains on the earth to be like a mass of saliva.

[50] Cp. *Dhp* 188 ff. (*Uv* 27.31 ff.), pointing out that nature does not offer ultimate safety and liberation from suffering. The above statement is not of course intended to deny the fact that even while still alive released persons do no longer suffer from the adversities or fleetingness of nature in the same way as an unreleased persons do (cp. note 38). But this is, just as the fact that released persons are no longer afraid of death (cp. VETTER 1995, 219 ff.; *Th* 707 ff.), due to their spiritual detachment and/ or to the certitude that they will soon be free, once for all, also from all physical pain, vicissitudes and impermanence (cp. note 60). Their happiness, or serenity, is hence not at all the merit of nature, and they would, essentially, also be happy, or serene, in any other surroundings (cp. *Ud* 2.4), even the most polluted one.

[51] *A* IV 104 f.—As for the impermanence and decay of edifices, goods and artefacts, see *ŚrBh* 482,14 ff. and 483,16 ff.

[52] Cp., e.g., *S* IV 1 ff.; *A* III 71 ff.; III 443: *sabbaloke ca me mano nābhiramissati, sabbalokā ca me mano vuṭṭhahissati, nibbānapoṇaṃ ca me mānasaṃ bhavissati*; IV 50: *sabbaloke anabhiratasaññā*, referring to the "manifold [things] of the world" (*loka-cittesu* [v.l. °*citresu*], cp. *Th* 674; *S* I 22); *T* vol. 1, 137c12-14, etc.

[53] I for one find it hard to deny that the overwhelming majority of the canonical materials suggests that in early Buddhism it was just a *matter of course* to strive, in the first place, for one's *own* self-perfection and release (cp. *D* III 61; *A* II 68: *ye te samaṇabrāhmaṇā ... ekam attānaṃ damenti, ... ekam attānaṃ parinibbāpenti*). According to tradition (*Vin* I 4 ff.; *M* I 167 ff.; cp. J. SAKAMOTO-GOTO in: *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* XLI.1/1992, 474-469) even the Buddha himself, after his Awakening, i.e. after attaining (spiritual) release (*vimutti*: *Vin* I 1; *M* I 167), first hesitated to teach (cp. *D* II 35 ff.: same story for the former Buddha Vipassin; cp. also *Vin* III 8: some of the former *buddhas* weary of teaching in detail); and when after all he did decide to do so, he started,

once again according to tradition (*Vin* I 9 ff.), with instructions on how to transcend death, suffering and rebirth, and how to become detached and released from all elements of personal existence. I find it problematic to denounce this matter-of-course striving for one's own release as "selfish"; for others are not, of course, grudged release, and every serious Buddhist wishes all living beings well; nor is release attained, let alone maintained, at the cost of others; on the contrary, release implies not only that the released person is, for ever, safe from the world, but also that the rest of the world is, for ever, safe from that person; for according to the "logic" of *ahiṃsā* (see p. 15 with notes 88 and 89) attaining absolute safety presupposes bestowing absolute safety; in fact, even in this life the Arhat is, on account of his spiritual perfection, simply "incapable" (*abhabba*) of intentionally killing (or, for that matter, injuring) any living being (*D* III 133), and after his death, even unintentional killing is excluded because he is not reborn and hence no longer in the world. Moreover, several passages stress that he who wants to take care of others has first to take care of himself (e.g. *A* III 373), in the sense of spiritual self-perfection; or that caring for oneself is at the same time caring for others, and vice versa (*S* V 169), the latter case being explained as referring to forbearance, non-injury, friendliness and sympathy which at the same time serve one's own spiritual perfection (cp. *Sāratthappakāsinī* III 227). Hence, striving, primarily, for one's own self-perfection and release does not exclude, and to a certain extent even involves, caring for others. The problem is, however, to what extent caring for others includes not just non-violence and benevolent *spirituality* but *active* help, especially in the case of monks and nuns. There are, to be sure, occasional references to everyday cases of active help motivated by compassion (e.g. *Vin* III 62: a monk freeing an animal caught in a trap), but the most important action for the benefit of others is teaching them the path to liberation, and exhorting them to practise it. As the above-mentioned traditional account of the Buddha's hesitation shows, such an activity is, however, neither a necessary requirement for nor an automatic outcome of a person's release, but requires the convic-

tion that there is a sensitive audience and sufficiently strong compassionateness with other living beings (*sattesu kāruññatā*: *Vin* I 6; *M* I 169; cp. *D* II 38). It would thus seem to have been understood, originally, as a kind of gratuitous extra, which is, to be sure, occasionally recommended to monks (e.g. *Vin* I 21; *S* I 105) and duly appreciated as superior to mere concern with one's own release (e.g. *A* II 95 ff.; I 168; cp. II 179), yet not in isolation from the latter but only as a supplement to it (ib.; *Dhp* 158). It seems that it was only later that reflection on the special case of the Buddha led to conceiving his career as aiming, *from the outset*, at both his own *and others'* release, and that it was only with the rise of Mahāyāna that this difference was developed into a critical attitude to striving, primarily, for one's own release, now devalued as inferior and "selfish" in contrast to Buddhahood as the higher ideal. But as is well known it is only in one strand of somewhat later Mahāyāna (viz. the *ekayāna* current) that such private release was considered *impossible*, whereas other Mahāyāna currents like Yogācāra continued to admit that both kinds of release are possible (so that even *bodhisattva*s may need exhortation not to enter "private" *nirvāṇa*: e.g. *DBhS* 66,19 ff. [8.K]), though Buddhahood does, of course, have a much higher status.

In view of this situation, the assumption that the doctrine of non-existence of a self—let alone the early canonical spirituality of understanding the constituents of one's personality or any elements of existence not to be self or mine—excludes striving, or at least successful striving, for private release, appears to me highly problematic. Whatever the logical cogency of this assumption *for us*, it need not have been perceived, from the outset, by the Buddhists themselves, and only unambiguous textual evidence could prove that it really was. As far as I can see, the "spiritual practice of not-self" is, in the early canonical texts, confined to the context of weariness (*nibbidā*) of and detachment (*virāga*) and release (*vimutti*) from the constituents of one's personality as well as other elements of existence (e.g. *S* III 21 ff.; IV 1 ff.), but still co-exists, somehow, with the (common-sense) notion of a "person" (*puggala*) as the subject of bondage and liberation. I for one do not re-

member to have come across any canonical passage suggesting that the idea of not-self explodes the idea of private release. Nor do I know of unambiguous canonical evidence proving that the spiritual practice of not-self was regarded to result in compassion or friendliness. [L. COUSINS's (*Buddha-L*, Nov. 1995) reference to *M* III 76 and 251 does not convince me, because the notion of *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammāsaṃkappa* underlying the two passages would seem to be different (cp. FRAUWALLNER 1953, 185), and because III 76 may not intend a sequence of causes and effects but a sequence of steps, the later ones supplementing those preceding; for III 251, even this much is problematic (cp. NYANATILOKA, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 1950, s.v. *magga*).] In the canonical texts, the idea of not-self does not even seem to be used for grounding everyday ethical behaviour like desisting from killing living beings (but cp. *ŚrBh* 378,15 ff. where it serves to counteract the notion of "enemy"). The purpose of grounding ethical behaviour is rather achieved by the Golden Rule (see note 105), i.e. by empathetic analogy of self and others. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, it is primarily this analogy that is, in the form of "[the idea] that others (or: all living beings) are like oneself" (*ātmaparasamatā*, *sarvasattveṣv ātmasamacittatā*, etc.: e.g. *MSA* 14.30cd; *Bhāṣya* on 9.76 and 17.46; *BCA* 8.90(ff.)), extended also to the context of soteriology. Occasionally this idea is now indeed, in contrast to the spiritually unwholesome egocentric belief in an individual self, designated as the "view of a vast self" (*mahātmadṛṣṭi*, *MSA* 14.37) comprising all living beings (cp. *BCA* 6.126; cp. also the explanation of *sabbattatāya* at *VisM* 9.47 [which however in view of *Udāna* 3.10 cannot be the original meaning of this expression]). It may, moreover, be grounded on the fact that all living beings are pervaded by one and the same True Nature (*tathatā*, *dharmadhātu*: *MSA* 14.30; *Bhāṣya* on *Madhyāntavibhāga* 2.14; *Pañjikā* on *BCA* 6.126), which may be called their (common true) self or essence (*ātman*) and is at the same time identified with their being devoid of an (individual) self or essence (*nairātmya*) (*MSA* 9.23; cp. 14.30 with Sthiramati's commentary [*Tanjur*, Peking, mi 304b6 ff.]). It is only in Śāntideva (*BCA* 8.101 f.) that I have noted an argument for altruistic

(salvific) action directly starting from the non-existence of a self, in the sense that since there is no self (not even in the form of an aggregate) to which suffering could be ascribed or by which it could be owned, there is nothing on the basis of which one could distinguish between one's own and others' suffering. But in other texts (e.g. *DBhS* 55,6-8 [7.A(2)]) the relation between lack of self (*nairātmya*) and compassion, etc., is rather felt to be one of a *tension*, which, however, is bridged over by the bodhisattva because he needs both as *complementary* elements of his spiritual practice. And at *DBhS* 17,26 ff. (1.QQ-SS) it is the awareness that the *other* living beings are merely a mass of disagreeable or unsatisfactory factors without self but do not realize this that arouses compassion on the part of the *bodhisattva*. Thus, the matter is rather complex, and surely in need of closer investigation; cp. the recent discussion on the parallel problem of emptiness and compassion in *Buddha-L* (Oct.-Nov. 1995).

[54] Such a "return to the world" out of compassion does not of course imply in any way a change in the *evaluation* of mundane existence or of the world, let alone nature. This holds good even for Mahāyāna Buddhism (not, perhaps, Far Eastern Mahāyāna, but at least Indian Mahāyāna, cp., e.g., *DBhS* 3.B, E-G; 6.O); for here, too, the motive of Bodhisattvas or Buddhas to remain, voluntarily, in the world is not preservation of nature but, *primarily*, to *save* other living beings from *saṃsāra* and lead them to *nirvāṇa* or Buddhahood (e.g. *DBhS* 1.SS; 2.X-CC; 3.G; 5.F-H), and only *secondarily* to *reduce* their sufferings, or improve their existence, on an *intramundane* level (which theoretically may, but need not, include preservation of nature).—It should also be noted that especially in Mahāyāna the Buddhas are often regarded to exist in a more or less supramundane sphere or dimension, and to descend to this world only in the form of mere apparitions (*nirmāṇa*) (cp. P. Harrison in: *Ōtani Gakuhō* 74/1995, 1 ff.)—an idea which does not at all suggest a revalorazition of the natural world. And even the ideas of the Buddha's relics being alive (cp. G. Schopen in: *Religion* 17/1987, 203 ff.) or of his physical presence in the monastery (id. in: *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 18/1990,

181 ff.) have quite obviously no ecological significance but are motivated by purely religious needs.

[55] E.g. *A* II 96 ff.; *Vin* I 21.

[56] E.g. *M* I 23 (cp. *A* I 60 f.; *S* II 203) with *Papañcasūdanī* I 129. In a sense, *every* released person, unless totally isolated, *automatically* helps others by being a model, and this is according to *Mil* 195 f. the reason why the Buddha has prohibited the monks from committing suicide (but cp. the exceptions referred to in note 59).

[57] Cp. the statement that all forms of becoming or existence (*sabbe bhavā*), which include those in the heavenly spheres, are impermanent and (hence) unsatisfactory: *Ud* 3.10; *A* II 177; cp. *Th* 260.

[58] E.g., *It* 17; *D* II 30 f.; *S* II 101 ff. (12.64); 104 (12.65); 185 (15.1 0).—I do not deny the possibility of Buddhist spirituality without belief in rebirth, but—whatever the situation may have been in the very beginnings of the Buddha's teaching (cp. VETTER 1995, 219 ff.)—in the canonical texts of Early Buddhism the idea of rebirth, already indicated in the second Noble Truth (*taṇhā ponobbhavikā*, Skt. *tṛṣṇā paunarbhavikā* or °*kī*), is essential and ubiquitous, as MACY (1991a, 162) herself admits. And she is hardly right in taking *S* II 26 f. as evidence for her assumption that "the Buddha did not consider it relevant or useful to reflect on the possibility or character of other existences"(1991a, 163). The purport of the text is rather to make it clear that by understanding Origination in Dependence one has no longer any *doubts* and abandons idle speculation as to whether at all, how precisely and in what form rebirth has taken or will take place, but, on the contrary, *knows* that it is a fact, how it works and how it can be brought to an end.

[59] This is doubtless an important aspect (cp., e.g., *S* III 1 ff.), but not the only one, as YAMADA (1980, 290 n. 55) asserts: "... Non-attachment ... is not escaping from life, but is detaching oneself from one's own deception of Self. This is the meaning of the doctrine of Anātman." For the basic formula of the spiritual practice of not-self is quite unambiguous in stating that the elimination of the notions of "I", "mine" and "Self" with regard to the *skandha*s as well as sense-objects entails weariness of

and detachment and liberation from these elements themselves, which have been recognized as impermanent and unsatisfactory (*rūpasmiṃ* etc. *nibbindati, nibbindaṃ virajjati, virāgā vimuccati*), the final result being that there is no further rebirth (*Vin* I 14; *S* IV 1 ff., etc. etc.; cp. also *Sn* 1068). Passages like *S* I 22 do not contradict this but rather want to make clear that this liberation cannot be attained by physically removing the objects of desire but only by eradicating desire itself. —For a saint comparing life to a burden, a disease, poison, a place of execution and a burning house, see *Th* 709 ff. and *Upasenasūtra* §§ 14-17. There may even have been cases (not condemned by the Buddha) of Arhats committing suicide in situations of excessive physical pain (*S* III 119 ff.; IV 55 ff. = *M* III 263 ff.; cp. also *S* I 120 ff. with *Sāratthappakāsinī* I 183,4 f.), but the interpretation of these cases poses intricate problems (cp. D. KEOWN in: *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 3/1996, 8-31).

[60] E.g., *M* III 187 = *A* I 142; *S* II 5; 24 f.; *A* IV 105; *Ud* 33 (3.10); 71 (6.7); 74 (7.1); 93 (8.9: final cessation of the *skandha*s); *Mil* 197,20 ff. Even the *Mettasutta* (*Sn* 143-152) ends up with detachment and overcoming rebirth; similarly *A* II 176 f. —The certitude of the released person that he/she is no longer subject to rebirth and re-death and hence has virtually transcended all kinds of *dukkha* constitutes a state of sublime happiness, which may be called "*Nirvāṇa* in this life" (*M* III 187).

[61] *Vin* I 10; *S* V 421. Desire is expressly characterized as "leading to rebirth" (*pono(b)bhavika*, Skt. *paunarbhavika*).

[62] Cp., e.g., *A* IV 105 (*ucchinnā bhavataṇhā ..., n' atthi dāni punabbhavo*).

[63] E.g., *A* V 116 f. (*avijjā* as the "nourishment" of *bhavataṇhā*).

[64] E.g. *S* II 1 f. or *Vin* I 1.

[65] Actually, the stereotyped twelve-membered formula appears to be, basically, a juxtaposition of two different analyses of the process of rebirth (cp. FRAUWALLNER 1953, 197 ff.; VETTER 1988, 45 ff.): a more archaic second half (from *taṇhā* to being (re)born, ageing and dying), preserved separately at S II 84 ff. (12.52-57) and in the Sarvāstivāda version of the *Mahānidānasūtra* (*T* vol. 1, 578b21-579a1 etc., corresponding to *D* II 55-58: cp. T. VETTER in: *WZKS* 38/1994, 144; cp. also *S* II 52

f. where *jarāmaraṇa* is traced back until *vedanā*), and a more advanced first half (from *avijjā* to *vedanā*), which is related to (and may even be based on a reworking and extension of) *D* II 62 f. (where *vedanā* is traced back to *vijñāna*). This fact also explains why the canonical texts do not explicitly refer the twelve-membered formula to *three* different existences, as Abhidharma sources often do: what was, originally, intended was just the explanation of rebirth, not of two different rebirths. But the decision to juxtapose two different descriptions of the same process, linked together by the item "feeling" (*vedanā*), automatically resulted in a concatenation which almost inevitably came to be understood as a sequence, now covering three different existences. Since the Ābhidharmikas are well aware of the fact that the different descriptions of the two rebirth processes are not intended to point out an actual qualitative difference of these processes but merely emphasize, each time, different aspects, the Abhidharmic interpretation is not a case of serious misunderstanding, much less serious, in my view, than the interpretation proposed (with considerable polemic vehemence) by Japanese scholars like K. MIZUNO (*Primitive Buddhism*, Ube: Karinbunko 1969) and I. YAMADA (1980) or by J. MACY (who explicitly refers to MIZUNO). I cannot help feeling that the interpretation of the Japanese scholars is heavily influenced by the wish to show that original Buddhism is, basically, in agreement with Mahāyāna Buddhism (as understood in the Far East, at that), and also with modern requirements. This amounts to a pattern (also shared by MACY) according to which Abhidharma is a degradation, while Mahāyāna has recovered the original teaching of the Buddha, especially the original meaning of *pratītyasamutpāda*, which is (in line, it seems, with Hua-yen) understood as *inter*dependence. Even the twelve-membered formula is, apart from being marginalized, dissociated as much as possible from its specific reference to rebirth. A detailed criticism of this view would, of course, by far exceed the limits of this paper. For the time being, I can only state that in the textual evidence adduced I have, so far, not found anything to convince me, and give one example (for another one, cp. note 67): In a discussion of *M* I 261 ff., YAMADA (1980,

267 ff., esp. 270 f.), referring (ib. n. 8) to a number of famous Japanese scholars, distinguishes between a "natural" and a "reversal" sequence of the twelve-membered *paṭiccasamuppāda* formula. The "reversal" sequence is the one starting from *avijjā* and ending in "aging-and-dying" and is understood by YAMADA as referring to rebirth. But the "natural" sequence he interprets, quite surprisingly and without philological arguments, as referring to *conceptual inter*dependence in a Madhyamaka and partly even Hegelian sense: The dependence of "ageing-and-dying" on "being born" means that the former presupposes the latter as its conceptual opposite, and "being born" presupposes "becoming" (*bhava*) as "the dialectically conceived 'unity of opposites' which includes both '*jarāmaraṇa*' and '*jāti*'". This conceptual dependence is, of course, a mutual one, i.e., *inter*dependence, so that "the three factors are simultaneous". I for one fail to see how all this can be gleaned from the text itself, which any unbiased reader cannot but understand as the simple attempt to retrace, for didactic reasons, the visible effect, viz. ageing-and-dying (involving suffering), step by step to its basic condition, viz. *avijjā*, the result of the investigation being thereafter summed up by restating the causal chain in its actual sequence from cause to effect. Perhaps YAMADA was misled by a misunderstanding of the problematic term *akālika* (on which cp. J. BRONKHORST in: *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10/1984, 187 ff.), which he takes to mean "timeless" also in the sense of "simultaneous" (p. 275); but this is altogether arbitrary. Another point is that he renders the question introducing the so-called "natural" sequence as "When what condition is not, are becoming-old and dying not?", but this must have been taken by YAMADA from another source (like *S* II 7). *M* I 261 f. has "Is ageing-and-dying actually dependent on being born or not: what do you (*vo*, cp. *T* vol. 1, 768a13) think about this?" But even if YAMADA's version of the question were accepted it would not be sufficient to support his view because the interpretation of the formula *asmin satīdaṃ bhavati* (in contrast to *asyotpādād idam utpadyate*) as referring to *conceptual inter*dependence is a Madhyamaka idea (cp. *Ratnāvalī* I.48) which we are not entitled to superimpose on

the canonical texts without strong evidence.

[66] E.g. *A* I 176; *D* II 62 f. (although, strictly speaking, the latter passage, by stating that *viññāṇa descends* into the womb, presupposes its pre-existence, hence *re*birth).

[67] E.g. *S* II 72 or IV 86 (sense-perception arising in dependence on sense-faculty and sense-object; the concomitance of the three is "contact", dependent on which there is feeling, entailing, in its turn, desire). In other texts (e.g. *S* II 73 f. or IV 87), this series is extended up to ageing-and-dying. The parallelism of this sequence with the twelve-membered formula has misled Japanese scholars (e.g., Mizuno, op. cit. [note 65], 142 ff.; YAMADA 1980, 272) to interpret *nāmarūpa* in the twelve-membered formula as sense-objects, although such a use is rare (but cp. *S* II 24) and is impossible in passages like *D* II 63 where *nāmarūpa* (lit. "name and form (or figure)") clearly means the living individual either under his physical aspect or as a psycho-physical being, from the proto-embryonic phase onward. Apart from this, the "psychological" chain starts with the explanation of how *actual* perception of an object arises, whereas *vijñāna* in the rebirth-focussed twelve-membered series is, originally, rather the latent, subtle *faculty* of perception which enters the womb at the moment of conception, keeps the body alive during life and leaves it at death (cp., e.g., Frauwallner 1953, 204 f.; D. KALUPAHANA, *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Honululu 1975, 117 ff.; L. SCHMITHAUSEN, *Ālayavijñāna*, Tokyo 1987, 7; VETTER 1988, 49 f.; W. S. WALDRON, "How Innovative is the *Ālayavijñāna?*", in: *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 22/1994, 201 ff.).

[68] *D* II 58-61.

[69] *D* III 59 ff. (see below: notes 162 and 163); more explicitly: *T* vol. 1, 137b16 ff. According to a somewhat later text, the *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, people's moral behaviour and piety causes the righteous *nāga*s to send seasonable rain so that crops thrive (*T* vol. 17, 105c23 ff. and 29 ff.; 106c29 ff.), whereas immoral and impious behaviour stengthens the unrighteous *nāga*s who send unwholesome rain, thunderstorm and hail (106a29 ff.; c24 ff.).

[70] E.g. *S* IV 230; *A* II 87; III 131 (feelings caused by change of season or weather, *utu-pariṇāma*).
[71] Cp., e.g., FRANCIS A. COOK in: CALLICOTT/AMES 1989, 213 ff.
[72] Cp., in this connection, also the remarks in HARRIS 1991, 104. HARRIS 1994b, 53, even argues that a totally "symmetric" causality as implied in universal interpenetration would render change inexplicable and, hence, ecological ethics both impossible and pointless. This argument seems to presuppose *total simultaneous* interdependence, in the sense that everything is totally constituted and determined by, and at the same time, in its turn, constitutes and determines, everything else. Yet, as far as I can see the above consequence would not follow in the case of "weaker" forms of interdependence or mutual causality (e.g. all entities, or chains of entities, merely *influencing* and thereby gradually changing one another to a certain, and perhaps different, extent). But as I am going to point out, this problem does not concern *Early* Buddhism. On the other hand, in my opinion, too, the Early Buddhist view of the world is dysteleological in the sense that on the *ultimate* level the world is fundamentally and incurably ill. But this does not preclude the existence *and establishment* of better or, for that matter, worse conditions on the *intramundane* level (see below pp. 23 ff.). What creates problems (cp. also HARRIS 1994a, 11) even on the intramundane level is the introduction of a—not specifically Buddhist (cp. A. METTE, *Indische Kulturstiftungsberichte und ihr Verhältnis zur Zeitaltersage*, Mainz 1973)—view of automatic cyclical cosmic ups and downs. To be sure, at least according to later Buddhist sources these cosmic ups and downs are conditioned by corresponding ups and downs of the moral and spiritual attitude of human beings (cp. p. 25), but precisely on account of the cyclical automatism of this process this amounts, *de facto*, to a kind of determinism of moral and spiritual rise and decline, which is difficult to reconcile with the moral and spiritual freedom of the individual that is fundamental to Early Buddhist ethics and soteriology.
[73] Cp. note 65. It is not of course sufficient to base the assumption of universal mutual causality in the canon on a hyper-etymological inter-

pretation of terms, as MACY does. According to her (1991a, 54), *paṭicca* expresses the feedback central to mutual causality, and *paṭicca-samuppāda* she (1991a, 34; 57) paraphrases as "the being-on-account-of-arising-together", and explains it by adducing Buddhaghosa's definition of *paṭiccasamuppāda* as "that according to which co-ordinate phenomena are produced mutually" or "according to which phenomena arise together in reciprocal dependence". But apart from the fact that Buddhaghosa's explanation is a commentarial sophistication belonging to a much later period, a careful perusal of the corresponding paragraphs of his *Visuddhimagga* (17.15 ff., esp. 17.17-20) reveals that the passage quoted (probably *Sāratthappakāsinī* II 6,27-29) has been misunderstood by her. It rather means that [the group of factors that constitute] the condition-aspect (*paccayākāra*) is called *paṭiccasamuppāda* because it produces united factors (*sahite dhamme*), i.e., factors which never occur without one another (*aññamaññam avinibbhoga-vutti-dhamme*: *VisM* 17.18), and that they do so in dependence on one another (*aññamaññaṃ paṭicca*), i.e., in co-operation and when they are complete (*VisM* 17.18 and 20)—hence, complex co-operating causes (cp. also KALUPAHANA, op. cit. [note 67], 56) and complex effects, without mention of *mutuality* or *inter*dependence of *cause and effect*. Apart from this, it is not probable that the prefix *sam-* was, from the outset, intended to convey such a heavy meaning. Even a later author like Candrakīrti (*Prasannapadā* 5,4) does not press it in this way, stating that *pad* with the prefix *sam-ud-* simply means "arising" (*prādurbhāva*). The original function of *sam-* in *samutpāda* was hence more likely merely to underline the completion of the action (see L. RENOU, *Grammaire Sanskrite*, 145).

[74] Liberation (*vimutti*) in the sense of a spiritual event is, of course, dependent on a cause, as *S* II 30 makes clear (cp. also *Uv* 26.9: *sahetuṃ parinirvānti*). But the canonical texts sometimes refer to another dimension of *Nirvāṇa* which they call "unconditioned" or perhaps rather "without conditioning" (*asaṅkhata*: *Ud* 8.3; *Th* 725), a realm (*āyatana*) where there are no elements, no celestial bodies, where there is neither this world nor the yonder one, neither arrival nor departure, neither dying

nor being born nor pain (*Ud* 8.1; cp. 1.10; *S* I 15; *D* I 223), where both the sense-faculties and the apperception of sense-objects cease (*S* IV 98: *se āyatane ... yattha cakkhu ca nirujjhati rūpasaññā ca nirujjhati*, etc.). J. MACY (1991b, 61 f. and 74 f.; 1994, 84 and 98) struggles hard to get these passages out of the way because such a *Nirvāṇa* would be a refuge to which one could try to withdraw from this imperfect world instead of realizing the latter to be the only one available and hence to try one's best to preserve or even improve it. In *Mutual Causality* (1991a), 134 f., she rejects the usual understanding of *āyatana* at *Ud* 8.1 as "sphere" in favour of "gateway" or "faculty" and takes the passage to refer not to *nirvāṇa* as "an objective self-existent, supernatural essence or realm" but to "the means by which we perceive, or the way in which we perceive". But the *Critical Pāli Dictionary* makes it clear that the basic meaning of *āyatana* is "dwelling-place", "region". Hence, it is reasonable to start from the metaphor of a "realm" or "sphere", as is not only supported by its being referred to by the locative *yattha* (cp. also *Ud* 1.10, etc.) but also by the use of unambiguous metaphors like *pada* or *sthāna* in parallel contexts like *It* 37 and 39 or *Uv* 26.24-27. Another question is whether this "sphere" or "state" should be understood as an "objective, self-existent essence", but at any rate I for one find that an unbiased understanding of *Ud* 8.1 suggests that it is beyond the world and beyond *saṃsāra*, and hence beyond becoming and conditioning, as is clear from *Ud* 8.3 as well as *It* 37 f. and 38 f. There is no reason to follow MACY in rejecting the traditional understanding of *asaṅkhata* as "unconditioned" (perhaps in the more specific sense of "not produced by a volition or desire for some form of individual existence") or "without conditioning" in favour of a hyper-etymological rendering "uncompounded"; for where there is no birth, arising, making/causing, there can hardly be conditioning. Cp. also passages like *M* I 500 and III 299 documenting the quasi-synonymity of *saṅkhata* and *paṭiccasamuppanna* and their equivalence to "impermanent" (*anicca*), and *It* p. 37 where this "sphere" (*pada*) is qualified as "unoriginated" (*asamuppanna*) and expressly termed an "escape from this" (*tassa*

nissaraṇaṃ), viz. the born, originated (*samuppanna*) and conditioned (*saṅkhata*) body which is full of diseases and not worth being pleased with (for *nissaraṇa* c. gen. see examples in *Pali Tripiṭaka Concordance* s.v. *nissaraṇa*).

[75] E.g. *nāmarūpa* and *viññāṇa* (*S* II 104 f.; 113 f.; *D* II 32; 63); *āyu* and *usmā* (*M* I 295).—In a weaker sense, one might add instances of "spiral" causality (of the hen and egg type) where, just as in the twelve-membered *pratītyasamutpāda* formula, the effect (or mediate effect) of a cause is, in its turn, the cause or presupposition of *another* instance of the initial cause.—One has to distinguish mutual dependence of cause and effect from mutual co-operation of causes in engendering a common effect (cp. note 73).

[76] There is no reason for assuming that mutual causality, though stated explicitly only in the case of *nāmarūpa* and *viññāṇa*, has to be presupposed as being *implied* throughout the twelve-membered chain, as YAMADA (1980, 274) and MACY (1991a, 56) do. The latter bases herself on the *pe* at *S* II 114 which, however, merely stands for the full enumeration of the remaining members of the chain but does not of course extend reciprocity to them (as is confirmed by *D* II 32 f.). *Sn* 728 ff., adduced by MACY (1991, 55) in support of mutual causality, is not conclusive; for the text only states that *avijjā*, etc., are *somehow* conditions of suffering but does not waste any words on the relation of these conditions to each other; as for *upadhi* (wrongly equated by MACY with *nidāna)*, see *CPD* and NORMAN's translation of *Sn* 728 and his note on *Sn* 33-34.—With regard to contact, feeling and desire, mutual dependence is expressly denied at *S* II 141 (14.3) and 148 (14.10).

[77] *Vibhaṅga* 141-143 and 158 ff.

[78] *Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā* 207; NYANATILOKA, *Guide through the Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, Kandy 1971, 35 f. Cp. also *AKBh* 133,1 ff.; *Vi* 118c7 ff.; *DBhS* 49,10 ff. (6.F).

[79] *S* II 189 f. —An appealing ecological re-interpretation of this idea is offered by Y. KAJIYAMA in *BN Proceedings*, 40; cp. also ibid., 55 f. J. MACY (1991b, 202; 1994, 238) seems to re-interpret it in terms of the

modern theory of evolution, whereas this theory was decidedly rejected by the German Buddhist H. HECKER in a lecture entitled *Über die Natur*, delivered at Roseburg on Sept. 19, 1992.

[80] *santuṭṭhi*, *appicchatā*, etc. (e.g., *D* I 71; *M* I 13).

[81] *bhojane mattuññatā* (e.g., *A* I 114).

[82] E.g., *Vin* II 291.

[83] Cp., e.g., L. DE SILVA in: SANDELL 1987, 15 f., and in: BATCHELOR/ BROWN 1992, 21 f. —The passages referred to by DE SILVA are, to be sure, very appealing, but it may not be superfluous to have a closer look at some of them in order to clarify to what extent they are actually motivated by ecological concerns. 1. *D* III 188 (*bhoge saṃharamānassa bhamarasseva iriyato / bhogā sannicayaṃ yanti vammiko v' upacīyati*) is taken by DE SILVA to show that "man is expected to make legitimate use of nature so that he can rise above nature and realise his innate spiritual potential". But actually the passage does not mention rising above nature nor spiritual potential but just accumulation of wealth, and what is explicitly said in the text is merely that by assiduously collecting one bit after the other, just like a bee, one (viz. a layman) will finally come to assemble a large amount. To be sure, the commentary (*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* III 951), when explaining the bee simile, refers to the fact that the bee does not harm the flower when collecting the honey from it, and this may be justified in view of *Dhp* 49. But even the commentary does not explicitly apply this aspect of the simile to the main theme, and even if one does so the passage may refer to a cautious attitude not towards *nature* but rather towards other *people* or society, i.e., to social, not ecological ethics. This is at any rate true of *Dhp* 49 (cp. also *Dasaveyāliya* 1.2-3!) where the bee simile is used to illustrate how the *monk* should behave on his alms-round in the village (*gāme*!): just as a bee collects honey from a flower without damaging it, so the monk should not become a burden or nuisance to his lay supporters, or even ruin them—and thereby also himself—economically. It is, of course, possible to *deliberately extend* the principle of concern for others and circumspect use of resources to the treatment of *nature*. But even this would not yet be an

ecological attitude in my sense (viz. protecting nature as a whole for its own sake), but rather an anthropocentric one motivated by long-term *human* utilization of natural resources, or, at best, be motivated by concern for fellow-beings as *individuals*. —2. Likewise, the simile of a person who, in order to eat a few fruits (*A* IV 283 + *Manorathapūraṇī* IV 138), shakes a fig tree (*udumbara*, Ficus glomerata) so violently that many more fruits than needed fall down, in its context merely illustrates unsound economy (living beyond one's means: *app'āyo samāno uḷāraṃ jīvikaṃ kappeti*). Still, if taken by itself, it may well be understood as recommending circumspect use of natural resources. But one can hardly derive from it an ecological ethics in the sense of protecting nature as a whole for its own sake. —3. Similarly, an ecological ethics deduced from a generalization of the idea that felling or injuring a tree whose shade or fruits one has enjoyed is a case of ingratitude or illoyalty (*A* III 369; *Jātaka* IV 352; *Petavatthu* 2.9.3 and 5; cp. *BN* n. 38) would be an anthropocentric one, since the motive for not destroying nature would be the *service* rendered by nature to *man*, not the intrinsic value of nature as such. The same would also hold good for an extension of the social principle of benefit for benefit recommended in the *Sigālovādasutta* (*D* III 189 ff.) to the ecological sphere (in the sense of "treat nature well, and nature will treat you well", as such not of course a bad thing).

[84] Cp., e.g., Detlev Kantowsky, *Von Südasien lernen*. Frankfurt / New York: Edition Qumran im Campus Verlag 1985, 135 ff. ("Umweltschutz durch Achtsamkeit").

[85] E.g., *Vin* I 13 f. (cp. note 53); *M* I 138 f.; III 19 f.; *S* III 22; 49 f.; 67 f.; IV 1-3; 24-26; cp. also *A* III 444 (*sabbaloke atammayo*).

[86] E.g., *M* III 18 f; *S* II 252 f.; III 79-81; 103; 136 f.; 169 f.; cp. *A* III 444; IV 53.

[87] For the difference in usage see Harvey B. Aronson, *Love and Sympathy in Theravāda Buddhism*, repr. Delhi 1986, 14 f. and 20.

[88] H.-P. Schmidt, "The Origin of *Ahiṃsā"*, in: *Mélanges d'Indianisme à la mémoire de L. Renou*, Paris 1968, 643 ff.

[89] Cp. *Vin* I 220, prohibiting monks from eating the flesh of tigers, etc.,

because congeners might attack them.

[90] Cp., especially, HANNS-PETER SCHMIDT, "Indo-Iranian Mitra Studies: The State of the Central Problem", in: *Études mithriaques, Acta Iranica* 1978, esp. 368 ff. and 385 f.

[91] Cp. *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 3.8.5.10 f. (alliance with water and plants!) or 4.1.4.8 (God Mitra being the ally or friend of all beings, including animals). As for a Buddhist text still very close to this idea, see the *Ahirājasutta* (verses; below p. 18 + note 119).

[92] The latter rendering is justified when *mettā* is exemplified by mother-love (*Sn* 149 f. [cp. note 104]; *VisM* 9.72). But in view of *mettā* being derived from *mitra* I normally prefer the rendering "friendliness".

[93] Cp. also the reciprocity of the "gift of safety (*abhaya*, lit. freedom from fear-and-danger)" at *A* IV 246 (*pāṇātipātā paṭivirato ... sattānaṃ abhayaṃ dattvā ... abhayassa ... bhāgī hoti*).

[94] E.g. *Vin* II 194 f.; II 109 f. = *A* II 72 (*Ahirājasutta*, prose; cp. below p. 18); for the protective effect of *mettā* cp. also texts like *S* II 264; *A* IV 150; *VisM* 9.71-72; *Cullaniddesa* ad *Sn* 42 (p. 142, no. 239.B); cp. also ARONSON, op. cit. (note 87) 48 ff.; HARRIS 1991, 107; 1994a, 18 f.; GÓMEZ 1992, 37.

[95] *Vi* 427a15 ff. raises the question whether just like *maitrī* so also *karuṇā* and the other *apramāṇas* too protect from danger, and answers this in the affirmative, but has then to solve the problem why such a function is not mentioned in any *sūtra*.

[96] This observation I owe to M. MAITRIMURTI.

[97] HARRIS 1991, 106 f.

[98] HARRIS 1991, 107,7-9.

[99] HARRIS 1991, 106 + n. 47. Similarly, though more cautiously, HARRIS 1994a, 18.

[100] *VisM* 9.3-4.

[101] *VisM* 9.30-34.

[102] *VisM* 9.50.

[103] *VisM* 9.51 f. At *M* III 169, *vinipātagata* must refer to animals. — *VisM* 13.93, where Buddhaghosa refers each of the expressions *apāya*,

duggati, *vinipāta* and *niraya* to a different *gati*, connecting the animals with *apāya*, is a typically commentarial attempt at differentiating canonical quasi-synonyms (as at least the first three terms would seem to be) and hence no strong counter-evidence.

[104] Cp. SCHMIDT-LEUKEL 1991, 7. Cp. also the *Mettasutta* (*Sn* 143-152) where *mettā* towards all living beings (*sabba-bhūtesu*: 149c; *sabbalokasmi*: 150a; *sabbe sattā*: 145d and 147d; *ye keci pāṇabhūt'*, mobile as well as stationary: 146ab) is compared to the love of a mother towards her only son. There is no explicit reference to self-protection in the *Mettasutta* (a fact from which GÓMEZ [1992, 40] seems to derive that it was not, originally, used for this purpose), but the commentary ascribes such a function to it, and in Theravāda countries it is actually one of the texts used in the *paritta* ceremony (cp., e.g., R. GOMBRICH, *Precept and Practice*, Oxford 1971, 205, who seems to think that it was "intended from the very first to serve such a purpose").

[105] *Sn* 705; *Dhp* 129 f.; *Ud* 5.1 = *S* I 75; *S* V 353 f.; cp. *BN* ns. 17 (delete *Sn* 368ab) and 172. —As I understand these passages, they do not indicate that the reference points "self" and "other" are changed *through* compassion and non-violence (GÓMEZ 1992, 44) but are rather intended to *motivate* non-violence, etc., by pointing out the *analogy* or likeness (*attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā*; not "identification"!) between self and others. And as far as I can see, at least in Early Buddhism this grounding of ethical behaviour on the *analogy* between self and others has nothing to do with the Buddhist spirituality of no-self (*anattā*), as GÓMEZ (1992, 42 ff.) seems to suggest (cp. also note 53). Actually, it is common to Buddhist, Jaina and Hindu sources: cp., e.g., *Āyāraṃga* 1.2.3.4 (ed. SCHUBRING p. 8,23-25) and 1.3.3.1 (p. 15,18 ff.); *Uttarajjhayaṇa* 6.6 (*Jaina Āgama Series* vol. 15, p. 109 § 167); *Dasaveyāliya* 6.10 (*ibid.* p. 40 § 273); *Tattvārthādhigamasūtra* 7.5; *MBh* 13.132.55; 13.116.21 f.; cp. 12.237.25 f.

[106] *VisM* 9.36. Cp. *BN* n. 221; cp. also *ŚrBh* 379,8 ff.

[107] Cp. p. 15 f. + note 79.

[108] HARRIS 1994a, 14; cp. also 17.

[109] E.g., *D* I 251; II 250 f.; *M* II 194 f.; *A* II 128 f.; V 342.
[110] E.g., *A* I 201; III 290 f.; 446; *D* III 247 f. Cp. also *ŚrBh* 429,1 f. (context: *maitrī*): *api tu tān etarhy anukampe yaduta sva-cittaniṣkāluṣyatām avyāpannatām upādāya ...* (*sva°* added with ms.). Cp. also *M* I 284 f. (*appamāṇa*s conducive to tranquillity, *vūpasama*). For the purificatory function of *ahiṃsā* cp. HARRIS 1994a, 17.
[111] E.g. *D* III 49 f.; 78; 223 f.; *M* I 38; *S* IV 296; *A* I 196 f.; V 344 f.
[112] Likewise, the genuinely ethical aspect of abstention from taking life if it is based on the "Golden Rule" is not annulled by the fact that it *also* serves spiritual purification or is motivated by fear from being reborn in an evil existence which is the karmic consequence of killing (e.g., *S* IV 342; *A* IV 247; V 289) and, in a sense, the ethicized pendant of the older idea of the vengeance of the victim. Cp. also SCHMIDT-LEUKEL 1991, 9 (but ignore the misleading analysis of *upādāna*).
[113] Perhaps primarily lay people from the Brahmanical fold, or even Brahmins specifically, since it is particularly god Brahman's world they are said to be conducive to.
[114] Even if *mettā*/*maitrī* does not necessarily entail active help (cp. *AKBh* 272,13 on its being, nevertheless, meritorious), it still prevents, by counteracting hatred and malevolence, the practitioner from injuring others (cp., perhaps, *S* IV 351 ff.).
[115] It seems that the *appamāṇa*s were, originally, more closely related, or even conducive, to liberation (cp. VETTER 1988, 26-28; R. GOMBRICH in: *Asiatische Studien* 38.4/1994, 1082; A. SKILTON, *A Concise History of Buddhism*, Birmingham: Windhorse 1994, 35).
[116] The relation between equanimity or imperturbability on the one hand and friendliness and compassion on the other is doubtless a crucial one for understanding Buddhist spirituality (and the differences between its various forms), but a detailed discussion of this difficult and controversial issue would exceed the limits of this paper.
[117] Cp., e.g., *Vin* I 6 (after his Awakening the Buddha, after some hesitation [see note 53], decided on teaching because he has *compassion* with living beings); cp. also II 195 (the Buddha tames a wild elephant by

suffusing him with friendliness); cp. also I 21 = *S* I 105.
[118] HARRIS 1991, 111; 1994, 18.
[119] *A* II 72 f. = *Vin* II 110; cp. *Ja* II 145 f.; cp. also note 94.
[120] Cp. *BN* § 43 + n. 217.
[121] Actually, these beings are identified as *nāga*s at *Ja* II 145, and it ought to be kept in mind that *nāga*s are both snakes, i.e., animals, *and* mythical beings (cp., e.g., *Vin* I 87 f.; 219 f.). At any rate, in the present context friendship with them involves friendship with, or at least protection from, snakes.
[122] Cp. also the enumeration of species of animals (snakes, scorpions, centipedes, etc.) in the spell-like prose formula following the verses.
[123] Cp. *BN* § 45.
[124] *D* III 61. Cp. also *Ja* V 123 (vs. 45) and VI 94 (vs. 123).
[125] This suggestion I owe to Dr. P. SCHMIDT-LEUKEL.
[126] Which does not of course prevent Buddhists from adopting or adapting this aim or value on an *intramundane* level.
[127] Cp., e.g., J. GONDA, *Die Religionen Indiens* I, Stuttgart 1960, 163; 172.
[128] For a detailed interpretation of Aśoka's animal list, see K.R. NORMAN, "Notes on Aśoka's Fifth Pillar Edict", in: *JRAS* 1967, 26-32 (= *Collected Papers* I 68-76).
[129] Cp. GÓMEZ 1992, 34.
[130] Cp. *Kauṭilīya-Arthaśāstra* (ed. KANGLE) 2.26; cp. also 13.5.12 f., and H. SCHARFE, *Investigations in Kauṭalya's Manual of Political Science*, Wiesbaden [2]1993, 252 ff.
[131] Cp. L. ALSDORF, *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Vegetarismus und Rinderverehrung in Indien* (Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz, Jahrgang 1961, Nr. 6), Wiesbaden 1962, 50 ff.; SCHARFE, *op. cit.*, 257.
[132] *Rock Edicts* IV A and C; IX G; XI C; cp. also I B **(**though ALSDORF, op. cit. [see note 131] 52 f., suggests that *idha* refers to the capital only; but cp. also U. SCHNEIDER, *Die Großen Felsen-Edikte Aśokas*, Wiesbaden 1978, 120**)**, *Pillar Edict* 7 NN, and the interpretation suggested by C.

CAILLAT (in: *Bulletin d'études indiennes* 9/1991, 9 ff.) for *Rock Edict* XIII M-N, and her reference to the Aramaic edict of Kandahar (ibid. 12 + n. 14).

[133] Cp. especially killing pregnant and young animals or sucklings.

[134] A different approach is the prohibition of killing and injuring on special days (cp. *Kauṭilīya-Arthaśāstra* 13.5.12), which in Aśoka's mind may have served as a kind of reminder and temporary ritual enactment of the *ideal* of non-violence even for such people as were unable to come up to it in their daily lives.

[135] This is explicitly stated for quadrupeds and suggested by Dharmaśāstra parallels for at least some of the animals expressly enumerated (cp., e.g., the birds at the beginning of Aśoka´s list with *Manu* 5.12). The fish named in the edict are regarded as inedible according to R. THAPAR, *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, 2nd ed. repr. 1990, 71 n. 3 (referring to HORA).

[136] Cp., e.g., *Dhp* 129-132; *S* V 353.

[137] Life—both human and animal life—as a value would seem to contradict the ultimate Buddhist evaluation of existence as well as the idea of the special unhappiness of animal life. But this is just one of the cases of different spiritual or didactic levels and contexts to be kept apart.

[138] Cp. *BN* §§ 39.3 and 42. One reason, at least, for the inclusion of dangerous and noxious animals into *ahiṃsā* and *mettā* is, of course, the historical background indicated above, viz. their original function of avoiding revenge and protecting from aggression (see above p. 15 f.).

[139] *BN* §§ 10.1-11.2; *Plants* pp. 5 ff.; 23 ff.; 46 ff.; 58 ff.

[140] Cp. *BN* n. 244.

[141] *T* vol. 23, 75a23 ff.; 776b18 ff.; cp. also *Paramatthajotikā II*, vol. I 154,23 f., where the addressee is a brahmin; cp. *Plants* § 5.2 and n. 204.

[142] *Vin* I 225; *Sn* p. 14; *S* I 169; cp. *Plants* § 11.1.

[143] *Vin* III 7.

[144] On the problem of the relationship between norm and actual behaviour cp., e.g., P. PEDERSEN in: BRUUN/KALLAND 1995, 264-266. Cp. also *BN* § 4.2.

[145] Cp. *Plants* §§ 16.1-4; 25.2-3; 38.3.
[146] Cp. also GUNAPALA DHAMMASIRI, *Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics*, Singapore: Buddhist Research Society 1986, 174 f.
[147] Cp. *Plants* § 26.2; cp. also *BN* § 11.1.
[148] Cp. *Plants*, esp. §§ 24 ff.; *BN* §§ 9-10.
[149] E.g., MAITHRI MURTHI 1986, 28 ff.; 48; 53; 56; M. SPIRO, *Buddhism and Society*, Berkeley & Los Angeles [2]1982, 45; GOMBRICH, op. cit. (note 104), 245; 261.
[150] Cp. *BN* §§ 14.3-5 and 60. Cp. also N. HAKAMAYA, "Akugō-fusshoku no Gishiki-kanren-kyōten-zakkō (*Sūtras* concerned with Rites for Extinguishing Evil)" (I), in: *Komazawa-daigaku-bukkyōgakubu-kenkyū-kiyō* 50/1992, 274-247 (III: ibid. 51/1993, 337-298; II in: *Komazawa-daigaku-bukkyōgakubu-ronshū* 23/1992, 442-423; IV: ibid. 24/1993, 434-413; V and VI in: *Komazawa-tanki-daigaku-kenkyū-kiyō* 23/1995, 95-127, and 24/1996, 67-91.
[151] The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (*T* vol. 17, 2b22 ff.) mentions various cases of killing that are not regarded as an evil deed, e.g. when one unintentionally crushes a worm or ant while walking, or when one lights a fire for some other reason and an insect jumps into it.
[152] Cp. *BN* § 37.
[153] Cp. *BN* § 12 and SANDELL in: BRUUN/KALLAND 1995, 155 f., pointing out that when using pesticides Sri Lankan farmers either do not care about the Buddhist norm (declaring insects to be their enemies) or refer to their lack of intention to kill. But cp. also M. SPIRO, op. cit. (note 149), 45, who writes that in Burma the government had difficulties in persuading people to use DDT.
[154] Cp. *BN* § 38.
[155] E.g., *D* III 75; *M* II 71 f.; *A* I 159 f.; cp. *BN* § 20; HARRIS 1991, 108; 1994a, 21 f.
[156] E.g., *D* I 73; *M* I 276; 378; *S* III 108 f.; *Ja* VI 506 f.; cp. *BN* § 20; HARRIS 1991, 108; 1994a, 22 f. This attitude is also found in later texts; cp., e.g., *DBhS* 21,25 f., contrasting the "*huge* city of omniscience (= Buddhahood)" (*sarvajñatā-mahānagara*) with the "[large] forest (*aṭavī*)

of *saṃsāra*".

[157] E.g., *Ap* I 271 (334.11). By the way, in the context of the description of nature surrounding the hermitage (see below p. 31f with note 219), the first line of this verse (enumerating various species of beasts of prey) occurs as an element underlining the *beauty* of nature.

[158] Apotropaic spells and rites, though, to be sure, not entirely alien to settlement-based and perhaps even wilderness-based monks (cp., e.g., self-protection from snake bite taught to *monks* in the *Ahirājasutta*: see p. 18 with note 119), would yet mainly seem to be the Buddhist response to requirements from the side of lay people.

[159] E.g., by means of ceremonies and spells soliciting rain, as exemplified by the (later) *Meghasūtra* (ed. [in extracts] by C. BENDALL in *JRAS* 12/1880, 286-311; *T* vol 19, nos. 989 and 991-993).

[160] It goes back even to Vedic times: cp. W. RAU, *Staat und Gesellschaft im Alten Indien nach den Brāhmaṇa-Texten dargestellt*, Wiesbaden 1957, 53.

[161] For Japan cp. ULRIKE THIEDE, *Japanibis und Japanische Nachtigall als Beispiele zweier Pole im Naturverständnis der Japaner*, Hamburg 1982 (Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, Mitteilungen Bd. 90), 118 ("... da die Natur den Bauern nur als formbare und nutzbare Natur interessiert") and 127 ("... wird vom Bauern allgemein die Natur in nützliche und nutzlose bzw. schädliche Natur eingeteilt. Die nützliche Natur wird geformt und gepflegt, die schädliche abgewehrt und vernichtet."). For certain South-American Indian societies cp., e.g., A. GEBHART-SAYER, *Die Spitze des Bewußtseins* (PhD diss., Tübingen 1987), 102; 110; 285 ff. (Shipibo-Conibo, Peru); MARK MÜNZEL, *Medizinmannwesen und Geistervorstellungen bei den Kamayurá (Alto Xingú, Brasilien)* (Wiesbaden 1971), 27 f.; 99. I am, of course, aware of the fact that much more material is available and that the subject may require differentiation.

[162] *D* III 75 (densely populated world during the period of the longest life-span) + 59-64 (period of moral perfection) + 68 (implying that the period of moral perfection is identical with period of the longest life-

span).
[163] *A* I 159 f.; II 74 f.; *D* III 71-73; *Ja* II 124; cp. III 110 f.
[164] *SN* I 33; cp. *BN* § 24 + n. 98. Cp. *MBh* 13.99. Cp. also Aśoka's having trees planted and wells dug along the roads for the use of men and beasts (*pasu-munisānaṃ*: *Rock Edict* II D; *Pillar Edict* 7 R-T), "beasts" referring, in view of "along the roads", to draught- and riding beasts in the first place, though wild animals may not be excluded (cp. *MBh* 13.99.16-17).
[165] E.g., *S* II 106; *M* I 365; III 5; 130 f.; HARRIS 1994a, 21. At *S* I 233 (11.15), the evaluation is, at the same time, relativized as intramundane by the reference that a *truly* lovely place is only that where holy men (*arahanto*) live, no matter whether wilderness or inhabited place.
[166] E.g., *D* II 171; 182; *Ap* I 333 (396.6).
[167] E.g., *D* III 201 f.; *Petavatthu* 2.12.2-4; similarly *Suvarṇabhāsottamasūtra* (ed. NOBEL) 164 f. Cp. also *Ap* I 333 (396.1-6) where, however, the *trees* are said to be made of gold and beset with jewels.
[168] *Vimānavatthu* 3.7.4-6. Similarly *Aṣṭ* 240,24 f. (tree consisting of precious metals or jewels: ib. 240,14).
[169] Cp., in this connection, the description, in the *Kauṭilīya-Arthaśāstra* (ed. KANGLE, 2.2.3) of the king's pleasure-grove as containing trees *without thorns*, *tame* animals and beasts of prey with *broken claws and fangs*.
[170] See pp. 26ff. and especially 31 f.
[171] *D* III 84 ff.
[172] Esp. *T* vol. 1, 137b16 ff. (*Dīrghāgama*, probably of the Dharmaguptaka school); cp. also *Yogācārabhūmi* (ed. BHATTACHARYA) 34,16 ff., and *AKBh* 178,5 ff., esp. 11 ff.
[173] According to *Abhidharmakośa* 178,11 f., *domestic* animals will only disappear together with man.
[174] Cp. *BN* § 25.
[175] Cp. NAKAMURA 1980, 274.
[176] *S* I 128 ff. (*Bhikkhunī-saṃyutta*).
[177] E.g., *D* III 195 (*... pantāni senāsanāni ... appasaddāni ... vijanavātāni ... paṭisallānasāruppāni*). Against noise also *M* I 456 f.; II 30; *A* III 31;

cp. L. DE SILVA in: SANDELL 1987, 21 ff.

[178] Cp. the Buddha's Awakening under a pipal tree. In spite of the undeniable importance of the positive emotional implications of this element of tradition (which is often adduced as evidence for a pro-nature attitude of Buddhism), it should be noted that the tree is also used as a simile for negative factors, e.g. *S* II 87 ff. (12.55-57) where it illustrates Desire (*taṇhā*), and its felling and uprooting the eradication of Desire.

[179] E.g., *D* I 71; *M* I 269.

[180] E.g., *M* I 16 ff. Numinous parks, groves and trees characterized as dangerous: *M* I 20. Cp. also HARRIS 1991, 108; 1994a, 20.

[181] E.g., *A* III 100-102; *Cullaniddesa* ad *Sn* 42 (PTS ed. p. 199; Nālandā ed. 265,3 f.); cp. *S* I 219 f.

[182] *A* III 100-102. Cp. also S. J. TAMBIAH, *The Buddhist saints of the forest and the cult of amulets*, Cambridge 1984, repr. 1993, 89 f.

[183] Thus in *S* I 219 f. Cp. also the (Mahāyānist) *Ugradattaparipṛcchā* quoted in *Śikṣ* 198 ff., esp. 199,3 ff.

[184] E.g., *Th* 189-190; 41; *Sn* 42 with *Cullaniddesa* 77 (§ 13; Nālandā ed. 268,11-13); *A* IV 291 (*āraññiko ... bhayabheravasaho ...*); *S* I 132 (*na taṃ bhāyāmi*: the perfected nun dwelling in the wilderness is not afraid of Māra, who in this case would seem to represent all kinds of threats—and of course also temptations); *D* III 133 (Arhat cannot have fear).

[185] E.g., *Th* 31 = 244.

[186] E.g., *A* III 108 f.; *S* I 181.

[187] *Th* 31 = 244; *A* IV 291 (*aratiṃ abhibhuyya ... viharati*).

[188] E.g., *S* I 130 f.; 181; *A* III 219 (*app'icchatā*, *santuṭṭhi*).

[189] *Th* 13; 113 = 601 = 1070; 307-310; 1135-1137; 992 = *Dhp* 99. Cp. also SCHMITHAUSEN 1985, 109 f.; *BN* § 25.2; HARRIS 1991, 107 + n. 54. —But cp. *D* II 102 f. (= *Ud* 62 f.) where what the Buddha enjoys as lovely (*ramaṇīya*) is the *city* of Vesālī and its holy places (*cetiya*, which may but need not be trees, groves, etc.: cp. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* IV,1 104).

[190] Cp. also the remarks in note 38.

[191] Cp. S. LIENHARD, "Sur la structure poétique des Theratherīgāthā", in:

Journal Asiatique 263/1975, 375 ff., esp. 382 ff.; for destructive behaviour cp., e.g., *Jm* 28.13-14.

[192] *A* III 219; cp. *M* I 18. Cp. also *Śikṣ* 198,2 ff. (mentioning, in this connection, also wild *animals*, besides robbers and outcasts).

[193] *M* I 104 ff. (*Vanapatthasutta*).

[194] *Ud* 12 (2.4) *Uv* 30.51.

[195] *M* I 9 ff. (*Sabbāsavasutta*). [The importance of this passage for the present context was kindly pointed out to me by Dr. P. SCHMIDT-LEUKEL.]

[196] *S* I 128 ff.

[197] *Vin* II 278.

[198] The reason adduced in the *Vinaya* may, to be sure, signalize that the difference is not so much one of evaluation of wilderness as one of concern, the *Vinaya* being concerned not with spiritual practice proper but with matters of discipline and social reputation of the Order and its members. HARRIS (1991, 108), however, supposes that the real background of the prohibition is the notion of the "unwholesome influences at work in this tainted environment". This would fit in with the attitude of the civilization-orientated strand to which city- or even village-based monks (and nuns) would by and large seem to belong, in contrast to those who are wilderness-based (*araññavāsin*).

[199] *A* I 35.

[200] Cp., e.g., Bhikkhu BUDDHADASA in Thailand, or the Thai monks practising tree ordination in order to preserve forests (HARRIS 1995b, 178 f. with n. 34; cp. also *The Nation*, 23.2.1991, B2: "Monks battle to save the forests").

[201] *Mil* 32,25-27; cp. *BN* ṁ 21.1 + n. 84; HARRIS 1991, 105 + n. 25..

[202] *M* III 169; *S* V 455 f.; 476; *A* I 37. For copious evidence, from Buddhist as well as Hindu and Jaina sources, for the idea that rebirth as a human is difficult to attain cp. M. HARA, "A Note on the Hindu Concept of Man", in: *Journal of the Faculty of Letters, The Univ. of Tokyo, Aesthetics*, 11/1986, 45 ff.

[203] *M* I 74 f.; III 169; *Th* 258; cp. *BN* § 21.2 + n. 85-87.

[204] *Yogācārabhūmi* (ed. V. BHATTACHARYA) 87,14-16.

[205] Ibid. 87,13 f.; cp. *M* III 169. Cp. also *T* vol. 3, 467b18 ff.
[206] *M* III 167-169.
[207] *A* III 339. Cp. also the hierarchy of forms of existence at *M* II 193 f. As for *VisM* 13.93, see note 103. Besides, Buddhaghosa justifies his statement that animals are *apāya* but not *duggati* by pointing out that the *gati* of animals includes powerful *nāga*s. Precisely for this reason, the passage hardly implies the attribution of a higher value to existence as an *ordinary*, natural animal.
[208] Cp. *BN* § 21.2 + n. 88, and § 26 + n. 119.
[209] *D* III 72.
[210] *M* III 169.
[211] Thus quite clearly in the *Story of the Elder Māleyyadeva* (see note 229), 43,1 and 84.
[212] Cp. the opinion reported in *BN*, end of n. 84.
[213] Cp. *BN* § 23.1; Schmithausen 1985, 105 f.; cp. also *Aṣṭ* 178,28-30.
[214] Cp. *BN* § 39.2 + ns. 170 and 171.
[215] Thus especially *M* III 163 ff. (*Bālapaṇḍitasutta*).
[216] Cp. *BN* § 27.1; Harris 1991, 105 + ns. 29 and 30.
[217] Maithri Murthi 1986, 7 f.
[218] Cp., e.g., the story of the furious elephant Nāḷāgiri tamed and admonished by the Buddha (*Vin* II 195 f.; *Ja* V 336 f.), or *Ja* II 53. —A famous example from another Buddhist tradition is, of course, the Tibetan Yogin Milaraspa who is reported to have not only enjoyed the beauty of landscape, vegetation and animal life—in a detached way due to his awareness of their ultimate emptiness (*rNal 'byor Mi la ras pa'i rnam mgur* [Xining: Qinghai minzu chuban 1981] 249 f.; 441) —, but also to have preached to wild animals and pacified them, so that in his presence the frightened stag becomes fearless and the fierce hunting dog peaceful (ibid. 430 ff.; H. Hoffmann, *Mi-la ras-pa: Sieben Legenden*, München-Planegg 1950, 87 ff.; Garma C.C. Chang, *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*, Boulder: Shambhala 1977, I 275 ff.).
[219] E.g., *Ja* V 405 f.; VI 529 f. and 533 ff.; *Ap* I 15 ff.; 328 f. (no. 393, vss. 1-5); II 345-47 (no. 402, vss. 1-31); 362 f. (no. 407, vss. 1-20); 367 f.

(no. 409, vss. 1-20). Cp. also *Ja* VI 496 f.

[220] Cp., e.g., *Ja* V 405 (vs. 68b): *rammaṃ*; VI 530 (vs. 343) and 534 (vss. 376 and 379): *manorame*; 536 (vs. 395): *sobhanā, upasobhitaṃ*; *Ap* I 15 f. (vss. 3-5; 10-13): *sobhayantā, sobhayanti*.

[221] ALSDORF (*Kleine Schriften*, ed. A. WEZLER, Wiesbaden 1974, 333 f., is certainly right in identifying these descriptions, in the *Vessantara-jātaka*, as an obstruction in the dénouement and in regarding the description of nature by means of a mere enumerations of species of plants and animals as rather primitive from the artistic point of view, but it may be "intolerably boring" only for readers who are unacquainted with the species enumerated and for whom they remain mere names, but not for those in whom each name evokes a colourful vision of the corresponding reality.

[222] Cp., e.g., *MBh* 1.64 and 3.155.37 ff.; *Rāmāyaṇa* (crit. ed.) 3.69.2 ff.

[223] E.g. *Ja* V 416 and 420 (*Kuṇālajātaka*; cp. W.B. BOLLÉE's edition and transl. [London 1970], 8 f.; 14 f.; 124 ff.) describing the beauty of forests inhabited by two birds (the second of whom is, however, virtually a sage; besides, ascetics [*tāpasa*: 420,9] are mentioned in passing among the creatures inhabiting that forest). Without any connection with hermits or animal-heroes: *Ja* VI 277 f.

[224] Clearly so *MBh* 1.64.6 stating that around the hermitage there are no trees without flowers, fruits and bees, *nor such as have thorns*. Similarly 3.155.65cd.

[225] *Ja* V 405 f. (vss. 264 f.).

[226] For tameness of animals around the hermitage also *MBh* 1.64.18ef; *Rāmāyaṇa* (crit. ed.) 3.69.8ab; ATINDRANATH BOSE, *Social and Rural Economy of Northern India*, Calcutta 1970, 100.

[227] *Ja* VI 591,13 f. (*tejena).* Cp. also Milaraspa (see note 218).

[228] E.g., *Ja* VI 73; 520; *Jm* ch. 1.8; cp. *Ja* II 53. Cp. also Śaṅkara, *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa* ad *Yogasūtra* II.35 (natural enmity among animals stops due to the yogin's *ahiṃsā*).

[229] Cp. also E. DENIS (ed.) and S. COLLINS (transl.), "The Story of the Elder Māleyyadeva", in: *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 18/1993, 50

and 88.

[230] Cp. also *Ja* VI 29,26-28, and, for a later example, Milaraspa (loc. cit.: see note 218). In these two cases at least, self-protection of the ascetic does not seem to play a significant role. What happens is rather a spontaneous transformation of the character and behaviour of the animal under the influence of the perfected person for the benefit of the animals themselves only.

[231] *Jm* ch. 1; for parallels cp. D. SCHLINGLOFF, *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings*, Delhi 1987, 145.

[232] Cp. É. LAMOTTE, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna*, tome I, Louvain 1949, 255 ff.; SCHLINGLOFF, *op. cit.*, 86 ff.; MARION MEISIG, *König Śibi und die Taube*, Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz 1995.

[233] Cp. also the readiness of the Bodhisattva to offer his body to the hungry beasts of prey in case self-protection by means of friendliness should not work (*Ratnarāśisūtra* quoted *Śikṣ* 200,15 ff.; J. A. SILK, *The Origins and Early History of the Mahāratnakūṭa Tradition of Mahāyāna Buddhism, with a Study of the Ratnarāśisūtra and Related Materials*. Diss. Michigan 1994, 470 f.).

[234] See *BN* §§ 48 ff., esp. 54 ff.

[235] For further references see *BN*.

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