SAṀGHABHEDA AND *NIKĀYABHEDA*:

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE SCHISM, ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF SECTS AND SECTARIANISM IN EARLY BUDDHISM

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I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at any other institution, and that it is entirely my own work.

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Finally, I used both Pali and Sanskrit words liberally throughout this study, and I tried to make it readable, so that an academic understanding could be gleaned; I hope I achieved this. Any shortcoming is mine and I am responsible for it, no one else. I also should like to note here an important issue regarding the use of Pali or Sanskrit Labioguttural (*kaṇṭhoṣṭhya*) alphabates अं and ङ (Ṃ, Ṁ, and Ṅ) (*anusvara*) "ṃ", "ṅ", "ṁ" throughout this dissertation; I referred to various reference sources where I found that there is no unified agreement using of these alphabates, rather different souce used different form. I have followed all wherever it was convenient for me.

ABSTRACT

Saṁghabheda and *Nikāyabheda:* A Critical Study of the
Schism, Origin and Formation of Sects and Sectarianism in Early Buddhism

By

Lokānanda C. Bhikkhu

About one hundred years after the great decease of the Buddha (*Mahāparinibbāna*), his democratically well-established *Saṁgha* community split, first into two major groups as the Sthaviravāda and Mahāsāṁghika sects. Later, each group split repeatedly, creating eighteen or more sub-sects. Nevertheless, a general curiosity prevails as to why the *Saṁgha* split. Hence, a number of treatises both in Pali and in Sanskrit were written by experts, and following these treatises, a number of modern scholars formed into two groups, each concluding that the splits were due to one of two reasons: (a) a monastic disciplinary reason centering on the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points), which were introduced by a group of bhikkhus from Vaiśālī, and on the other hand, (b) a doctrinal debate due to the dispute on *pañcavatthu* (Five Points), which was propounded by a monk named Mahādeva of Kukkuṭārāma.

However, after thorough examination of the existing treatises, scholastic monographs, and academic writings, a few modern scholars, viz., Charles Prebish and André Bareau, came to conclude that the split was not due to either of these two reasons, and further suggested that scholars must find other reasons.

This dissertation is an attempt to address this suggestion and addresses schism and its applicability in the Buddhist Studies arena; it analyses the meaning of sect and schism from a comparative perspective. It further examines the social, political, and geographical circumstances of ancient India, which actually influenced and contributed to the first and later splits in the *Saṁgha* community. The present work also observes that there were personal conflicts among the disciples of the Buddha, which later emerged as confrontations and caused splitting. Additionally, it also examines and finds that there were different groups of bhikkhus within the Buddhist *Saṁgha* who were under the tutelage and leadership of a certain prominent disciple of the Buddha. These were proto-sectarian elements and separate fraternities (*nikāya*); the royal patronage of these proto-sectarian fraternities caused the formation of various sects. Royal patronage helped these small groups spread to various geographic localities at home and abroad. Ultimately, after comparing and examining the issues, this dissertation concludes that the root of split was embedded in early Buddhism.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> Until perhaps fifty years ago, the prevailing view, as espoused primarily by Wilhelm Geiger, was that a sectarian split occurred at this event, separating the community into two rival groups: (1) the Sthaviras, closely associated with the traditional Buddhist orthodoxy of the time, and (2) the Mahāsāṃghikas, portrayed as representing the liberal, progressive wing of the community in both discipline and doctrine. This view has now been conclusively discredited by Marcel Hofinger, André Bareau and Charles Prebish, forcing scholars to look elsewhere for the beginning of Buddhist sectarianism.
>
> —Charles Prebish[1]

After the Enlightenment of the Buddha, he preached the *Dhamma* (doctrines) for forty-five years while travelling all over North India, befriending many people among whom he collected numerous disciples. At the end of his first sermon to the five disciples —the *Dhammacakkapavattana* (Turning the Wheel of Righteousness)—the community of the *Saṁgha* was established by the Buddha in Saranath. Before the Buddha passed away at the age of eighty in Kusinagara, he established a community of the *Saṁgha* based on purely democratic principles. There was only one unit of the *Saṁgha,* regardless of color, race, gender, caste, or whatever existing Indian social classification. Unfortunately, this unique unity of the community of the *Saṁgha* did not persist.

Within two hundred years of the passing of the Buddha, his community of the *Saṁgha* allegedly split: first, into two distinct groups as the orthodox Sthavīravādin or

[1] Charles S. Prebish, *Historical Dictionary of Buddhism* (Metuchen, New Jersey & London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1993), 7.

Theravāda group and the liberal Mahāsāṁghika group; second, each group split again and again, counting at least eighteen,[2] nineteen, or even thirty-two or more groups or sects within the five to six hundred years' life span of the Buddha's teachings.

Several opinions exist regarding the cause of these splits in the Pali textual literatures, viz., *Cullavagga*, Sinhalese Chronicles, viz., *Dīpavaṁsa, Mahāvaṁsa*, *Nikāyasaṁgraha,* Sanskrit narratives byVasumitra, *Samayabhedoparacanacakra*, by Vinīthadeva, *Samayabhedoparacanacakranikāyabhedopadarśanasaṃgraha*, and by Bhavya, *Nikāyabhedavibhaṇgavyākhyāna*), Tibetan works by Tāranātha[3] and Bu-sTon Rinpoche[4] (these last two narratives were originally composed in Tibetan but have been translated into English), and *Śāriputraparipṛrccha sūtra,* by an undetermined author. In addition to two theories – *dasavatthu* (Ten-Points) and *pañcavatthu* (Five-Points), the Vinaya of the Dharmaguptika, Mahāsāṁghika, Sarvāstivāda schools blame Devadatta alone to cause a split in early Buddhist saṁgha. Comparing all of the available narratives and textual evidences in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan languages, it is clearly visible that there are two groups of scholars, ancient as well as modern, who hold two different views concerning the formation of early Buddhist sectarianism; they call it *saṁghabheda*, "schism." However, could this term "schism" be applied to the Buddhist monastic system, since it has a Western connotation?

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[2] L. S. Cousins expresses his opinion on this figure as "symbolic." Thus, he states, "The number eighteen is probably symbolic in nature and should perhaps not be taken too seriously. Nevertheless it is clear that there is a generally accepted tradition that in the course of the second and third centuries after the Buddha's *mahāparinibbāna* the *saṃgha* divided into a number of teacher's linages (*ācariyakula*) or doctrines (*vāda; ācariyavāda*) or fraternities (nikāya)." Lance Cousins, "The 'Five Points' and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools," in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*, ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 52.
[3] L. Chimpa and A. Chattopadhyaya, trans., *History of Buddhism in India of Tāranātha* (New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990).
[4] Bu-sTon, *The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet*, trans. E. Obermiller (New Delhi, India: Paljor, reprint 1996).

If we are allowed to call this a *saṁghabheda*, it goes against the Buddha's original Vinaya teachings, for, in accordance with the Vinaya rules, a bhikkhu or a group of bhikkhus cannot create a *saṁghabheda* in the *Saṁgha*. If he or they do, he or they are guilty of one of the five offences (*anantarīya kamma*), viz.: (1) patricide; (2) matricide; (3) killing of an *arahant*; (4) wounding a Buddha; and (5) creating a schism in the monks' order.[5] The Pali term *saṁghabheda* does not have an English equivalent except for "schism," which I will use here for the sake of convenience. Any schismatic bhikkhu would not even think of a *saṁghabheda* within the *Saṁgha.* Hence, this study focuses more on the *nikāyabheda* or the study of the formation of sects and sectarianism, rather than on *saṁghabheda*.

A dispute evidently existed in the monastic establishment, which caused a separation; one group of scholars (those scholars have been identified later in this study) believes that a dispute regarding the disciplinary code (*Vinaya*) was the main root-cause, while another group of scholars holds that a doctrinal dispute (*Dhamma*) was the main cause–as Juryo Masuda puts simply in Sanskrit as "*paramparābhedabhiniveṣat*," contradiction among each other. So the question is (a) did the Vinaya issue cause the formation of sects and sectarianism in the *Saṁgha?* On the other hand, (b) did the *Dhamma* issue cause the formation of sects and sectarianism in the *Saṁgha?*

Considering Prebish's above suggestion, I also, indeed, would agree that neither of these issues are the real reason for the split in the early Buddhist monastic tradition, for "This view has been conclusively discredited by Marcel Hofinger, André Bareau, and

[5] Nyanatiloka *Buddhist Dictionary* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1980), 12; also *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* ed G.P.Malalasekera (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Government of Ceylon Press, 1961) 1:552

Charles Prebish." I will follow his suggestion and attempt here "to look elsewhere for the beginning of Buddhist sectarianism", outside these two traditional issues.

While undertaking this task, one must bear in mind that there was/is no differences of views in the Buddha's original teachings regardless of schools, whether Mahāsāṁghika or Sthavīravāda. Every school believes and teaches the core of the Buddha's teachings: *dukkha-sacca* (suffering), *dukkha-samudaya-sacca* (cause of suffering), *dukkha-nirodha-sacca* (cessation of suffering), and *dukkha-nirodha-magga-sacca* (path leading to cessation of suffering). The Buddha himself declared that "whether, brethren, there be an arising of Tathāgatas, or whether there be no such arising, this nature of things just stands, this causal status, this causal orderliness, the relatedness of this to that.[6]"

Whatever the differences among the schools, the reflection of the contemporary social and political influence over the monastic establishment, the existence of certain schismatic members in the *Saṁgha* itself, and more importantly, the participation of various contemporary sect members and sect leaders of the *Saṁgha* contributed in the formation of various later sects and schools of Buddhism. In the course of time, the creation of sects was also due to master-disciple succession (*guruparamparā*) in monasticism, as we see, for example, in the Dharmaguptika School, the Kāsyapiya School, the Siddhārtika School, etc., which were successively named after certain teachers: Dharmagupta, Kāśyapa, and Siddhārtha, respectively. On the other hand, the Vinaya, from the Sthaviravāda standpoint, is the life span of the Buddha's teachings (*vinayanāmabuddhasāsanasa āyu*), as the commentator Buddhaghosa states. As such, no

[6] F.L.Woodward, trans. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings* (*saṁyutta nikāya*) (London: Pali Text Society, 1954) 39

one, whether monastic or laity, would ever disregard this stand; every Buddhist would desire the continuity of the *Buddhasāsanasa*, not to mention prevent a split in it.

Whatever their doctrinal differences, Buddhist scholars have depended on the Buddha's teaching for their philosophical arguments, because of which there appeared certain separate groups of followers. For example, we see the *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa, *Abhidhammatthasaṁgaha* of Anuruddha, *Abhidharmakośa* of Vasubandu, *Mādhyamikakārikā* of Nāgārjuna, *Satyasiddhi* of Haribhadra, etc. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the Buddha's teaching is beyond the authority, reports, tradition, hearsay, logical arguments, inference, or reasoning, etc., as the *Kālāma Sutta* records.

I will explain in detail in this dissertation why the Buddhist *Saṁgha* separated into several groups and formed different sects over time. For the implementation of the methodology, this dissertation is divided into various chapters, each chapter containing a particular issue. At the end of this dissertation, answers to the following questions may be found:

(a) Was there a *saṁghabheda* (schism) in early Buddhism?

(b) If it was not a *saṁghabheda*, was it *nikāyabheda* (sectarianism)?

(c) How were these *nikāya*s (sects) formed?

(d) Who led the formation of these *nikāya*s?

(e) Who contributed the most in the formation of the *nikāya*s?

The subject of this dissertation, *Saṁghabheda and Nikāyabheda*: *A Critical Study of the Schism, Origin and Formation of Sects and Sectarianism in Early Buddhism,* has never has been addressed by any Buddhist Studies specialist previously. "*Saṁghabheda*" is a very well-known topic in the Buddhist Studies arena. Therefore, it does not demand

detailed explanation. The application of the term "*saṁghabheda*" (schism) in the Buddhist monastic establishment is discussed in Chapters Three and Four. However, what is "schism?" It has different meanings and applications depending on the subject and the circumstances. It has been studied from the religious perspective. Since this work is related to Religious Studies in general, Buddhist Studies in particular, it has definitive application here. The Western and Christian theologians applied schism to define a split within the Church; the split means here a complete separation from the mother church. The definition of "split" in other religions also applies, more or less the same as in the Christian split. What is, then, the meaning or definition of "split" (*saṁghabheda*) in accordance with Buddhism? Was there a *saṁghabheda* in the Buddhist monastic system? There happened to be some splits in the Buddhist monastic system, however.

Saṁghabheda* or *Nikāyabheda

André Bureau,[7] Étienne Lamotte,[8] Louis de La Vallée Poussin,[9] Henerich Kern,[10] Thomas W. Rhys Davids,[11] Wilhelm Geiger,[12] and various others in Europe are pioneer scholars in this subject. Several decades ago, Nalinaksa Dutt,[13] Ryukan Kimura,[14] Jiryo Masuda,[15] Akira Hirakawa,[16] and very recently, Lance Cousins,[17] Janice Nattier and

[7] André Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle*, trans. Sara Boin-Webb, ed. Andrew Skilton (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2013).
[8] Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, trans. Sara Webb-Boin (Louvain, Belgium: Peeters Press, 1988).
[9] Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *The Buddhist Councils* (Calcutta: K. P. Bagchi, 1976).
[10] Henerich Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism* (New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974).
[11] T. W. Rhys Davids, "Schools of Buddhist Belief," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* n.v. (1892):1-3.
[12] Wilhelm Geiger, trans., *Mahāvaṁsa* (London: Luzac & Co., 1912).
[13] Nalinaksa Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1970).
[14] Ryukan Kimura, *Introduction to the History of Buddhism* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1925).
[15] Jiryo Masuda, "Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools (*Samayabhedoparacanakra*)," in *Asia Major,* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1965). part 2, 4-78.

Charles Prebish,[18] Shizuka Sasaki[19] and others have made significant contributions. Most of these historians of Buddhism indicated one of the two reasons: *dasavatthu* (Ten Points) and *pañcavatthu* (Five Points) as the main root causes for the sectarianism. Nevertheless, at the beginning of this chapter, I quoted an important and conclusive remark from Charles Prebish, which became an eye-opening and instructive issue for this dissertation. However, my main purpose here, after analyzing the two traditional theories of the *saṁghabheda* or "schism," is to examine the origin of sects and sectarianism from a different perspective, which I call *nikāyabheda*, and examine if the schismatic tendencies (e.g., grouping under the leadership of a teacher) existed in the Buddhist monastic tradition even during the lifetime of the Buddha. This perspective has been ignored by various scholars until now. I therefore, intend to show in this dissertation that neither the *dasavatthu* nor the *pañcavatthu* played an important role in the schism in the early Buddhist monastic tradition, since there was no theoretical *saṁghabheda.* Rather, the schismatic tendencies existed even in the time of the Buddha.

Modern scholars have thoroughly coupled the Pali term "*saṁghabheda*" with the English word "schism," though the term does not reflect an accurate sense. The Pali Vinaya textual literature recorded the term *saṁghabheda,* and Buddhist Studies specialists have used this word constantly in their works. S*aṁghabheda*, the English equivalent of which is closely "schism," "split," "separation," etc., is a technical word

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[16]Akira Hirakawa, *A History of Indian Buddhism From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, trans. and ed. Paul Groner (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).
[17] Lance Cousins, "The Five Points and the Origins of Buddhist Schools."
[18] Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "The Mahasamghika Origins: The Beginning of Buddhist Sectarianism*"* in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies,* ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). vol. 2, chap. 28.
[19] Shizuka Sasaki, "Buddhist Sects in the Aśoka Period" in *Bukyoo Kenkyu* (*Buddhist Studies*, 1991-94), Vol. 21 – 24.

and does not require a detailed explanation. Later I will show some other terms used instead of schism.

David B. Gray remarks: "This term has been variously translated as "sect," "order," or "monastic fraternity"; the latter is the meaning of the term in contemporary Theravāda Buddhist communities as well as in ancient times."[20] Gray further compares and disagrees with Richard Gombrich, who

> has objected to the translation of *nikāya* as "sect," but the English term sect is actually an excellent translation of the Buddhist term *nikāya* as both have primary meaning of a "class or group," and a secondary meaning of a "religious order". . . The negative English connotation of a heretical, breakaway religious denomination is also not inappropriate, since the *nikāya*s emerged precisely due to differenes in practice (of the monastic code most notably) as well as doctrine.[21]

The Webster's New International Dictionary comparing Greek, Latin and other classical languages provides the modern definition of "schism" as "division," "separation," "discord," "disharmony," "formal division," etc.[22] The term "schism*"* has been studied from different perspectives, since it has vast areas to cover—religious and political, just to mention a few relevant fields.

A recent study on schism by Martin E. Marty, *The Modern Schism: Three Paths to the Secular,*[23] is a remarkable addition to the studies of the history of religion. The author focused on schism from comparative and contrasting perspectives as well as in

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[20] David B. Gray, "Buddhist Sectarianism," in *The Buddhist World*, ed. John Powers (London, New York: Routledge, 2016), 369
[21] Gray, "Buddhist Sectarianism," 369.
[22] *The Webster's New International Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1971), 2029.
[23] Martin E. Marty, *The Modern Schism: Three Paths to the Secular* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).

terms of medieval Christian religious historiography. Nevertheless, if we take his theory of schism and want to study it from the standpoint of a contrast-and-compare basis, unfortunately, we cannot apply this theory to (so-called) schisms in the Buddhist Studies arena. The reason for this inapplicability is that Marty's theory deals basically with secularism or secular issues—Marxism, the Industrial Revolution, the modernization of the West, and Napoléon's anti-religious approach in controlling the state—whereas schism in Buddhist monasticism deals with (as Buddhist Studies specialists have discussed widely) "doctrinal issues" (*pañcavatthu*) and "disciplinary issues" (*dasavatthu*). I could not find any term like Marty's to cite in the case of the Buddhist monastic system. Furthermore, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (online version) states:

> In the early church, "schism" was used to describe those groups that broke with the church and established rival churches. The term originally referred to those divisions that were caused by disagreement over something other than basic doctrine. Thus, the schismatic group was not necessarily heretical. Eventually, however, the distinctions between schism and heresy gradually became less clear, and disruptions in the church caused by disagreements over doctrine as well as disruptions caused by other disagreements were eventually all referred to as schismatic. In the early church, "schism" was used to describe those groups that broke with the church and established rival churches. The term originally referred to those divisions that were caused by disagreement over something other than basic doctrine. Thus, the schismatic group was not necessarily heretical. Eventually, however, the distinctions between schism and heresy gradually became less clear, and disruptions in the church caused by disagreements over doctrine as well as disruptions caused by other disagreements were eventually all referred to as schismatic.[24]

On the other hand, the online *Catholic Encyclopedia* defines the schism as:

> Schism, therefore, is usually mixed, in which case, considered from a moral standpoint, its perversity is chiefly due to the heresy which forms part of it. In its other aspect and as being purely schism it is contrary to

[24] *Encyclopedia Britannica,* s.v. "Schism," accessed March 9, 2015, http://academic.eb.com/levels/collegiate/article/66135.

> charity and obedience; to the former, because it severs the ties of fraternal charity, to the latter, because the schismatic rebels against the Divinely constituted hierarchy. However, not every disobedience is a schism; in order to possess this character it must include besides the transgression of the commands of superiors, denial of their Divine right to command. On the other hand, schism does not necessarily imply adhesion, either public or private, to a dissenting group or a distinct sect, much less the creation of such a group. Anyone becomes a schismatic who, though desiring to remain a Christian, rebels against legitimate authority, without going as far as the rejection of Christianity as a whole, which constitutes the crime of apostasy.[25]

From the above definitions, one can conclude that schism takes place in the Christian context when there are a:

> a) body or group of individual that disagrees with the doctrine of the founder and splits;
>
> b) body or group of individual that disagrees with the doctrine of the founder and defines a new divinity;
>
> c) body or group of individual that disagrees with the doctrine of the founder and establishes a separate heresy;
>
> d) body or group of individual that disagrees with the doctrine of the founder and becomes an independent group.

All of these examples of definitions from the dictionary and encyclopedias are very different from the situation regarding schism in the Buddhist monastic establishment. In the first schism, from the Buddhist *saṁghbheda* standpoint, there was no denial of the authority of the Buddha, as there was no heresy or accusation thereof. Both the definitions quoted above deal with "divinity" and "heretical" issues, whereas in Buddhism, these issues are rare. In brief, however, the term *saṁghabheda* or schism in the *Saṁgha* or the community of the bhikkhus takes place when, at least, "nine or more fully ordained monks separate themselves from the order; a faction of less than nine

[25] *Catholic Encyclopedia,* s.v. "Schism,*"* retrieved on March 9, 2015, http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=10569

monks constitutes a "dissension" (*saṁgharāji*) rather than schism."[26] Such a split has a Vinaya consequence (offence) also known as the *anantarīya kamma*. The schismatic bhikkhus should know the *karmic* consequences very well. Therefore, the term *saṁghabheda* is not valid here because knowingly, a group of bhikkhus would not commit an offence; nevertheless, for the sake of our study it has been taken here *status quo*. Therefore, I would like to disagree with the notion that there was any *saṁghabheda* or schism in the Buddhist monastic system because in accordance with the Vinaya rules, *saṁghabheda* is a heavy offense and not a single bhikkhu will take that chance. Hence, I further would like to follow the suggestion of André Bareau here when he states in the introduction of his authoritative studies in this subject, as:

> Before approaching the heart of the subject, it is important to specify the meaning of the above terms, which we use for lack of anything better by which do not precisely express the Indian ideas they claim to represent. We will call *school* what Sanskrit Buddhism terms *nikāya* and Pali Buddhism *ācāryavāda*. A *nikāya* consists of a group of people subjected to the same regulations. It is also, and more usually, a collection of objects, such as the collection of sūtras, precisely called *nikāya* in Pāli.[27]

In light of the above, the title of this dissertation also needs further explanation. It could be divided into several terms: (a) *saṁghabheda,* which means separation among the followers of the Buddhist monastic organization; (b) *nikāyabheda,* which means a division of several smaller groups within the same order (*nikāya*), (c) *sects and*

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[26] Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 751.

[27] Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle*, xxv. The editor, Andrew Skilton, adds in a footnote, "In the French text Bareau indicates that he will use *secte* and *école* interchangeably, but in practice he favours *secte* most of the time. The translator has made the decision to amalgamate Bareau's *secte* and *école* since he was not using them to denote different entities, and translate both simply as 'school'. She has rejected the term 'sect', with its negative connotations in English, as a label for these groupings of the early Sangha. This word now appears in the English version only in cited titles."

sectarianism, which is understood as *status quo*; and finally, (d) *early Buddhism,* which needs further detailed explanation.

Since the separation in the *Saṁgha* did not take place within a month or year, a time line may be required here. Even though certain texts and scholars tend to believe, and pinpointed, that it took place in the Second Buddhist Council, yet, I maintain that it happened within different periods and that the schismatic tendencies were present among the bhikkhus during the Master's lifetime. In fact, this will be one of my suggestive arguments of this dissertation.

Schismatic monastics became active immediately after the passing away of the Buddha and continued to exert influence after the period from the rule of Emperor Aśoka until the great King Kaniṣka in the 1st century B.C. or A.D. This study will focus, nevertheless, within the 500 to 600 hundred years of the history of the existence of Buddhism—more precisely, after the passing away of the Buddha to the 1st century B.C. or A.D., i.e., from the First Buddhist Council held under the patronage of King Ajātasatru in Rājagṛha through the Fourth Buddhist Council, which took place under the patronage of King Kaniṣka in Kashmir in India. This is what is meant by "early Buddhism" in this study. However, I may mention occasional examples of some later incidents that may be relevant to this dissertation. In order to demonstrate and develop the argument, a brief historiography in favor of this dissertation is needed.

It also should be remembered that there were borrowings of ideas from one sect member to another during and after the time of the Buddha. Since there were several "sect" members and their leaders in the Buddhist monastic establishment, it was possible and probable that each sectarian participant exchanged views. Besides, the Pali canonical

text *Kathāvatthu* (*Points of Controversies*) as well as the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikaya* are collections of various views and dogmas of different sects of the time, which were expressed and exchanged by monastic members and those of various sects. Thus, Louis de La Vallée Poussin observes:

> Mutual borrowing from sect to sect was by no means impossible; opposition between sects was, on the whole, restricted to a few rules of practice or a few doctrinal tenants; local traditions, or fresh acquisitions, by a particular sect, by some monastery or group of monasteries, were, we must admit, generally welcomed by the others. And it may be urged that a sect – possibly the Pali-speaking one – which would surpass its fellow-sects in compelling an organized body of Scriptures (or, to be more precise, in designing a drawer-desk in which to put the Buddha's words) would exercise *ipso facto* a profound and decisive influence on the Buddhist Order at large. It does not follow that the traditions of this sect were the oldest, or genuine and free from borrowing, or that they have not been, since their earliest compilation, manipulated, or adulterated in many ways.[28]

The Early Sect Formation in the Saṁgha

After the passing of the Buddha, his democratically organized religious institution, *Saṁgha,* separated into different sects. Scholars traditionally believe there were at least two reasons for this separation: (i) a controversy propounded by a monk called Mahādeva known as *pañcavatthu* (Five Points), said to be doctrinal issues that were introduced to his pupils at the Kukkuṭārāma vihāra of Pāṭaliputra, eventually causing a separation within the monastic establishment; (ii) a dispute on disciplinary codes, the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points). A group of Vajjian monks was practicing Ten Points, which was noticed by elders who brought this forward at the Second Buddhist Council for authentication. At the Council, these Ten Points were rejected by the elders; then the Vajjian monks left the Council, causing a separation. However, certain Tibetan narrators,

[28] Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Councils and Synods (Buddhist)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* ed. James Hasting (New York: Charles Schreiber's Sons, 1924), 4:181 (hereafter, *ERE*).

viz., Vasumitra, Bhavya, Vinīthadeva, etc., believed that the *pañcavatthu* issue (of Mahādeva) was the main reason for this particular Second Buddhist Council. On the other hand, the Pali *Cullavagga, Sinhalese* Chronicles - *Dīpavaṁsa, Mahāvaṁsa* and certain modern scholars, such as Geiger, Rhys Davids, etc., believe that the Second Buddhist Council was convened due to the *dasavatthu* controversy of the Vajjian bhikkhus. In addition, a debate exists between two groups of experts as to whether the Second Buddhist Council ever took place. Furthermore, an argument could be made here that how could there be one council to settle two different notorious issues at the same time. Both these issues, *dasavatthu* and *pañcavatthu*, have their original history; it seems they just appeared in the same period within separatist groups of bhikkhus.

The History of *Dasavatthu* and Vinaya

As mentioned, about a century after the passing of the Buddha, groups of monks belonging to the Vajjian clan and from the Vajjian confederacy of Vaiśālī were practicing the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points).[29] This practice of the Vajjian monks came to the notice of the prominent elders and concerned them enough to bring about the convening of a new council in order to establish the orthodoxy of the *Saṁgha* Vinaya. It is difficult to pinpoint by name the particular monks in this group, but throughout the Pali Vinaya literature (*Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga* especially), they are identified as the Vajjiputtaka or Vajjiputtīya monks belonging to the Vajjian clan of Vaiśālī. There were different groups of monks during the time of the Buddha who hardly accepted any rule without a challenge. Such a tradition, it seems, continued at the First and Second Buddhist Councils as well. The *dasavatthu* were, in brief, as follows: (a) carrying salt in a horn, (b) taking a

[29] I. B. Horner, Eng. trans., *Book of the Discipline* (*Vinaya Piṭaka*), (London: Luzac & Co. Ltd., 1938-1951), 4:407.

meal after the shadow is two fingers broad, (c) going to another village to take a second meal on the same day, (d) obtaining sanction for a deed after it is done, (e) using customary practice as precedents, (f) drinking buttermilk after meals, (g) drinking of toddy, (h) using a rag which has no fringe, and (i) acceptance of gold and silver.[30]

The Second Buddhist Council, convened under the chair of Venerable Yasa, discussed these *dasavatthu*; at the conclusion of the council, the *dasavatthu* were dismissed as unorthodox. The supporters of the *dasavatthu* at the council were the majority and with the rejection of the *dasavatthu* as unorthodox, the Vajjian monks left and formed a different group, known as the Mahāsāṁghika. Because there were a greater number of bhikkhus (*mahāsaṁgha*), they came to be known as the Mahāsāṁghikas. Hence, one might notice the issue of Vinaya became an important issue. A full collection of Vinaya rules were collected and formed a separate *Piṭaka* known as the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Additionally, there are three sectarian Vinaya collections also existing in Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit. More is discussed below on this issue.

From the Pali Buddhist standpoint, there were no Vinaya rules at the beginning of the *Buddhasāsana*. Buddha started his monastic community with only five bhikkhus (*Pañcavaggīya* bhikkhus) at the Deer Park of Sāranāth, where the Buddha preached his first sermon. Buddha's focus was achieving enlightenment, advancement in realizing *aniccatā* (impermanence), *dukkhatā* (suffering or unsatisfactoriness), and *anāttatā* (insubstantiality of existence). Internal discipline was enough to attain such goal. However, with the growing of the *Saṁgha* community, the external and visible discipline became necessary.

[30] Horner, *Book of the Discipline,* 3:407.

The Vinaya, a word in both Pāli and Sanskrit, means "leading out" or "discipline." The regulatory framework for the Buddhist monastic community, or *Saṁgha,* is known as *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Etymologically, the word "*vinaya*" itself is the combination of two words: "*vi*" (a prefix) + "*naya"* (the verb form of which is "*naya ti"* to lead), which is derived from root "√*nī*" stem = "*naya*". The Vinaya is also the bounding element of the Buddhist monastic community, the *Saṁgha.* Though it is a Buddhist monastic (religious) term, its application is also seen in the modern secular government administrative system, where different rules and regulations are observed, without which a democratic system collapses. Here the Pali term *naya*, which means lead, is applicable to both secular as well as sacred government environments. A government that has a constitution rules the assembly. Such is the Buddhist monastic organization known as *Saṁgha.* However, with the advancement of the monastic community, the regulatory rules also started; it is in this regard that the Vinaya becomes relevant and important. If the Vinaya is not followed or abided by the followers, the institution becomes fragile.

It is impossible to pinpoint when the Buddha started to relay the Vinaya rules to his disciples, but from the chronological order of the *Cullavagga* (chapter xii) standpoint, as Ven. Upālī testified, a certain bhikkhu by the name of Sudinna was the first person to commit a major Vinaya offence (*pārājikā*) and receive instruction in the first Vinaya from the Buddha. It precedes other Vinaya instructions. Nevertheless, it could have been a different Vinaya. Here the assumption is made depending upon Vinaya recitation proceedings as recorded in *Cullavagga* xi. There is ample reason to assume that by the time of the First Buddhist Council, the Vinaya text was complete. In the First Buddhist

Council, Ven. Upālī recited the entire Vinaya upon request by Ven. Mahākāssapa. Sukumar Dutt remarks:

> The Buddhist Sangha had rested originally on a community of faith and belief, on a Dhamma, but an external bond of union, a Patimokkha, was afterwards devised serving to convert the Sect into a religious Order, and this Patimokkha originally consisted in periodical meeting for the purpose of confirming the unity of the Buddha's monk-followers by holding a communal confession of faith in a set form of hymn singing.[31]

The Buddha introduced the Vinaya rules not by demand, but due to need. Whenever there was any *avinaya*[32] act among the *Saṁgha* members that was noticed or complained about, the Buddha summoned bhikkhus and laid down certain Vinaya rules. Buddha saw that the Dhamma and the Vinaya must go side-by-side, in parallel: without the Dhamma, the Vinaya could not stand and *vice versa*. Therefore, a practitioner of the Dhamma also needs the Vinaya to guide him. Whatever knowledge (*vijjā*) one accumulates, he has to practice it (*ācaraṇa*). This is, in fact, one of the characteristic qualities (*guna*) of the Buddha, hence, the Buddha is known as an ambodiment of "knowledge and conduct" (*vijjācaraṇasampanna*). Thus, until such Vinaya instruction begun, the only Vinaya was summarized in a few *śloka*, as Charles Prebish stated:

> It is not unreasonable to supposed that each verse (of those appended to the Prātimokṣa Sūtras) represented the original Prātimokṣa of a particular Buddha, the favorability of this hypothesis being heightened by the fact that at least one version of a Prātimokṣa Sūtra (the Sanskrit Mahāsāṁghika text) refers to each verse as a Prātimokṣa. I conjecture that the inclusion of these verses in the fully developed Prātimokṣa Sūtras of the various schools represents an admission of the earlier form of Prātimokṣa, designed to provide the mature texts with added religious an historical authority.[33]

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[31] Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism* (Bombay, India: Asia Publishing House, 1960), 72-73.
[32] Not related to vinaya, the alphabet *"a*" being a prefix to *vinaya* to denote a negative meaning.
[33] Charles Prebish, "The Prātimokṣa Puzzle," in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*, ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 250.

Prebish, further, remind us that the early Buddhist monastic Vinaya was found in a number of *śloka* from the *Dhammapada* as:

> Enduring patience is the highest austerity,
> Nirvana is the highest say the Buddhas;
> For he who injures others is not a monk.
> He who violates others is not a Śramaṇa.
> Not to do any evil, to attain good, to purify one's own mind;
> This is the Teaching of the Buddha.
> Not speaking against others, not harming others,
> And restraint according to the Prātimokṣa;
> Moderation in eating, secluded dwelling, and the practice of *adicitta*;
> This is the Teaching of the Buddhas.[34]

Originally, the Vinaya was orally passed down from the Buddha to his male and female disciples throughout his forty-five-year mission. At the very heart of the Vinaya is a set of rules known as *Pātimokkha* in Pāli or *Prātimokṣa* in Sanskrit. The *Prātimokṣa* is a compendium of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. Eventually, depending on circumstances, different sectarian Vinayas also developed, based upon geographical or cultural elements. Different Buddhist Vinaya developed in sectarian lineages later. Three of these Vinayas are still in use in different geographic and sectarian lineage settings. The Vinayas rules are substantially the same and have only minor differences. Extant Vinaya texts include the Sthavīravāda/Theravāda Vinaya, Mahāsāṁghika Vinaya, Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, Dharmaguptaka Vinaya (sometimes Mahīśāsaka-Dharmaguptaka Vinaya), Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya.

The Theravāda Vinaya is preserved in the *Vinaya Piṭak*a of the Pali Canon. The Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya is preserved in both the Tibetan Buddhist canon in the *Kangur* (*bKa'gyu*) and in an incomplete Sanskrit manuscript in a Chinese edition. Some other complete Vinaya texts are preserved in Chinese. The nature of the transmission of the

[34] Prebish, "The Prātimokṣa," 250.

Vinaya was first oral, until the First Buddhist Council, where Ven. Upālī and Ven. Ānanda recited the Vinaya and Sutta Piṭaka respectively. Then the transmission likely continued orally until the Third Buddhist Council, which was held under the chairmanship of Ven. Moggalīputta Tissa and under the patronage of great Indian Emperor Aśoka. Even though we do not have any historical evidence to prove such claim, the Sinhalese chronological works *Mahāvaṁsa* and *Dīpavaṁsa* point us towards the Buddhist mission to Sīnhaladvīpa led by Ven. Mahinda, Aśoka's son, who allegedly took the inscribed form of the Pali *Piṭaka*s there. Historically, after the Fourth Buddhist Council, which was held under the patronage of Kushan King Kaniṣka, the king sent, following Emperor Aśoka, several missions, including to Central Asia (this mission also took Buddhist scriptures, this time mostly Sanskrit). In the Fourth Buddhist Council, the Pali *Tripiṭaka* was edited, modified, and translated into Sanskrit, but the emphases were given to the *Sutra Piṭaka* and the *Abhidharma Piṭaka*. The *Abhidharma Piṭaka* received an additional supplementary inclusion. Evidence does not show if the Vinaya received any treatment in the Fourth Buddhist Council, but vinaya rules was accepted as the *status quo* of the Vinaya of Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Mūlasarvāstivāda, etc. However, on the oral transmission of Buddhist texts in general, which includes the Vinaya as well, Erik Frauwallner states:

> At the beginning there is a time of free transmission, during which the test is rendered in free words from memory. Memorial sentences, mostly couched in the form of verses, probably came early to the help of the memory. This sort of transmission has always been employed with less important texts…. The passage to an established tradition is marked by the appearance of fixed formulae.[35]

[35] Erik Frauwallner, *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature* (Rome: Instituto Italiano per il Med ed Estremo Otiente, 1956), 173.

Nevertheless, Frauwallner's observation is very general, and in order to pinpoint an authentic canonical transmission of Vinaya in other countries, concrete documents are required.

By the time of the Buddha's death, however, there was a structured body of rules, which bhikkhus/bhikkhunis were expected to follow. In the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (of *Dīgha Nikāya*) and Vinaya *Cullavagga*- xi, the Buddha, as part of his last instruction, tells the bhikkhus that they can abandon (or modify) some minor rules (*mamaccāyena bhikkhave khuddakānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadānī samāhantu*),[36] but that they should stick to the major ones; unfortunately, there appears to have been some confusion over which was what—major or minor. It was therefore decided in the First Buddhist Council that they would keep all of the rules in practice. Immediately after the Buddha's death, there was a council, at which all of the teachings were recited, collected, and sorted.

Legend has it that most of teachings were recited from memory, with Ven. Ānanda reciting the Dhamma and Ven. Upālī reciting the Vinaya; yet, a different group of bhikkhus did not agree with this collection, and felt that there were many rules (Vinaya) and teachings (Dhamma) that were not collected or recited at the council. As a result, bhikkhus started to compose different Vinaya and suttas, which ultimately led to the formation of different sects and sectarian Vinaya and Dhamma. During the time of the Buddha, as later, there was greater freedom among the disciples of the Buddha. For an example, when Ven. Purāṇa was invited to attend the final phase of the First Buddhist Council, he declined to attend, saying that he would believe and will stick with whatever Dhamma/Vinaya he himself had heard from the mouth of the Master. Ven. Purāṇa was

[36] T. W. Rhys Davids and Herman Oldenberg, trans., *Vinaya Texts*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1882); (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), 551.

not alone in this group; there were many others: Ven. Gavampati and Ven. Subhadda, just to mention a few.

The preparation of the First Buddhist Council was also, from the modern perspective, a male chauvinistic council, as partiality prevailed; there was not a single female participant (bhikkhuni) invited to the council, even though there were many enlightened bhikkhunis in the *Saṁgha* there at that time. Three other Buddhist councils were also held without any bhikkhuni participants being invited. Ven. Ānanda was not originally included for some unbeknownst reason, allegedly because he was not a perfectly enlightened one (*arahant*); yet, later by miraculous means he could attend the First Buddhist Council. Could there be other reasons? However, this is not the focus of the present paper.

The History of *Pañcavatthu*

There were continuous personal conflicts among prominent bhikkhus during and after the passing away of the Buddha; some of the conflicts became very personal. There was also a tendency of bhikkhus taking revenge against each other. Since the Buddha did not appoint any (Catholic) "pop"-style hierarchy in the Buddhist monastic system, bhikkhus became relaxed in their personal behavior. However, for reasons unbeknownst to historians of Buddhist monasticism, a bhikkhu by the name of Mahādeva of Kukkuṭārāma is said to have invented the *pañcavatthu* (Five Points), which deals with the nature of an *arahant* in general; these "Five Points" are discussed later in this study and do not have anything to do with nature of the early teachings of the Buddha as found in, for example, the *Dhammacakkapavattana sutta.* Mahadeva, who is, I would suggest, probably a *scapegoat* here copied from the Kashmiri poet Kṣemendra's book

Dharmarucyavadāna of the *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalplatā,*[37] has an Odipal depiction. This depiction also could be an act of revenge against Mahādeva, who is said to have realized certain five spiritual issues known as "*pañcavastthu*" (in Sanskrit) or "*pañcavatthu"* (in Pali); he created turmoil in the *Saṁgha* approximately 100 years after the passing away of the Buddha.

A controversy started after these Five Points within the *Saṁgha.* Hence, a synod was held in Vaiśālī, known as the Second Buddhist Council in the Sthavīravāda or Pali tradition, not in the Sanskrit tradition. The Mahādeva episode in relation to the "Five Points" and the Second Buddhist Council has been thoroughly studied by Jonathan A. Silk in his *Riven by Lust: Incest and Schism in Indian Buddhist Legend and Historiography*. The main argument of Silk is summarized by Pascale Hugon as below.

> …the transformations applied to the scenario of Dharmaruci's tale that resulted in the calumnious account of Mahādeva's life. Silk convincingly demonstrates that the demonization of Mahādeva proceeds by a recasting of the Dharmaruci tale, in which the vectors of action in the mother-son incestuous relation are switched, a crucial change that leads to Mahādeva bearing full responsibility not only for his sexual misconduct (he is no longer the victim of a "bedtrick" as was Dharmaruci, but the conscious perpetrator of incest), but also for the murders that ensue.[38]

This is also known as a cause of schism based on "Dhamma." A number of monographs, studies and articles have been produced analyzing the "Five Points,"[39] suggesting the probability and possibility of the cause of the split. Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish observe:

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[37] Saratchandra Das, trans., *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā*, 2nd edition (Kolkata, India: Mahabodhi Society of India, 2000), 737.
[38] Pascale Hugon, Review of "Riven by Lust. Incest and Schism in Indian Buddhist Legend and Historiography" *Numen* 57 (2010): 619-63.
[39] For example, L. S. Cousins, "The 'Five Points' and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools," cited earlier; Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins," cited below.

> An overview of all five points shows clearly that four of them have to do with the nature of the Arhant, while the fifth focuses on the utterance of the word "sorrow!" and is relation to the Path. It is certainly the points dealing with the Arhant, and not the fifth point, which have been the focus of the accusation of Mahāsāṁghika laxity. In what sense, then, could these descriptions of the Arhant be an indication of lax practice?
> Certainly, the acceptance of these points, taken out of contest, would appear to be a sign of laxity, in that their effect is to "demote" the Arhant from the status of near-perfection which had previously been him. If the Arhant is still the goal to be pursued, the net effect would be to lower the level of that goal, thus making it easier to attain. If the Arhant is not still the goal, however, then the picture changes radically. If another, higher goal is being advocated, then these points, as demeaning as they might be to the Arhant, cannot be taken as a sign of laxity on the part of those who adopted them.[40]

This controversy also forced the elders to convene a council to ratify the disputes between two groups. In the history of Buddhism, it was in this council that Buddhism sectarianism took ground. There are disputes regarding the historicity of this council, which will be examined later on in this dissertation. In both cases, at the end of the council, scholars agree that a larger group of bhikkhus left the council with unsatisfactory result, and formed a separate group. Henceforth, the Buddhist *Saṁgha* witnessed a number of splits. If the question is asked as to the reason for the separation in the *Saṁgha,* scholars throughout the ages have given either *dasavatthu* or the *pañcavatthu* as the reason. Furthermore, they continue to argue with either of these issues. This dissertation is also an attempt to find an answer to such questions.

This council is known as the Council of the Recitation of Vinaya (discipline). The orthodox Sthaviravādins claimed the Mahāsāṁghikas to be relaxed in Vinaya, yet a comparative study by Wang Pachow[41] shows that the Mahāsāṁghika (and other offshoot

[40] Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins: The Beginning of Buddhist Sectarianism" in *History of Religion* 16 (March 1977), 257.
[41] Wang Pachow, *A Comparative Study of the Pratimoksha: On the Basis of its Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Pali Versions (*Santiniketan, India*:* The Sino-Indian Cultural Society, 1955).

sub-sects of it) have more Vinaya rules than the Sthaviravādins. However, Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish after a thorough comparative analysis of the "Ten Points" of the Vaiśālīan Vajjiputtaka monks and comments by other prominent Buddhist Studies specialists conclude that:

> Having now carefully surveyed, on a point-by-point basis, the points listed in the Pāli account of the Vaiśālī, as presented in the twelfth chapter of the Cullavagga of the Vinaya Piṭaka, in comparison with the Mahāsāṁghika statements on these points, we must conclude that there is nothing less than complete and absolute concord. Thus, when Demiéville states, "thus, even on the single point of discipline which the Mahāsāṃghikas make mention of in their recitation of the council of Vaiśālī, their Vinaya appears infinitely more laxist than the Pāli Vinaya" his conclusion seems to be unfounded. …. Now it has long been accepted by scholars such as Bareau, Pachow, Hofinger, Frauwallner and Roth, that the Mahāsāṁghika Vinaya is very likely to be the most ancient stratum of Vinaya literature. …. In summary, then, we must restate our position that, with regard to the ten points of the Vaiśālī council, the Mahāsāṁghika posit a condemnation equal to that of the Pāli sources, and our agreement with Bareau when he notes, "the nine practices of the monks of Vaiśālī could not have been one of the causes of the schism which separated the Mahāsāṃghikas from the Sthaviras as the Sinhalese chronologies maintain and, in their course, certain historians of Buddhism."[42]

Table 1: Variation of Vinaya Rules

Sthaviravāda Vinaya	Bhikkhu 227	Bhikkhuni 311
Dharmaguptaka Vinaya	Bhikkhu 250	Bhikkhuni 348
Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya	Bhikkhu 253	Bhikkhuni 364

Here the table shows the Mahāsāṁghika (and its offshoot sect) has more Vinaya rules than the Sthaviravādin sect does. The following table shows a further, clearer picture of the Prātimokṣa of all the sects.

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[42] Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins: The Beginning of Buddhist Sectarianism," in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious* Studies, ed. Paul Williams (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), 2:204.

Table 2: School (Language) Bhiksu Prātimokṣa Sutra

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
MSG (Chinese)	4	13	2	30	92	4	66	7	218
MSG (Sanskrit)	4	13	2	30	92	4	67	7	219
T (Pali)	4	13	2	30	92	4	75	7	227
K (Chinese)	4	13	2	30	90	4	96	7	246
MHS (Chinese)	4	13	2	30	90	4	100	7	250
MSV (Chinese)	4	13	2	30	90	4	98	7	248
MSV (Tibetan)	4	13	2	30	90	4	108	7	258
MSV (Sanskrit)	4	13	2	30	90	4	113	7	258
S (Chinese)	4	13	2	30	90	4	113	7	263
S (Sanskrit)	4	13	2	30	90	4	113	7	263
Mahāvyutpatti	4	13	2	30	90	4	105	7	255[43]

What is "Sect"?:

Nevertheless, the question remains open as to what is "sect" and "sectarianism"; it requires clarification. Perhaps we can speculate that the origin of group mentality or the sectarian concept comes from one's own family; then, it spreads over the extended family as well as greater society. When someone feels betrayed or oppressed by a family member, extended family members, or ultimately, society, the victim becomes rebellious.

[43] [Sources: -- the notion for this table, as well as much of its content, is taken from Pachow (n. 38 above), 27-28. Information on the Sanskrit texts was gleaned from the following sources: *Mahāsāṁghika*,- Pachow and Mishra's text, *The Prātimokṣa Sutra of the Mahāsāṁghika* (Allahabad, India: Ganganath Jha Research Institute, 1956); *Mūlasarvāstivādin*, Anukul Chandra Banerjee, ed., *Prātimokṣa Sūtram [Mūlasarvāstivāda*] (Calcutta: Calcutta Orient Press, 1954); *Sarvāstivādin* – Louis Finot, ed., "Le Prātimoksasutra des Servāstivadins," *Journal Asiatique* 2 ser. 11 (November-December 1913): 405-557. Due to the fragmentary character of this last manuscript, Finot's numbering system, which was kept in line with the Chinese text, is only partially correct.

Key

MSG: Mahāsāṁghika
T: Theravādin
K: Kāśyapīya
D: Dharmaguptaka
MHS: Mahīśāsaka
MSV: Mūlasarvāstivādin
S: Sarvāstivādin

I: Pārājikā-dharmas
II: Saṁghavaśeṣa-dharmas
III: Aniyata-dharmas
IV: Niḥsargika-dharmas
V: Pāyantika-dharmas
VI: Pratideśanīya-dharmas
VII: Śaikṣa-dharmas
VIII: Adhikaraṇa-Śamath-dharmas]

Such a rebellious person starts to split from the family or even from society and organize a separate group with same-minded members. Such a concept of dissension becomes a practical factor later on, which reflects the greater community or society.

In a sectarian concept, the issues of "equality and liberty" are two cardinal ideals, as Louise Dumont observes.[44] Sects or sectarianism could be characterized from different perspectives: religious, political, social, and so on. Thus, some of the dictionary definitions are as follows: *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* defines "sect" as:

> Groups, usually religious, which are set up with their own organization in distinction from, and often in protest against, established religions… Sects are characterized by: depending on volunteers (to be born into a sect indicates that it is on the way to stability); charismatic authority; strict discipline with clear rules of conduct; sense of elite privilege (of being the only ones in a true, or enlightened, or saved states); restrictions on individuality... attempts to map sects on to particular social strata (e.g. the underprivileged) have been defeated by the recognition that sects can emerge at almost any social level.[45]

This dissertation could consider "sect" under the socio-political category with a Buddhist religious banner. The "seed" of sects and sectarianism in the Buddhist monastic establishment was planted or existed during the formation periods, as there were members from other Śrāmaṇic and Brahmanic groups. Many of the Buddha's direct disciples, such as Ven. Sāriputra, Ven. Moggallāna, Ven. Gavampati and many other prominent disciples of the Buddha had five hundred disciples of their own, and each of these *guru*s joined the Buddha with his own disciples. These gurus had their own doctrinal views as well as ascetic Vinayas. It is difficult to say if those doctrinal views and ascetic Vinayas were practiced within the umbrella of the Buddha's *Saṁgha,* as there

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[44] Louise Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications*, trans. Mark Sainsbury (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 4.
[45] John Bowker, *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 871.

were monastics who joined from different social groups, such as Brāhmins, Kṣatrīyas, Vaiṣya, and Śudras. Each of these social groups had their own doctrinal practices and group mentalities. Perhaps the Buddha's own teachings were misunderstood or misinterpreted by collectors of the teachings.

The Buddha was a human being of blood and flesh, but with special qualities and thirty-two characteristics, as the *Lakkahaṇa Sutta* (of *Dīgha Nikāya*) recorded.[46] He had thirst for water, hunger for food, need for rest, and the experience of pain, like every human being under certain circumstances; yet, many disagreed with the existence of such human characteristics and interpreted them differently. Certain other sectarian schools, the Lokottaravādins for example, considered the Buddha to be above all of these humanly characteristics: he was seen as "superhuman." The Buddha is "beyond" (*uttara*), the "worldly" (*loko*) needs; some even considered there was no physical Buddha of blood and flesh.[47]

As far as the "sectarian" (*nikāya*) issue in early Buddhism in India is concerned, the two issues, *dasavatthu* (Ten Points, the monastic discipline theory of the dissension) and *pañcavatthu* (Five Points, the Dhamma theory of dissension), are taken into consideration by early and later Buddhist scholarship, as the main root cause of the formation of different sects. Several chronological treatises of Vasimutra, Bhavya, and Vinithadeva and *Dīpavaṁsa, Mahāvaṁsa,* and *Nikāyasaṁgraha* (which were mentioned earlier and will be described further below) were written, in both Pali and Sanskrit languages. Contemporary Buddhist Studies specialists, e.g., André Bareau, Charles

[46] Maurice Walshe, trans. *Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (London: Wisdom Publications, 1987), 441.
[47] Sitamsu Sekhar Bagchi, ed. *Suvarṇaprabhāsasūtram* (Darbhanga, India: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1967).

Prebish, Jan Nattier, and Wilhelm Geiger, etc., have discussed these two issues from comparative standpoints. A brief annotated description of these treatises and scholars has been provided below in the book review section.

With the spread of Buddhism, inside and outside its place of origin, sectarian ideologies also spread. Nevertheless, the caliber of the formation of sectarian issue lessened when it went outside India, especially in China, Korea, and Japan; even though sectarianism continued there, those sectarian issues took root in different shape, from the different perspectives. Here, I intend to discuss these issues briefly in the appropriate section.

The Issue of Controversies

As the monastic tradition was already established, many people joined the Buddha, as many sectarian ascetic leaders along with their disciples. Since each ascetic group had its own disciplinary code, it was difficult for them to implement their own discipline into Buddha's monasticism. Therefore, the Buddha decided to issue his own disciplinary code, uniform for everyone within the *Saṁgha*. When certain circumstances appeared for the Vinaya, the Buddha introduced new ones. As the Buddhist monastic community enlarged, different scholarly adherents also came to join him.

There were members from a Brahmanic group who were versed in Vedic and Upaniṣadic philosophical doctrines and who asked Buddha to discuss Vedic philosophy. Sometimes they asked Buddha to discuss the nature of the "*puruṣa*" or "soul" in accordance with Buddha's view—what happens after the Buddha's death, as to whether the Buddha survives or not. Such kinds of issues later developed, creating different doctrinal and philosophical sects within Buddhism itself. If the Buddha answered

affirmatively, he could become an eternalist (*śāśvatavādin*), or if he answered negatively, he could be seen as nihilist (*ucchedavādin*). Thus, he avoided both extremes.

There were several issues with the notion or nature of "*āttā," "sattva," "jīva," "puruṣa," "pudgala," "bīja,"* and even "*dhamma,*" all of which led to the formation of different religio-philosophical sects. Some of these terms are even found in Buddhist scriptures, alleging the Buddha's authorship. The Pudgalavādīns*,* one of the Buddhist sectarian schools, believed in some sort of "essential particle" known as *pudgala* (which is an equivalent term for the Vedic *puruṣa*) being present in a being, as it is recorded in different suttas, particularly the *Aṁguttara Nikāya*. The Buddha himself discussed and validated the presence of *pudgala* in a person. In the sutta, one could argue, the Buddha said one should radiate "loving-kindness" (*mettā*) to every living being (*sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*).[48] Then the argument is, who this "*sattā*" is, if there is no essential entity behind such being or *sattā*. Who attains enlightenment after so many births and rebirths? The sutta also recorded that the Buddha said, "One *pudgala* appears on this earth for the benefit of many, welfare of many." Then who is this *pudgala*, the Pudgalavādin would argue. Other sects, the *Sthaviravādin*s, for example, answer that it is the flow of the pure "*dhamma*" (mental events) that continues (*suddhadhamma pavattanti*). Then the question is what this *dhamma* "is"? Without a foundation, how can a series of *dhamma*s continue? The dialectic philosophers argued, on the other hand, an entity (*bhāva*) does not appear by (a) itself (*svato*), not by (b) others help *(parato*), nor by the combination of both (a) and (b) (*dvābhyāṃ*), neither without a cause (*ahetutaḥ*).[49]

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[48] Lord Robert Chalmers, Eng. trans and ed., *Buddha's Teachings—Being the Sutta-Nipāta or Discourse-Collection* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1932), 36.
[49] Kenneth K. Inada, Eng. trans., *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay* (Delhi, India: Sri Satguru Publications, 1993), 39.

These are a few examples of controversial issues. The important fact is that the Buddha remained fair always. He discouraged his disciples to take truth from the standpoint of logic, rationality, tradition, or obedience to one's own teacher, as the *Kālāma Sutta* (of the *Aṁguttara Nikāya*) indicates. André Bareau has summarized a host of these controversial issues in his *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle*. According to Bareau's count, there are at least 52 controversial issues among the various Buddhist schools and sects, and he has analyzed them categorically.[50] It should be noted here also that none of these schools has ever declared that it does not belong to the *Buddhasāsana*; they each wanted to strengthen their adherence to the Buddha's teachings.

At one point, a bhikkhu called Mahādeva propounded Five Points (*pañcavatthu*), which are supposed to be doctrinal issues dealing with the quality of the *arahant*. He preached his view among his disciples and caused a controversy. Such controversy spread throughout the community, so the king held a meeting with the monastics and settled this issue. Comparing the rejection of Ven. Ananda from the First Council, from a speculative standpoint, it seems to me the Five Points of Mahādeva actually was a personal retaliation against the *arahants* and do not match with the notion of doctrinal issues as mentioned above. I intend to examine this issue in detail in the appropriate place below. The Five Points of Mahādeva have been discussed by Lance Cousins,[51] Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish in their studies.[52] From the discussion of these specialists, it is clear that the Five Points (so-called dhamma of the dhamma theorists) are rather different from the early teachings of the Buddha.

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[50] Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools*, 354-408.
[51] Lance Cousins, "The Five Points and Origins of Buddhist Schools."
[52] Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins."

Nevertheless, the Buddha established a well-organized *Saṁgha* community with democratic elements in it. The Buddha issued many disciplinary (Vinaya) codes for the *Saṁgha* that were supposed to be followed by the *Saṁgha* community members; there was an offense prescribed for those that did not follow the codes, as well as means of rectification. Whosoever could not follow a particular Vinaya code had the opportunity to object, and the *Vinaya Piṭaka* recorded several incidents that testify to such opposition. Whenever the public did not like certain behaviors of the monastic community, they complained to Buddha or publicly agitated; as a rectification, the Buddha summoned the *Saṁgha* and issued a Vinaya amendment immediately. It should be remembered here that not all the Vinaya codes were suitable for all geographic locations or specific circumstances, as it was realized later on. Under such circumstances, the Buddha also recommended his disciples to modify or abolish certain minor and very minor Vinaya rules (*mamaccāyena bhikkhve khuddakānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadānī samāhantu*) if it was appropriate. However, for the safeguard and purity of the *Buddhasāsana*, early collectors of the Dhamma-Vinaya did not abolish or modify any of the Vinaya codes; they collected almost all of them, even though there were certain bhikkhus who did not agree with the collection and argued that there were more teachings that were not collected (Ven. Purāṇa was one such bhikkhu).

Approximately one hundred years after the passing of the Buddha, a group of bhikkhus from the Vajji country was practicing the *dasavatthu,* which grew into a controversy. As a result, a synod was convened and the *dasavatthu* was ruled as illegal, which eventually created a sectarian schism between the Sthaviravādins and the Mahāsāṁghika. B. Jinananda observes thus: “The story of the Second Council has every

reason to be accepted as genuine. It resulted in a schism in the Buddhist Church and the secession of the Mahāsāṅghika which is confirmed by later evidence."[53]

Immediately after the passing of the Buddha, a bhikkhu exclaimed that since the Master passed away, there would be no one to tell the *Saṁgha* what to do or not do. Such an exclamation rang a warning bell, so a synod was convened in which the Dhamma and Vinaya was collected. In the synod, the Ven. Upālī recited all the Vinaya codes and Ven. Ānanda recited the Dhamma from memory. Initially, Ven. Ānanda could not attain arahantship, so he was at first disallowed to attend the synod. Some other bhikkhus, like Ven. Gavampati, did not agree with the collection, and made the accusation that the collection was not complete; he was invited to participate in the council since he was an *arahant* but he entered Nirvāṇa instead, ignoring the invitation of his participation. In a later period, such denial of the admission of Ven. Ānanda at the synod, indeed, created controversies (e.g., *dasavatthu*, *pañcavatthu*) among the lineage and supporters (*guruparamparā*) of Ven. Ānanda and other prominent disciples of the Buddha. Though the *pañcavatthu* (Dhamma issue) was not an issue at the time of the first synod, it seems, according to the Sthaviravādin tradition, in later periods it became an important factor, which resulted in calling the Second Buddhist Council. According to the Vinaya *Cullavagga* and the Sinhalese chronologies, however, the first schism between the Sthaviravādin and Mahāsāṁghika took place after this council in Vaiśālī. Henceforth, the Buddhist *Saṁgha* split into various sects. At least eighteen sects in Buddhism are recorded in Pali and Sanskrit chronological works in the few centuries after the great decease (*Mahāparinibbāna*) of the Buddha. The eighteen Buddhist schools or sects

[53] B. Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," in *2500 Years of Buddhism,* ed. P. V. Bapat (New Delhi, India: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1959), 39.

known from different records of Vasumitra[54] or of Vinīthadeva,[55] for example, are different from what André Bareau[56] describes, as below:

(1) The Mahāsāṁghikas, ((2) The Lokottaravādins, (3) The Ekavyāvahārikas, (4) The Gokulikas or Kukkuṭikas, (5) The Bahuśrutīyas, (6) The Prajñāptivādins, (7) The Caitīyas or Caitikas, (8) The Andhakas, (9) The Pūrvaśailas or Uttaraśailas, (10) The Aparaśailas, (11) The Rājagirīyas, (12) The Siddhārtikas, (13) The Sthaviras, (14) The Haimavatas, (15) The Vātsīputrīyas, (16) The Sammitīyas, (17)The Dharmattarīyas, (18) The Bhadrayānīkas, (19) The Saṇṇagarikas or Ṣaṇḍagiriyas, (20) The Sarvāstivādins Vaibhāṣikas, (21) The Mūlasarvāstivādins, (22) The Sautrāntikas or Saṅkrāntivādins, (23) The Drāṣṭāntikas, (24) The Vibhājyavādins, (25) The Mahīśāsakas, (26) The Dharmaguptakas, (27) The Kāśyapīyas or Suvarṣakas, (28) The Tāmraśātīyas, (29) The Theravādins or the Mahāvihāra, (30) The Abhayagirivāsins or Dharmarucikas, (31) The Jetavanīyas or Sāgalikas, (32) The Hetuvādins, (33) The Uttarāpathakas, and (34) The Vetullakas.

The literary works as well as the authors mentioned here could be classified into two groups; one group supports the "doctrinal issue" (*dasavatthu*) and the other support the "disciplinary codes issue" (*pañcavatthu*). This dispute in Dhamma and Vinaya took place even during the time of the Buddha. After the great decease of the Buddha, the dispute accumulated different points, but on the same line: Dhamma and Vinaya.

[54] Jiryo Masuda, "Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools," 1-78.
[55] W.Woodville Rockhill, "History of the Schools of Buddhism," in *The Life of the Buddha and the Early History of His Order* (London: Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill, 1884), 181.
[56]André Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools.*

The Early Buddhist Texts

Pali or Sanskrit early texts do not provide us a definite account of the subject. The account in the Pali texts is not free of sectarianism either. On the other hand, Pali commentaries also do not supply us with very much information and fall onto one side or the other. There are various other accounts of Chinese and Tibetan-Chinese translations of various Sanskrit works, which supply us with some information, but these sources are quite limited and generally inadequate for this purpose. Yet there is still hope that we have some clues like minor textual evidence, secondary literature in both Pali and Sanskrit, archeological findings, Asokan edicts, etc., which enable us to reconstruct the history that we want to outline in this dissertation. Overall, the various scholastic monographs of different scholars would be more helpful.

Therefore, we will have to use Pali texts despite the lack of adequate information for our purpose, and different literary sources such as commentaries and chronological works both in Pali and in Sanskrit—the original of many of which are now lost, but whichever few are available have been translated into English from Tibetan and Chinese translations. A very important note I should make here is that the three Buddhist synods are considerably important in the history of Buddhism and particularly for our studies, but the historicity of these synods is controversial. Different scholars have expressed different views as to whether certain synods took place or not. Henceforth, the historicity of these synods also needs to be examined, though not in this dissertation. However, a few of the relevant modern works could be mentioned here.

1. (a) **Pali Texts**

Some of the incidents related to our topic are recorded in the Pali texts. However, the problem again with the textual literature is their date and the lack of neutrality. The Pali texts, according to the tradition, have been collected during the time of the First Buddhist Council (383 B.C.) in a modified form, and again in the Third Buddhist Council (225 B.C.). Yet we do not have any of these original texts. Finally, the Pali texts were collected in written form in Sri Lanka towards the end of the first century B.C., and until then the Pali texts have been orally transmitted. It is also believed that the Pali texts were written down at the conclusion of the Third Buddhist Council and that a part of these texts were brought to Sri Lanka by Buddhist missions and later became the source of the Sthaviravādin succession. Since we do not have any part or edition of these, we accept the Sri Lankan collection as the authentic one.

Additionally, the Pali texts might have undergone certain changes within the span of its existence; over time, numerous unauthentic foreign sectarian elements may have entered the original body of the canon, which cannot be filtered out now. A teacher might have written down something in the margin that he felt to be as worthy as the Buddha's words. Over the course of time, his pupils included that marginal note of his teacher in his edition, his student wrote another marginal note, and finally, all these marginal notes came to be seen as part of the Buddha's words. In addition, if the collector belonged to a certain sect, he might have inserted certain doctrinal points or Vinaya rules suiting his sect, into the canon. We should bear in mind that a major portion of the collectors of the Pali canon were from an upper-class ethnic group of the ancient Indian social classification and that it is possible that they could have inserted certain doctrinal as well

as disciplinary issues into the scripture befitting their ethno-centric social ideologies. On the other hand, a large number of early disciples, who became very active, influential, and prominent, joined the Buddha's *Saṁgha,* and had their own followers.

I will deal with some of the Nikāya and Vinaya texts here, especially the Vinaya *Mahāvagga*, *Cullavagga*, and various suttas from the Nikāya collections. The section Kosāmbika of the *Cullavagga* narrates the first split of the *Saṁgha*, which led to the formation of two groups of bhikkhus, the *Dhammavādī* and *Vinayavādī* fraternities. Then in section xii (Second Council) of the Vinaya *Cullavagga,* the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points) and the first recognized split (schism) are recorded. Since the schism in the second Buddhist Council was due to a Vinaya controversy, both *Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga* are reliable sources for this study. The *Kosambiya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* records the *Cullavagga* incident (noted above) from a different perspective; hence, it is important in this regard to use it as well. Additionally, there are various suttas where minor disputes among the monastic members are recorded; these suttas are a great help for the purposes of this study. The *Mahaparinibbāna Sutta* further indirectly encourages to bhikkhus to lead their "live as island," "with the Dhamma as your refuge,"[57] without making another the object of reliance.

1. (b) **The Commentaries**

Pali commentaries form a separate body of literature. They also reflect the contemporary social environment and political condition, which I should like to regard in combination as the socio-political situation we want to address in this dissertation. According to Sri Lankan tradition, this body of commentarial literature existed only in the Sinhalese language, which the commentator Buddhaghosa restored into Pali around

[57] Walshe, *Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, 245.

the 500 century A.D. The Vinaya commentary *Samantapāsādikā*[58] by Buddhaghosa is very important in this regard. It deals with all of the Vinaya issues in detail. The *dasavatthu* of the Vajjian bhikkhus have been analyzed by Buddhaghosa term by term, which helps us to go to the root of each *vattu* (term). Among the other commentarial works we will use is the *Theragāthā* and *Therigāthā* Commentaries; there is valuable information regarding the various disciples of the Buddha, the *theras* (monks) and *theris* (nuns). The socio-cultural positions of the disciples are relayed, occasionally, in these commentaries. Another important work is the *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, which is the commentary of the *Dhammapada* of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. It records a narrative of a quasi-schismatic activity of two rival groups of bhikkhus. However, the problem again with these commentaries is that they belong to a particular sect, and thus, there is ample reason to believe that they do not present a neutral perspective.

2. **Sanskrit**

Some of the Sanskrit works would be helpful to our studies, since occasionally, they hold certain views that are different from the Pali texts, especially the *Vinaya Piṭaka* of the Mahāsāṁghika, Sarvāstivāda, Dharmaguptaka, and Mahīśāsaka. The Sanskrit Buddhist texts are not as old as the Pali counterparts are. Apart from the Chinese *āgamas* that exist only in Chinese are Sanskritized versions of the Pali. What comparatively later Sanskrit Buddhist literatures we have are a kind of Apocrypha; therefore, historicity and authenticity of the facts contained are, obviously, questionable. There are certain Sanskrit texts currently considered as original texts that have been revised several times in their existence, the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* for example (though not relevant to this dissertation).

[58] Buddhagosa, *Samantapāsādikā: Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Vinaya Pitaka*, ed. J. Takakusu and M. Nagai (London: Pali Text Society, 1975).

This sutra existed in the early1st or 2nd centuries A.D.—not with ten chapters as it does now, but with three or more chapters. Likewise, there are many other Sanskrit texts, which could face such judgment. Of course, they bear sectarian flavors too. We will use the English translation of the Sanskrit works, the originals of which were either lost or preserved only in Chinese or Tibetan languages.

There are also differences in the historical facts contained in Sanskrit and Tibetan works. For example, the *History of Buddhism* of Bu-sTon differs from Vasumitra's *Samayabhedoparacanakra* (The Origin and Doctrine of Early Indian Buddhist Schools), Bhavya, or Vinīthadeva (*samayabhedoparacanakranikāyabhedopadarśana*), etc. Both Bu-sTon and Vasumitra see *dasavatthu* from different socio-cultural standpoints. Comparing these authors one notices that each point of the Ten Points differs from each other and that there are variations. Bu-sTon also differs from the original Vinaya *Cullavagga* description of the *dasavatthu*. For a critical study of the history of the schools of Buddhism, I believe these works will be very helpful.

3. **Chronological Works**

I will use some of the information recorded in Sinhalese chronological works such as the *Dīpavaṁsa* (400 A.D.), the *Mahāvaṁsa* (400 A.D.), the *Nikāyasaṁgraha*, a much later work, and the *Kathāvatthu* (225 B.C.) (though considered a Pali (*Abhidharma*) textual work)**.** While *Dīpavaṁsa* and *Mahāvaṁsa* give details of the Ten Points (*dasavatthu*) and do not mention Five Points (*pañcavatthu*), the *Kathāvatthu,* on the other hand, does not mention either of the issues, but provides a different issue parallel to what Mahādeva claimed to be his thesis. (These Five Points have been noted below in the footnote on page 62). Therefore, the *Kathāvatthu* is taken under this classification.

Modern Works

A number of modern works by various scholars—monographs, articles, review notes, etc. —will be used in this study. The works of these authors help us to understand and examine the nature of the amalgamated *Saṁgha* community of the Buddha 600 years before the Common Era. Each of these scholars has studied Buddhism from a different perspective—psychological, sociological, political, or racial. Although they do not all agree, an individual opinion is expressed in their studies, and some of them use scientific and statistical analyses of the *Saṁgha* community to substantiate their observations, which helps us to formulate our own theory.

Wilhelm Geiger translated the Sinhalese Chronicle, *The Mahāvaṃsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon,* in 1912 and added an introduction. The *Mahāvaṁsa* was composed in the Pali language; therefore, it belongs to the sectarian Theravādin tradition, which believes the schism took place due to the Ten Points (*dasavatthu*), and the *Mahāvaṁsa* gives the details of it. In the text, there is no mention of the Five Points of the Bhikkhu Mahādeva. Nevertheless, Geiger brings up this Five Point controversy in his introduction and creates a platform of discussion between the scholars of two schools. He also discusses, very briefly, whether the Second and Third Buddhist Councils actually took place or whether there were merely two separate small meetings. He compares, briefly, the Chinese and Tibetan sources with the Pali source. Thus, he states:

> But there is something more. The Northern writings are very familiar with the ten points raised by the monks of Vaiśālī and the schism produced by them. But they also know of another division associated with the names of the monks Mahādeva and Bhadra. These latter set up five dogmas which were also expressed in brief aphorism and which led to a schism. In Vasumitra's account the confusion is complete when he relates that somewhat more than 100 years after the Nirvāṇa, under king Aśoka in Paṭalīputra the schism of the Mahāsāṁghikas resulted from the five

> dogmas of Mahādeva are confounded with the ten points of the Vajji-monks.[59]

Ryukan Kimura's book *Introduction to the History of Early Buddhist Schools* is another addition to the study of the history of Buddhism. Originally appearing in the *Journal of the Department of Letters*, University of Calcutta, it later was published as a book. In this book, Kimura gives both causes of the schism and points out some of the discrepancies in the historical materials. Thus, Kimura states:

> It appears that through the carelessness of the later writers the whole matter was confused and the accounts of the First and Second Councils became awkwardly amalgamated. The separation of the Mahāsaṅghikas, therefore, certainly took place in the Second Council at Vesāli, and not in the First Council at Rājagṛha.
> As to the causes of this separation, it has been already noted that the cause attributed by the Southern Records is the Ten Points of the Vajjian monks, and by the Northern Records the Five Points of Mahādeva. Both the Southern and Northern Records agree as far as the Ten Points are concerned. We are, therefore, sure that the Ten Points constituted one of the causes of the separation.
> The Southern Records do not agree in accepting the Five Points of Mahādeva as one of the causes.[60]

Kimura also suggests that the traditional two theories of separation, as the origin, are not sufficient and that there are many other causes, which Charles Prebish has also suggested, as noted below. Kimura further finds that:

> There were other incidents and matters, occurring in the lifetime of Buddha, as well as in the period beginning from His death to the Vaiśālī Council, which helped in creating that dissension as the Mahāsāṁghika separation could not be the result of the movement of a single day. There must have been some remote causes. These are of two kinds, (*i*) those which were existing in the time of Buddha, (*ii*) those which were existing in the period from Buddha's death to the Second Council of Vaiśālī.[61]

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[59] Wilhelm Geiger, trans., The *Mahāvaṃsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*. (London: Pali Text Society, 1912), lxi.
[60] Ryukan Kimura, *Introduction to the History of Early Buddhist Schools* (Calcutta, India: Calcutta University Press. 1925), 95.
[61] Kimura, *Introduction,* 100 -101.

Nalinaksa Dutt's *Buddhist Sects in India* (1978) dealt with various issues of the Buddhist sects, especially problems in early Buddhism. He mentioned the Dhamma and Vinaya issues briefly. He compared canonical, commentarial, as well as contemporary issues of the time. He also compared the *dasavatthu* of the Vaiśālīan Vajji bhikkhus, which is recorded in the Vinaya *Cullavagga* and other later interpretation of the same by other scholars. Dutt's most important discussion in this book, among others, is of the Second Buddhist Council, in which the split took place. Dutt made it clear that the schism was due in part to both reasons, Dhamma and Vinaya, but that they are not absolutely the main reasons. Dutt also examined the doctrinal side of the issue in detail in this book. From the Vinaya standpoint, he knew the "*pañcaanantarīyakamma*" would not allow a group of bhikkhus to create a separation in the *Saṁgha*. The note on the front jacket of this book gives the very nature of this book as:

> with a detailed and lucid exposition of the political background of India from Ajātasattu to Mahāpadma Nanda, it goes on to trace the sources of the Second Buddhist Council, to locate with unerring exactitude the disruptive, forces in the Saṅgha and, .. to classify the Sects.

Dutt's second book, *Mahāyāna Buddhism* (1978), dealt with different issues, though, somewhat relevant to the origin of the Buddhist monastic sects. In the first chapter in this book, Dutt dealt with the political as well as the cultural background of early Buddhism in India and showed how the political ruler and the cultural elements affected Buddhist monasticism. Dutt also dealt, most importantly, with the religio-political and socio-cultural milieu of North and Northwest India, where Indo-Greek, Parthian, Scythian, Kushan, and other foreign rulers played an important part. It is in these areas, according to him, that so many ideas conglomerated with the early form of Buddhism, which ultimately helped to foster and form a separate form of Buddhist sects.

Lance Cousins's "The Five Points and the Origins of Buddhist Schools" (1988-89)[62] is a reproduction of a lecture that he delivered at the School of African and Oriental Studies, University of London, and the title itself indicates his main theme of "Five Points" being the doctrinal (Dhamma) issue at the root of Buddhist sectarianism. He argued that the disciplinary issue was not an important issue in the formation of the sects, but that the doctrine was key. Contrary to Cousins, Charles Prebish and Janice Nattier [63] argued that neither the "Five Points" not the "Ten Points" issue was prominent, but that friction between two groups in the Second Buddhist Council played an important role. They concluded that previous debates on the root-causes of sectarianism in the Buddhist monastic tradition need to be reexamined and reevaluated and offered two ample suggestions and several new interpretations of the traditional materials. Thus, Prebish and Nattier maintained that:

> First, that Mahādeva has nothing to do with the primary schism between the Mahāsāṁghikas and Sthaviras, emerging in a historical period considerably later than previously supposed, and taking his place in the sectarian movement by instigating an internal schism within the already existing Mahāsāṁghika school. Second, that the sole cause of the initial schism in Buddhist history pertained to matters of Vinaya, but rather than representing a reaction of orthodox Buddhists to Mahāsāṁghika laxity…[64]

Furthermore, comparing Nalinaksha Dutt's *Buddhist Sects in India* (1978), Marcel Hofinger's *Étude sur le Concile de Vaiśālī* (1946), Wang Pachow's *A Comparative Study of the Prātimokṣa: On the Basis of its Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Pāli Versions*), André Bareau's *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle* (2013), and

[62] This article also appeared later on in volume 2 of *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies,* ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 52.
[63] Nattier and Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins: The Beginnings of Sectarianism" in *History of Religions* vol.16 and *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies,* vol. 2, ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).
[64] Nattier and Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins," 238.

Wilhelm Geiger's *Mahāvaṁsa*, etc., Prebish concluded that: "... serious tensions and disagreement were beginning to appear in the still unified saṁgha. Further, it highlights a conflict between rigorist and laxist disciplinary tendencies in the community, and perhaps even purports to insinuate that there is a movement from sacred to secular emphasis within saṁgha." In addition, Prebish continues:

> that a sectarian split occurred at this…separating the community into two rival groups: (1) the Sthaviras, closely associated with the traditional Buddhist orthodoxy of the time, and (2) the Mahāsāṁghikas, portrayed as representing the liberal, progressive wing of the community in both discipline and doctrine. *This view has been conclusively discredited by Marcel Hofinger, André Bareau, and Charles Prebish*, *forcing scholars to look elsewhere for the beginning of Buddhist sectarianism.*[65]

While dealing with modern Buddhist scholarship in Vinaya issues, Charles Prebish's name appears repeatedly; his is a remarkable addition to this field and a number of them are well known.[66] After carefully examining the geographic distribution of several Buddhist missions to different countries and different sects of Buddhism by Emperor Aśoka, Charles Prebish draws interesting conclusions in this regard, such as where the mission went and what sect of Buddhism prevails there:

Mission [number, leader(s), place]	School Founded
1. Majjhantika to Gandhāra	Sarvāstivādin
2. Mahādeva to Mahisa Country	Mahīśāsaka
3. Yonaka Dhammarakkhita to Aparantaka	Dharmaguptaka
4. Mahārakkhita to the Yonaka Country	Haimavata
5. Kassapagotta, Majjhima, and	Kāśyapīya

[65] Prebish, *Historical Dictionary*, 6 -7 (It is at this suggestion, however, that this study is aimed. italics in last sentence is mine).

[66] (a) "A Review of Scholarship on the Buddhist Councils," (b) "Theories Concerning the Skandhaka: An Appraisal," (c) "The *Prātimokṣa* Puzzle: Fact versus Fantasy," (d) "*Śaikṣa-Dharma* Revisited: Further Consideration of Mahāsāṁghika Origins," (e) *Survey of Vinaya Literature* (Routledge 1994) are some of the articles which appeared in various scholastic journals and have been reprinted in Paul Williams, ed., *Buddhism Critical Concepts in Religious Studies* (Routledge 2005). In addition: *Buddhist Monastic Discipline: The Sanskrit Prātimokṣa Sūtras of the Mahāsāṁghikas and Mūlasarvāstivādins* (1975).

	Dundubhissara to the Hiṃavanta	
6.	Mahinda, et el., to Sri Laṅkā	Theravādin[67]

Paul Demiéville's 'The Origin of Buddhist Sects" in *Melanges Chionois Bouddhiques* vol. 1, Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich's *The World of Buddhism* (1984), and A. K. Warder's *Indian Buddhism* (1980) all dealt more or less with either side of the issue. Mahādeva played an important part in the schism in the early Buddhist monastic tradition; in fact, Mahādeva challenged the quality of the *arahant*s. Warder dealt with the sects of Buddhism briefly without discussing in detail the "root-causes" of these sects. Thomas Watters' translation, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, *629–645 A.D.* (2 vols), while a travelogue of a Chinese Bhikṣu, Xuanzang, bears some historical facts related to this research topic. Louis de La Vallée Poussin's paper, "The 'Five Points' of Mahādeva and Kathāvatthu" in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1910) investigates the origin of the "Five Points" recorded in the Pali (*Abhidharmic*) *Kathāvatthu* text and compares it. An additional note I should add is that though Mahādeva was the alleged propounder of the "Five Points," when we compare these points with the *Kathāvatthu*, as La Vallée Poussin concluded, it suggests that Mahādeva is not the propounder of the "Five Points," for they existed in the pre-*Kathāvatthu* periods. Yet, no other early Nikāya or Āgama literature recorded them.This particular issue was mentioned earlier (and will be examined as inter-personal conflict among the monastics in chapter 5): a debate regarding the position of the *arahant* and Mahādeva finding an excuse to lower the status of the *arahant*.

[67] Charles Prebish, "Theories Concerning the Skandhaka: an Appraisal," in *Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies,* vol. 1, ed. Paul Williams (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 247.

The other argument that could be made here is that it is possible that both Mahādeva and the composer of the *Kathāvatthu* were at least a hundred years apart. The *Kathāvatthu* was composed at the Third Buddhist Council, whereas Mahādeva's "Five Points" were introduced in the Second Buddhist Council.

The question remains: who/which was earlier or pre-existing? The fact is that all of the "Five Points" as well as the other points that were disputed in the Third Buddhist Council and collected in the *Kathāvatthu* have been accumulated in the mindset of the sectarian monastics since the Second Buddhist Council, if not even earlier. The *Kathavatthu* considered the "Five Points" as heretical, the *Kathāvatthu* being a text of the Sthaviravādins. They could not take the "Five Points" as authentic teachings of the Buddha.

There are scholars who suggest that the Second Buddhist Council did not take place, and La Vallée Poussin is one of the participants in this debate. His other important book in this context is the *Buddhist Councils*, in which La Vallée Poussin investigates the three Buddhist councils and points out:

> In spite, or perhaps even because of the clumsiness of the style and composition- "breakings-off," repetitions, brusque transitions, episodes badly connected with the general course of the story – the writer pictures to us with a greyish back-ground, in the half light of a legend which aims at being history, or of a history which "the Buddhist style unique in the world" cannot fail render legendary, a wide plan, full of suggestive details, and one seems agreed to this point, more or less susceptible of historical criticism.[68]

Henerich Kern is another scholar participant in this debate. According to Kern, "The records of it look like copies of a genuine historical document which have been

[68] La Vallée Poussin, *The Buddhist Councils*, c30.

falsified as to the date and in some other particulars."[69] Étienne Lamotte's *History of Indian Buddhism, from the Origins to the Śaka Era* (1988) is a monumental masterpiece in the area of Buddhist Studies. Lamotte was a prominent Buddhologists, though a Jesuit, whose comparative studies of different sutras in Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit, and other languages made him an authority in the field of Buddhist Studies, not only in secular Euro-American academia, but also in entire Buddhist studies world. Lamotte remarks after comparing the Pali Nikāya materials with Chinese and Tibetan that:

> … there was no violent opposition between the adepts of the various Buddhist sects. They all considered one another as disciples of the Śākya, enjoying the same rights and prerogatives. They all professed the reality of Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa and as one man adhered to the law of the dependent origination of phenomena. They only differ over secondary points of the doctrine and discipline, either because they rejected certain propositions advanced by their neighbours, or because they avoided expressing an opinion on problems which they considered of little urgency or interest.[70]

Akira Hirakawa, on the other hand, has the authoritative book *A History of Indian Buddhism From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna* (Eng. Tr. & Ed. By Paul Groner, 1990), in which he deals with the history of Buddhism. However, his analysis of councils and other relevant examinations are very important, for he takes the root-cause of the sectarianism back to the First Buddhist Council, in which Ven. Ānanda's attendance was denied because he could not attain arahantship at that time. Such a rejection to attend the council could have disappointed him and his disciples, who could have reconsidered the position and quality of arahantship. In addition, the lineage of Ven. Ananda followed among others issues, if I could speculate and interpret here. If a pupillary lineage linking the Ven. Ānanda and Mahādeva (of the Five Points) could be found (if any existed), it would change Buddhist scholarship tremendously. This issue has been briefly discussed

[69] H. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, 103.
[70] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 518-519.

in other places of this dissertation (Personal Conflicts, Chapter 5). Hirakawa's other book, *The Rise of Mahayana Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stupas* (*Memoirs of the Research Department of Toyo Bunko* #22, 1963), examines the origin of the Cetīyavādins school—a sect that I maintain should not be counted under the traditional eighteen schools. The Cetīyavādins sect existed even during the time of the Buddha, as the Pali *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* indicates.

Jonathan Silk's *Riven by Lust: Incest and Schism in Indian Buddhist Legend and Historiography (*2009*)*, is another addition to this study. Silk examines the historicity of the alleged story of incest (of an Oedipal nature) of a bhikkhu called Mahādeva, an important figure related to the "Five Points." Silk tries to discredit the alleged incest of Mahādeva from "psychological and anthropological" standpoints. Mahādeva is alleged to have had sex and produced children with his mother and killed an *arahant* bhikkhu, among other allegations; such an allegation Silk smells to be the revenge of another bhikkhu, Dharmaruci.[71] Silk also suggests that the geographic isolation of the bhikkhus plays a significant role. Thus Silk states:

> The particular stage upon which the drama of Mahādeva is set belongs to a crucial time in Indian Buddhist history. Buddhist legends tell us that during his lifetime the Buddha Śākyamuni established a monastic community, his saṁgha, which has survived down to the present day. The members of this community—monks, and eventually nuns—were ordained directly by the Buddha himself and later by his immediate disciples, the Buddha remaining both de jure and de facto head of the community until his death. But even during the forty-five years of the Buddha's teaching career, and certainly increasingly thereafter, the original unitary community gradually diversified, for reasons no doubt is part connected with the geographic expansion of Buddhism within the Indian sub-continent itself.[72]

[71] The *Dharmaruciravadāna* of the *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā* (Bengali translation), noted earlier, is the copy of the story of Mahādeva.
[72] Jonathan Silk, *Riven By Lust: Incest and Schism in Indian Buddhist Legend and Historiography* (New Delhi, India: Munshiram Manoharlal Pvt. Ltd., 2009), 12.

In David B. Gray's short article, "Buddhist Sectarianism," Gray emphasizes Buddhist sectarianism from a different perspective. He avoided the traditional account of eighteen Buddhist schools but focused on three *yāna*s or vehicles of Buddhism. According to Gray,

> The history of Buddhism is replete with examples of controversy and conflict between competing sectarian traditions.
>
> While not all the groups covered these eassays are "sects" as technically defined by contemporary sociologists, I would argue that many Buddhist groups exibit strong sectarian tendencies, and I employ the term "sectarianism" as used by Charles Jones in the context of contemporary Buddhism in Taiwan.[73]

Recently Shizuka Sasaki wrote an important and interesting long article *Buddhist Sects in the Aśoka Period*, which appeared in *Bukkyoo Kenkyu* (Buddhist Studies) (21:1992). The author compared the schism from different vinaya literatures of the Mahāsaṁghika, Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivāda and Sthavīravāda schools standpoint and found the Devadatta episode in the schism as the main cause. Sasaki made Devadatta's schism as main issue in addition to two other theories. Nevertheless, if we take Sasaki's theory accurately then we ought to count three theories in the schism in early Buddhist monasticism not traditional two. I intend to use Sasaki's exposition a great deal in this dissertation especially while comparatively defining the meaning of the *saṁghabheda* in modern as well as in Buddhist usages.

Since this study deals with sects and sectarianism in early Buddhism, it is important that we consider some of the materials that deal with race, caste, and social issues etc. Louise Dumont's *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its Implications*

[73] Gray, *Buddhist Sectarianism*, 367.

is an important study in this regard. Uma Chakravarti's *Social Dimensions in Early Buddhism* (1987) is a noteworthy monograph. She deals in this book with contemporary social conditions during the time of the Buddha and its influence over the *Saṁgha.* Chakravarti finds several wealthy individuals as well as various racially hierarchical individuals who took refuge in the *Saṁgha.* She precisely counts the percentage of the individuals who played a significant role in the formative periods of the *Saṁgha.*

> … Buddhism is in a large measure based on its social appeal. Within India Buddhism has appeared as an alternative to the hierarchical and in egalitarian ideology and practice of Hinduism. In contrast, Buddhism is viewed as a system which was more sympathetic to oppressed groups and it has been considered an economic, political, and social solution to the problem of caste oppression…. While it has become evident that early Buddhist society was rapidly changing and becoming sharply stratified the form in which that stratification was expressing itself needs to be analyzed.[74]

Uma Chakravarti further examines and finds that:

> There are 105 references to individuals who joined the *sangha* and whose social background is indicated in the texts. The largest group consists of *brāhmaṇas* (39), followed by *khattiyas* (28); 21 bhikkhus and bhikkhunis originated from *ucca kulas* and one from a *gahapatikula*. The *nica kulas* are represented by eight bhikkhus.[75]

In this regard, Hans W. Schumann's book *The Historical Buddha* also is a remarkable addition in which the author examines, among other historical facts, the domination of social hierarchical elements within the *Saṁgha.* Schumann finds "… the proportion of the castes, both for monks and for nuns, is significant, displaying as it does

[74] Uma Chakravarti, *Social Dimensions in Early Buddhism* (New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1987), 2-3.
[75] Chakravarti*, Social Dimensions,* 124 (*ucca-kula*, meaning high class, clan, race; and *nica kula*, meaning that of lower status). My notation.

a preponderance of Brahmins."[76] Furthermore, Schumann concluded, similar to Uma Chakravarti's study, after a thorough examination that:

> A canonical list of "pre-eminent disciples"… mentions 41 prominent bhikkhus; 17 (=41.5per cent) of these were of Brahmin stock. A similar result is obtained from the 259 monks whose poems are recorded in the Theragāthā; 113 (=44 per cent) of them were of Brahmin origin. However, the comparable figures for Brahmin-born nuns are considerably lower.[77]

By the same standard, Max Weber's book, *The Religion of India* (1958), is a classic, though it is not directed towards Buddhist Studies alone; nevertheless, its contents are very relevant to this topic. Weber is one of the two major propounders of the school of sociology (the other one being Emile Durkheim); hence, his study in sociology of religions plays an important role. Weber spared a section on Buddhism in this book, where he examines the sociological: caste and its impact over the Buddhist monastics. Thus on Buddhist monasticism, he observes:

> Buddhism, in principle, had not infringed upon the caste order. Its, as we shall see, were and are thought to be out-and-out heretics, and they themselves claim to be non-Hindus. That did not, however, prevent isolated Buddhistic communities on the North Indian border from acquiring peculiar caste stratification after the monasteries had become secularized into prebends.[78]

Richard Fick's book *The Social Organisation in North-East India in Buddha's Time* is itself a masterpiece in this regard. Fick studies the Indian social system from the sociological as well as religious standpoints; he sees Buddhist monastics from a psychological standpoint, too, and finds that the caste mentality among the Buddha's

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[76] Hans W. Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, Eng. trans. by M.O'C Walshe (New York: Viking Penguin Inc. 1989), 187.
[77] Schumann*, The Historical Buddha,* 187.
[78] Max Weber, The *Religion of India: The Sociology of Hinduism and Buddhism*, Eng. trans. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale (New York: The Free Press, 1958), 20.

disciples was still in the mind even though many of them were *arahants* or spiritually advanced. Thus, Richard Fick states:

> In my opinion, there is no more reality in these theoretical speculations than in the theory of the Brāhmaṇas; they are nothing else than a reflex of the priestly literature and show us that the Brahmanical theory was not only well known to the Buddhist monks but was so strongly imbedded in their consciousness, that they could not free themselves from it, although in all probability, they were quite convinced of its incongruence with the real world as well as of the worthlessness of the caste. Moreover, the Buddhist writers never cared in the least to contradict the caste-theory as such and thereby introduce a better organization of society; what they tried to do was simply to show that caste is of no value for the striving for emancipation.[79]

Stanley J. Tambiah's masterpiece *World Conqueror and World Renouncer* (1976) is a socio-anthropological study that covers a variety of areas in the Buddhist sociological milieu, particularly in Thailand, but is universally Buddhistic in nature. Tambiah goes to very early periods of Buddhism to find the Buddha's definition of society according to the Pali Suttas, especially the *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta* and *Aggañña Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya,* and analyses Buddha's interpretation of the origin of society, kingship, and the "great-elect" (*Mahāsammata*) with present-day socio-political implications. He also sees how royal powers, i.e., political power (e.g., Aśoka's role), played an important part in the schism of the early Buddhist *Saṁgha*. He observes how Emperor Aśoka issued a decree (Rock Edict XIII)[80] against a certain group of bhikkhus who wanted to create a separate sect. Thus Tambiah states:

> It is my thesis that the Asokan pronouncements on the spreading of dharma to these peoples partly serve as a historic precedent and charter for the policies of domestication, political incorporation, and even conversion to

[79] Richard Fick, *The Social Organisation in North-East India in Buddha's Time*, Eng. trans. Shishirkumar Maitra (Calcutta, India: University of Calcutta Press, 1920), 31.
[80] N. A. Nikam and Richard McKeon, *The Edicts of Asoka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

> Buddhism, followed by the governments of Burma, Thailand, and others, toward their allegedly primitive and bothersome hill tribes.[81]

Dealing with the schismatic groups of bhikkhus who caused him to convene the Third Buddhist Synod, the Emperor Aśoka could not have been a neutral party here. He took part in the two party debates: the debate between Mahāsāṁghikas and Sthaviravādins, or the debate between the Bhikkhu Mahādeva's group, who believed or accepted the "Five Points" as valid doctrine and the other group, who thought these points were unorthodox. The emperor was destined to purify the *Saṁgha* and convened the synod. So Tambiah indicates:

> There is one last theme expressed in the Asokan edicts that we would like to highlight if only because it is a pregnant issue, judged from the hindsight of periodic purifications attempted by enthusiastic reformers or puritanical trends. And in Buddhism they characteristically take the form of devaluation of ceremonials as productive of religious merit.[82]

Tambiah further observes that:

> The most conspicuous feature of Buddhism regarding the recruitment of religious personnel—at least in Thailand and Burma—and the imparting to them of religious sacred knowledge is its antithetical posture vis-à-vis brahman exclusiveness. It recruited persons as monks or novices from any social position, commoner or noble (but not slave), subject to certain admission criteria that are recited at ordination.[83]

In addition, he makes a relevant footnote, as:

> As is well known, in Ceylon *goyigama* caste status was an exclusive criterion of recruitment in the established Siyam *nikaya*; it is only from the beginning of the nineteenth century that other castes have been able to form their own fraternities of monks.[84]

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[81] Stanley J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background* (Cambridge, London, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 64.
[82] Tambiah, *World Conqueror*, 66-67.
[83] Tambiah, *World Conqueror*, 201.
[84] Tambiah, *World Conqueror*, 201.

The political influence over the Buddhist monastic establishment has been ubiquitous since the inception of it. While Tambiah provides a clearer overall picture in his monograph, other scholars, viz. Gokuldas De, etc., have studied the system very closely. One of these studies is *Democracy in Early Buddhist Samgha* (1955) by Gokuldas De, in which the author shows how the Buddha has established his *Saṁgha* democratically. The Pali Vinaya texts show the democratic practices that the Buddha initiated and implemented in his *Saṁgha*. De observes:

> Thus, inter-communication among residents and visitors was made easy for creating what might be looked upon as the 'Fraternity in Buddhism'. The motive was no doubt to make them live together in peace and harmony. The system of government obtaining in the Saṃgha being of a pure democratic nature individual opinion in it carried considerable weight which in no other community was considered so highly a deciding factor for conducting its business. Even, when it was expressed through the minority it had its value. This made the Saṃgha invincible and, as such, it was destined to work wonders in the history of the Indian people not very long after its inception.[85]

In this introductory chapter, various important issues have been addressed. The purpose of this dissertation is explained here; the issues of the schism, its origin, and validity of the term *saṁghabheda* in Buddhist Studies arena have also been addressed. We also examined if the term *saṁghabheda* (schism) could be applied to Buddhism against the Buddha's teaching; then, we provided an alternative term for schism: *nikāyabheda* (sectarianism). Perhaps fraternity will be a more pertinent term here to use. The meanings of "sect" (*nikāya*) are examined from different standpoints. In the next chapter, we will further investigate the meaning of the term schism, *saṁghabheda* from a comparative standpoint. We also reviewed the existing opinions of other specialists. All of these issues will help us to define this dissertation.

[85] Gokuldas De, *Democracy in Early Buddhist Samgha* (Calcutta, India: Calcutta University Press, 1955), 63.

The Purpose of This Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to undertake an investigation of a possible answer to the question "Was there a *saṁghabheda* in Buddhism?" If there was/were any, what is the possible cause of it/them? It also aims to examine the validity of the two traditionally recognized root-causes of the schism in early Buddhism: "Five Points" (*pañcavatthu*) and "Ten Points" (*dasavatthu*). If there was no *saṁghabheda*, then what was that "split" which took place during the Second Buddhist Council? Finally, what was the force behind the formation of various sects and sectarianism in early Buddhism? An attempt is made here to answer these questions.

Methodology

In order to accomplish the purpose, several steps have been applied here; first, finding a suitable definition of the terms "*saṁghabheda*" and "*nikāyabheda*"; then, defining the term "sect" according to a modern interpretation and comparing it with Buddhist "*nikāya*." In Chapter two, the two traditional theories explaining the "*saṁghabheda*" or "schism" are discussed and examined to see if they are really the cause of the split. Also in Chapter two, prototypical elements and precursorial episodes involving Devadatta and two havoc-raising groups of bhikkhus are discussed, together with examples from different perspectives— religious, philosophical, and sociological. Chapter three covers theories of sects and sectarianism, according to different experts and sects of Buddhism. Here in this chapter I intend to look at the early Buddhist literatures especially vinaya of the different schools, and *Abhidharmakośa* and *Kośabhāṣyam* both of Vasubandhu where application and usag of *saṁghabheda* in an alternative term is made. In the fourth chapter, the admission of various sect-members into the Buddhist

Saṁgha is addressed. Then in the fifth chapter, an attempt is made to examine and interpret various interpersonal conflicts among the prominent disciples of the Buddha and their role in the Four Buddhist Councils, which forced the monastics to continue in the formation of the sects. Subsequently, in the sixth chapter, I interpret the Buddhist political ideologies and role of the contemporary rulers and monastics in the fostering of Buddhist sects of India and other countries. Finally, a conclusion is drawn. Ultimately, answers to the following questions will emerge from this dissertation:

(a) Was there really a *saṁghabheda* "schism" in early Buddhist monastic establishment?

(b) Alternatively, were there various sects and sectarian elements, "*nikāya*s," within the *Saṁgha?*

(c) Is "schism" applicable to the Buddhist monastic "split"?

(d) Who were the forerunners of the sects and sectarianism?

(e) Did interpersonal conflicts contribute in the formation of Buddhist sects and sectarianism?

(f) Did ancient Indian royalty help in the formation of sects and sectarianism?

(g) Finally, were the seeds of sects and sectarianism inherited from the early Buddhist *Saṁgha*?

The Contribution

As mentioned, Buddhist scholasticism, especially in the academic arena, falls into two distinct groups: one group believes that the schism in Buddhism was due to a dispute regarding the Dhamma or *pañcavatthu* (Five Points), and on the other side, the second group believes that the schism was due to a dispute regarding the monastic discipline *dasavatthu* (Ten Points), and there is a substantial gap in between these two groups. This study here which relates to early Buddhism or more specifically, early Buddhist

monasticism; therefore, it will make a great contribution towards filling the gap that Charles Prebish indicated (noted above).

Finally, all of these observations by above-noted authorities help us to examine the notion of the growth of various oppressive social groups in the *Saṁgha* community, under either a prominent or racially identical tutor as well as different sectarian divisions, which arose to form 18 or 32 sects in the monastic tradition of early Buddhism. Apart from the opinions of these traditional views and scholarly opinions, it would be helpful to develop my own independent theory regarding sectarianism in early Buddhism. Each traditional view and authoritative opinion mentioned above has a valid point, yet is different from each other, hence directing us to form an independent theory such as the current one.

CHAPTER TWO

First Schism in the Buddhist Monastic Establishment

After the passing away of the Buddha (*mahāparinirvāṇa*), approximately within five hundred years, his democratically organized monastic establishment, the Saṅgha, split, first into two sects, the Sthaviravāda and Mahāsāṁghika. Then each sect split again into multiple sects, totaling eighteen sects (*aṣṭādaśanikāya*). Yet the exact reason or reasons for the split has not been pinpointed; whatever suggestions are made are not without dispute. Nevertheless, after thorough study of these above-mentioned literatures, Buddhist Studies specialists, come to offer two suggestions, namely:

(a) according to one group, viz., Wilhelm Geiger[86] and Rhys Davids, following *Dīpavaṁsa, Mahāvaṁsa* and the Pali literature, the Buddhist monastic establishment split due to the controversy on the application of the ten monastic codes (*dasavatthu*) generally known as "Ten Points," which was modified by a group of bhikkhus from the confederation of Vaiśālī, and

P. V. Bapat, Ryukan Kimura, following Sanskrit narratives of Vasumitra and Vinithadeva suggest:

(b) on the other hand, the second group of specialists, the Sanskritists, suggest the five doctrinal disputes (*pañcavatthu*), generally known as "Five Points" among the Buddhologists, was propounded by a bhikkhu named Mahādeva.

However, an attempt is made here in this chapter to examine these two reasons for the split in the Buddhist monastic establishment. This split is termed by Western Buddhologists as "schism" (*saṁghabheda*), yet the acceptability of this term here in the

[86] Wilhelm Geiger, trans., *The Mahavamsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Government of Sri Lanka, 1950). On p. lxii Geiger states, "The '10 points' are historical, and we must also regard as historical the names of the theras concerned in refuting them. Moreover, the division of the community, till then united, into two schools is, as I belive, a fact."

Buddhist environment is discussed earlier, with the conclusion that it is not a suitable term (the discussion will not be repeated here).

As noted earlier, there are two traditional causes of the splits, which are discussed here: *dasavatthu* (Vinaya, Ten Points) and *pañcavatthu* (Dhamma, Five Points). A detailed account of each perspective follows.

(a) The "Ten Points" (*dasavatthu)* is the cause of first schism, according to some. The split took place approximately two hundred years after the passing away of the Buddha, which takes us to the Second Buddhist Council or just before the council. As far as the *dasavatthu* is concerned, the birthplace of this issue, Vaiśālī and its citizenry is very important. The people of Vaiśālī are known in the Pali literature, as the Vajjis, who were praised even by the Buddha himself. The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* records their seven special characteristics, which is known as the *satta aparihānīya dhamma,*[87] the seven special concepts of diminution. The Vajji clan deserved a special place in the confederation, and there was a group of bhikkhus, as well, who were generally known as the Vajjiputtaka Bhikkhus in Vaiśālī. These Vajjians clansmen were influential at that time; now it seems the bhikkhus were influential too. They were progressive not only in social issues, but also in religious matters as well.

[87] "(1) As long as the monks hold regular and frequent assemblies, they may be expected to prosper and not decline. As long as they meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and cany on their business in harmony, they may be expected to pros-per and not decline. (2) As long as they do not authorise what has not been authorised already, and do not abolish what has been authorised, but proceed according to what has been authorised by the rules of training... (3) as long as they honour, respect, revere and salute the elders of long standing who are long ordained, fathers and leaders of the order. . . ; (4) as long as they do not fall prey to desires which arise in them and lead to rebirth. . . ;(5) as long as they are devoted to forest-lodgings . . . ; (6) as long as they preserve their personal mindfulness, so that in future the good among their companions will come to them, and those who have already come will feel at ease with them . . . ; (7) as long as the monks hold to these seven things and are seen to do so, they may be expected to prosper and not decline." *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of *Long Discourses of the Buddha (Dīgha Nikāya*), Eng. trans. Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 233.

They hardly accepted or agreed with anything without challenge, even from the Buddha himself. The Vinaya text records a Vajjian bhikkhu protesting to the Buddha against implementing so many Vinaya rules.[88] The Vajjian bhikkhus were numerous both during and after the Buddha. Five hundred Vajjian bhikkhus stood against the Buddha and cooperated with Devadatta, virtually creating a schism in the *Saṁgha*, and perhaps the same number during the Second Buddhist Council, who was in the leadership. Therefore, the formation of the *dasavatthu* and their introduction into the *Saṁgha* seems attributable to the Vajjians, who were practicing *dasavatthu* (Ten Points) there in Vaiśālī.

It came to the notice of the Elder Kākaṇḍakaputta Yaśa when he came to visit the locality. Ven. Yaśa informed other Elders in the locality and outside of such offensive practices. He was condemned by this group of bhikkhus. The Elder Yaśa, then, reported this condemnation to both laity and monastics, for which the Vajjian bhikkhu had to beg for pardon from the Elder. Nevertheless, as a result, the Elder was ex-communicated from the *Saṁgha* by the Vajjian bhikkhus. A long controversy, dispute, blame, and counter-blame went on against each other. After a prolonged dispute, two groups of followers, laities and monastics, formed, and the groups finally decided to settle the dispute with the help of most elderly surviving Elders near and abroad. Some of these Elders, at least six according to the *Mahāvaṁsa*, were direct disciples of the Ven. Ānanda, Ven. Anuruddha, and Ven. Mahākāssapa. Such a controversy was brought to the attention of King Kālāśoka (or Mahāpadma Nanda), which eventually resulted in convening the council. Seven scholarly Elders were present at this council, which took place in Vālukārāma or Kukkuṭārāma Vihāra in Vaiśālī, even though opinions differ regarding the exact place.

[88] Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*, 7.

At the council, Ven. Revata presided and seven hundred bhikkhus took part. At the conclusion of the council, all the Ten Points were rejected as unorthodox and unacceptable. The Vajjian monks, who were over ten thousand, left the council unsatisfactorily and formed a separate sect (*Nikāya*), which was known as the Mahāsāṁghika. Hence, the first schism took place in the Buddhist monastic establishment. This is supposed to be the first schism according to the Pali Buddhist tradition.[89] The "Ten Points" are as follows:

1) *Siṅgilona-kappa* = (storing salt in a horn). This point was meant to store salt to be consumed when any unsalted food is received. According to the Theravāda Vinaya rule, storing salt constitutes an offence of expiation (*pācittiya* #38) for eating what has been stored (*sannidhikāraka bhojane*).
2) *Dvāṅgula-kappa* = (two fingers). This practice means eating meals when the shadow of the sun showed two fingers breadth after noon, which also constitutes, in Theravāda Vinaya rules, an offence of expiation (*pācittiya* #37) after mid-day meal.
3) *Gāmāntara-kappa* = (among the villages). This point means a monk after having one meal going for the second time in another village, which constitutes an offence of expiation (*pācittiya* #35), according to Theravāda Vinaya.
4) *Āvāsa-kappa* = (residence). This point means several residences belonging to the same *sīmā* (boundary) may carry out separate formal acts (*uposath-kamma)* which constitutes an offence of wrongdoing (*dukkaṭa*) for going beyond Vinaya rules.
5) *Anumati-kappa* = (consent). This point means that an incomplete Order of absentee monks may without prior sanction of the absence, carry out a formal act (*uposath-kamma*), with the intention of securing sanction afterwards, which constitutes a wrongdoing (*dukkaṭa).*
6) *Āciṇṇa-kappa* = (customary practice). This point means that a monk may follow the practices of his teacher, right or wrong, just because his teacher has practiced it.
7) *Amathita-kappa* = (not churned). A monk may drink a kind of milk product that has passed the stage of milk, but not turned into curd yet. This constitutes an offense of expiation (*pācittiya* # 35).
8) *Jalagipatung* = (kind of liquor). This point means a monk may drink liquor that is not fully fermented yet, as a medicine to cure diseases. This constitutes an offense of expiation (*pācittiya* #51).
9) *Adasaka-nisidanam* = (seat). This point means a monk may sit upon a rug or piece of cloth that has no border, and is an offense of expiation (*pācittiya* #89).

[89] B. Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," 35; La Vallée Poussin, *Buddhist Councils,* 60.

10) *Jātarūparajatam* = (gold, silver etc.). The acceptance of gold, silver and the like. This point is forbidden by rule 18 of the *Nissaggiya-pācittiya*.

Since this schism took place because of Vinaya laxity, it is indeed necessary to see what Vinaya the Mahāsāṁghika follows. Do they follow less Vinaya rules than the orthodox Sthaviravādins? When the Mahāsāṁghika separated away from the main school, actually, they still remain in a single universal fold (*Saṁgha*); rather they split repeatedly into multiple sects, yet, being the Buddhist *saṁgha*. With that separation, the Vinaya rules were addendum. A comparative study by Wang Pachow on the various Vinaya rules, *Prātimokṣa* for example, shows different sets of the Vinaya rules, with more Vinaya rules in the Mahāsāṁghika Sect than the Sthaviravādins (as mentioned earlier). Therefore, the Vinaya issue goes beyond the question.

However, there are multiple sets of Vinaya Texts—Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivāda, Mūlasarvāstivāda and Tibetan Tangyur. Each one of these Vinaya texts differs in terms of variations in these Ten Points (of Vajjians). Yet it is also to be noted here that the question remains as to whether or not these points belong to the "*khuddakānukkuddakānisikkhāpadam*" minor or very minor issues, which the Buddha mentioned to Ven. Ānanda. If they were minor, an argument could be put forward here that there was no danger in the declination of the *Buddhasāsana,* for which Ven. Kākaṇḍakaputta Yaśa was very concerned. Thus, in order to solve the dispute, a council was convened; at the conclusion of the council, these Ten Points were rejected as unorthodox. Hence, the greater group of bhikkhus (*Mahāsaṁgha*) left the council, creating a schism, according to one school. However, logically, if the *dasavatthu* was not the reason or cause, then there should be a different one, and the second group of scholars suggests the following.

(b) On the other hand, the alternative cause of schism, according to others, is the *pañcavatthu*, which has its own history. At that time, there lived a merchant in Mathura, India. He married at an early age. He and his wife had a very nice-looking boy, whom they named Mahādeva. Carrying many valuables one day, the merchant went on a business trip to a distant country. He did not return home for a long time. In the meantime, the little Mahādeva grew up to be a handsome young man. In the course of time, he had an affair with his mother. Later on, when his father returned home from abroad, he killed his father, committing the first of the five major offensive acts (*pañca anantarīya kamma*) according to Buddhism, so that his father would not come to know of the affair or reveal it to others. Then Mahādeva along with his mother arrived at Paṭalīputra, then kingdom of Magadha. There in Paṭalīputra, he met an *arahant* bhikkhu from Mathura. The bhikkhu knew of Mahādeva's incest with his mother at home. Mahādeva, fearing that such a crime would become known in Paṭalīputra, killed the *arahant* bhikkhu also and committed the second of the five major offensive acts. In the meantime, his mother began a love affair with another man. Mahādeva, finding out about his mother's affair, became very angry and killed her, too, mounting his major offensive acts to three. Mahādeva finally realized that he had committed serious offenses. Being sorry for his unwholesome actions (*akusala kamma*), he started to find some place or person that could cure his mental pain. Then he heard that a Buddhist monk lived in the Kukkuṭārāma Temple of Paṭalīputra. Then when he went to meet that monk, he met another monk outside the temple gate who uttered a hymn as follows:

> *If someone has committed a serious crime,*
> *He can eradicate it by cultivating goodness;*
> *He could then illuminate the world,*
> *Like the moon coming out from behind a screen of cloud.*

After hearing such a hymn, Mahādeva was excited, converted to Buddhism, and later on became a monk. Due to his brilliant memory, he could complete studying the *Tripiṭaka*, Buddhist scripture, and because of his mastery of the scripture, he became famous. People invited him to expound the Dhamma to them. Finally, he settled down at Kukkuṭārāma. He eventually declared himself an *arahant*. Thereafter, a series of events took place in his personal life. Each time such an event took place; his pupils asked him the reason. Five such events took place, and his pupils asked him the reason. The answers Mahādeva gave to his pupils later on became the famous Five Points (*pañcavatthu*) in the history of Buddhism.[90] The Five Points are:

(a) The arhat (advanced Buddhist disciple) may ejaculate while asleep.
(b) The arhat may remain subject to certain forms of ignorance.
(c) The arhat may still have doubts.
(d) The arhat may be made aware of his level of enlightenment by someone other than himself.
(e) The arhat shouts at the moment of enlightenment.

Such Five Points created a controversy among the bhikkhus in Kukkuṭārāma, which ultimately spread all over Paṭalīputra and outside. However, Janice Nattier and Charles Prebish observed thus:

> Certainly, the acceptance of these points, taken out of contest, would appear to be a sign of laxity, in that their effect is to "demote" the Arhant from the status of near-perfection which had previously been him. If the Arhant is still the goal to be pursued, the net effect would be to lower the level of that goal, thus making it easier to attain. If the Arhant is not still the goal, however, then the picture changes radically. If another, higher goal is being advocated, then these points, as demeaning as they might be to the Arhant, cannot be taken as a sign of laxity on the part of those who adopted them.[91]

[90] Victor Mair, "An Asian Story of the Oedipus Type," *Asian Folklore Studies* 45 (January 1986): 19-31; also *Dharmarucirāvadāna* in *Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā* of Kṣemendra, 737.
[91] Nattier and Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origins."

This controversy also forced the elders to convene a council to ratify the disputes between two groups. It is the Sanskrit literature that focuses on the Five Points as related to Mahādeva, but if one reads carefully, one will notice that such Five Points are related to Mahādeva's personal life: each point is the result of his personal involvement. They are recorded as heretical doctrines in the Pali Abhidhārmic text *Kathāvatthu*. Neither the early Pali Nikāya texts nor the Sinhalese Chronological works mentions the name of Mahādeva; it seems also that these sources never heard of Mahādeva. Louis de La Vallée Poussin has demonstrated this in his paper, as noted elsewhere in this study. La Vallee Poussin's paper[92] also directs us to look at the circumstances around these two sources, the Mahādeva and the Kathāvatthu, critically.

The formulation of the Five Points allegedly by Mahādeva seems to have been an indirect response to, or a re-modification, I will venture to opin, of the charges against, the orthodox bhikkhus who stood against Ven. Ānanda's participation in the First Buddhist Council on the grounds of a certain issue by a direct or indirect disciple of the Ven. Ānanda; Mahādeva is a scapegoat here. These issues in *Kathāvatthu* did not come to existence within a year, but took at least a hundred or more years, which means from the First Buddhist Council to the Second and finally to the Third Buddhist Council. There are various issues in *Kathāvatthu,* in which the Five Points are included, so the suggestion of the Five Points as being of Mahādeva origin is doubtful. These issues have been examined somewhere else.

[92] La Vallée Poussin, "The 'Five Points' of Mahādeva and Kathāvatthu," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1910): 413-423.

However, the question remains: did the Five Points caused the schism? A probable answer to such a question remains behind a number of historical and sociological facts.

> (1) When Emperor Aśoka sent seventeen missions to different countries, one of them went to the Mahīṣamaṇḍala (i.e., modern Andra Pradesh) which was headed by one Mahādeva; he is said to have preached the Buddha's teachings there along with the Five Points, and upon these points there appeared three (or more) separate sects: Pūrva śaila, Apara-śaila and Uttara-śaila.
>
> (2) The schism is said to have taken place before Asoka when there was a monk also known as Mahādeva, which is, according to some historians, during the controversial Kālāśoka or Mahāpadma Nanda periods.
>
> (3) The Mahāsāṁghika, being a newly organized sect, perhaps had no relation with either of these Mahādevas and the Five Points. The Five Points are found in the Pali *Kathāvatthu* as well. The fact of the matter is that all of the issues including the Five Points addressed in the Kathāvatthu were collected from the time of the Buddha and at the time of the Third Buddhist Council.

However, Nattier and Prebish, after examining the record of Vasumitra, Bhavya, Vinīthadeva and others offered two probable answers:

> (1) that at a later time all the Mahāsāṁghikas did in fact accept these points, or (2) that the writers of these treatises, knowing that Mahādeva and his doctrines were associated with the Mahāsāṁghikas, mistakenly read these famous points? back into the doctrinal lists of the Mahāsāṁghikas as a whole. It is significant that none of the sources which do this are Mahāsāṁghika works. As outsiders, writing several centuries after the events with which they were concerned, they might very well have confused what was originally an intra-Mahāsāṁghika controversy with the dispute which brought about the original appearance of the sect.[93]

Therefore, after considering above passages, it is clear that the Five Points of a "certain" Mahādeva did not cause the schism in Buddhist monastic tradition. Both the *dasavatthu* (of Vajjian monks) and the *pañcavatthu* of Mahādeva claim that it was the Mahāsāṁghikas who split off from the mainstream. Almost every treatise that deals with

[93] Nattier and Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origin," 264.

the schism—works composed by Vasumitra, Vinīthadeva, Bhavya and others (of the Northern School) and the Pali *Dīpavaṁsa, Mahāvaṁsa* and *Cullavagga* (of the Southern School)—also have maintained that the Mahāsāṁghikas were the ones to split off from mainstream monastic tradition.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note here, as previously, that none of the Mahāsāṁghika sources ever mentions any of the two "Points" groups, with the exception of #10 of the Vajjian *dasavatthu*. It furthermore needs to be clearly pointed out that such an omission, from the Mahāsāṁghika perspective, leads one to wonder if there were, indeed, different problems as well as reasons concealed under these controversies throughout the ages. From the early history of Buddhist monastic tradition, disputes have been recorded and a few literary records have been made by both the Southern School and Northern School; it is granted, however, that there was a controversy and that none of the schools blamed or accused each other, but, rather stated that there was an issue and this (schism) was the result.

In order to solve the controversy, a council was convened, known as the Second Buddhist Council. In the history of Buddhism, it was in this council that the Buddhism sectarianism took ground. There are disputes regarding the historicity of this council, which will be examined later on in this study. In both cases, at the end of the council, scholars agree that a larger group of bhikkhus left the council with unsatisfactory result, and formed a separate group. Henceforth, the Buddhist *Saṁgha* witnessed a number of splits within the *Saṁgha*.

In an earlier study, *Dasavatthu and Pañcavatthu: A Critical Study in the Schism in Early Buddhist Monastic Tradition,*[94] I suggested that the actual schism was caused by a multiple conditions in ancient India:

> (a) the undercurrent of sociological division within the Buddhist monastic establishment,
> (b) a political reason in which ancient Indian royalties played an important role,

and

> (c) the geographical isolation of the Buddhist monastic personalities.

(a) <u>The Sociological Reason</u>

The ancient Indian social stratification also influenced the Buddhist monastic establishment in which so-called "*kula*" (clan) and "*gotra*" (tribe) played an important part. The so-called upper-class individuals had a monopoly over so-called lower-class individuals in society. Following the Vedic tradition, the ancient Indian society was divided into a four-class system: (1) Brāhmin (priestly class), (2) Kṣatrīya (the warrior class), (3) Vaiṣya (the trading class), and Śudra (the lower class*)*. The Śudras are also known as outcastes or untouchables who are supposed to be born from four distinct parts of the creator Brahmā. From Brahma's mouth was born the Brāhmin class, the Warrior class from the arm, from the thigh were born the traders, and Sudras from the foot. The mouth being the highest part of Brahmā and the foot being the lowest the position, the classes also signify as such high and low. During the forty-five-year mission of the Buddha, a greater numbers of individuals entered the Buddhist *Saṁgha* from all the social groups, and the Buddha admitted them indiscriminately, from the so-called lower class Upālī (a lower class) to the upper class, such as Ānanda (of the warrior class), and treated them equally. Even though each *Saṁgha* member entered the classless Buddhist

[94] A master's thesis submitted to the Department of the Asian and Asian-American Studies, California State University-Long Beach, 1992.

community, the undercurrent class-consciousness did not disappear from those-class minded members. Thus, Richard Fick observes:

> Many of the disciples of Buddha belonged, before their acceptance of the homeless life (pabbajja), like Buddha himself, to the Kṣatrīya caste and showed a preference for their former caste even when they entered the monk's state; many were rich, influential citizens, before they renounced the world, and in consequence of this, looked at their own former condition with more favourable eyes than the Brāhmaṇas; and whoever, among these classes even accepted Buddhism was very likely to view Brahmanism with great and even in just severity. But the Buddhist monks among whom the tradition spread and to whom we owe its fixation, showed a more objective attitude towards the worldly life which they had renounced and in exchange for which they had adopted the homeless life, than the Brāhmanas who were always conscious of their Brahmanism which they spread over the society in which they lived.[95]

The Buddha stood against the concept of contemporary Brahmanic social system in which the four social stratifications prevail, yet after the Buddha, the Buddhist monastics could not keep that tradition. Many Pali discourses show how the Buddha criticized and condemned the Vedic social stratification; the *Assalāyana Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya*), *Vasala Sutta* (*Sutta Nipāta*), *Vāseṭṭha Sutta* (*Sutta Nipāta*) are some of the classic examples. Nevertheless, the Pali literature often refers to terms such as "*gotta*" (tribe), "*kula*" (clan); and the Buddha very often praised a bhikkhu from a good family as "*kulaputta*" (son of a good family). Buddha also instructed his disciples to honor a senior monk by respectfully addressing him by his clan (*gottena*). In Pali *Mahāvagga*, we read the Buddha saying to his disciples, "I allow you, monks, to proclaim merely by clan (name)."[96] This term, indeed, gave class-conscious members of the *Saṁgha* perhaps, a wrong impression, and indeed, some assurance in holding onto their clan identities. In later periods, we notice different monastic sects grew after certain clan and tribe-based

[95] Fick, *Social Organization*, 14-15.
[96] Horner, Eng. trans., *The Book of the Discipline*, vol. 5, 119.

concepts, like "*Gokulikas*" ("*go*" means cow "*kula*" "clan") or "*Kukkuṭika*" (a clan belonging to hen), "*Bhadrayānik*a" (belonging to *Bhadra,* gentle family). Perhaps a group of bhikkhus who belonged to certain trader's (*Vaiṣya*) family got together and formed a sect or "a club or fraternity in modern sense" or the "Vātsīputrīyas," who belonged to a "lineage" (*putra*) of Vatsa race. Further, there were the Vajjiputtaka (who belonged to certain regions of India–Vajji), Rājagirīyas (who came from the Rājagriha), Abhayagirivāsins (the dwellers of *Abhayagiri*), Jetavanavāsin (the dwellers of *Jetavana*), Pubbaśaila, (the dwellers of the East Hill), and another Śaila group, the Avantikas from the region of Avanti. There were minor sects who were named after certain prominent masters, like Siddhārtikas, Kāśyapīyas, Dharmaguptakas, and Mahīśāsakas. There were also certain bhikkhus who had specific practices and formed a sect themselves, such as the Channāgārikas (bhikkhus who have ceased living in dwellings) and Ekavyāvahārikas (bhikkhus who use items only one time). Therefore, the ancient Indian social stratification and its influence over the Buddhist monastic tradition easily played a role in creating different sects, "clubs" or fraternity-like organizations. Furthermore, the lay community of Northern India of the Buddha's time addressed a bhikkhu or generally the bhikkhus as "Śākyaputriyas," which means the children of Śākyamuni Buddha. The Śākya is also name of a clan in which the Buddha was born. There was a specific sect of Buddhism that requires investigation, the Cetīyavādins. A few scholars, viz., Akira Hirakawa and Nalinaksa Dutt, have addressed this, yet there is need for a thorough study of its origin.

The Buddha himself praised the *caitya*s or stupas. Upon his visit to the Vaiśālī alone with Ven. Ananda, the Buddha appreciated the beauty of the Cāpāla Caitya,

Ānanda Caitya, et cetera. Perhaps, there were various other bhikkhus who were spending time under the shade of those *caitya*s focusing on *pāṁsukulika* (who leads the monastic life by collecting cloth and other materials from cemetery) life-style there. Since they had to celebrate the *uposatha*, they definitely came together there and in the long run became a sect.

(b) <u>Political Reason</u>

For decades, scholars, Max Weber being the most prominent among them, believed that the Buddha ignored the political side of ancient Indian civilization. Thus Weber states:

> … Jainism and Buddhism, which provide radical antitheses to Confucianist accommodation to the world, were tangible expressions of an intellectualist attitude that was utterly anti-political, pacifistic, and world-rejecting. We do not know, however, whether the sometimes considerable following of these two religions in India was increased by the events of times, which tended to reduce the preoccupation of these people with political matters.[97]

Nevertheless, such a negative assessment started to change after several studies established that the Buddha was not less concerned and aware of the Indian political theories and ideas, from the very early stages of his mission. Stanley J. Tambiah[98] and Gokuldas De[99] have demonstrated this soundly. The Buddha's political ideas or theories are to be found in various discourses (*sutras*), especially in the *Cakkavattīsīhanāda Sutta, Aggañña Sutta, Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* and various discourses in the *Aṁguttara Nikāya, Saṁyutta Nikāya*, as well as the *Pātimokkha* section of Vinaya *Mahāvagga,* which indicates the Buddha was not only was well aware of the political

[97] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*. Eng. trans. Talcott Parsons (Boston, MA: Beacon Press 1993), 122.
[98] Stanley Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer*.
[99] Gokuldas De, *Democracy in Early Buddhist Samgha*.

theories and ideas of ancient India but also was a propounder of his own political theory that he implemented in the governing of the *Saṁgha*.

The *Aggañña Sutta* provides the Buddha's theory of the origin of the universe and his political ideas. The *Aggañña Sutta* is not only the Buddhist *Book of Genesis* but also a source for early Indian socio-cultural-political ideologies. It deals with the origin of "living beings" (*sattva*), their consumption of food, environmental circumstances, how the daily lives of the "beings" were maintained, and how crime and the punishment came into existence. It also is the first document in the early Pali literature to show the "kingship" and "royalty" origins. Here the position of the kingship was a democratic process with the elected person known as "great elect" (*mahāsammata*). Then how "taxation" comes to exist is addressed; all these issues and more are discussed in this discourse. Three important issues relevant to this study come out of this particular discourse, viz.:

> (1) The fundamental principles of democratic ideas or theories, such as the institutionalization of *Saṁgha* or union through the democratic process;
>
> (2) The formation, incorporation and the principles of the autocratic monarchical institution – authority, such as monarchy, *Mahāsammata* (great elect) or the *Cakkavatti-rājā* (universal monarch), both of which during the lifetime of the Buddha helped him to organize his monastic institution and, after him, the formation and development of the Buddhist monastic sects; and
>
> (3) The interdependency of both points (1) and (2) above, i.e., the *Saṁgha* as the example of an ideal social circle and the monarch as a protector of the ideal social circle through his Dharma (righteous law).

However, as to the principles of democratic ideas, the *Aggañña Sutta* indicates that at the beginning there was only one "social circle" (*Saṁgha)* or a union. Every single member of the society was known as a "being" (*sattā/sattvā*). They lived feeding on radiance. Everybody had equal rights. There were no identity distinctions whatsoever as to color, race, size, gender, status, etc. A "being" could go to the field in the morning and

collect food for breakfast, at noon for lunch, and in the evening for dinner. By dawn of the following day, the field was full again. The collective life process continued free of problems; life was easy. There was no individual property; every "being" of the "social circle" (*Saṁgha*) shared the earth as common property without even thinking of individuality (*attabhāva pariaapannā*), yet each "being" inherited property. Nevertheless, due to greediness (*lobha*) and disrespect for the *Saṁgha* property, one day a certain "being" collected foods for multiple consumption. Other "beings" warned that lawbreaker "being." On another day, they punished a different "being" for the same reason. Gradually, crime came into existence. In order to control the crime, the "beings" decided to appoint a qualified "being" as the leader. Since that "being" was elected by confirmation (*sammati*) or opinion (*mata*) of the greater social circle (*mahāsaṁgha*), he was known as the "*mahāsammata*" or "Great Elect." That was the beginning of a democracy.

The principle of electing such a "Great Elect" was based on unanimous consent. All supported all. There was a natural law or Dhamma, which is the constitutional law of modern governments. Thus, Gokhle summarizes this point as follows:

> The state, as the Suttanta points out, come into being to uphold the rule of law and order in the place of greed and anarchy, to safeguard the institutions of property and family and ensure the victory of the right over the claim of brute force. For this purpose was Mahāsammata declared to be the king, the khattiya (Lord of Field) and the raja because he agreed to protect the people with dharma. The state, according to this version, therefore, is based on the general acceptance (mahājanasammata) of its aims and functions. It is expected to preserve and safeguard the rights of the individual and create conditions of happiness for the subjects through the observance of dharma (dhamma pare rañjati). The state, in brief, is the antithesis of anarchy and the apotheosis of dhamma.[100]

[100] Balakrisna Gokhle, "Dhammiko Dhammarājā: A Study in Buddhist Constitutional Concept," in *Indica: The Indian Historical Research Institute Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume* (Bombay: Indian Historical Research Institute, 1955), 161 – 62.

The Democratic Elements in Buddhist *Saṁgha*

Buddha being pragmatic (*yathābhūta),* implemented democratic elements in his *Saṁgha.* The *Vinaya Piṭaka* itself is the testimony of such inclination. In a modern democratic country, one sees an assembly, which is elected by the adult franchise. Such an adult franchise was introduced, first by the Buddha in his own *Saṁgha* in India. As pointed out in the *Aggañña Sutta*, the Buddha implemented the adult franchise by accepting a 20-year-old adult into the *Saṁgha* or assembly. However, if a candidate was below 20 years of age, he/she could not become a fully accredited (ordained) member of the assembly of monks, i.e., the *Saṁgha*. Every single member, despite education level, mental capacity, spiritual level, or intellectual achievement, had equal rights in the assembly regarding casting a vote (*salākā chanda*).

Buddha personally favored the Vajjian style republican rules and created his *Saṁgha* according to such rules. It perhaps is the main reason that the Vajjian monks were very active within the *Saṁgha* in protesting against the unwanted number of Vinaya rules sanctioned by the Buddha or cooperating with the schismatic Devadatta during his lifetime, as noted earlier, and the formation of "Ten Points" (*dasavatthu*) or the "Five Points" (*pañcavatthu*) after his Mahāparinibbāna. As far as the schism in relation to political influence was concerned, it was the majority's decision that the Saṁgha separate from each other. The records of both traditions, Pali and Chinese (Sanskrit), confirm such an assumption.

From the Pali standpoint, it is clear that the majority's opinion played an important part in schism. When the Vajjian monks introduced "Ten Points" (*dasavatthu*) in the council of seven hundred monks during the Second Buddhist Council and after

their rejection, the Vajjian monks along with a majority of the monks left the council and held a separate one. It is said that there were, at least, over a thousand monks on the majority's side. Some sources even mention that there were around 1,200,00 participants, but do not mention which side, whether the Mahāsāṁghikas or the Sthaviras.[101] From the speculative standpoint, it was, perhaps, on the Mahāsāṁghikas' side, since seven hundred is mentioned in other traditions, like the Pali *Cullavagga*[102] and other sources, with Mahāsāṁghikas as the majority.

In the *Abhidharma-Mahāvibhāṣā-Śāstra* there is a similar scenario regarding the acceptance of the majority's opinion. When the *saṁgha* at Kukkuṭārāma split into two factions, it was reported to the king. Then the king came to the temple and inquired from Mahādeva, "With which faction should we align ourselves?" Mahādeva replied, quoting from the "Sutra of Regulation" (*Vinaya Piṭaka*): "If one wishes to terminate controversy, he should along with the voice of the majority." Then the king asked the *saṁgha* to divide into two sections according to individual inclination. After counting, it was found that Mahādeva's section was the majority. Thus, the dispute was solved by the majority's voice.

Sasaki in his comparative studies pointed out the *śalākā* (vote) was used by Devadatta in his schism (*saṁghabheda*) attempt. Devadatta's *saṁghbheda* is described following manner with the *śalākā*. Thus, Sasaki translates the (Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, vol. 37. *Taisho* No 1435, XXIII, p. 265a-b) as

> At that time, Devadatta made this speech. "I, Devadatta, make this speech in the saṃgha. (1) A monk must wear picked-up garment throughout his life. (2) A monk must live by begging throughout his life. (3) A monk must live on one meal a day throughout his life. (4) A monk must live in

[101] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 131.
[102] *The Book of the Discipline*, vol. 5, 429.

> the open air throughout his life. (5) A monk must not eat fish nor meat throughout his life. Those who follow these five rules joyfully should stand up and take the *śalākā*". After making this speech, Devadatta and four followers stood up and took the *śalākā*….[103]

When Devadatta made this speech for second time, 250 monks took the *śalākā,* Devadatta made the same speech for third time; another 250 monks took the *śalākā*. By taking a *śalākā* the *saṁghabheda* is performed. The *śalākā* system here symbolizes the democratic elements in early Buddhist monastic tradition. Devadatta could collect 500 (250+250) votes (*śalākās*) here to organize his *disruption*, -to use Sasaki's terminology. Sasaki further states

> Here saṁghabheda is interpreted as the action of proclaiming an opposing opinion to the Buddha's teaching and forming an independent group of those who agree with the new opinion. This interpretation disagrees with that in the Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya, in which *saṁghbheda* is interpreted as an independence of *uposatha*. Although the difference seems to be a minor one, in reality it would bring about a great difference in the management of the samgha.[104]

However, both traditions mentioned above testify that the schism between two groups, whether or not between the Mahāsāṁghika and Sthaviras or regarding the *dasavatthu* or *pañcavatthu*, was due to the fact that the majority's opinions were the main issue behind the schism in the early Buddhist monastic tradition. Furthermore, it is also interesting to note here that neither the *dasavatthu* nor the *pañcavatthu* was solely responsible for the schism; rather, political elements and democratic power played an important role. Similarly, it is also important to note here that since the traditions testify about the schism from both sides, there is ample reason to believe that the friction

[103] Shizuka Sasaki, "Sasaki Buddhist Sects in the Aśoka Period" in *Bukkyoo Kenkyu* 1992, 21:162-163
[104] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in the Aśoka Period,* 164

between these two groups might have cause a sectarian split at first, but that later they dissolved the dispute and the split not due to these two "causes."

(c) <u>The Geographical Isolation as Reason</u>

After the establishment of the Saṁgha, the Buddha asked his disciples to spread out and preach the doctrine for the benefit of the many. Buddha himself travelled across the Madhyadeśa. Such missionary zeal was kept alive by later generations, especially by Emperor Aśoka and King Kaniṣka. According to Sinhalese chronicles, Aśoka sent various missions to geographically diverse regions of India and beyond. Aśoka's *Rock Edict XIII* testifies that he sent different missionaries to outside the India, viz., "Antiyoka = Antiochos II Theos of Syria (261-246 B.C.); Turamaya = Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt (285-247 B.C.); Antikini = Antigonos Gonatas of Macedonia (278- 239 B.C.); Maka = Magas of Cyrene (300-258 B.C.); and Alikasudara =Alexander of Epirus (272?-258 B.C.)."[105] Two bhikkhus, Sona and Uttara, were sent to Suvarnabhūmī, which is identified with modern Myanmar, Thailand, Kampuchea, Laos, and a portion of the Malay Peninsula.

When these missionaries settled down in the respective regions, they started to ordain their own disciples, converted local peoples and built temples and monasteries that came to be known by their geographic locations. Gradually, these missionaries, along with their new disciples and converts, found new kings or wealthy householders to support them, built temple and monasteries, bestowed caves and hills, became semi-independent or fully independent Buddhist sects, and isolated themselves from their origins. Some of the prominent geographically isolated Buddhist sects that could be mentioned here are: all the Śaila Schools, Pūrva-śaila, Apara-śaila, and Uttara-śaila;

[105] Nikam and McKeon, *The Edicts of Asoka*, 29 fn.

Rājagirika, Himavanta, Avantika, etc., which are the geographic expansion of Buddhist sectarian tradition.

Furthermore, following the example of Emperor Aśoka, King Kaniṣka also sent various missionaries, especially to Central Asian regions; there were, at least, four important states in the region of Chinese Turkestan, such as Akxu (Bharuka), Kucha Kara-shahr (Agnideśa) and Turfan (Kao-chang) and the Kashmir-Gandhara along with the Bamiyan (of modern Afghanistan) as part of the geographic spread. Thus, Étienne Lamotte observes:

> The formation of the sects was due mainly to the geographical extension of community over the entire Indian territory. In the region which it occupied in its own right, each Saṃgha was confronted by particular problems. … The Saṃgha was marked by the infinite variety of territories which it occupied: Āryan India in the Gangetic Basin, Dravidian in the south, Graeco-Scythian in the north and west.[106]

The preceding pages examined the two theories of schism in the early Buddhist monastic tradition as recorded in Pali and Sanskrit traditions as well as the modern scholastic interpretations. Following the Pali tradition, one group suggested that the first schism in Buddhist monasticism was due to the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points) of the Vajjian bhikkhus, and on the other hand, following the Sanskrit tradition, a different group of scholars suggested that the schism was caused by the *pañcavatthu* (Five Points) which was propounded by a bhikkhu named Mahādeva. Here a third group critically examined these issues and concluded that neither the *dasavatthu* nor the *pañcavatthu* really is the main reason for the schism. Therefore, considering both the modern theories of schism according to scholars' interpretation and in the early Buddhist monastic tradition, the dispute regarding the doctrinal interpretation (*pañcavatthu*) and that of the disciplinary

[106] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 519.

code (*dasavatthu*), from a comparative standpoint, it is fair to conclude that neither of the above issues caused the schism. Instead, the schism was caused by the political influence of contemporary Indian and other rulers, the social stratification of Indian society, and the geographical isolation and missionary zeal of individual members of the monastic establishment. Hence, I would like to argue that the schism in early Buddhist monastic tradition was not due to above mentioned reasons, but the socio-cultural influence over the monastics at the time of the Buddha, political influence over the Buddhist monastics, and geographic isolation of the monastic members.

In the following pages, it will be seen what sect and schism mean and how modern theories of sect could be applied to the Buddhist theory of sect (*nikāya*) if at all, how several small groups of bhikkhus organized together, and how royalty helped organize sectarian Buddhism.

CHAPTER THREE

The Theory of Sects and Sectarianism According to Different Experts and Sects of Buddhism

The term "sect" is a subgroup of an organization such as religion, a social group that is usually an offshoot of a larger religious organization, church archdiocese, or the like, whereas sectarianism is an ideology, the different set of rules, or policies along which the sect is organized. Though the term sect was mostly used to refer to religious groups, it has since transformed, and in contemporary usages, it can refer to any organization that breaks away from a larger one to follow a different set of rules and policies or ideologies.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to define and compare the term "sect" with the modern interpretation and examine if such theory could be applied to Buddhist monastic sects. First, I will survey the modern secular interpretation and then I will look at the Buddhist Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sectarianism. I also will examine the early Buddhist literatures such as Vinaya texts and other Sanskrit philosophical literature, viz., the *Abhidharmakośa* and *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu to compare all the available terms they used.

Hinduism is a complex religious system itself; therefore, it is difficult to analyze simply in this case. Yet, it is a perfect basket of *"isms"* to examine from the sociological standpoint. In fact, Hinduism is a collection of sects, which grew up from a multiplicity of castes and sub-castes, an opposite term to "orthodoxy." The religion was fostered by

different ideologies, such as what Kurt Rudolph summarizes from a broader perspective as:

1. Dogmatic-theological questions;
2. Questions of lifestyle;
3. Questions of ritual and cultic observance;
4. Social problems;
5. Political causes;
6. Cultural, anthropological (racial), and ethnic factors;
7. The figure of a charismatic leader.[107]

Rudolph further clarifies the term heresy as:

> The term heresy derives from the Greek hairesis. In classical Greek this word has a variety of meanings, all based on the verb haireo: "seizure" (of a city), "choice," "election," and "decision or purposive effort." This last meaning is the starting point for the Hellenistic and Christian use of the term to mean "doctrine," "school," or "received opinion," emphasizing the idea of a free decision or free choice of a doctrine or doctrinal authority. The word thus becomes a technical term for a philosophical school, a party, or a religious doctrinal system and its adherents. The term is applied to Stoics, Pythagoreans, Sadducees, Essenes, Pharisees, and Christians (see Acts 5:17, 24:5, 24:14, 26:5, 28:22). Neither in Greek nor in Hellenistic Jewish usage does the word have a negative, derogatory sense; it is an entirely value-free designation.[108]

Sect as used, for an example, in an Indian context refers to an organized, socio-religious tradition, however. The Indian society itself is a mass of various religions and social groups, which are studied and put into various socio-religious categories by the Western experts. Its religious origin goes back to pre-historic times. In pre-historic India, the "sects," *sampradāya* (and sectarianism) existed side by side, as recorded in Vedic and Upaniṣadic Religio-philosophic literatures, viz., *Śaivaite* (devotees of the Lord Śiva), *Vaisnavi* (the followers of Lord Viṣṇu), as there are many religious sects after different deities' names. Nevertheless, the sect is inherited in Indian soil, since its caste/*varṇa*

[107] Kurt Rudolph, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd edition (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 6: 3920-3925.
[108] Rudolph, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 6:3920-3925.

system was introduced with the Vedic religio-social system to India. The *Ṛgveda X*, (*naiṣadhiya sukta*) states the four *varnas* or classes of people come out of four parts of the Bhahma, and the *Srimadbhagavadgītā* also records that God according to their *karma* (action) and *guṇa* (quality) classification created the four *varnas*[109]. On the other hand, the early Buddhist view of sect, in my observation, is different from both Rudolph's and the Indian Brahmanic interpretation; Rudolph emphasized the "Hellenistic and Christian" standpoint and Brahmanic interpretation relies on Vedic classifications of divine decree. The notion of sect in early Buddhism is not definitely a divine decree, but rather, a temporal socio-cultural fraternistic organization within the monastic environment. The Pali and Sanskrit term for this fraternistic organization is *nikāya* (sect/fraternity). More on this issue below.

However, there were two distinct sects in India in its formation age of it religio-cultural milieu: the Śrāmaṇic tradition and the Brahmanic tradition. From the School of Sociology standpoint, Max Weber defines sect as:

> A "sect" in the sociological sense of the word is an exclusive association of religious virtuosos or of especially qualified religious persons, recruited through individual admission after establishment of qualification. By contrast a "church," as a universalistic establishment for the salvation of the masses raises the claim, like the "state," that everyone, at least each child of a member, must belong by birth. It demands sacramental acts and possibly, proof of acquaintance with its holy learning as a precondition of its membership rights, but establishes as a duty the observance of the sacraments and the discharge of those obligations which are a condition of active membership rights.[110]

Furthermore, Weber's interpretation of "sect" here also differs from the early Buddhist monastic tradition, for the Buddhist monastic traditional view of sect is "within" whereas Weber defines it as "universal." The Buddhist sectarian view meant

[109] Kees Bolle, *The Bhagavadgītā* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979) 52.
[110] Weber, *The Religion of India*, 6.

within the Indian cultural milieu, even though it spread outside India. Etymologically, the word sect comes from the Latin noun *secta*, meaning "a way, road", and figuratively a way, mode, a discipline or school of thought as defined by a set of ideologies, methods and doctrines. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines it as:

> group, sect. . . *secta* organized ecclesiastical body. . . way of life, school of thought, class of persons. . . *sequi* to follow. . . a dissenting religious body. . . one that is heretical in the eyes of other members within the same communion. . . a group within an organized religion whose adherents reorganize a special set of teachings or practices. . .[111]

The contemporary concept and meanings of sect have been influenced by confusion with the homonymous, as sects were separated from the mainstream religion.

The common feature for various religious sectarianism that separated from and opposed other sects is a prevailing current in almost in all of the world religions: sectarianism originated as a protest against, and a form of democratic movement that expressed protest against the prevailing order in a religious guise. In the course of social development, however, sectarian movements became separate churches that played a profoundly reactionary role in modern society, of which Martin Luther's (1483 – 1546) Schism (the Reformation) from the original Church could be a good example. Recent religious sects like the Unification Church, Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), and Jehovah's Witness are some other examples.

The religious sect was a form of social community binding followers together on the ground of equality and unity of devotion; the sect was cloaked in religious forms, and at the same time was a revolt against the mother churches. In other religions both in the East as well as the West, sects emerged through the separation of opposing currents from

[111] *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1971), 2052.

the dominant religion, expressing a spontaneous social protest by the popular masses against class exploitation and, sometimes, foreign domination.

However, due to the lack of power or limitations, sectarianism as a religious form of social protest, and the heterogeneity of the elements initially united in any particular group, sects die out in the course of historical development or display internal contradictions and are transformed into separate, smaller churches.

From the religio-sociological standpoint, there are several different definitions and descriptions of the term. Among the first to define the term sect, were Max Weber, one of the two founders of the School of Sociology (the second being Emile Durkheim) and a 20th century socio-philosophical concept which was fostered by these two sociologists, and Ernst Troeltsch, both of whom are German by birth. In the chuech – sect typology, they are described as newly reorganized religious groups that form to protest elements of their parent religion (generally in a denominational case). Their intention tends to be situated in accusations of heresy in the parent denomination; they are often decrying liberal trends in denominational development and advocating a return to true religion.

The American sociologists Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, both American sociologists, assert that sects and sectarianism seem to be an authentic, but unaccepted, purged, refurbished, and modified version of the faith from which they separate. Both scholars further assert that sects have, in contrast to churches, a high degree of tension with the surrounding society. Thus, Rodney and Bainbridge state:

> When we define a sect as a religious movement that occurs within a conventional religious tradition and that is in a high state of tension with its sociocultural environment, we include only those features found in all sects, and which together exclude from the category all phenomena we

> wish to exclude. Political "sects" are excluded for lack of being religious movements (which, in turn, follows from our definition of religion). Cults are excluded because they represent an unconventional religious tradition. Churches are excluded because they are in a low state of tension with their surroundings.[112]

Here, the theory of Rodney and Bainbridge, which excludes political "sects" for not being religious movements, is very appropriate when we compare it with Buddhism, for they have already excluded "political" sects, and Buddhism was not primarily a political movement. Rodney and Bainbridge also made it easy for us by defining "a sect as a religious movement that occurs within a conventional religious tradition and that is in a high state of tension with its sociocultural environment." However, both of these scholars defined the sect from the Western political standpoint, whereas we are in an Indian religious (if we can call Buddhism a religion) perspective.

Among other sociologists of religion, Fred Kniss for example has asserted that sectarianism is best described with regard to what a sect is in conflict with. Religions also have sects and sectarian ideologies; they exist in conflict only with co-religious groups of different ethnicities, racial groups, and cultural milieu or exist in tension with the whole of society rather than the religious organization, which the sect originated from. Fred Kniss thus states:

> That such a bucolic existence would be so marked by strife belies the popular conception that culturally conservative sectarian communities, because of their emphasis on separation and internal authority, are relatively immune to intragroup conflict. The seeming oxymoron of "Mennonite conflict" is intrinsically interesting; but it also provides a window into questions of broader sociological import regarding interreligious conflict and, still more broadly, the intersection between culture or religion and processes of social change.[113]

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[112] Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion* (Rutgers University Press, 1996), 16.
[113] Fred Kniss, *Disquiet in the Land: Cultural Conflict in American Mennonite Communities* (Rutgers University Press, 1997), 2-3.

Here Fred Kniss differs from the concept of Buddhist "sect" because his comparison and emphasis is on "Mennonite conflict" sectarianism and "processes of social change," whereas Buddhist zeal regarding sectarianism was not as such, but moves of fraternity (*nikāya*) within the monastic environment. Buddhist monastics did not want to change social conditions by creating sects but organized themselves under their tutors. Nevertheless, sectarianism is sometimes defined in different fields, such as the sociology of religion as a worldview that emphasizes the unique legitimacy of believers' creeds and practices (hence, that legitimacy of believers' creed and practices heightens tension with the larger society by engaging in boundary-maintaining practices). The notion of "legitimacy of believers" excludes the Buddhist monastic fraternity completely, because there was not any heightened tension within the Buddhist monasticism or with respect to "society." Thus, Kniss' theory of sect is not appropriate for the Buddhist notion of sect (*nikāya*).

Sociologists and church historians, from academic standpoints, have attempted to be more neutral and objective, defining "sectarian" in neutral terms and, in fact, proposing that sectarian groups may be closer to the essence of Christianity than the "mainstream churches" of Christendom. However, for obvious reasons, they left Eastern religions, Buddhism for example, outside the scope of their studies. The essential difference between sect and church, nevertheless, is that the church expresses God's design through socio-cultural forms and by dominance, while the sect is defined as expressing God's design though rejection of socio-cultural dominance by forming voluntary congregations of followers.

Stanley Hauerwas is an American theologian, ethicist, and public intellectual. His theological views may be best illuminated by his engagement with the work of two Niebuhr brothers, Reinhold Niebuhr and H. Richard Niebuhr, who are very often considered two of the most influential American theologians of the 20th century. Hauerwas frequently discusses the work of both Niebuhrs, mentioning them in some form in most of his books. From Stanley Hauerswas's standpoint, sectarianism is assumed as the disagreement between two distinct groups of believers of the same religious, cultural, or political organization.

> By 'Sectarianism' what is assumed to be a correlative disengagement from public concerns and debate. If the sectarian does not simply abandon the (public) world to its fate, then the most he does is to address it uncompromisingly in his own language and in the form of a monologue, saying, in effect, "There's the Gospel: take it or leave it". Here the sin of sectarianism takes the specific form of "confessional' (as distinct from 'dialogical') mode of address.[114]

On the other side of the coin, schools of Buddhism referring to the various institutional and doctrinal divisions of Buddhism that were based on disciplinary and doctrinal issues have existed from the Buddha's time up to the present. The classification and nature of various doctrinal, philosophical, disciplinary issues or cultural facets of schools of Buddhism is rather vague and has been interpreted in many different ways, one group believing in doctrinal dispute, the other the discipline issue, which ultimately led to the sheer number of different sects, sub-sects, movements, etc. that have made up or currently make up the span of Buddhist traditions. The sectarian and conceptual

[114] Nigel Biggar, "Is Stanley Hauerwas Sectarian?," in *Faithfulness and Fortitude: In Conversation with the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas*, ed.Mark Theissen Nation and Samuel Wells (Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark Ltd., 2000), 121.

divisions of Buddhist thought are part of the modern framework of Buddhist studies, as well as of comparative religious studies in Euro-American academia.

From the general popular perspective, sectarianism in Buddhism is often framed in the division into two groups: Theravāda and Mahāyāna; the Theravāda school, literally, "the Teaching of the Elders" or "the Earlier Teaching," and the Mahāyāna School, literally the "Great Vehicle." However, the most common classification among the Western Buddhologists is threefold: Mahāyāna teachings, the Vajrayāna teachings, which emphasize esotericism, and the Hīnayāna or Theravada teachings. On the other hand, from the Western academic standpoint, there are two distinct groups of scholars: one group focusing on Sino-Japanese Buddhist Studies, depending mainly on Chinese and Japanese languages, and the second group focusing basically on Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies, depending on the Sanskrit and Tibetan languages. But in between these two groups, there is a substantial gap, Pali Buddhism—a small group of Pali specialists exists nevertheless. Hence, Buddhist sectarianism should be considered and studied from the comparative standpoint of all these schools.

And Heinz Bechert after comparatively examining the issue thouroughly, regarding the usage and the applicability of the English term sects over the Pali term nikāyas in Buddhist sectarianism,very pertinently states.

> There can hardly be any doubt, however, that the formation of nikāyas had begun in a period before Aśoka's reign. Again, the use of a rather inadequate translation for the tern nikāya, i.e. "sect", has obscured the the fact. A nikāya has nothing in common with a "sect" in the accepted understanding of this word, if used in the context of the history of Christianity. A nikāya is a group of monks who mutually acknowledge the validity of their upasampadā, and consequently, if staying within the same sīmā, can commonly perform vinayakammas. The early nikāyas, therefore, represent groups of monks who had accepted identical interpretation of the

> rules of vinaya. It was only in the course of subsequent developments that certain dogmatic opinions were associated with particular nikāyas.[115]

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Early Buddhist literatures provide us with varieties of terms to denote the Western term "schism" or *saṁghbheda*. Though we have used schism for *saṁghabheda* most cases here in this dissertation; the Buddhist literatures give us different words to define schism depending on circumstances of the incidents for which *saṁghabheda* was applied. Among a few the most common two terms are *kammabheda* and *chakkabheda, which* are used and applied instead of or along with the term *saṁghabheda*. Collecting materials from the Pali Sthavīravāda Vinaya literature, Upasak summarizes the term *cakkabheda* as

> Breaking the 'wheel of Law', i.e. breaking the teaching of the Buddha, both doctrinal and ecclesiastical. (*Cakkabhedaṃ ti sāsanabhedaṃ…).* It is

[115] Bechert, *The Importance of Aśoka's So-Called Schism Edict,* 67-68.

> something like *Saṅghabheda* (schism) and so it is often mentioned with it. (e.g. Pārā. Pp. 258,262; Cv. P. 298 etc)[116].

Nevertheless, Sasaki translated *cakkabheda* as *disruption*[117], which seems to me very appropriate. After comparing the Pali Vinaya, the Dhammaguptaka Vinaya and the Mahīsāsaka Vinaya, the author points out that there are two different definitions of "split in the saṃgha" available in these texts, viz., *inconsistent* and *confused*[118]. Thus Sasaki continues

> These inconsistencies seem to have occurred as the definitions were going through a transitional period from that of the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya to that of Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya. That is, in the Pali, the Dharmaguptaka and Mahīsāsaka Vinaya texts, the definition of splits in the saṃgha as it appears in the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya was in the process of being modified to that given in the Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya[119].

On the other hand, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu – though a metaphysical treatise, deals with the Vinaya term as well. The reason for *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* to deal with is to look the split from the doctrinal perspective; the discontinuation of the *cakka* (wheel) of the Buddha and his teachings. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* put forward the question "What kind of conditions are necessary to determine that a saṃgha is disrupted? (*kiyatā bhinnaḥ saṃgho bhavati*)". The answer is "When one recognizes a different master and way. (*śāstṛmārgāntarakṣāntau bhinnaḥ*)[120]". Sasaki added, "When they (those in a saṃgha) recognize a master who is not the Tathāgata and a way that was not taught by Tathāgata, (under these conditions), the saṃgha is recognized as disrupted."

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[116] Upasak, *Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms*, 85
[117] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 170
[118] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 168
[119] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 168
[120] Prahlad Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* of Vasubandhu, 2nd Edition, (Patna: K.P Jayswal Research Institute, 1975), 261-262

However, according to Sasaki's essement the disruptions are as

> When we compare the *cakrabheda* and *karmabheda* types of disruptions with those I discovered in the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya and in the Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya, the *cakrabheda* corresponds to the disruption explained in Sarvāstivāda Vinaya, while the *karmabheda* corresponds with that in the Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya.That is to say, the two types of disruptions discovered by comparing Vinaya materials are confirmed by the Abhidharma texts of the Sarvāstivādins. … the concepts of disruption found in the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya and Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya were distinguished as *cakrabheda* and *karmabheda*, respectively, and that *cakrabheda* required nine monks while *karmabheda* required only eight[121].

The Pali, Dharmaguptaka, and the Mahīsāsaka Vinayas provide a detailed explanation to Upali how and when a *saṁghabheda* is occurred. In the *Cullavagga* of the Pali Vinaya Piṭaka, there are eighteen points, which cause a split. If we compare these eighteen points with the *dasavatthu* of the Vaiśālīan monks (of the Second Buddhist Council), we do not find any "point" to come closer to the definitation given by the Buddha here; hence, the schism or split or "intruption" as Sasaki adopted, due to disciplinay reason, as alleged, could not be accepted. Thus, Sasaki translates from Pali

> As to this, Upāli, monks explain non-Dharmma, as Dhamma,they explain Dhamma as non-Dhamma, they explain non-disciplne as discipline, they explain discipline as non-discipline,they explain what was not spoken, not uttered by the Truth-finder as spoken, uttered by the Truth-finder, they explain what was spoken, uttered by the Truth-finder as not spoken, not uttered by the Truth-finder, they explain what was not practised by the Truth-finder as practised by the Truth-finder, they explain what was practised by the Truth-finder as not practised by the Truth-finder, they explain what was not laid down by the Truth-finder as laid down by the Truth-finder, they explain what was laid down by the Truth-finder as not practised by the Truth-finder, they explain what was laid down by the Truth-finder as not laid down by the Truth-finder, they explain what is not offence as an offence, they explain an offence as no offence, they explain a slight offence as a serious offence, they explain a serious offence as a slight offence, they explain an offence that can be done away with as an offence that cannot be done away with, they explain an offence that cannot

[121] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 172

> be done away with as an offence that can be done away with, they explain a bad offence as not a bad offence, they explain not a bad offence as a bad offence. These, in regard to these eighteen points draw awayand separate (a ceremony), they carry out a separate *uposatha*, they carry out a separate *uposatha*, they carry out a separate (formal) act of the Order. To this extent, Upāli, does an Order become split.[122]

At the end of above-mentioned eighteen points, we notice a separate clouse such as "in regard to these eighteen points draw awayand separate (a ceremony), they carry out a separate *uposatha*, they carry out a separate uposatha, they carry out a separate (formal) act of the Order", which lead us to a different issue. We mentioned earlier that there are two intruptions - *cakrabheda* and *karmabheda*; the discontinuation of the Buddha's teaching is the *cakrabheda* as defined earlier according to *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, then, what the *karmabheda* is. The *karmabheda* is the *uposatha* (act or formal monastic ceremony) of the saṁgha. Upasak summarizes the *karmabheda* (act) as

> An 'act' in the eccelesiastical sence, particularly when the disciplinary measures are taken by the Saṅgha. To hold an eccelesiastical 'act' a formal function is held by the whole Saṅgha. … Thus there are four kinds of *karmas*;… The *Mahavagga* and the *Cullavagga* mention many other kinds of *Karmas*. …
>
> It is mentioned that the *Kamma* must be performed according to the rules (*Dhamma-kamma*) and that also by the Saṅgha all in 'concord' (*samagga*). And so any *kamma* performed against the rules (*adhamma-kamma*) or not approved by the whole Saṅgha (or approved only by a group of the Saṅgha – *Vagga*) should be regarded as illegal. … A *kamma*, which appears only as 'just' but actually it is not proper, should not be performed either by the whole or the 'group' of the Saṅgha[123].

Here Devadatta's schismatic action could be used as an example of both *cakrabheda* and *karmabheda* attempt. First he wanted to split the Buddha's monasticism (i.e. disruption of the continuation of the Buddha's teachings) by declaring himself as a leader of a

[122] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 173
[123] Upasak. *Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms*, 66-67

separate group and performed a separate vinaya act (*uposatha kamma*) away from the main saṁgha. Thus, the *samantapāsādikā* – the Vinaya commentary, states

> "When this happens, Upāli, the saṃgha is disrupted," This means that when the disrupting monk declars one of the eighteen causes described above, has urged others to accept and recognize his declaration, has made them take *śalākā*, and perform rituals independently, the saṃgha is disrupted[124].

In these preceding pages, we have examined different theories of "sect," including some scholastic definitions of the term "sect" and "schism" from a comparative standpoint. At the same time, we have addressed whether these terms could be used in the Buddhist environment. These scholastic theories of schism and sect lead us to a conclusion that there are two characteristics in two poles: modern scholasticism and Buddhist monasticism, viz., a "common characteristic" that covers both scholars' and the Buddhist view of sect and a "special characteristic" that is inherited only in Buddhism. In the Buddhist view, it is an atheistic application, whereas the modern scholars' definition of sect predominantly is theistic in nature, and God, Church, and politics are involved. Finally we have examined the Pali and Sanskrit Vinaya as well as Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* interpretation of the various terms used by Buddhists themselves, led us to conclude that schism of the Western scholars' and that of the Buddhists' do not agree with each other. Let me conclude this chapter with a pertinent quotation from Heinz Bechart again

> It is now clear that saṁghabheda does not mean a "schism" in the sense known from Christian church history, where it nearly always implies dissensions in the interpretation of dogma. In Buddhist tradition, "splitting of the Sangha" always refers to matters of monastic discipline, because the validity of any vinayakamma depends on the validity of the upasampada

[124] Sasaki, *Buddhist Sects in Aśoka Period,* 193

and the completeness of the bhikkhus within the sīmā during the performance of the particular act.[125]

[125] Bechert, *The Importance of Aśoka's So-Called Schism Edict*, 67-68

CHAPTER FOUR

The Admission of Various Sect-Members into the Buddhist Saṁgha

Introduction

The Buddhist monastic establishment split into different *nikāya*s (sects) within 500 years after the passing away of the Master. Buddhist Studies specialists, e.g., André Bareau,[126] Heinz Bechert,[127] Buswell and Lopez[128], etc., use the Pali term "*saṁghbheda*"[129] (schism) to define this split (a split here to denote the entire monastic community which the Buddha so democratically organized for 45 years). Shizuka Sasaki used this split as "intruption" for the *saṁghabheda*. Nevertheless, such a term is not agreeable to this researcher. There are many reasons for this disagreement, one of which is that the Buddha prohibited and discouraged any split in the *Saṁgha,* and declared a split of the *Saṁgha* to be one of the five major offences (*pañca anantarīya kamma*). *Saṁghbheda*, splitting or causing a split in the *Saṁgha* by a member of the *Saṁgha* is, therefore, logically or theoretically, beyond possibility. Therefore, *saṁghbheda* is an inapplicable term. Furthermore, as discussed previously, Buddhist Studies specialists claim that the *Saṁgha* split into sects and sub-sects due to two traditional theories: (a) a monastic disciplinary dispute (*dasavatthu*) and (b) a doctrinal controversy (*pañcavatthu*),

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[126] Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools*, xxvi. ("We will term what Buddhists call saṁghbheda, 'a split in the Community', and which constitutes one of the five major offences…")

[127] "In most cases, the formation of the "schools" took place in such a way as to avoid the formal violation of the above-mentioned injunction against saṃgha bheda." Heinz Bechert, "Saṃgha: An Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan References, 2005) 12:8071-

[128] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 75.

[129] Oldenberg, Herman, ed., *Vinaya Piṭaka* (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1995), 196 ("*etha mayaṃ āvuso samaṇassa Gotamassa saṃghabhedam karissāma cakkabhedan ti,"* which I. B. Horner translates as "Come, we, your reverences, will make a schism in the recluse Gotama's Order, a breaking of the concord" in *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka*), vol. 5 (*Cullavagga*) (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1992), 276 (my underline).

at the conclusion of the Second Buddhist Council, which took place under the patronage of the Indian Emperor Aśoka and under the leadership of the Elder Moggaliputta Tissa.

As described earlier, the first schism took place, according to Pali tradition, at the conclusion of the First Buddhist Council, due to the practice of *dasavatthu* (Ten Points), a series of ten Buddhist monastic disciplines. A council was summoned to authenticate them, but the convening Elders found these "Ten Points" as unorthodox. The bhikkhus who were practicing these Ten Points left the council unsatisfied, summoned a different assembly. The group of bhikkhus who left the council unsatisfied was over ten thousand (*mahāsaṁgha*); hence, this group became to be known as Mahāsāṁghika. In addition, those elder bhikkhus who rejected these Ten Points remain to be known as Sthaviravādin. That was the first split/schism in the early Buddhist monastic tradition.

On the other hand, the Sanskrit tradition differs from the Pali accounts and provides its own version. According to this tradition, there was a bhikkhu by the name of Mahādeva in the Kukkuṭārāma Vihāra who propounded *pañcavatthu* (Five Points), which created havoc in the monastic community. The King had to come to the *vihāra* in order to settle the dispute. At the end of the inquiry, the king asked the monastics their personal preference regarding the issue; the majority of the bhikkhus supported Mahādeva and his Five Points. The King then declared the minority group of bhikkhus should leave the Kukkuṭārāma and the greater portion of the bhikkhus as orthodox. That was the first separation/schism according to the Sanskrit tradition. However, both *dasavatthu* and *pañcavatthu* as the main cause of schism has been discredited by Charles Prebish, André Bareau and a few others; a brief discussion on this issue was made elsewhere in this study.

Therefore, in order to solve such a historiographical problem, this researcher suggests that it was a *"nikāyabheda,"* sectarian split, not a "*saṁghabheda,*" schism of the *Saṁgha,* and that the origin and element of the sectarian split in the Buddhist monastic establishment (*nikāyabheda*) did not start at the end of the Second Buddhist Council as Buddhist Studies specialists suggest. Rather, sects and sectarianism were inherited in the monastic establishment itself during and after the time of the Buddha.

Nevertheless, the question remains open as to what is sects and sectarianism; it requires clarifications. Hence, although it has been discussed earlier in this dissertation, it will be taken up here briefly again. This chapter is structured as follows: first, defining the term "sect," then, looking at the sects and racial distribution of the Buddhist monastics who came from different sects and racial groups of ancient India, next, examining why various sects and sectarian members were interested in joining the Buddhist monastic establishment, and finally, before coming to the conclusion of this chapter, surveying which sectarian groups joined the Buddhist monastic establishment. An analysis is also made here regarding if neither one of the two traditional theories of schism or split in the *Saṁgha* is not accepted as the main cause of the split, then, what was the cause.

According to the Vinaya text, splitting or causing a split of the monastic community (bhikkhu *Saṁgha*) is known "*saṁghabheda*" in Buddhism. C. S. Upasak summarized the term as:

> A 'schism' or 'disunion' in the sangha. On any matter if there are at least five *Adhammavādī* (unrighteous) monks on one side and at least four *Dhammavādī* (righteous) monks on the other, it is called *Saṅghabheda.*
> ….

> The Saṅghabheda can be created by fully ordained monks, not by Bhikkhunis, or *Sikkhamānās*, or *Sāmaneras*, or *Sāmanerīs*, or *Upāsakas, or Upāsikas.* They can however connive at a 'schism'…
>
> What are the characteristics of a Saṅgha 'split'? When the monks advocate the non-Dhamma as Dhamma, the Dhamma as non-Dhamma, the non-Vinaya as Vinaya, the Vinaya as non-Vinaya, the non-spoken by the Buddha as spoken, the spoken by the Buddha as non-spoken, the non-practised by the Buddha as practised, the practised by the Buddha as non-practised, the not-laid down by the Buddha as laid down, the laid down by the Buddha as non-laid down, the non-offence as offence, the offence as non-offence, the ordinary offence as serious offence, the serious offence as ordinary offence, the *Sāsava* 'offence (other than *Pārājikā*) as *Anāvasesa* (*Pārājikā*), the *Duṭṭhulla* offence (*Pārājikā* and *Saṅghādisesa*) as *Aduṭṭhulla* (other offences). On these above points they differ and split and hold *Uposatha, Pavāranā* and other Saṅgha-kammas separately, then it should be regarded as the Sangha 'split' This is known as Saṅghabheda or 'schism' in the Saṅgha.[130]

Buswell and Lopez further analyzed the term from the Buddhist canonical standpoint, as:

> … the act of causing a schism in the community of Buddhist monks and nuns (saṁgha). Technically, a schism occurs when nine or more fully ordained monks separate themselves from the order… These schisms may occur over disagreements in the teachings (dharma) or details of monastic life (vinaya).The Abhidharmamavibhāsa distinguishes two separate types of *saṁghabheda*, one in which there are two separate samghas established within a single sīmā (boundary), the second in which a group attempts to establish a new dispensation with a different teacher.[131]

Splitting or causing split of the *Saṁgha* is such a major offence that the violator will reborn into *avicī* hell for an aeon. Therefore, because of such a decree, knowing the major offence, no one would attempt to split or cause to split the *Saṁgha* and go to *avicī* hell, and without any separation, the unity in the *Saṁgha* will continue. This follows the belief that no one willingly commits suicide. On the other hand, the definition of the term "schism" is not only a complex term that therefore could not be applied to many fields

[130] Upasak, *Dictionary of Early Buddhist Monastic Terms,* 210.
[131] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 751-53.

such as Buddhism, but is also a misleading concept for Buddhism; it is a prohibited term, from the Western interpretation:

> Schism is the process by which a religious body divides to become two or more distinct, independent bodies. The division takes place because one or each of the bodies has come to see the other as deviant, as too different to be recognized as part of the same religious brotherhood. Often disputes over doctrine or organization brew for years before some triggering incident incites the final break. During that preparatory period, groups of *adherents slowly come to understand their procedures and convictions as being fundamentally different from those of opposing group.*[132]

Hence, the applications of the terms *saṁghabheda* and *schism* by Buddhist Studies scholars, is not valid. In accordance with the analysis given by Nancy T. Ammerman as quoted above, and as cited from C. S. Upasak above, it does not fit with the sectarian split in the Buddhist monastic tradition, for, there was no denial of following the teachings of the Buddha by any one of these partisan groups; rather, each and every single group wanted to be a better group within the Buddhist monastic community, without denial of the basic tenets of the Buddha. Furthermore, each sect took up the cause of Buddhism with great zeal and tried to popularize it in various territories and boundaries within and without India and beyond. Nevertheless, Sasaki's interpretation - *disruption*, as mentioned earlier, is fairly acceptable to this researcher.

The Buddha always wanted his *Saṁgha* to survive in one unit, and once he mentioned to his disciples to follow the example of the Vajjis of Vaiśālī, who practice seven factors contributing to progress and not decline (*satta aparihānīya dhamma*). Two

[132] Nancy T. Ammerman, "Schism: An Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd edition, ed. Lindsay Jones (MI: Thompson Gale, 1987), 12:8151 (italics are mine).

of these seven factors are "(i) the frequent meeting and meeting many times; (ii) meeting in unity and conducting the affairs of the Order in unity"[133] are significant in this case.

However, unfortunately, there were, at least, 18 Buddhist *nikāyas* (fraternities) seen in the Buddhist monastic tradition within the 500 years after the passing of the Buddha. Since there were 18 *nikāyas* (fraternities), it is obvious that splits took place in the monastic community, and if so, was it a "*saṁghabheda*"? What term could be used for this split? This researcher would like to argue that it should be a "*nikāyabheda,*" rather than a *saṁghabheda*. What is then, the "*nikāya*" as it is suggested here? The word "*nikāya"* is taken for many purposes, categorically, canonically, sociologically, etc., but here, it is taken more sociologically, a "sect" other than the canonical usages found in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya, Saṁyutta Nikāya,* etc., of the Buddhist canon, defining a sectarian and sub-sectarian separation within the major community. Early Buddhist historians like Vasumitra (*aṣṭādaśanikāyabhedoparacanaackr*a), Bhavya (*nikāya-bheda-vibhaṁga-vyākhyāna*), and Vinīthadeva *(samayabhedoparacanacakrenikāya-bhedopadeśanasaṁgraha*) previously have applied this term *nikāyabheda* in their works, to denote the 18 sectarian divisions within the Buddhist monastic establishment. One should notice here that there is a significant problematic situation in the usage of the term "*saṁghabheda*" in the study of the historicity of the Buddhist sectarianism. It is also always problematic to use terms like *"saṁghabheda*" and "*nikāyabheda*" to describe the states of affairs in very different settings with different socio-historical circumstances; their concepts have very specific meanings and applications in one historical context. This chapter, under these circumstances, other than defining in detail *saṁghabheda* and

[133] *Satta aparihānīya dhamma* – seven factors of undeclining in *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya* which was qouted earlier.

nikāyabheda, focuses on surveying the entry of various sects into the early Buddhist monastic community, which led to the continuous formation of sectarian divisions in the establishment only.

A simple and rational question would be why a sect member would enter into another sect and still maintain the self-identity of his or her previous sect, openly or secretly. In such a case, one needs to realize that Indian society of 6th century BCE was in an identity crises and social turmoil, not due to the influence of the Buddhist social revolution alone, but also because the Brāhmaṇic stratification of the contemporary social institution forced them to do so. Even though there were many liberal members from upper class social groups in the Buddhist monastic establishment who were interested only in release from rebirth as a cessation of mundane existence, yet prevailing conservative contemporary social consciousness was so deeply rooted in the Brahmanic class ideology that their mindset could not give up class and race mentality. Thus, Richard Fick observes:

> These are, so to speak, academic discussions regarding the value of castes which all only serve — not to give us a picture of Indian society — but to oppose the claim of Brāhmaṇas to be through their caste in sole possession of truth, of the knowledge of the path of emancipation. In my opinion, there is no more reality in these theoretical speculations than in the theory of Brāhmaṇas; they are nothing else than a reflex of the priestly literature and show us that the Brahmanical theory was not only well known to the Buddhist monks but was so strongly imbedded in their consciousness, that they could not free themselves from it, although in all probability, they were quite convinced of its incongruences with the real world as well as of the worthlessness of the caste.[134]

[134] Richard Fick, *The Social Organization in North-East India in Buddha's Time*, Eng. trans. Shishirkumar Maitra (Varanasi and Delhi, India: Indological Book House, 1972), 30-31. (Also, for further investigation: Lokānanda C. Bhikkhu , "*Dasavatthu and Pañcavatthu: A Critical Study in the Schism in Early Buddhist Monastic Tradition"* (1992), an MA thesis submitted to the Department of Asian and Asian-American Studies, California State University-Long Beach.)

Such a class mentality could have influenced and forced several sectarian-minded members of the *Saṁgha,* who previously belonged to other so-called lower class or oppressed class members, to organize and reorganize themselves or remain in-group intact, who joined the *Saṁgha* as a group into smaller groups. T. W. Rhys Davids, while reviewing the treatise *Kathāvatthu* (*Points of Controversy*), summarizes the historical facts of the pre-Third Buddhist Council *Saṁgha* in a few sentences denying existence of any sectarian element in the *Saṁgha,* making an important observation:

> If we take this evidences together, it is possible to draw only one conclusion. There were no 'sects' in India, in any proper use of that term. There were different tendencies of opinion, named after some teacher (just as we talk of 'Puseyites') or after some locality (as we used to talk of 'the Clapham sect'), or after the kind of view dominant (just as we use 'Broad' or 'Low' Church). All the followers of such views designated by the terms or names occurring in any of the lists were members of the same order and had no separate organization of any kind.
>
> The number eighteen is fictitious and may very probably be derived from the eighteen moral causes of division set out above. As so-called sects were tendencies of opinion, the number of them was constantly changing, and at no time or place which of any great importance. Two or three could, and did, exist at the same time, not only in the same monastery, but in the same mind.[135]

Supporting these two poles, scholars, both Eastern and Western, argued on both issues in favor of their own choice, but without any remarkable conclusion; the result of such a debate was considered as highlights

> separating the community into two rival groups: (1) the Sthaviras, closely associated with the traditional Buddhist orthodoxy of the time, and (2) the Mahāsāṁghikas, portrayed as representing the liberal, progressive wing of the community in both discipline and doctrine.[136]

[135] T. W. Rhys Davids, "Sects" (Buddhist), in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hasting (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 11:308.
[136] Prebish, *Historical Dictionary*, 6 -7.

However, while all of these above-mentioned scholars focused the origin of Buddhist sectarianism basically in post-Second Buddhist Council historiography, this researcher has a different stand on it, as Prebish encouraged "scholars to look elsewhere for the beginning of Buddhist sectarianism."

However, the question modern scholars face is, if neither the cause (1) nor the (2) is responsible, as Prebish suggests (quoted above), then what is the possible reason for this split? Alternatively, what is the fundamental reason for this split? Furthermore, was it a misinterpretation of the term *saṁghabheda*? Did Buddhist sectarianism begin at the Second or Third Buddhist Council? On the other hand, did seeds of sects and sectarianism exist during the time of the Buddha? Modern Buddhologists should find some answers to these questions.

The Origin of Group Mentality

Some of the issues raised by Bowker are applicable to the Indian socio-religious environment of the 6th century B.C. Indian society was always trying to find a self-identity, as the suppressed minority groups were trying to survive under the divisive pressure from higher-class social groups. The divisive and fragile nature of the Indian social system is well documented in various scholastic monographs; André Bareau's *The Buddhist Schools of the Small Vehicle* analyzes some of these factors.[137] It has been the case for even religious ascetic groups who were Śrāmaṇic by nature and struggling to survive against the powerful Brahmanic group. S. K. Pathak observes thus from the Indian perspective: "In this context, the Buddhist in their homeland faced several challenges from their diverse opponents like the Veda-oriented Brahmanic promulgators,

[137] Bareau, *The Buddhist Schools*, 39.

Jaina Śrāvakas and multiple indigenous mendicant yogin groups."[138] However, other minor groups were also affected by such challenges, which led them to join the Buddha, so that a strong organizational force could have been a motivation. There were six prominent heretical groups who were trying to influence over each other until the Buddha came into the scene.

There were many sectarian ascetics, wanderers, Jaṭilas, and other sect members who entered the Buddhist monastic establishment and fostered the sect mentality themselves. Certain anti-Buddha sect leaders, the Jain ascetic Nigantha Nāthaputta, for example, sent sect followers such as Sīha to defeat the Buddha (Sīha failed). It is not impossible that many already entered and worked silently to promote sectarianism. Although it is seems a superficially speculative suggestion, it is possible as far as the presence of Devadatta and Ciñcā, a courtesan, and other anti-Buddha elements are concerned. On the other hand, the ubiquitous Indian social caste system also influenced the Buddhist monastic establishment. Both Uma Chakravarti[139] and Hans W. Schumann demonstrated such claims in their studies. Schumann, after studying the Buddhist literary sources, drew a chart analyzing racial makeup in his book, *Historical Buddha*:

Table 3: Monks to Nuns Ratio

	Monks		Nuns[140]	
	No	%	No	%
Brahmins	96	48.2	15	38.4
Kshatriyas	57	28.6	13	33.2
Vessas	27	13.5	10	25.8

[138] S. K. Pathak, "Ideology and Genesis of the Schismatic Buddhism in India (up to Cent. 13 C.E.)," in *The Schismatic Buddhism in India: Ideology and Genesis (up to 13th Century)*, ed. Sanjib Kumar Das (Delhi, India: Buddhist World Press, 2014), 102.
[139] Uma Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism* (New Delhi, India: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2008). Appendix C- the Social Background of the Bhikkhus and Upāsakas, 1996), 199 -.
[140] Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, 188.

Casteless	6.6	6.6	1	2.6
Suddas	6	3.1	--	0
Total	199	100	39	100

The above chart shows that there was racial stratification in the monastic establishment even during the time of the Buddha. These race-sectarian elements were not openly active during the life of the Master, since he was the founder and sole authority of the community, but after his demise, the schismatic elements became, indeed, active. In this regard, one could consider Torkel Brekke's observation:

> The five monks in the deer park did not change their lifestyles radically when joining the Buddha, nor did the matted hair ascetics, nor did all those who went over from other sects, such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna, who initially belonged to the following of Sañjaya, nor did General Sīha who was a Jain. On the contrary, it is clear from the texts that a large number of those who joined the early Samgha were already part of a large religious and philosophical milieu of homeless wanderers. Some of the early Buddhists had to modify their meditational practice, their outward appearance or their diets, but their situation as religious seekers and wanderers did not change.[141]

The metaphysical speculations in India were, as B. M. Barua summarized: "How does the world originate? In what manner are individual things created? By what have these their unity and existence? Who creates, and who ordains? From what does the world spring up and to what again does it return?"[142] Depending on these speculative questions, a number of religio-philosophical sects grew up in India. The purposes of these sects were to find the answer to these questions. Contrarily, Buddhism was not interested in these types of speculative questions; rather it focused on release from this sāṁsāric, troublesome rebirth through the cessation of mundane existence. The Buddha avoided

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[141] Torkel Brekke, *Religious Motivation and the Origins of Buddhism: A Socio-psychological Explanation of the Origins of a World Religion* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 50.
[142] Benimadhab Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* (Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970), 5 (the author is also known as Dr. B. M. Barua).

two extremes (*antā*), which comprises self-indulgence *(kāmesukāmasukhallikānuyogo*), on the one hand, and self-mortification (*attakilamatānuyogo*) on the other; rather, he focused on the Middle Way (*majjhima paṭipadā*). Such a scheme appealed to other sect members; other sectarians saw a rational, feasible and doable environment, so they joined the Buddha's monastic establishment. Yet they could not remove from their mindset their previous racial as well as sectarian identity completely.

Different Pre-Buddhist Sects in India

There were two distinct religious sects/traditions in pre-Buddhist India who were puzzled by these metaphysical speculations, the Śramaṇa tradition and the Brāhmana tradition. Whereas the Brāhmanic tradition remained exclusively a householder sect, the Śrāmaṇic tradition, on the other hand, according to early Pali literatures, was composed of six heretical sects, which are recorded in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (cited earlier). The well-known sectarian leaders were Nigantha Nāthaputta, Sañjaya Belaṭṭiputta, Ajita Kesakambalin, Pakudha Kacchāyana, and Makkhali Gosāla. The *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (I-I) recorded names and doctrines of these contemporary well-known sectarian leaders. Each of these sects had their own followers, some of which counting over a thousand. Some well-known sects joined the Buddha on different occasions. The *Sutta Piṭaka* carries the testimony of various sect leaders (and their sectarian doctrines)[143] entering into the Buddhist monastic tradition since the inception of it. Some of the very prominent disciples of the Buddha were sect leaders or followers of a certain sect before their admission in the Buddhist *Saṁgha*. Among these

[143] Benimadhab Barua, *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* deals with most of these sects and their doctrines.

were the Ven. Sāriputra, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, Ven. Devadatta (the Buddha's cousin), Ven. Gavampati, the Group of Six (Chabbaggīya Bhikkhus), and many more.

The *Tipiṭaka* mentioned some of these sects, including the Ājīvakas (Those of the Pure Life), the Muṇḍaka Sāvakas (the Shaven Disciples), the Jaṭilas (the Matted-hair Ones), Paribbājakas (the Wanderers), the Māgaṇḍakas, the Medaṇḍikas (the Trident-bearers), the Aviruddhakas (the Free Ones), the Gotamakas (Gotama's Followers), the Devadhammikas (the Godly Ones), and the Dārupāttikas (Heirs of the Wooden Bowl, (A.III, 276; D.I, 157). All of these sects come under the Śramaṇa sects and are collectively known as "*titthiya*" (ford-makers) since they claimed to be able to show the way to "cross over" from this to the next world. Buddhist sutras used this term, "*titthiya*" or *"aññatittiyas*" for any non-Buddhist Śramaṇa sects. The two most dominant Śramaṇa sects of the time, however, were the Nigaṇṭhas (the Bondless Ones,) (A.III, 276), later known as the Jains, and the Śākyaputras, i.e., the Buddhists.

The Buddhist sutras recorded there was a great deal of religious switching during the time of the Buddha as well as in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, especially in favor of Buddhism. The Buddha, at the beginning of his search for the truth, himself was the disciple of two different sect teachers, Ālāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta (*Majjhima Nikāya* I, 164-5). In the Buddha's early career, three famous brothers who were the leaders of three different groups of Jaṭilas, the Kassapas—Nadī Kassapa, Uruvela Kassapa and Gayā Kassapa— became Buddha's disciples, bringing all their followers with them.[144] The converting of these three brothers was the most important incident that more than any other drew widespread attention to the Buddha soon after he started his

[144] T. W. Rhys Davids and Herman Oldenberg, trans., *Vinaya Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1882); (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1974), 118.

mission. Additionally, the two ascetics who later became Buddha's senior disciples were Sāriputta and Moggallāna; both had their own followers figuring five hundred each and had been Ājīvakas before becoming Buddhists. Many ascetic participants in the Buddhist monasticism came, basically, from the Jain and Ājīvaka sects, but why should a member of a different sect join another one while there was a rivalry among them? The answer could vary depending on circumstances. Nevertheless, here, in this case, the followers of the Jains and the Ājīvakas had doctrinal similarities to Buddhism. Thus, Noble Rose Reat observes:

> Both these doctrines bear some resemblance to Buddhism, which is uninterested in speculations regarding the origin of the universe, and which regards release from rebirth as a cessation of mundane existence. Buddhism thus belongs primarily to the yogic tradition of Indian religion. Buddhism originated, however, at a time when the religious and intellectual traditions of two great civilizations were in the midst of vigorous interchange and ferment, as is evident in the speculations of the Upanisads.
>
> … Early Buddhism is not, then, merely a variation upon the yogic theme of release of the soul from rebirth. This much is clear in the Buddhist denial of the soul. Instead, the Buddha participated in a critical and creative movement to synthesize ancient, traditional worldviews which vied for the collective heart of India in the time.[145]

In the following pages, an attempt is made to collect and survey most non-Buddhist sects and sect members who join the Buddhist monastic establishment. The *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* records at least 62 views[146] of contemporary sectarian teachers. The Vinaya Text, on the other hand testifies that the Buddha allowed sectarianism within the monastic system, but under certain conditions (details below). Similarly, the Buddha made every single member of the monastic establishment

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[145] Noble Rose Reat, "The Historical Buddha and his Teachings," in *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies,* ed. Karl H. Potter (New Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1998), 7:7.
[146] *Brahmajāla Sutta* of *Dīgha Nikāya,* Eng. trans. Maurice Walshe, 55.

understand and realize that creating a sect or a schism has a Vinaya consequence, which will lead to exclusion from the establishment. The Vinaya *Mahāvagga* dedicates a whole chapter on this issue.

The Buddha also allowed the partisan bhikkhus to hold *vinaya-kamma* (monastic disciplinary acts) or *uposatha* (confession) separately if a certain group of bhikkhus wished. After a quarrelsome episode in the city of Kosambi, two groups of bhikkhus were staging *uposatha* separately, and it was reported to the Buddha by other senior bhikkhus. Thus the Vinaya text records:

> At that time the Bhikkhus who were partisans of that expelled bhikkhu, held Uposatha and performed official acts at that same place, within the boundary. On the other hand the Bhikkhus who had pronounced expulsion against him, went outside the boundary and there held Uposatha, and performed official acts.[147]

This incident was reported to the Buddha as below:

> Lord, those Bhikkhus who are partisans of that expelled bhikkhu, hold Uposatha, and perform official acts, at that same place, within the boundary. On the other hand, we do have pronounced expulsion against him, have gone outside the boundary and there hold Uposatha and perform official acts.[148]

Then the Buddha replied:

> If those Bhikkhus, O bhikkhu, who are partisans of that expelled Bhikkhu, will hold Uposatha, and perform official acts, at that same place, within the boundary, according to the rules laid down by me about ñatti and anussāvanā, these official acts which they perform will be lawful, unobjectionable, and valid. And if you, O bhikkhu, who have expelled that Bhikkhu, will hold Uposatha, and perform official acts, at that same place, within the boundary…. and valid.
>
> And why is this so? These bhikkhus belong to another communion than that to which you belong, and you belong to another communion than that to which they belong.[149]

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[147] *Vinaya Texts*, (Part II), 285.
[148] *Vinaya Texts,* 290.
[149] *Vinaya Texts,* 290-91.

However, such kind of liberal attitude by the Buddha in his monasticism gave other liberal-minded individuals assurance and freedom of partisan living in the same establishment. The result of such an accepting attitude was that different people could maintain their group affiliation and live under the same roof without any major conflict. Therefore, it seems, if there were a number of members from other (ascetic) sects, they also could continue performing Vinaya acts separately, even though there is not enough evidence to show as such. In accordance with the Buddha's last decree (quoted above), Ven. Sāriputra or Ven. Moggallāna, who were the leader of five-hundred disciples each, could have held separate *vinaya-kamma* following their previous Ājīvaka ascetic practice. Nevertheless, they did not do it, and rather participated in general *vinaya-kamma* ceremonies.

However, there were two major conflicts recorded in the Pali literatures, especially in *Vinaya Texts*. One of these conflicts was led by Buddha's cousin, Devadatta, who introduced five ascetic rules, and the other one was between two prominent bhikkhus regarding an issue in the outhouse. According to the Vinaya, a bhikkhu must keep the water vessel upside down after using it in the outhouse. If this is not done and the bhikkhu leaves the outhouse, there is a Vinaya offence.

The following are some of the sectarian elements who joined the Buddha's monastic establishment. Though remote, it should be pointed out here, however, that in early Pali sources we find a number of categorical divisions of Śrāvakas Bhikkhu (sects ?) made by the Buddha, such as (a) *supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṁgho* (the *Saṁgha* of the Exalted One's disciple who have practiced well), (b) *ujupaṭipanno*…. (*Saṁgha* of the Exalted One's disciple who have practiced straightly) (c) *ñāyapaṭipanno*… (the

Saṁgha of the Exalted One's disciple who have practiced rightly), (d) *samīcipaṭipanno*… (*Saṁgha* of the Exalted One's disciple who have practiced properly) (e) *aṭṭhapurisapuggalā*… (the four pairs of men, those who are in the four pairs of Noble Path and Fruition). All of these impart the suggestion that the Buddha himself created a sectarian concept here. There were numbers of bhikkhus who qualified to be under such categories during the time of the Buddha (as are some now). It is possible that those who did not fall under these categories were jealous of those who fall under.

Dhammavādī-Vinayavādī Group

As the *Kausambiya Sutra* (of *Majjhima Nikāya*),[150] Vinaya *Cullavagga* and *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* [151] mention, we notice there was a dispute (which has been mentioned in detail elsewhere) between two prominent bhikkhus that later grew into two larger fragments, each fragment containing 500 bhikkhus.

Ajita-mānava Group

Ajita mānava was a son of a Brahmin of Śrāvasti – a price-assessor (*aggāsaniya*) of the King of Kosala; and a disciple of Bāvari who visited the Buddha along with other friends, and was the first one to ask question to the Buddha according to the Ajitamānavapucchā of the *Sutta Nipāta*. Ajita-mānava had a thousand followers who became arahants after listening to the Buddha. Both the *Therigāthā* and *Saṃyutta Nikāya* provide references to Ajita-mānava.[152]

Atula Group

[150] *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, Eng. trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), 419.
[151] *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* (*Yamakavagga*), Eng. trans. E. Burlingame, Chapter 8.
[152] Malalasekera, *DDPN*, I:37

Atula was an *Upāsaka* from Śrāvasti. Atula along with his five-hundred followers went to listen the Dharma sermon by Ven. Revata, Ven. Revata would not preach Dharma to Atula who being anger, went to Ven. Sariputra who preached on Abhidharma. Ven. Ananda also preached a short Dharma sermon to Atula and his followers. Finally, they went to listen to the Buddha's preaching; at the conclusion of the Buddha's preaching Atula and his followers gained the "First Fruit of the Path".[153]

Niganṭhanāthaputta Group

Though Nāthaputta was always opposed to the Buddha's teachings and antagonized his pupils against Buddha; yet, many of his pupils being unsatisfied eventually joined the Buddha's monastic tradition. Thus Malalasekera informs "that there was great dissension among the Niganṭas after the death of Nāthaputta at Pāvā. The Commentaries state that Nāthaputta, realizing on his death-bed the folly and futility of his teaching, wished his followers to accept the Buddha's teaching."[154]

Devadatta Group

The second noteworthy schismatic act took place under the leadership of Devadatta, the cousin of the Buddha. Devadatta wanted to have sole leadership of the monastic community, and tried to get the Buddha to place the community under his control. The Buddha refused.

After Buddha's refusal, Devadatta split the monastic community and with five hundred other bhikkhus went to live in the township of Gayāsirsa. However, later, the Ven. Sāriputta and the Ven. Mahamoggalāna went to meet Devadatta and his followers, convinced them of the proper demeanor of monasticism, and brought them back to the

[153] Malalasekera, *DDPN,* I:53
[154] Malalasekera, *DDPN,* 2:64-65

vihāra. The dispute was seemingly settled, but in actuality, it was not. When the Chinese pilgrim Śramaṇa Xuanzang visited India, he saw a group of bhikkhus living in the Eastern India, precisely in Pandruvardhana/Karnasuvarna, who were still practicing Devadatta's ascetic rules, i.e., abstaining from taking milk and milk products.[155] Fa Xian also noticed the continuation of Devadatta's *Saṁgha* during his visit to India in the 5th century. Schumann thus notes: "His Saṁgha outlived him for a long time. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien, who visited India, had met monks who claimed to be followers of Devadatta."[156]

Chabbaggīya Group

The Chabbaggīya Bhikkhus were a notorious group of monks who always triggered disputes, disliked other monks, and transgressed the Vinaya rules. The *Vinaya Text* records their anti-vinaya activities in several places. There were six monks in this group; hence, it is known as Chabbaggīya. Among them were Assajī, Punabhasu, Paṇḍuka, Lohitaka, Mettiya and Bhummajaka. Additionally, there was a bhikkhuni in this group who also played an important sectarian role. All of these bhikkhus and the bhikkhuni originated from the city of Sāvatthi. They each had five-hundred followers and divided into three groups to live in three different places, where they maintained their headquarters: Assajī and Punabhasu resided in Kiṭāgiri; Mettiya and Bhummajaka in Rājagaha; and Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka in Jetavana. Their early livelihood was very poor, so in order to maintain their livelihood they entered the Buddhist monastic establishment. They were all were acquainted from childhood. Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka were pious and

[155] Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India* (A.D. 629 – 645) (Delhi, India: Munshi Ram Manohar Lal, Oriental Publishers and Booksellers, (Part II), first Indian edition 1961), 191.
[156] Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, 238.

remained near the Buddha, accompanying him on his tours. The five were very negatively influential towards the main Buddhist monastic establishment.[157]

Another important negative element was the Bhikkhu Subhadda, who after hearing that the Buddha passed away uttered an exclamation of relief:

> Enough Sirs! Weep not, neither lament! We are well rid of the great Samana. We used to be annoyed by being told, 'This beseems you, this beseems you not'. But now we shall be able to do whatever we like; and what we do not like, that we shall not have to do.[158]

Such countering words show how other schismatic elements in the monastic establishment existed during the lifetime of the Buddha. However, Dr. Wang Pachow suggested an interesting concept regarding the Chabbaggīya Bhikkhus. He thinks the Chabbaggīya itself is a concept only and never existed. Thus:

> It is also an obvious fact, that the persons who joined the Buddhist Church were both elites and persons of undesirable characters. Some came with the supreme ideal of Nirvāṇa and others purely for a comfortable living as we find it constantly mentioned in the Vinaya how notoriously the Chabbaggiya Bhikṣus behaved themselves. There might have never existed the so called 'group of six Bhikṣus' in reality, but we believe, there must have been persons in the Saṃgha who did represent such characters and a major portion of the Pmk rules originally framed on their account.[159]

Additionally, a whole series of anti-monastic behaviors have been listed in Chapter five of this study.

Paribbājaka Pasūra Group

There was a Paribbājaka (wanderer) by the name of Pasūra who carried a branch of *jambu*-tree (rose fruit) in hand all the time. One day, he visited Sāvatthi alone with a large crowd, intending to have a debate with Ven. Sāriputta. After the discussion, Pasūra

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[157] G. P. Malalasekera, ed. *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, vol. 1 (London: Luzac & Co., 1960), 926. Hereafter, *DPPN*.
[158] *Vinaya Text,* (Part III), 371.
[159] Pachow, *A Comparative Study of the Prātimokṣa on the Basis of its Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Pali Versions,* 66.

was defeated by Ven. Sāriputta, and later with his followers, he entered the *Saṁgha* under Lāludāyī.[160]

Bāvarī Group

There was a brāhmin ascetic by the name of Bāvarī who lived in a hermitage on the bank of the Godāvari river. He sent his sixteen main pupils, Ajita, Tissametteya, Puṇṇaka, Mettagū, Dhotaka, Upasīva, Nanda, Hemaka, Todeya, Kappa, Jatukaṇṇi, Bhadrāvudha, Udaya, Posāla, Mogharāja, and Pingiya, to Sāvatthi to meet the Buddha; when they met the Buddha each asked a question to Buddha and received answers. They gathered sixteen-thousand followers while travelling to Sāvatthi; all after listening to the Buddha became disciples of the Buddha.[161]

Bhaddavaggiyā Group

There was a group of thirty young men known as the Bhaddavaggiyā who went on a picnic in a place in between the city of Bārānasī and Uruvelā. Among these young men, one was unmarried, so others found a courtesan for him. However, she was not happy and looked for the opportunity to run away; one day, she ran away with all of their goods. While looking for her, these young men met the Buddha and after listening to a sermon, they became disciples of the Buddha.[162] A different account states there were a thousand followers.[163]

Mahākāssapa Thera Group

Ven. Mahākāssapa was one of the most influential disciples of the Buddha. The Buddha himself considered Mahākāssapa as competent as the Buddha himself in

[160] Malalasekera, *DPPN*, 2: 168.
[161] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 280.
[162] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 350.
[163] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 1: 795.

understanding the Dhamma, beside the Ven. Sāriputta. Immediately after the passing away of the Buddha, it was the Ven. Mahākāssapa who took the leadership of the *Saṁgha* and safeguarded the Buddha's teachings. When Ven. Mahākāssapa heard the naïve comments of Purāṇa and Subhadda, he organized, with the active support of the King Ajātasatru, the First Buddhist Council, in which the collection of "Dhamma" and "Vinaya" were accomplished. Ven. Mahākāssapa had, as most prominent other disciples of the Master, five-hundred disciples.

Upananda Group

Ven. Upananda was a Śākyan by birth whose name is mentioned in several occasions in the Vinaya Text. Once there was a great uproar against him, but he found, as usual, his way. Upananda was rather unpopular among the bhikkhus, for he was "quarrelsome" and the creator of disputes. One of his quarrels was with the notorious Chabbaggīya monks. He also was selfish; caring for only his needs, he refused to share foods obtained from alms with other monks. It is said that he deliberately set out to quarrel with other monks. In one incident, eighty-thousand fellow Śākyans who joined the monastic order held him in contempt.[164]

Kuṭambiya-Tissa Thera Group

Along with his twenty-nine friends, Kuṭambiya Tissa Thera of Sāvatthi went to Jetavana Vihāra with offerings to listen to the Buddha's sermon. All heard the Buddha's sermon and decided to become bhikkhus. Then after five years' residence in the *vihāra*, they requested the Buddha for a *kashina* (topic for meditation), so that they could live the solitary life.

The Tebhātika Jaṭila group

[164] Malalasekera*, DPPN,* 1: 395.

After showing miracles in the locality of Uruvela, the Buddha won the three Kassapa brothers, the Tebhātika Jaṭilas. Alone with these three brothers, there were a thousand followers with these Jaṭilas who became bhikkhus. Eventually all of them became *arahants*.

The Tissa Thera Group

Ven. Tissa Thera was an *arahant* who belonged to a Brahmin family of Rājagriha. He was proficient in the three Vedas, and became a teacher of five-hundred young men. Later he joined the Buddhist monastic establishment and won the arahantship.[165]

Puṇṇa, Puṇṇaka Thera Group

Puṇṇaka Thera was born in the family of a householder in Sunapranta country. He went on a business trip to Srāvasti, where he heard the Buddha was preaching; and he joined the *Saṁgha*. He won over many followers, both male and female, and built a *vihāra* for the Buddha with sandalwood (*candanasālā*).[166]

Ven. Purāṇa Group

Ven. Purāṇa was one of the Buddha's *arahant* disciples. He was living in Dakkhiṇāgiri province during the time of the recital of the Dhamma and Vinaya in the First Buddhist Council and also had his 500 disciples. Ven. Purāṇa while visiting the vicinity of the council in Rājagaha was asked to participate in the council. He did not participate in it, but agreeing with the outcome of the council expressed his opinion: "The doctrine and the disciplinary rule have been well sung by the Elders, nevertheless, even in such manner as it has been heard by me, and received by me from the very mouth

[165] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 2:1021.
[166] Malalasekera*, DPPN,* 220.

of the Blessed One, in the manner will I bear it in my memory."[167] Additionally, like Devadatta, he further insisted that bhikkhus should incorporate eight Vinaya rules regarding food into the Vinaya. Though not extant in Pali, the rules are recorded in Chinese, which D. T. Suzuki translated, as quoted by Nalinaksha Dutt:

> i) cooking food indoors;
> ii) cooking indoors;
> iii) cooking food of one's own accord;
> iv) taking food of one's own accord;
> v) receiving food when rising early in the morning;
> vi) carrying food home in compliance with the wish of the giver;
> vii) having miscellaneous fruits; and
> viii) eating thing grown in a pond[168]

Mahāmoggallāna Thera Group

Mahāmoggallāna Thera was one of the prominent disciples of the Buddha. He was born in Kolitagāma of Rājagriha. He, at the beginning was a follower of the Ājivaka ascetic Sañjaya Belaṭṭiputta, like Sāriputta. After discussing Buddha's teachings with Ven. Assajī, Moggallāna became interested in joining the Buddha along with five-hundred followers of Sañjaya. Then all went to Veluvana Vihāra and became *Saṁgha* members.[169]

Sariputta Thera Group

Both Sāriputta and Moggallāna were colleagues. Before Moggallāna, Sāriputta decided to join the Buddha's monasticism. He had five hundred followers. Ven. Sāriputta is very often referred to as the *Dhammasenāpati* and was second to the Buddha by wisdom. Whenever there was a candidate pursuing ordination into the Saṃgha, the

[167] La Vallée Poussin, "Councils and Synods," in *ERE,* vol. 11, 185.
[168] Nalinaksha Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*, 39.
[169] Malalasekera*, DPPN,* 534.

Buddha would ask Sāriputta to ordain such candidate. Buddha entrusted Rāhula- his biological child, to Sāriputta to ordaine and guide him.

Mettagū Thera Group

Mettagū Thera was one of the sixteen disciples of Bāvarī (noted above). Mettagū went to greet the Buddha along with sixteen disciples of Bāvarī and asked Buddha different questions. Upon listening to Buddha's sermon, Mettagū and thousands of his disciples became the followers of the Buddha.[170]

Saṅkicca Thera Group

Saṅkicca Thera was born to a Brahmin family of Sāvatthi. His mother died when she was pregnant with him; when her body was cremated, relatives found Saṅkicca miraculously alive. Upon growing in age, he was ordained by Sāriputta. One day he travelled through a forest where five-hundred robbers lived who wanted to sacrifice a human being. Soon these robbers saw him and captured him for sacrifice. On the sacrifice altar, the slaughterer raised the sword over Sankicca's throat, but the sword split into two. The robbers upon seeing this miracle paid obeisance to Saṅkicca, and after listening to a Dhamma sermon, all became his followers.[171]

Ven. Sīvalī Thera Group

Sīvalī Thera was one of the prominent disciples of the Buddha. He was the well-known recipients of gifts and was considered to be the luckiest among the bhikkhus. He once went to the Himālaya to test his luck along with five-hundred bhikkhus.[172]

Ven. Sonaka Thera Group

[170] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 657.
[171] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 975-7.
[172] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 1164.

Sonaka Thera was a son of a caravan leader of Kāśi. When he was about fifteen years old, he went to Rājagriha and then to Veluvana Vihāra. He met Dāsaka Thera and entered the *Saṁgha*. He became an *arahant* and a leader of one-thousand bhikkhus.[173]

Brahmin Sela Group

Brahmin Sela of Aṅguttarāpa was a close friend of a Jaṭila by the name of ascetic Keṇiya. One day the ascetic Keṇiya invited the Buddha to offer *dāna* along with Buddha's twelve-hundred disciples. The Brahmin Sela and his two-hundred-and-fifty followers also paid a visit to the Buddha at the same time. Brahmin Sela wanted to observe the thirty-two characteristic (*mahāpurisalakkhaṇa*) of the Buddha to confirm that he was really the Buddha, and Sela saw all of the bodily characteristics of the Buddha with the exception of two—the male organ and the tongue. The Buddha, knowing Brahmin Sela's mental doubt, clairvoyantly showed both. Then Brahmin Sela, being convinced, bowed down before the Buddha and put forward a question and the Buddha answered. Then the Brahmin Sela being pleased with the answer along with his two-hundred-and-fifty students entered the *Saṁgha.*[174]

Beside the groups as noted above, during the time of the Buddha, there were other prominent monastic leaders during the Second and Third Buddhist Councils who also had numbers of disciples. There were at least six direct disciples of Ven. Ānanda during the Second Buddhist Council who played an important part in the council and also had their own group of disciples. They were following their teachers obviously. When Ven. Moggaliputta Tissa led the Third Buddhist Council, he also had a retinue of disciples.

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[173] Malalasekera*, DPPN, 2:*1296.
[174] Malalasekera, *DPPN,* 1288; also *Sela Sutta (The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: Majjhima Nikāya*), Eng. trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2005), 755.

Ven. Mahinda, the son of the Emperor Asoka, and Ven. Saṁghamitrā, the daughter of the emperor, had their own retinue of disciples who followed them to the island of Sri Lanka. Following them, of course, different sects were born there. Moreover, if we can further our span of periods, we could mention here the Fourth Buddhist Council, which took place under the patronage of King Kaniṣka: sectarian elements were there as well.

Akira Hirakawa made a pertinent assessment on Caityavādins in his work, "The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stupa." The Cetīyavādins deserves an especial mention in this category, although it is considered one of the traditional, post-Second Council eighteen schools; its origin, indeed, goes back to the time of the Buddha. The term *caityavāda* comes from the word "*caitya*" (a derivation from *citā*, funeral pyre), a small, hemispherical dome (also known as stupa) erected over the funeral pyre of a deceased honorable person such as a Buddha or a *cakravartin rājā* (universal monarch), in order to honor him. It was a traditional practice in India from time immemorial to respect an honorable person with the *caitya/*stupa. From the Buddhist standpoint, the Buddha encouraged his disciples and followers to respect worthy ones by erecting a *caitya/*stupa over the funeral pyre. While on the way to the township of Vaiśālī, the homeland of the Vajjis, just three months before his *Mahāparinibbāna*, the Buddha once told the Ven. Ānanda that

> …. as long as the Vajjian they honour and esteem and revere and support the Vajjian shrines [Cetiyāni] in town or country, and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formerly given and performed, to fall into desuetude —so long may the Vajjian be expected not to decline, but prosper.[175] (*modified: I inserted* "Cetiyāni*" from the footnotes.*)

[175] T.W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids, trans. *Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta* (*Dīgha Nikāya*), (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1966), 80.

It should be emphasized here that though I highlighted each group above purposefully, they are not identified in the Pali text with any particular sectarian or partisan group. Rather, I grouped them under whose leadership they entered the *Saṁgha* or whose teachings they were following previously, for the support of my thesis argumentation. Indeed, with the exception of a few major leaders such as Devadatta, Chabbaggīya, Dhammavādī, and Vinayavādī groups (of Kosambi), all others were living in the *Saṁgha* peacefully without noticeable dispute. Yet, the Vinaya text testifies that there were numerous complaints against certain bhikkhus making issues, for which the Buddha had to amend or addend additional Vinaya rules.

Additionally, Pali Texts also testify that the bhikkhus during the time of the Buddha avoided group activities, either meditating or spending the rainy seasons (*vassāna*). Very often, monks after receiving instruction from the Buddha, went away and sat under the root of a tree (*rukkhamūla gato*), in an empty house (*suññāgāro gato*), in a forest (*araññagato*), and meditated. There is ample reason to believe that certain bhikkhus went to sit under the shade of a huge *caitya* such as the *Ānanda caitya* or the Cāpāla caitya in Vaiśālī, under one of which the Buddha himself had a short rest along with his disciple Ven. Ānanda. The inception of the *Loving-kindness Discourse* (*Karanīyametta Sutta*; *Sutta Nipāta, Khuddaka Pāṭha*) testifies that after receiving instruction from the Buddha, a group of sixty bhikkhus went to the Himalayas to spend the *vassāna*, but had to return breaching the rule of *vassāna* because there was fierce attack from the ghostly spirits. The *Isigilī Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya*) mentions that several hundred bhikkhus (*isis*) entered the cave but never came out, which means they liked solitary living. It also could be pointed out here that in the history after the Third

Buddhist Council, one might notice the birth of a sectarian Buddhist school known as "Cetīyavādins." One may wonder if such an element of solitary living also contributed in the formation of sects. Charles Prebish noted that the Caityavāda school was started by one Bhikkhu Mahādeva.[176]

Additionally, we should also point that there was a disciple of the Buddha by the name of Gavampati who played certain role in the formation of a "sect." It is not mentioned in the Pali texts as to whether he was a sect leader, though, but later on around 6th century A.C., several pieces of evidence show that he became an iconic leader of a lay religious (cultic) sect in Burma, the Gavampati sect. Different epigraphical and archeological findings direct us to that conclusion. H. Shorto[177] in his paper concretizes the theory. Ven. Gavampati was an *arahant* disciple of the Buddha who was invited to attend and recite *dhamma-vinaya* in the First Buddhist Council since he was an *arahant*, but instead of attending the council, he decided to pass into the Nirvāṇa. He was popular in Lower Burma (*Suvannabhūmi*), for a legend states he invited the Buddha to visit and preach the Dhamma to the natives in Suvarnabhūmī and the Buddha did. The legend is not recorded in Pali textual literature, but in Sanskrit.[178]

After the Second Buddhist Council, a number of schools or sects of Buddhism developed, but according to the Vinaya Text and Sri Lankan chronologies, at first, it was a split between the conservative Sthavira group and the liberal Mahāsāṁghikas. Subsequently, each group split into several sects and sub-sects. Finally, Vinīthadeva, Bhavya, and Vasumitra came to calculate all these sects to total 18, but there could have

[176] Nattier and Prebish, "Mahāsāṁghika Origin."
[177] H. L. Shorto, "The Gavampati Tradition in Burma," in *R. C. Majumdar Felicitation Volume*, ed. Himansu B. Sarkar, (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1970), 15-30.
[178] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 316.

been more. Each sect had its own philosophical ideologies, even though it is believed that the split was based on, according to one group, the monastic discipline codes, and on the other side, the doctrinal issues, as others advocated.

In conclusion, in the preceding pages a number of sectarian members were collected which existed during the time of the Buddha; yet, Buddhist historiography maintains only eighteen Buddhist sects were found after the Second or Third Buddhist Council. In the preceding pages, it was disputed as to whether it is appropriate to use the Pali term "*saṁghabheda*" (schism), as most Buddhist Studies specialists have been, and if not, what appropriate term should be applied while discussing the split in the Buddhist monastic tradition. On the other hand, it was also pointed out that if such term should be used, it would not be rational or logical since the Buddha disapproved of the "split" (*saṁghabheda*) of the *Saṁgha*. This researcher suggested that the term "*nikāyabheda*" is the appropriate term while discussing the split in the Buddhist monastic establishment. The Buddhist monastic establishment split, first into two sects at the conclusion of the Second Buddhist Council, and two particular reasons were cited. This researcher, considering the Pali Vinaya texts, disputed that there was no possibility of *saṁghabheda* (schism) other than *nikāyabheda* (sectarianism) before and after the Second Buddhist Council. The entry of several sect members into the Buddhist monastic tradition has been cited here to demonstrate the existence of sectarianism even during the time of the Buddha. Throughout the periods in the history of Buddhism, there were various minor sects and sectarian elements that were sneaking or trying to sneak into the Buddhist monastic establishment. The Aśoka edicts, especially the schism edict, tell us that Asoka

had to send several unorthodox sect monks into exile. More on this issue will be discussed in a later section.

CHAPTER FIVE

Inter-personal Conflicts among the Elders

Personal conflict, which contributed in the formation of the *nikāya* (sects) and sectarianism among the monastics, is recorded in Buddhist literatures. However, perhaps not doctrinal differences, but rather, individual conflict was the main reason for this problem, which could have been racial, sectarian, and most importantly, perhaps, hierarchical, among other contributing factors. Louis de La Vallée Poussin sees it as:

> The 'ecclesiastical age,' the number of years elapsed since the admission into the Order, and the 'sanctity' (arhat-ship), the number of years elapsed since the acquisition of the passionlessness of an arhat, are the principle of a hierarchy – not a constraining, but a very effectual one. The rule of addressing an 'elder in religious life' by a special title, *bhante*, 'venerable,' instead of using the primitive and leveling *āvuso*, 'friend,' is attributed to the dying Buddha; it was enforced at an early epoch, though not at the very beginning. Arhats were jealous of their privileges; they regarded it as a very grave crime unduly to claim arhat-ship; they considered themselves as the spiritual aristocracy of the Church, the universal saṅgha (cf. the legend of the judgement of Ānanda).[179]

Many individual conflicts were solved by the Buddha during his missionary life, but after his great decease, there was no authoritative figure to remedy any conflict in the monastic establishment. As a result, many unruly monastics found excuse to express their individual interest and establish their lineal ideals in the establishment. However, it is noticed that some prominent disciples of the Buddha often played the role of the authoritative leader of the establishment. Ven. Mahākassapa, who rightfully considered

[179] La Vallée Poussin, "Councils and Synods Buddhist," in *ERE*, 4:180.

himself as leading the hierarchy of the Saṁgha at that time, was one of these prominent disciples.

Many undercurrents of personal interests took shape in the monastic establishment as sect and groupings. In the previous chapter, it was shown how the sects and sectarian groups originated and formed in the establishment; the underlying reason for this grouping was discussed there, as racial, hierarchical, and sectarian zeal. La Vallee Poussin, however, again defines the "sect" as:

> There are a number of synonyms or quasi-synonyms, which are translated as follows; 'altercations, contentions, discord, quarrels, divisions, among the saṅgha (bheda), disunion among the sangha (vaji), separations among the sangha (vavatthāna), schism among the sangha (nānākaraṇa)…[180]

Throughout Buddhist history, conflict and personal interest have been shown to dominate in the formation of sects and sectarianism, even in the three major Buddhist Councils and thereafter. However, in this chapter, an attempt is made to demonstrate how personal interest and conflict influenced the formation of sects during and after the passing of the Buddha. In order to demonstrate this claim, we intend to pinpoint and discuss some of the incidents that took place in the time of the Buddha and during the time that each Buddhist Councils took place after the passing of the Buddha.

Internally, there were other schismatic bhikkhus, such as Kokālika, Kaṭamoraka-tissa, Khaṇḍadeviyāputta and Samuddadatta, who were always looking for opportunities to partisan the monastics. Devadatta was one of these leading schismatic monastics who rallied monks to his side. Devadatta propounded five ascetic rules, which he consulted with his partners about and submitted to the Buddha for the approval. The Buddha categorically refused such strict ascetics rules, for such rules would be extreme in nature,

[180] La Vallée Poussin,"Councils and Synods," 4:180.

contrary to his Middle Way, and therefore, impracticable. The five ascetic rules Devadatta propounded were:

> (a) that monks should dwell all their lives in the forest;
> (b) that they should accept no invitation to meals, but live entirely on alms obtained by begging;
> (c) that they should wear only robes made of discarded rags and accept no robes from the laity;
> (d) that they should dwell at the foot of a tree and not under a roof;
> (e) that they should abstain completely from fish and flesh.

The conflict in the Dhammavādī-Vinayavādī episode is a noteworthy episode in the Buddhist monastic establishment; it has been a point of interest even in the time when the collection of the Pali canon, and was also able to receive sufficient attention of the compiler of the Pali canon at the First Buddhist Council. Hence, such episode was cited in three different textual or commentarial texts, from three different perspectives, respectively: first, Ven. Upālī recollected the episode at the First Buddhist Council, which was recorded in the Vinaya *Cullavagga*, then, Ven. Ānanda relayed his memories, which were recorded in *Majjhima Nikāya*, and then, third, the commentator Buddhaghosa wrote a historiography in *Dhammapada aṭṭhakathā*. The Vinaya *Cullavagga* focuses on this episode purely from the judicial (disciplinary) standpoint; hence, the supporters of the Vinayavādī School have reason to believe that it was a Vinaya issue, whereas the Nikāya, *Kosambiya Sutta* (of *Majjhima Nikāya*) maintained this episode from the doctrinal standpoint, since the sutta focuses purely on doctrinal issue. The Vinaya stand is cited above and in this sutta, the Buddha instructed his disciples from the doctrinal perspective:

> Bhikkhus, there are these six principles of cordiality that create love and respect and conduce to cohesion, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. What are the six?

> "Here a bhikkhu maintains bodily acts of loving-kindness both in public and in private towards his companions in the holy life. This is a principle of cordiality that creates love and respect, and conduces to cohesion, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. . .
> Verbal acts of. . .Mental acts of. . . [181]

Hence, Ven. Ānanda considered this sutta from the doctrinal standpoint, whereas Ven. Upālī came from a disciplinary perspective; they presented at the same time and in the same council in the presence of at least 500 *arahants*. The commentary of this episode provides the historiography of the dispute, avoiding both doctrinal as well as disciplinary conclusions. No record regarding agreement or disagreement among the participant *arahants* in the council is found in the Pali texts. Yet this issue has remained a point of controversy since.

The episode goes thus: one day in the township of Kosambi, there were two prominent bhikkhus "each with a retinue of five hundred monks" (both monks' group totaling their students a thousand). One day, a senior bhikkhu who was "a preacher of the Law" (Dhamma) went to the outhouse to ease himself, and after washing his private part with water, he exited the toilet without turning the water vessel upside down. After that episode, another senior bhikkhu, who was "a student of the Discipline" (Vinaya), entered the outhouse and noticed that the water vessel was not kept upside down by the earlier user. He told this incident to his band of disciples in the Vihāra. Upon hearing the criticism by the other band of bhikkhus, they reported to the senior bhikkhu, who disagreed with the reported offence, and a dispute begun. The senior bhikkhu was a prominent adherent of Dhamma, and, on the other side, the offending bhikkhus were

[181] *Kosambiya Sutta* of *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, Eng. trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2009), 419.

strict adherents of Vinaya. Hence, a dispute between the follower of the senior Bhikkhu of the Dhamma (*Dhammavādī*) band and that of the Vinaya band (*Vinayavādī*) begun. This partisan quarrel gained such vigor that the Buddha himself had to become involved in settling it. "The Buddha goes to them in person and admonished them. Still they refuse to be reconciled. Disheartened by his failure to restore harmony, he leaves them, and goes quite alone to the village of Bālaka the salt-maker…"

Here it should be pointed out that the Buddha himself envisioned the seeds of the future schismatic problem, perhaps, in this partisan quarrel. To solve the dispute, the Buddha had to physically go to these bhikkhus and prevent the continuation of the quarrel. The seeding of the origin of sectarianism or personal friction in the Buddhist monastic establishment began. The followers (*dāyakas*) of these two bands also divided into two. Later on, such division was reported to the Buddha, who was dwelling at the Ghositārāma of the township of Kosambi. The Buddha admonished all of the bhikkhus involved to settle down the dispute, but with no good result. The Buddha left for the forest. Here in the village, the *dāyakas,* not seeing the Buddha, agitated against these bhikkhus. The resident and disputing bhikkhus allegedly settled their dispute and the Buddha returned to Kosambi, but it is difficult to say how many bhikkhus took part in these individual partisan disputes and whether or not there were underground sectarian feeling or activities going on within or outside these two groups.

In the future, after the Second Buddhist Council, we notice two separate sectarian disputes based on the "Dhamma" and "Vinaya" controversy, promulgated by the Vajjian bhikkhus of Vaiśālī and a bhikkhu known as Mahādeva of Kukkuṭārāma, respectively. Nevertheless, it is impossible to ascertain as to whether there was any connection

between the "Dhamma" and "Vinaya" disputes of the Kosambi and that of the Second Buddhist Council disputes.

The *Cullavagga* chapter (xi) provides a detailed narration of the First Buddhist Council, which is briefly as follows. Soon after the passing away of the Buddha, the first Buddhist Council was summoned. A few simple incidents, it seems, caused those in authority to summon this Council. As described in the Chapter four, according to the Vinaya *Cullavagga* (chapter XI), a newly ordained bhikkhu by the name of Subhadra or Subhadda, who became a bhikkhu at an advanced age, noticed other bhikkhus were lamenting and grieving upon hearing the passing of the Buddha, and exclaimed:

> Enough, Sirs! Weep not, neither lament! We are well rid of the great Samana. We used to be annoyed by being told, 'This beseems you, this beseems you not.' But now we shall be able to do whatever we like; and what we do not like, that we shall not have to do.[182]

I. B. Horner confirmed that such an utterance was revenge against the Buddha. In her translation of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, she noted, "At DA 599 he is identified with the barber with of Ātuma who went forth when old, and who, as told at *Vin.i*, 240, was angry when Gotama refused to accept the meal he had prepared. The above incident was his revenge."[183] However, such an exclamation warned the eldermost disciple of the Buddha, the Ven. Mahākassapa, to summon a synod, so that all of the teachings could be recited and collected for the sake of the purity, security, authenticity, protection, and future safety of the teachings of the master. Therefore, the venerable *Saṁgha* addressed the Ven. Mahākassapa:

> Come, Sirs, let us chant together the Dhamma and the Vinaya before what is not Dhamma is spread abroad, and what is Dhamma is put aside; before

[182] Rhys Davids and Oldenberg, trans., *Vinaya Texts*, 547.
[183] I. B. Horner, Eng. trans., *The Book of Discipline* (*Vinaya Piṭaka*), vol. 5 (*Cullavagga*) (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1992), 394.

> what is not Vinaya is spread abroad, and what is Vinaya is put aside; before those who argue against the Dhamma become powerful, and those who hold to the Dhamma become weak; before those who argue against the Vinaya become powerful, and those who hold to the Vinaya become weak![184]

Then the Ven. Mahākassapa chose five-hundred *arahant* bhikkhus, but only 499 *arahant* bhikkhus were found to hold the chanting, excluding the most capable Bhikkhu Ven. Ānanda. Ven. Purāṇa rejected the invitation, and Ven. Gavampati received an invitation, but entered Nirvāṇa rather than participating in this important event—of course, these indicate personal conflicts. The Pali *Therīgāthā* tells us that there were several competent bhikkhunis in the monastic system, many of them *arahant*s, yet none were invited to participate in the council. Ven. Ānanda served the Buddha for eleven years, heard sermons delivered by the master directly from the Buddha, and remembered all of them; yet, he was excluded. This exclusion naturally did not appease other bhikkhus who were supporters of the Ven. Ānanda; thus, they requested the elder Ven. Mahākassapa:

> Lord, this venerable one, Ānanda, although he have not yet attained [to Nirvāṇa], yet is he incapable of falling into error through partiality, or malice, or stupidity, or fear, and thoroughly have the Dhamma and the Vinaya been learnt by him from the Blessed One himself. Therefore let our Lord choose the venerable Ānanda. And the venerable Mahā Kassapa chose also the venerable Ānanda.[185]

Here at this point, a few major issues should be highlighted (which may be reflected in future councils): (a) the arahanthood as a qualification for what makes an attendee a counselor; (b) the comment made by the Ven. Purāṇa, who announced that he remembers the Dhamma and Vinaya like Ven. Ānanda, yet he was not an originally

[184] *Vinaya Texts*, 547 – 548.
[185] *Vinaya Texts*, 548.

invited participant in the Council; (c) the debate in the of selection of Ven. Ānanda as to whether he could attend the chanting in the synod.

Ven. Ānanda's eventual admission to the First Council is important, since denial of his admission could have made Ven. Ānanda's supporters or disciples understandably angry with the Ven. Mahākassapa and other council-organizing Elders. Ven. Ānanda's exclusion from the First Buddhist Council did not go without any protest, which indicates that there were already a group of supporters of Ven. Ānanda built up there. Thus, B. Jinananda, comparing the Pali sources with the Tibetan sources, comments:

> There was, however, some protest regarding the omission of Ānanda from the number of councilors chosen. In the Cullavagga, it is stated that the bhikkhus strongly interceded for Ānanda, thought he had not attained Arhathood, because of the high moral standard he had reached and also because he had learnt the Dhamma and Vinaya from the master himself. …. The procedure followed regarding Ānanda has, however, given rise to a controversy. It will be observed that Ānanda was brought to trial in the course of the proceedings.[186]

On the other hand, Ven. Ānanda being depressed (?) due to not being selected to attend the Council, sat down, reflected on his last several years' experiences with the master, and focused on mental cultivation. His depression is revealed in the *Thera Gāthā* (verse), which runs as:

> They of the older time are gone:
> The new men suit me not at all.
> Alone to-day this child doth brood,
> Like nesting-bird when rain doth fall.
> *Theragāthā* 30:1035[187]

[186] B. Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," 37-38.
[187] *Psalms of the Early Buddhists (Theragāthā*), Eng. trans. Mrs. C.A. F. Rhys Davids (London: Pali Text Society, 1994), 356. (In Pali: *ye purāṇā atītā te, navehi na sameti me/ Sv ajja eko 'va jhāyāmi vassupeto va pakkhimā//)*

Unexpectedly, Ven. Ānanda attained *arahant*-hood, which he could not accomplish in the last eleven or more years. The Vinaya *Cullavagga* (xi) does not provide how Ven. Ānanda arrived at the council venue, which was held in the Saptaparnī Cave—a very isolated place. Yet, it is stated that the Ven. Ānanda arrived there miraculously. The nature of the *arahant* bhikkhu and the qualification of a councilor bhikkhu also become debatable. In addition, were there only 499 *arahant* bhikkhus alive in the surrounding neighborhoods at the time of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of the Buddha? Most importantly, one might consider why there were no bhikkhunis in the councilor group. What was the reason? Nuns were as qualified with Dharma and Vinaya as bhikkhus; there were similarly many qualified *arahant* bhikkhunis as bhikkhus, as the Pali text, the *Therīgāthā*, indicates. Yet, why were the bhikkhunis excluded? Upon the completion of the council, the Ven. Purāṇa who came to visit the vicinity to rehearse the council, agreed with the collection of the teachings but declared somewhat negatively:

> The Dhamma and the Vinaya, Sirs, have been well sung by the Theras. Nevertheless, even in such manner as it has been heard by me, and received by me from the very mouth of the Blessed One, in that manner will I bear it in my memory.[188]

Furthermore, the controversy regarding Ven. Ānanda's admission to the council played an important role in the future councils. The question is, was Ven. Purāṇa an *arahant* at that time? If he was, why wasn't he invited to participate in the recitation? On the other hand, if he was not an *arahant*, why would other bhikkhus ask him, "Do thou, then, submit thyself to and learn the text to rehearse by them?"[189] This statement

[188] *Vinaya Texts,* 552.
[189] *Vinaya Texts,* 552.

indicates that there was disagreement among the bhikkhus who were not selected to attend the council.

Even though the historicity of the first (and second) councils is controversial, and among the scholars, there is a dispute regarding their authenticity, the eventual factors like the practice of *dasavatthu* and its origin cannot be disputed or ignored. After comparing both the *Dīgha Nikāya* (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*) and the *Cullavagga* (Chapters XI, XII), a suspicion was raised and discussed by R. Otto Franke in his long article, "The Buddhist Councils at Rājagaha and Vesāli as alleged in *Cullavagga XI, XII.*" In his view:

> From the first our suspicions settle on D. xvii. inasmuch as the thin, artificial, long-winded rigmarole of D. xvii does not mate with the tone of the Buddha's converse in xvi. and elsewhere; and, further, because it is so highly improbable that the dying Buddha would have delivered a mythical discourse of that length. But our decision here must rest, not on what our feeling and our criticism pronounces to be not genuine, but on the fact that tradition covers both Suttantas with the shield of accepted authenticity. That tradition hereby forfeits for both of them its claim on our recognition.[190]

Nevertheless, other scholars like Rhys Davids, Wilhelm Geiger, and La Vallee Poussin agreed that these councils were actual events. As in the case of all of these councils, the First Council also leads us to various personal as well as procedural problems.

There was a continuous conflict between the Elder Mahākassapa and the Ven. Ānanda, even though both had mutual respect for each other. There were several charges put forward against the Ven. Ānanda. Schumann summarizes some of these charges, as:

> It was well known in the Saṅgha that there had been repeated differences of opinion between the uncompromising Mahākassapa and the soft-

[190] R. Otto Franke, "The Buddhist Councils at Rājagaha and Vesāli, as Alleged in Cullavagga XI., XII," in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society* (1908), 4-5.

> hearted Ānanda. Because Ānanda occasionally instructed the nuns, Kassapa suspected him emotional involvement and once had even threatened him with a disciplinary investigation by Order (SN 16.10.13). On another occasion, because some of the novices under Ānanda's care had left the Saṅgha, Kassapa had addressed the aged Ānanda, in the hearing of some nuns, as 'laddie' (*kumāraka*) (S 16.11.7). On the other hand, Mahākassapa could not deny that Ānanda had heard and remembered more discourses of the Buddha than any other bhikkhu. In the interest of the cause, therefore, he included him in the list of members, all 'elders' (*thera*) (*Cv* 11.1.3) i.e. monks of at least ten years' standing.[191]

G. P. Malasekera further elucidates some of the conflicts between the Ven. Ānanda and the Ven. Mahākāssapa:

> There is an interview recorded between them in which Kassapa roundly abused Ānanda, calling him "corn-trampler" and "despoiler of families," and he ends by up saying "this boy does not know his own measure." Ānanda had been touring Dakkhiṇagiri with a large company of monks, mostly youths, and the latter had not brought much credit upon themselves. When Kassapa sees Ānanda on his return to Rājagaha, he puts on him the whole blame for the youths' want of training. Ānanda winces at being called "boy", "my head is growing grey, your reverence, yet I am not vexed that you should call me "boy" even at this time of days." Thullanandā heard of this incident and showed great annoyance. "How dare Mahā Kassapa," she says, "who was once a heretical teacher, chide the sage Ānanda, calling him 'boy'"?[192]

First, it is clear from different episodes that there were personal conflicts between the Ven. Mahākassapa and the Ven. Ānanda and suspicion against Ven. Ānanda, which also played an important role in admitting the latter in the council in order to recite the Dhamma. A number of accusations put forward against the Ven. Ānanda by Ven. Mahākassapa and other Elders and forced Ven. Ānanda to apologize. Ven. Ānanda, out of courtesy, apologizes for each of the charges. Nevertheless, he never confessed that each of these charges against him was factual.

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[191] Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*, 258-259.
[192] Malalasekera, *DDPN,* 1:258.

Ven. Ānanda was charged (i) against his advocacy to the Buddha in favor of admitting females in the *Saṁgha*, (ii) allowing women *Upāsikās* to view the dead body of the Buddha, (iii) failure to provide pure water to the master at the *parinibbāna*, etc. Even the master also charged Ven. Ānanda as being romantically involved with females, as the *caṇḍāla kanyā* episode indicates.[193] Also, "in a famous tale reproduced in various sources, the daughter of a woman named Mātaṇgi attempted to seduce Ānanda with the help of her mother's magical powers, only to come to realize her wrongdoing with the intervention of the Buddha."[194] Another serious charge against Ven. Ānanda was that he did not request the Buddha to live on the earth as long as a Buddha could, which the Buddha indicated in Vaiśālī. Partiality was found in Ven. Ānanda's personal behavior; when Ven. Subhadda wanted to see the Buddha on his deathbed, Ven. Ānanda refused to let him see him, but when Mallas of Kuśinagara came with their families to do the same, Ven. Ānanda let them see the Buddha.[195] This episode could have been in the mind of Subhadda's supporters.

In summary, the main charges brought against the Ven. Ānanda were as Jinananda writes:

> (1) He could not formulate the lesser and minor precepts, as he was overwhelmed with grief at the imminent death of the Master.
> (2) He had to tread upon the garment of the Master while sewing it as there was no one to help him.
> (3) He permitted women to salute first the body of the Master, because he did not want to detain them. He also did this for their edification.
> (4) He was under the influence of the evil one when he forgot to request the Master to enable him to continue his study for kalpa.

[193] This episode is taken from the Sanskrit work *Sardula Avadāna*. The Benagli Nobel Laurate poet Rabindranath Tagore also has composed a dance drama, *Caṇḍālikā*, (Qä¡¢mL¡) based on this particular incident.
[194] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 39.
[195] Malalasekera, *DDPN*, vol. 1, 252.

(5) He had to plead for the admission of women into the Order out of consideration for Mahāprajāpati Gautamī who nursed the Master in his infancy.[196]

When the Buddha's death body was under preparation for the state cremation ceremony, several bhikkhus started to create conflicts. While worldly bhikkhus are mourning and grieving for the passing away of the Buddha, there were bhikkhus, like one "Subhadda, comforts them with the frivolous utterance that they can now do what they will, and that they are freed from an irksome control." However, after thorough examination of the reason and authenticity of the First Buddhist Council, despite the negative observation regarding the historicity of the council by H. Kern and other Indologists, Geiger summarizes the post-Nirvana conflict into four categories, in his introduction to the English translation of the Sinhalese Chronicle *Mahāvaṃsa*, as:

> (1) Ānanda relates that the Buddha had, in his presence, declared the community of monks empowered after his death to do away with the less important precepts, if they wished. Since they are not able to agree in deciding what is to be understood by this expression, they resolve not to away with any precept.
> (2) Certain reproaches are cast upon Ānanda. Although he is not conscious of any fault he acknowledges himself guilty from respect for the Assembly.
> (3) The thera Purāṇa enters Rājagaha. He is called upon to take part in the work of the Assembly. He renders due acknowledgement to this work but refers to hold by that which he himself has heard from the Master's lips.
> (4) Ānanda further relates how the Buddha, before his death had also pronounced the monk Channa liable to the brahmadaṇḍa penance. The fulfilling of this duty is entrusted to Ānanda. Channa is deeply troubled. With zealous endeavor he attains to arahantship, upon which the penance is remitted.[197]

Considering all of these charges against the Ven. Ānanda, the question remains as to whether there was any personal conflict or misunderstanding between Ven. Ānanda

[196] Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," 39.
[197] Wilhelm Geiger, trans., *The Mahāvaṃsa*, liii.

and Ven. Mahākāssapa. It is also very important to bear in the mind that both these personalities, Ven. Mahākāssapa and Ven. Ānanda, had their own three-figure followers (as noted in Chapter Three) within the monastic community. Some of whom survived, Ven. Ānanda's disciple Sabbakāmī, for example, for many years, as late as the time of the Second Buddhist Council. Any residue of animosity, conflict, and misunderstanding of these prominent disciples of the Buddha could have been a source of revenge or retaliation in the future. Ven. Ānanda was alone here; not a single bhikkhu did or could protest against all of these accusations, not even anyone from his prominent four disciples, out of respect for the Elder Mahākassapa.

Almost a hundred years later, a probably fictitious monk by the name of Mahādeva literally challenged the quality of an *arahant* and indirectly supported Ven. Ānanda. Mahādeva formulated the "Five Points," which go against the nature of an *arahant* (these Five Points have been discussed earlier). Each point of the "Five Points" needs comparative analysis, but since this study is not directed to that direction, it will not be discussed here. Jonathon Silk has an appropriate study on this issue, however.

Each of the charges against Ven. Ānanda could be analyzed in light of Mahādeva's standpoint. Ven. Ānanda was charged as being romantically involved with female followers. Such charge could lead to the conclusion of one's seminal discharge during sleep due to mental states in favor of sexual desire, *rāgo*. Mahādeva argued an *arahant* could have emotional desire, *kaṁkhā*, and still be an *arahant*. Hence, he also may need *paravitaraṇā*, leadership from others, which is another point by Mahādeva. We should bear in mind that Ven. Ānanda was not an *arahant* before the First Buddhist Council; therefore, all these points could be applied to him.

Since, speculatively speaking, Ven. Ānanda was the main target, we need to counterbalance the charges against him. Personally, as described earlier in the chapter, Ven. Mahākāssapa once expressed a verbal knockdown against Ven. Ānanda by calling him a "boy" or condemning a nun, Ven. Thullanandā, who defended Ven. Ānanda for supporting female participants in the bhikkhuni *Saṁgha*. Additionally, different minor conflicts among the monastics are not necessary to list completely here. Ven. Ānanda was in "sad" mood for his failure to attain arahanthood, and was focusing on it; by that point, Ven. Ānanda could attain his *summum bonum* just by focusing, "*āho dukkham,"* "*āho dukkham"* (How sorrowful! How miserable!). Therefore, Mahādeva concluded one could become an *arahant* just by uttering such an expression. Ven. Ānanda was apparently lonely at his advanced age; he also was frustrated because none of his disciples, followers, or others came to support him and they in fact abandoned him.

Ven. Ānanda being an important bhikkhu with extensive involvement with the Buddha on one hand, and on the other hand, his treatment by other bhikkhus, is a crucial issue, since Ven. Ānanda had at least 500 disciples during the time of the Buddha, as well as at least 6 prominent disciples surviving until the Second Buddhist Council, all of whom definitely played an important role. It has been mention earlier that Mahādeva has introduced Five Points, which I consider were indeed in indirect defense of Ven. Ananda's non-*arahant* position during the First Buddhist Council. Ven. Ānanda lived, according to Chinese pilgrim Faxian, for over 120 years.[198] Interestingly, it was the approximate length of the span of time in between the First Buddhist Council and the Second. Mahādeva was supposed to have introduced his Five Points by then. Then the Vajjian bhikkhus (*Vajjiputtaka*) introduced their Ten Points (*dasavatthu*) in the monastic

[198] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 39.

establishment. Of course, Ven. Ānanda, moderate in demeanor, had nothing to do with the Ten-Point controversy, even though he moved from Magadha to Vaiśālī, the Vajjian capital, to die, as Faxian noted.[199] Ven. Mahākāssapa and his supporters were, of course, the followers of Vinaya—no one can cook or speculatively suggest a conspiracy here.

The Sinhalese Chronicle *Mahāvaṁsa* testifies that six direct disciples of the Ven. Ānanda were involved in the settling of the "Ten Point" dispute and, eventually, in the commencing of the Second Buddhist Council in Vaiśālī. Among the eight were Sabbakāmī, Sāḷho, Revata, Khujjasobhita, Kākandakaputta Yasa, and Sambhūta Sānavāsī. All of these bhikkhus were lucky enough to meet the Buddha in their lifetime: "*aṭṭha therā pi dhaññā te diṭṭapubbā tathāgataṁ"*[200] (these eight *theras* were lucky for having seen the *tathāgata* themselves) even a hundred years (like Ven. Ānanda himself) after the passing away of the Master.

One of the traditional well-known conflicts in the Theravada School is called "*acariyapaṃparā*" (the lineage of teacher-disciples tradition). This term could be related to the *āciṇṇa-kappa* of the *dasavatthu* of the Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus, which means "that monk may follow the practices of his teachers, right or wrong, merely because his teacher has practiced it."[201] In Chapter four, we categorized a number of series of prominent disciples of the Buddha who each had their 500 disciples and entered the *Saṁgha* during the time of the Buddha. Thus upon a thorough examination, Geiger suggested a lineage of Elders after the passing away of the Buddha, as follows:

Ācariyapaṃparā[202]

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[199] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 39.
[200] Wilhelm Geiger, trans., *Mahāvaṁsa*, *śloka* 4:57-59, 24.
[201] Upali Karunaratna, "Dasavatthu," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol. 4, ed. G. P. Malalasekera et al. (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Government of Sri Lanka, 1979 –1989), 326.
[202] Geiger, trans., *Mahāvaṁsa*, 1.

Table 4: Continuation of Patriarchs.

	Priest	Chief of Vinaya
1.Upāli …	44 B.C. - 30 A.B = 527 B.C. - 453 B.C.	from 1 A.B.
2. Dāsaka….	30 A. B. - 94 A.B. = 467 B.C. - 403B.C.	from 30 A.B.
3. Soṇaka…	60 A.B. - 124 A.B. = 423 B.C. - 359 B.C.	from 94 A.B.
4. Siggava….	100 A.B. - 176 A.B. = 388 B.C. - 319 B.C.	from 124 A.B.
5. Moggaliputta	164 A.B. - 244 A.B. = 319 B.C. - 289 B.C.	from 176 A.B.
6. Mahinda	224 A.B. - 284 B.C. = 259 B.C. - 199 B.C.	

The Ten Points themselves also carry the hidden clue regarding conflicts. Each point of these Ten Points inherited a notion of conflict, which was born during the lifetime of the Buddha within the monastic establishment. Hence, it is important to explore these ten points in detail. *Āvāsa-kappa*, *Anumati kappa* and *Āciṇṇa kappa* (#4, #5 and #6 of the Pali tradition), are among them. *Āvāsa* means residence in the monastic compound where (Vinaya) *uposatha-kammas* are done. We must remember here that during the Kosambika dispute, a group of bhikkhus was practicing separate *uposatha-kammas* in the same *sīmā* (compound), and a certain bhikkhu approached the Buddha and reported that a certain group of bhikkhus was holding separate uposatha-kammas; the Buddha after providing judicial allowances allowed and validated such separate *uposatha-kamma*. The Buddha furthermore told that bhikkhu that since you do not belong to that particular group you do not have to participate in that group, instead you must allow them to do what they are doing.

This incident allows us to speculate that they were fostering sects and sectarian practice in the same *sīmā* (compound). Such a trend was already established by the Buddha, though was not practiced in common circumstances, and gradually developed during the formation periods of the Ten Points in Vaiśālī by the Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus. This point, interestingly, is not mentioned in certain Vinaya such as *Mahāsāṁghika-*

Vinaya, which is the forerunner of the Ten Points; the Tibetan *Tangyur* also does not carry it.

The *Anumati-kappa* means an "incomplete Order of monks may without prior sanction of absentee monks, carry out, in their absence, a formal act (*uposatha-kamma*), without intention of securing their sanction afterwards" as a result of which, let us say, sects and sectarian practices could be kept alive. This issue also leads us to the Kosambika incident, where the Buddha gave freedom of holding separate *uposatha-kamma* under partisan guidelines to different bhikkhu groups. Another important point also to be considered is "*āciṇṇa kappa,*" which means "custom": simply speaking, one could keep practicing a "customary" practice, which former (monastic) ancestors practiced.

Further disputes continued, probably a hundred years later in Vaiśālī, where the notorious Ten Points were formulated and practiced by the Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus. Upon noticing such practice, the Elder Bhikkhu Kākandakaputta Yaśa declared these practices as unorthodox. The Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus pronounced a penalty upon Elder Yaśa. Such action necessitated the offending party apologizing to the laity, who had been forbidden by Yaśa to carry out the precepts of the Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus. Elder Yaśa defended his view before the laity, who upon understanding the situation, took part with the Elder. Such action infuriated the offending bhikkhus, who pronounced the penalty before excommunicating the Elder. This brought up a series of meetings among the Elders; the offending side in which group there were over ten-thousand bhikkhus, also did not remain idle. They also went out to find other Elders who might support their cause. However, after several bargaining meetings, both parties decided to hold a council, so

that the dispute could be settled. In order to avoid further disputes, a committee was formed consisting of four Elders from the East and four from the West. Ven. Ajita was elected as the seat-regulator and the Elder Sabbakāmī was elected as the president of the council. In the council, each point was analyzed and declared unorthodox and therefore unacceptable in the Vinaya; they were rejected unanimously. The Vajjiputtaka "group," who were allegedly over ten-thousand in number, did not agree with the result, so they left the council and had a separate council themselves. The Pali tradition does not mention anything of this separate council, but the Sanskrit tradition, especially by Vasumitra, Bhavya, Vinīthadeva, Taranātha (the works of these authors have been cited elsewhere), and others have narrated them. Therefore, an official schism between the Sthavira and the Mahāsāṃghika school in the monastic establishment took place. Thereafter, conflicts among other monks did not stop, but continued.

About a hundred years passed after the Second Buddhist Council concluded; it should be pointed out here that the kings and wealthy devotees were supporting, as they usual did before, the Buddhist monastics. That attracted many unemployed, criminals, and different sect members to join the Buddhist monastic establishment so that they could survive with good food and royal support; life would be very easy. A number of different false sectarians also joined. With the conversion to Buddhism by Emperor Aśoka, material prosperity in the monastic establishment improved; bhikkhus lived in the *vihāra* with ease and comfort. Sectarians who lost their income joined the Buddhist monastics as well. As the result of their participation in the Buddhist monastic establishment, the heretics got the chance to interject their own doctrine into the Buddha's. However, it is difficult to say who these heretics were since opposing groups called each other heretics

or non-believers. Under such circumstances, the Buddha's teachings became so corrupted with unorthodox views that it was equally difficult to find a qualified monk to answer a *Dhamma* question, even within the Buddhist fold. Jinananda further observes,

> The number of the heretics and false monks became far larger than that of the true believers. The result was that for seven years no Uposatha or Pavāraṇā ceremony was held in any of the monasteries. The community of the faithful monks refused to observe these festivals with the heretics. The Emperor was filled with distress at this failure of the Brotherhood and sent commands for the observance of the Uposatha.
> A grievous blunder was committed by the Minister who was entrusted with this task. He misunderstood the command and beheaded several monks for their refusal to carry out the king's order. When this sad news was reported to Aśoka he was seized with grief and apologized for this misdeed. He asked the Brotherhood whether they held him responsible. Some thought him guilty, some not.[203]

Therefore, the emperor decided to consult the proper qualified monk as to what was the teachings of the Buddha and questioned his ministers if there was such a scholar monk nearby. They mentioned the name of the Elder Moggaliputta Tissa. Eventually the emperor invited the venerable Tissa to clarify the *Dhamma,* and upon realization of the heretical presence in the monastic establishment, he requested the Elder Tissa to hold a council. In the meantime, the Buddhist *Saṁgha* was mixed with various heretical persons and their doctrines, so that the real Buddha's teachings could not be figured out. All of the possible and relevant questions prevailing at that time were put forward, and all of the controversial answers were cleared and put together at the council. Here, Tissa could not be taken as neutral or non-sectarian either.

At the conclusion of the council, Sthavīravāda Buddhism was "termed" as "*vibhājjavāda*" (analyst), but if Sthavīravāda Buddhism was *vibhājjavāda*, who were the *a-vibhājjavādins*? The emperor ordered that all of the heretic monks either should disrobe

[203] B. Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," 46.

or leave the country. He then erected three rock edicts recording that the controversy was settled, the purity of the (*vibhājjavāda*) Dhamma would continue, and there would be no further disruption in the *Saṁgha*. Further, he sent warnings against schismatic activities in his kingdom. In the Sāñchi Pillar Edict, the emperor ordered:

> The Saṁgha of the monks and the Saṁgha of the nuns have each been united to continue united as long as my sons and great-grandsons rule and as long as the sun and moon shine.
> The monk or nun who disrupts the Saṁgha shall be required to put on white robes [instead of the customary yellow] and to live in non-residence (*anabasasi*). It is my desire that the Saṁgha be united and endure forever.[204]

In addition to the Sāñchi edict, he also erected another edict with strong warnings against schismatic monks, appointed administrators to watch the schismatic activities of the laity as well as the monastics, and encouraged them to take part in regular religious services in the *vihāra*. Thus, the Sāranāth Edict states:

> If a monk or nun disrupts the Saṁgha, he or she shall be required to put on a white robe and to live in non-residence.
> This edict should be published both in the Saṁgha of the monks and in the Saṁgha of the nuns.

King Priyadarśī declared:

> Place one copy of this edict in the cloister of the vihāra; give another copy to the lay disciples. The lay disciples shall assemble every fast day to study this edict and understand it fully.[205]

However, at the conclusion of the council, all of the doctrines and contemporary views were put together in a book called the *Kathā-vatthu* (*Points of Controversy*), which became a part of the *Abhidharma Piṭaka* of the Theravāda School of Buddhism. As it was noted earlier, that there were at least sixty-two heretical views existing during the time of the Buddha, according to the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Some of the

[204] Nikam and McKeon, *The Edicts of Asoka*, 67-68.
[205] Nikam and McKeon, *The Edicts*, 68.

followers of these sectarian views entered Buddhist monasticism, and perhaps continued to believe these diverging views even until the Third Buddhist Council. Furthermore, some of the points collected in this treatise played an important role in the formation of the Buddhist schools or could even be considered the main cause of the early schism in Buddhist monasticism, such as the split caused by *the pañcavatthu* (Five Points) allegedly formulated by Mahādeva. Other issues discussed in this treatise are categorically classified by T. W. Rhys Davids, as:

> The book, probably of gradual growth, was put into its present shape by Tissa in the middle of the 3rd cent. B.C.; and it discusses about 200 questions on which different opinions were then held by different members of the order. About a score of these are question as to the personality of the Buddha; another score are on the characteristics of the *arahant*, the fully converted man, who has reached, in this world, the end of the Ariyan 'path'. Three questions are on the nature of the gods, and four on the nature of the Saṅgha. The rest are disputes on points of cosmology, psychology, or ethics. The whole gives a valuable picture of the great diversity of opinion in the order, sometimes on questions which now seem unimportant, but for the most part on matters of the greatest for Buddhists who wished to understand, in detail, the scheme of life unfolded in the more ancient books.[206]

Louis de La Vallée Poussin, after careful study of the various texts and monographs come to conclude that:

> All these testimonies, and many others, e.g. the dishonest method of securing concord and orthodoxy by manipulation of the votes… establish at the same time: (1) that there are germs of division, and no small danger of the Order's losing its originality; (2) that, conversely, there is a catholic and traditional spirit, asserting itself in the rules of excommunication, etc.[207]

However, at the conclusion of the Third Buddhist Council, the Emperor Aśoka sent many (14) Buddhist missions to the East as well as to the West. His own son Mahinda was sent to the Island of Sīnhaladvīpa (Sri Lanka) to spread the Dhamma.

[206] Rhys Davids, "Sects" (Buddhist), in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 11: 308.
[207] La Vallée Poussin, *ERE*, 180.

Ven. Sona and Ven. Uttara were sent to Suvannabhūmi, modern Burma, Thailand, Kampuchea, Laos and the neighboring areas, where the Sthaviravādin (sect) was established. Additionally, the Sanskrit record testifies that the Emperor Aśoka also sent his other son, Kuṇāla, to Takṣaśīlā (Taxila), and from there to Khotan, Kucha and the Taklamakan Gobi desert of modern Central Asia/China.[208] Both Sthaviravādin and Sarvāstivādin monastics lived together as a member of a universal *Saṁgha*; nevertheless, sectarian conflict occurred. Chinese pilgrim monks Faxian and Xuanzang witnessed the monastics of both Sthavīravāda and Mahāsāṁghika sects living together.

However, this dispatching of several missions was the result of the continuation of conflicts among the monastics. A long-ignored issue needs to be added here: the exclusion of female participants or bhikkhunis in the councils and other important decision-making events. When each council was convened, bhikkhunis were not invited to share their opinions. Perhaps, here the contemporary Indian anti-feminine social trends could have influenced the Buddhist monastic hierarchies. Pali literature does not show any bhikkhu with the exception of the Ven. Ānanda expressing opinion in favor of female participants in early Buddhism. The bhikkhus who came from the upper-class social status of ancient India dominated the early Buddhist monastic establishment; naturally, they did not support women in religious activities, reflecting the Brahmanic attitude toward women.[209] Uma Chakraborty and Richard Fick, as noted earlier, have explored the social dimension in early Buddhism.

Under these circumstances, since the bhikkhunis were excluded from any religious administrative activities or decision-making, they became a separate element

[208] Buswell and Lopez, ed., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 433.
[209] Lokānanda Bhikkhu, "The Position of Women in Brahmanic and Buddhist Tradition," in *W. F. B. Review*, (1991) 28:15, Bangkok, Thailand.

from the sectarian standpoint, even though there is no Buddhist sect dominated by bhikkhunis. Nevertheless, a minor bhikkhuni sectarian influence was seen in Sīnhaladvīpa (Śrī Lankā) upon arrival of Ven. Saṁghamitrā, the daughter of the Emperor Aśoka, at the island after the Third Buddhist Council. She started a bhikkhuni *Saṁgha* in Sīnhaladvīpa that survived for a number of generations, until it discontinued in the island but was transplanted to East Asian countries. Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to indicate the ubiquitous anarchic conflicts of the group of bhikkhus, the Chabbaggīya. Throughout the Vinaya texts there are numerous incidents where Chabbaggīya Bhikkhus were the main source. K. D. Somaratne summarized most of their anti-Vinaya activities in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* as:

> Incidents relating to the misdemeanor of these Chabbaggiya-monks, and consequent laying down of additional ecclesiastical rules and even prescribing punitive measures to deal with the offenders by the Buddha are abundant in the Pali texts, especially of the Vinaya. The Chabbaggiya-monks are found challenging the validity of ecclesiastical acts correctly performed by the Saṅgha (*vin*. IV, p. 126). They are reported as having made false accusations against innocent monks, the most reprehensible example in this respect being the conduct of Mettiya-Bhummajaka Bhikkhus who falsely accused Dabbamallaputta thera of a *pārājikā*…offence (*Vin*. III. pp.166 ff.). Paṇḍuka-Lohitaka bhikkhu were found guilty of inciting groups of monks to fight others (Vin. II, p. 1 f.). Similarly, the chabbaggiya-bhikkhus, as a whole, came to be accused of indulging in tale-bearing with a view to creating dissensions in the Saṅgha (*Vin*. IV, p. 12). Mention is also made of their attempts to get rid of some of the monastics regulations in the *Pātimokkha* (*Vin*. IV, p.142), and their practice of holding separate recitals of the *Pātimokkha* …., among themselves was prohibited by the Buddha (*Vin*. I, p. 104, f). Their ceaseless endeavor to undermine the authority of the Vinaya is evident in the history of the *pācittiya* rule lxxii of the Theravāda Vinaya texts (*Vin*. IV, p. 143).
>
> Even by way of personal conduct the chabbaggiya-bhikkhus are said to have been unethical. They wore different kinds of ornaments, grew their hair long, combed it and applied oil, used mirrors, applied cosmetic powders and ointments (Vin. II, p. 106 f), wore sandals (Vin. I, p. 194) and robes of various colours (Vin. I, p. 306) and used high couches (Vin. II, p. 149 f). They recited the Dhamma in a singing fashion (Vin. II, p.

> 108). When the Buddha permitted a little liquor to be mixed with medicine, they used it excessively and got intoxicated. Thereupon, the Buddha laid down the special circumstances under which liquor was to be used even therapeutically (Vin. I, p. 205). They are even reported to have sought sexual pleasure, and once attempted to attract the attention of nuns by sprinkling water on them and exposing their person in the presence of nuns (Vin. II. P. 262). The nuns belonging to the chabbaggiya groups, too, behaved in a similarly unseemly manner.
> Assaji-Punabbasuka monks of Kiṭāgiri had once became very popular among the people of the neighbourhood and misled thereby the laity with regard to the proper behaviour of monks. Their numerical strength and the consequent power they wielded had become such a threat that Sāriputta and Moggallāna were asked by the Buddha, when informed of the situation, to go reinforced with sufficient numbers in order to deal with the miscreant monks (Vin. II,p.12; III, p. 182).
> …
> The chabbaggiya-monks, who are generally regarded as guilty (sāpattika) members of the Order (Vin. I, p. 125 f; II, p. 241), continued their reprehensible conduct even after the demise of the Buddha.[210]

Though there is no relation found, it should be pointed out here that the bhikkhus in the Vaiśālī incident who were practicing the Ten Points are not very different from these Chabbaggīya Bhikkhus. Wang Pachow's remark, noted earlier, is considerable here. The personal conflicts among the major disciples of the Buddha, though silent and unnoticed widely, in fact played an important role in sectarian formation later in the continuation of the Buddhist monastic tradition. The denial of Ven. Ananda in the First Buddhist Council did, perhaps, generate a personal conflict among Ven. Ananda's disciples, by slowly poisoning the mind and triggering different excuses for their isolation. Ven. Ananda himself moved to Vaiśālī to live near his surviving disciples. In the following chapter, the support of royal patrons who helped spread sectarian Buddhism will be discussed.

[210] K. D. Somaratne, "Chabbaggīya Bhikkhu," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. G.P. Malalasekera et al. (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Government of Sri Lanka, 1979 – 1989), 4:111.

CHAPTER SIX

The Royal Contribution in the Formation of Sects

After King Ajātasatru, three Buddhist ruling dynasties patronized the spread of sectarian Buddhism in India and abroad. The Maurya dynasty under the patronage of Emperor Aśoka, the Kushan dynasty under King Kaniṣka, and King Gopāla and his son King Dharmapāla of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal are noteworthy. Though not dynastic, the kings of Sri Lanka played an important role. Under Emperor Aśoka, Theravāda Buddhism and its various sects were spread in South and South-East Asia; King Kaniṣka patronized Mahāyāna Buddhism with its various sects, which were exported to Central Asia and beyond in Asia. Under the Pāla rulers, the Tantrayāna with its various sub-sects, such as Vajrayāna, Sahajayāna, Kālacakrayāna, Mantrayāna, etc., spread over Tibet, Sikkim, Bhutan, Mongolia and various other parts of the world.

Different royal figures and wealthy persons supported the Buddha to preach his teachings during his lifetime, and various rulers, indigenous or foreign, helped spread the Buddha's teachings, not only in the Madhyadeśa but also outside Madhyadeśa of India, as well as outside the Indian continent. In this regard, King Bimbisāra, King Prasenjit, and King Ajātasatru during the Buddha's life time; Emperor Aśoka, King Kuṇāla (one of Asoka's sons), King Devanāmpiya Tissa, King Duṭṭhagāmini of Sīnhaladvīpa, King Kaniṣka of Kushana, and further down in history, the kings of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal should be remembered. Of course, there were many others, yet these were the instrumental sources of the spreading and fostering of various sects and sectarianism in

Buddhism. However, in this chapter, we intend to look briefly at their contribution in the fostering, patronizing and spreading of Buddhism inside and outside the Indian continent.

Royal patrons and wealthy families have supported the Buddhist monastic establishment during the time of the Buddha as well as later, after the great decease of the Buddha. During the lifetime of the Buddha, there was royal figures such as King Bimbisāra, his son Ajātasatru, King Saniya Prasenjit, and Prince Bodhirājakumāra, and wealthy families such as the banker Sudatta (also known throughout the Pali Piṭaka as Anāthapiṇḍika), the physician Jīvaka, Lady Viśākhā, and Courtesan Ambapālī, who built numerous *vihāras*, groves, etc. for the use either of the Buddha and/or his disciples all over the Madhyadeśa. The Buddha himself came from a royal family of the Śākyas. These *vihāras* and groves built by devout followers helped Buddhism to take the firm root in India. Among these well-known groves, the Jetavana, which was built and donated to the Buddha and his disciples by the wealthy *zamindar* Sudatta, the Mango Grove of Courtesan Ambapālī, the Veluvana of King Bimbisāra of Rājagriha, and the Mango Grove of physician Jīvaka of Rājagriha, remain prominent in early Buddhist monastic history. The major portions of the *Sutta Piṭaka* were preached in the Jetavana grove. The Sanskrit Buddhist literature testifies that the Peak of Gijjhakuṭa was another prominent place where Dhamma was preached by the Buddha.

King Ajātasatru[211]

King Ajātasatru was a son of King Bimbisāra, one of the early prominent supporters of the Buddha. King Bimbisāra was assassinated through starvation by his son Ajātasatru according to suggestions by Devadatta, one of the Buddha's disciples and cousins. After the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha, one of his prominent disciples, Ven.

[211] Malalasekera, *DPPN*, 1:31.

Mahākāssapa, being warned by certain events, summoned the First Buddhist Council. This council, as a point of controversial argument here, was sectarian and could not be taken as neutral or anonymous, for there were other prominent disciples of the Buddha, such as Gavampati, Puṇṇa etc., who did not agree with the conclusion of this council. Hence, this council can be considered a sectarian event. At a later point, there was a Buddhist monastic sect known as the Kāśyapīyas, although it is difficult to pinpoint if there was any direct connection between the Ven. Mahākāssapa and this sect (this is only a suggestive remark). In order to concretize the suggestion, it could be further suggested that some of the disciples of the master might have organized it. Additionally, as noted earlier, there is no available evidence to show that there were any female disciples of the Buddha (*bhikkhuni*) present or invited to take part in the recitation.

To be fair, it should be pointed out that the convener of this council did not consider it a sectarian recitation; Ven. Mahākāssapa, with good intention, wanted to make sure that the teachings of the Buddha were collected in a timely manner. Unfortunately, it became a partial recitation due to the non-cooperation of other prominent disciples of the Buddha. On the other hand, according to the account of the Vinaya *Cullavagga*, Sinhalese chronicle *Mahāvaṁsa,* etc., all of the sutta collections of the *Sutta Piṭaka* were recited by Ven. Ānanda, who was the Buddha's personal attendant for short periods of time, whereas the Buddha preached his teachings for forty-five years; therefore, it is certain that there were many discourses which remained uncollected. Perhaps there were other senior disciples of the Buddha present in the council hall who heard the Buddha preaching when Ven. Ānanda was not present; such discourses also could not have been collected at this council. Ven. Puṇṇa himself uttered such words that he will believe

whatever discourses he personally heard from the mouth of the Master himself. Ven. Mahākāssapa did not ask other participants in the council if they had to add any discourses that were not recited at the council by Ven. Ananda. Ven. Mahākāssapa and the senior participants of the council also pressed Ven. Ananda for his "guilt" repeatedly, but not in the case of any probable missed discourses.

All of this happened under the patronage of the King Ajātasatru. However, it is not that King Ajātasatru wanted a sectarian Buddhism; he simply desired the collection of the teachings of the Buddha. Perhaps, neither Ven. Mahākāssapa nor King Ajātasatru was aware of any sectarianism in monasticism at that time. What happened in this case is simple avoidance of bhikkhunis and proper handling of the reliable reciters of the teachings.

King Kālāśoka[212]

King Kālāśoka was a disputed ruler in the kingdom of Magadha. The Śiśunāga dynasty is generally placed immediately before King Nanda (or Mahāpadma Nanda) and is dated roughly from the mid-5th to the mid-4th century B.C. King Śiśunāga was the founder of the dynasty who annexed Avanti to his empire and came to be associated with the early Magadhan capital Rājagriha or Girivraja. Śiśunāga's son Kālāśoka is known in ancient Indian history mainly for two important events: the convening of the Second Buddhist Council at Vaiśālī and shifting the Magadhan capital to Pāṭalīputra.

About a hundred years after the passing of the Buddha, in Vaiśālī, a revolution started within the *Saṁgha*: a movement to modify the Vinaya rules, which caused a sectarian separation in the Buddhist monastic tradition and required royal involvement.

[212] K. L. Hazra, *Royal Patronage of Buddhism in Ancient India* (Calcutta, India: D. K. Publications, 1984), 59.

Vaiśālī was a progressive province even in the time of the Buddha; as the Buddha borrowed from them the progressive ideologies of "*satta aparihānīya dhamma*" (seven factors for non-declanation). In addition, there was even a group of progressive monks in the *Saṁgha*. Different traditions bear two different versions of this incident; there is a Pali tradition and a Sanskrit tradition. According to the Pali tradition, there was a group of progressive bhikkhus practicing the Ten Points (*dasavatthu*) which conservative authoritarian Elders (*thera*) did not like; thus, a series of arguments and counter-arguments took place. The conflict was brought to the notice of the king. It was in the reign of either King Kālāśoka (c. 395 – 367 B.C. E.), though historically the position of the king is doubtful. Yet as the different traditions state, it was King Nanda or Mahāpadma Nanda who was reigning at that time. In either case, with the king's patronage, a council was convened in which seven-hundred bhikkhus attended to solve the conflict. At the conclusion of the council, the Elders rejected the Ten Points (*dasavatthu*) as unorthodox. The majority Vaiśālīans, who were ten-thousand in number, did not like the rejection, left the council, and alternatively held another one themselves; since they were greater in number (*mahāsaṁgha*): they became to be known as the Mahāsāṁghikas. Hence, this was the first recorded separation or split in the Buddhist monastic system.

On the other hand, a different version states, it was the Five Points (*pañcavatthu*) of the Mahādeva that caused the sectarian split. Such points created a controversy among the monastics there and a grouping was created. Whereas the Ten Points of Vajjian bhikkhus, noted earlier, covered a few provinces from the East and West, the Five Points, it seems, remained within the Paṭalīputra range. However, such dispute was brought to

the king's notice; the king came to Kukkuṭārāma Vihāra and had a long discussion with Mahādeva regarding the validity of the Five Points. Ultimately, he ordered to the monastics to choose whichever section they liked. The majority of monastics liked the leader Mahādeva and his section; the king accepted that section as a legitimate sect, ordered other sectarians to leave the monastery and settled the dispute by creating the sect. The tradition does not, however, give any details on if there was any council convened, as in the case of the Pali tradition regarding the Ten Points settlement. The king was again either Kālāśoka or Nanda (Mahāpadma Nanda).

The historical problem here is both the time and the reign of the king. Traditionally, there were three councils under the patronage of three different kings: first, King Ajātasatru, second, King Kālāśoka (or Nanda/Mahāpadma Nanda) and third, Emperor Aśoka (c. 273 – 232 B.C. E.). Nevertheless, Emperor Aśoka was supposed to have patronized only the Third Buddhist Council, and the second one by King Kālāśoka, as the Sinhalese *Mahāvaṁsa* records. Now who was Kālāśoka or Emperor Aśoka? Were there two different Aśokas? Some scholars identify both as one; some do as two. Their argument is that Emperor Aśoka was known as Kālāśoka earlier, as he was called also as "Vitaśoka," and "Vissa."[213] *Ipso facto*, did not the same Aśoka patronize both the Second and Third Buddhist Council? The Second Buddhist Council took place approximately a hundred years after the passing away of the Buddha, but the Emperor Aśoka lived approximately two hundred years after the passing away of the Buddha. These puzzles should be solved elsewhere by specialists; this study aims in a different direction.

Additionally, there is a historical problem here as to whether it was King Kālāśoka or King Nanda (Mahāpadma Nanda) who was the patron of the Second

[213] Hazra, *Royal Patronage of Buddhism*, 59.

Buddhist Council. If we accept the Sinhalese Chronicles, then we have to reverse some of the historical facts. On the other hand, if we cannot accept Nanda (Mahāpadma Nanda) as the patron of the Second Buddhist Council, we will have to deny the existence of the whole Nanda Dynasty. Kanai Lal Hazra, thus, compares several Tibetan and Indian sources and found that "Tāranātha, the Tibetan historian, says that Nanda, a son of Śūrasena, ascended the throne after his father. He founded the Nanda dynasty."[214] Hazra continues,

> King Mahāpadma Nanda or simply Nanda was a worshiper of the Buddha. He patronized the Buddhist monks. It is said that he offered services to the monks of Kāśi and supported them for many years. He at the request of Kalyāṇamitra, his religious teacher, made presents to the caityas which were constructed on the sacred relics of the Buddha. In his reign Mahādeva's chief disciple and successor, Naga popularized the doctrine of the five propositions of his teacher and because of it, several sects appeared in the Sangha. He is said to have reigned for twenty years. He spent his whole life as a true follower of Buddhism and did everything to the cause of Buddhism. He died at the age of sixty-six.[215]

Emperor Aśoka (272/268–232 BCE)

The most enduring legacy of Emperor Aśoka was that he provided a model of the two wheels (*cakra*) theory, which the Buddha and King Bimbisāra were said to have discussed during a conversation; the relationship between the "wheel of dhamma" (*dhammacakka*) or "wheel of righteousness" and the "wheel of command" (*aññacakka*). The rulers of South and South-East Asia have followed such a model of kingship embodied by Emperor Aśoka; ultimately, such model became the Buddhist model of "*Cakkavatti rājā*" or the "Universal Monarch." Following such model of "*Cakkavatti rājā,*" kings sought to legitimize their rule not by providential descendancy as some religions suggest, but by earning Buddhist monastic approval. After Aśoka's example,

[214] Hazra, *Royal Patronage*, 44.
[215] Hazra*, Royal Patronage*, 45.

kings funded the construction of *vihāra*s, stupas, and monasteries, and supported the monks in their kingdoms. Many of these rulers also took an active part in resolving disputes of the *Saṁgha*, as Kālāśoka (or Nanda/Mahāpadma Nanda) did when settling the *pañcavatthu* (Five Points) of Mahādeva or the Emperor did when calling the Elder Moggaliputta Tissa to settle confusion in the *dasavatthu* (Ten Points) of the Vajjian monks. This scenario ultimately led to a close relationship between the monarchy and the Buddhist monastic hierarchy in many South and Southeast Asian countries.

As a Buddhist emperor, Aśoka maintained that Buddhism is altruistic, and as such, he built a number of stupas, monasteries, gardens, and hospices for people as well as for animals and birds. For example, Aśoka helped to develop Sāñchi stupa and Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgaya. According to legend, he constructed 84,000 stupas to house Buddha's relics. He also built residences for Buddhist monks all over South Asia and Central Asia. He further sent his only son Mahinda and daughter Saṁghamitrā to Sīnhaladvīpa (modern Sri Lanka) to spread Buddhism.

The VIth Rock Edict about "oral orders" reveals that Aśoka sent several emissaries to convey messages to various neighboring or distant rulers; it was later confirmed that it was usual practice to add oral messages instead of written ones, as inferred from the XIIIth Rock Edict. These emissaries were meant to spread his *dharmavijaya,* conquest by Dhamma, which he considered the highest victory. These are undeniable evidence of cultural contact with international communities. This indicates that Aśoka was indeed in contact with other cultures, and played an active part in intermingling and spreading new cultural ideas beyond his borders. In his edicts, Aśoka mentions some of the people living in Hellenic as well as African countries to which he

sent emissaries. *Dharmavijaya*, conquest by Dhamma, happened even six-hundred miles away, where different kings like Antiochus, Magas, and Ptolemy, Antigonos, and Alexander ruled. It could be inferred that Aśoka also, in turn, received letters from Greek and other Hellenistic royal officials.

The most important and influential political dynasty came to rule India, in which the Emperor Aśoka holds a prominent place, not only in the political history of the Indian sub-continent, but also in the history of Buddhism and the spread of Buddhism inside and outside of the country. The Emperor was so generous that he offered daily food, lodgings, and other facilities, not only to the Buddhist monastics, but also to other religious sectarian groups as well. He even provided human services for animals, birds and other living beings. Such generosity attracted many opportunity-seeking non-Buddhist sectarians, who entered the Buddhist monastic establishment disguising their religious garb to earn an easy livelihood. By doing so, these disguising elements manipulated the Buddhist teachings with their influence.

On the other hand, the Buddhist monastic system had split into at least eighteen sects by that time. It began at the conclusion of the Second Buddhist Council, first, as Sthavīravāda and the Mahāsāṁghika; then gradually both schools split repeatedly into various sub-schools. In the meantime, as has been discussed earlier, doctrinal differences within the Buddhist monastic environment became corrupted; it was impossible to identify what the real Buddhist teaching was. When the emperor wanted to clarify the real teaching of the Buddha and asked different monastics, each monastic responded in different way, which made the emperor confused until he met the Elder Moggalīputta Tissa. Elder Tissa discussed with the emperor the entrance of multiple disguised elements

and corruption within the Buddhist monastic environment, and suggested the purification of the monasticism by convening a proper council. The emperor agreed and the Buddhist Council was held, with a thousand bhikkhus in participation. B. Jinananda summarizes the event thus:

> Thera Tissa thereafter elected a thousand bhikkhus of the brotherhood who were well versed in the three Piṭakas to make a compilation of the true doctrine. For nine months he worked with the monks and the compilation of the true Tripiṭaka was completed. This Council was held in the same manner and with the same zeal as those of Mahākāssapa and Thera Yasa respectively. In the midst of the Council Thera Tissa set forth the Kathāvatthu-pakaraṇa wherein the heretical doctrines were thoroughly examined and refused. Thus ended the Third Council in which a thousand bhikkhus took part.[216]

It should be pointed out that it is in this council that a firm sectarian Buddhism, the Vibhājjavāda or Theravāda, took ground and spread inside and outside the Indian continent. The Sinhalese *Mahāvaṁsa* testifies that after the conclusion of the Third Council, the emperor sent nine Buddhist missionaries to different provinces and states in ancient India, which includes, as K. L. Hazra summarizes:

> … Majjhantika (Madhyāndina) to Kashmir and Gandhāra (Peshawar and Rawalpindi district), Mahādeva to Mahīṣamaṇḍala (Mahiṣmati, a district country of the Vindhyas or Mysore or Māndhātā), Mahārakkhita to Yavana or Greek country (the foreign settlements of the north Western Frontier Province), Rakkhita to Vanavāsi (north Canara), Dhammarakkhita to Aparantaka (western countries like Alor, Broach and Sopārā), Mahādhammarakkhita to Mahāraṭṭha (Mahārāstra), Majjhima to Himavanta (the Himalayan country), Mahinda to Tambapaṇṇi (Ceylon or Śrī Lankā) and Soṇa and Uttara to Suvaṇṇabhūmi (Lower Burma).[217]

Additionally, Aśoka's 13th rock edict testifies that the Emperor Aśoka also sent various missions to Europe and African continents—Antiochus (Antiyoko) II, King of Syria, and four other neighboring kingdoms, Ptolemy (Turameya) of Egypt, Antigonos (Antakini) of

[216] B. Jinananda, "Four Buddhist Councils," 47.
[217] Hazra. *Royal Patronage*, 87.

Macedonia, Alexander (Alikasundar) of Epirus, and Magas of Cyrenia in Northern Africa are noteworthy. Aśoka, though favoring the Vibhājjavāda or Theravāda School, at the same time patronized and helped spread other schools of Buddhism. At least a few of these missionaries followed a certain sectarian doctrine and preached them to their followers in assigned countries. Nevertheless, as the above chart shows, Emperor Aśoka did not favor a particular sect, but sent missions belonging to different sects to other distant lands. The question remains open for further debate as to whether the Sarvāstivāda school existed during his period.

King Devanāmpiya Tissa (c. 250 B.C. – 210 B.C.)

The king who is also known as "Tissa" was the king of Sri Lanka during whose reign Buddhism was introduced in the island nation by the Emperor Aśoka's son Mahinda. King Tissa was a contemporary to the Emperor Aśoka of India and they had maintained a close relationship with each other. The Aśokan edicts indicate that the Emperor Aśoka sent several secular emissaries (apart from the religious missions) to different countries in Europe, Africa and Asia, one of which was to Sri Lanka. Hence, the friendship between the Emperor Aśoka and the King Tissa led to communications with each other. At the early stage of their friendship, King Tissa sent his chief minister Ariṭṭha to Aśoka with expensive gifts. However, it is not clear if these gifts were tax revenue or just a gift of good gesture. Emperor Aśoka was expanding his empire at that time extensively, and political tension between these two nations was under some pressure. Nevertheless, Aśoka ended his *digvijaya* (conquest by war) and started the *dharmavijaya* (conquest by Dhamma), so the exchange of gifts, may well have been a sign of good gesture. Emperor Aśoka also sent gifts to King Tissa that could be classified

into two types, materials and spiritual; the spiritual gift was the Dhamma mission headed by Aśoka's son Mahinda, who took Buddhism to the island. Mahinda could have been sent to other distant lands in Europe or Africa but was selected for Sri Lanka, probably as a special gift to King Tissa out of special consideration for the sake of friendship and the close relationship between these two nations.

When Mahinda landed at Missakapabbata in Mihintale, a mountainous place near Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka, King Devanampiya Tissa was hunting deer near the mountain. After exchanging respectful greetings with the Ven. Mahinda and hearing short religious syllogisms, the king took refuge in the Dhamma and became a Buddhist. Then the Elder preached the *Culahattipadopama Sutta* (of the *Majjhima Nikāya*) to the king. After listening to this sutra, the king along with his 40,000 retinue converted to Buddhism. The conversion of the king to Buddhism laid the foundation of the Dhamma in Sri Lanka. By the second day after his conversion, the king invited the Elder to the royal garden, Meghavana, to stay. Within this royal garden, the king built various buildings to accommodate monks, where later on was established the famous Mahāvihāra, the headquarters of the sect Mahāvihāravāsin and the main center of the Theravāda Buddhism. Thus, the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* remarks:

> It must be remarked that of all the missions sent in various directions by Emperor Asoka, the mission to Sri Lanka was the most fruitful and the credit must go, at least in part, if not the whole, to Devanampiya Tissa for extending his patronage. From the time of his demarcating the consecrated boundaries of Meghavana, Tissa made the monarchy a part and parcel of the *sāsana* in Sri Lanka included the king, the sangha and the people. Without one the other two cannot and would not sustain, and even to this day this bond remains unchanged.[218]

[218] M. Kr., *Encyclopedia of Buddhism,* 4:428.

King Duṭṭhagāmini (c. 161 B.C. to 137 B.C.)

King Duṭṭhagāmini, also known as Gāmani, was an early ruler of Sri Lanka who occupies an important place in the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. He was a great monarch and a great patron of Buddhism. He was the son of Kākavanna Tissa, a king of Rohana in southern Sri Lanka and Vihāradevī, the daughter of the king of Kalyāni (Kelaniya) and a direct descendent of King Devanampiya Tissa. Gāmani was born in a time of turmoil, when the Tamil king Elara of the Chola Dynasty of South India was attacking Buddhist monks and *vihāra*s. He is renowned for defeating and overthrowing the Tamil king Elara. The Sinhalese chronicle *Mahāvaṁsa* provides brief details of how Duṭṭhagāmini criticized his father Kāvanatissa for not fighting against the powerful invader Elara. Gāmani ruled the nation from Anuradhapura for 24 years; then he turned over power to his brother Tissa, so that he could devote full time for the development of Buddhism. He built several stupas; these famous stupas include his greatest works, the Mirichavettiya Stupa and the Mahāstupa, which later became to be known as Ruvanvelisäya.

King Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya (c. 29 B.C. – 17 B.C.)

King Abhaya, also popularly known as Walagambahu, was one of the several sons of King Saddhātissa. The importing and putting into written form of the *Tripiṭaka* was the most important event occurring during the period of King Vaṭṭhagāmaṇī. King Vaṭṭhagāmaṇī supported Mahāyāna Buddhism other than Theravāda after the Abhayagiri sect. Here the Abhayagirivāsins sect lived. In fact, there was a controversy among the monks in Mahāvihāra, which later on spread to two other prominent *vihāra*s – Jetavanārāma and Abhayagiri Vihāra gradually formed three separate sects, and these

divisions happened under royal support. Mahāvihāra was destroyed, all of its valuable books were burnt, and bhikkhus were dispatched to different locations.

King Mahāsena (273–301 A.D.)

King Mahāsena initiated the construction of Jetavanārāma following the destruction of Mahāvihāra. Jetavanārāma was the hub of the Sāgalika sect, which was closely linked with the Abhayagiri Vihāra. Towards the end of the Anuradhapura period, Jetavanārāma had developed into one of the three Buddhist monastic sects of the island, along with Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri Vihāra. Mahāvihāra was an important place for Theravāda Buddhism in Sri Lanka. It was founded by King Devanampiya Tissa (247–207 B.C.E.) noted earlier, in his capital Anurādhapura, in which the Theravāda orthodoxy was established by monks such as Sumangala, the chief of the monastery, the commentator Buddhaghosa, and others. The famous *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa was composed in Mahāvihāra. The *Visuddhimagga* is, in fact, the fundamental compendium of the Theravāda school.

Abhayagiri Vihāra, on the other hand, appears to have been a center for all three schools of Buddhism, Theravāda, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna; as such, Abhayagiri Vihāra was seen as heretical by more conservative Mahāvihāra monks. L. S. Cousins provides a brief but detailed examination of these three Sinhalese Schools in his paper, "The Teachings of the Abhayagiri School."[219]

It is in the reigning periods of these kings that three major v*ihāra*s, Mahāvihāra, Jetavana Vihāra and Abhayagiri Vihāra, were built, and these *vihāra*s were the hub of three Buddhist sects. The *Tripiṭaka* was brought to the island from India and put into

[219] L. S. Cousins, 'The Teachings of the Abhayagiri School," in *How Theravāda is Theravāda? Exploring Buddhist Identities*, ed. Peter Skilling et al. (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation, 2012), 67.

written form, and three of the major Buddhist sects were developed: *Mahāvihāravāsin* (the sect which lived in Mahāvihāra), the *Jetavanavāsin* (the sect which lived in Jetavana Vihāra), *Abhayagirivāsins* (the sect which lived in Abhayagiri Vihāra) and the Vaitulyavādin schools.

A Buddhist council also was held in Āloka Vihāra under the presidentship of Elder Ariṭṭha Thera, who was the first disciple of Thera Mahinda. According to the Sinhalese tradition, there was a council that is considered as the Fourth Buddhist Council. Nevertheless, the Sanskrit tradition considers the council that was held in Kashmir under the patronage of King Kaniṣka of the Kushan dynasty as the Fourth Buddhist Council. While Thera Mahinda (and Therī Saṁghamitrā) was successful in the South, his stepbrother Kuṇāla played an important part in spreading the Dhamma in the North.

King Kuṇāla (c. 3rd century B.C.E)

King Kunāla was one of the hundred children of Emperor Aśoka and Queen Padmāvati and the presumptive future heir to Aśoka, as of the Mauryan Empire, which once ruled almost the entire Indian subcontinent. After the departure of Mahinda, who was the heir apparent, Kuṇāla was supposed to be the future heir to the empire, but another of Asoka's wives, Tiṣyarakṣitā, blinded him at a young age out of jealousy. While he was not able to take the throne, his son, Samprati, became the heir. There was a political disturbance in the Gandhara and Takṣaśīlā (Taxila) area at that time, and Kuṇāla was deputed there to take care of the situation. From Takṣaśīlā, Kuṇāla is said to have moved to Khotan, where he established a kingdom. Prabodh C. Bagchi states "that a son of Asoka named Kustana founded the kingdom 234 years after the Nirvana, i.e., about 240 B.C. and that it was that latter's grandson, Vijayasambhava, who introduced

Buddhism in Khotan. A Buddhist scholar named Ārya Vairocana came from India and became King's preceptor."[220] The Buddha's teachings also traveled with him, probably the Vibhājjavāda School of the Third Buddhist Council. However, later literary evidence shows that various other schools dominated, and many Sanskrit Buddhist texts were composed and translated from either Pali or Sanskrit languages by Indian immigrant bhikkhus and local converted monks. K. L. Hazra, comparing various documents states thus:

> … that Dharmavivardhana (Kuṇāla), the son of Aśoka, introduced Buddhism into Central Asia. It may be further pointed out in this connection that one of the Khotanese legends "asserts that the earliest ancestor of the royal family of Khotan was the prince Kuṇāla, Aśoka's son, who was himself exiled from Taxila.[221]

A number of foreign dynastic rulers, especially from Indo-Greek, Scythian (Śaka), Parthian, Kushana, and Pahlavas racial stock in Northwest India have left a tremendous influence over the formation and spread of Buddhist sects. Some of these rulers had vast empires covering from Central Asian states in the North to the Gangetic Valley in India, whereas a few of them ruled only a smaller portion of the North-West India. Nevertheless, most, if not all, of these rulers have supported Buddhist causes. Their pro-Buddhist activities are recorded in various numismatic documents like coins, official seals, and archeological sites. A few coins bear the titles of them as "*cakravartin*" or a similar status. For example, King Śpalahores bears a honorific title as the "*Mahārajabhrata dhramikasa Śpalahorasa*" ("brother of the Great King"), (ΒΑΣΙΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩ ΜΕΓΑΛΟγ ΟΝΩΝγ),[222] King Vonones (53-40 B.C.), who came from Eastern

[220] P. C. Bagchi, *2500 Years of Buddhism*, ed. P.V. Bapat (New Delhi, India: Publication Division, Government of India, 1956), 66.
[221] Hazra, *Royal Patronage*, 94.
[222] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 456.

Iran and seized the Gandhara and Western Punjab, bears the title "*mahādānapati*" (Great Benefactor), for he has "re-established to the North of Taxila a 'dislodged' relic of the Bhagavat Śākyamuni."[223]

The Greek Ruler Menander (Milinda) (c.165/155–130 BCE)

After the Alexander the great, the Ionian Greeks settled and founded the Greek state of Bactria across the border of Gandhara in Northwestern India. At the same time, the rise of Parthians gave up relationships with Hellenistic culture and adopted gradually the Indian culture. Around the second century B.C., the Mauryan Dynasty begun to decline, and the Greeks started to invade northern India. At the peak of the Greek invasion, they covered the entire Indus Valley and western parts of modern United Province. The most important and famous of these Greeks was King Menander, who is known in Indic language as Milinda. Milinda was an Indo-Greek ruler (c. 155–130 B.C.) who established an empire in South-West India covering a large portion of Greece, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India; he became a patron of Buddhism. Milinda was born in Caucasus—a kingdom between the Black and the Caspian seas—and was a king of Bactria.

Milinda converted to Buddhism after a long religious discussion with a well-known Buddhist monk, Nāgasena. The conversation between King Milinda and Nāgasena is recorded in the important Buddhist literary work, the *Milindapañha (The Questions of Milinda).* Milinda's son Strato I. ruled Bactria after his death in 130 B.C. His capital is supposed to have been in modern Sialkot (Sāgala), Pakistan.

As T. W. Rhys Davids states in the *Milindapañha*, Milinda is introduced as:

[223] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 458.

> King of the city of Sâgala in India, Milinda by name, learned, eloquent, wise, and able; and a faithful observer, and that at the right time, of all the various acts of devotion and ceremony enjoined by his own sacred hymns concerning things past, present, and to come. Many were the arts and sciences he knew--holy tradition and secular law; the Sânkhya, Yoga, Nyâya, and Vaisheshika systems of philosophy; arithmetic; music; medicine; the four Vedas, the Purânas, and the Itihâsas; astronomy, magic, causation, and magic spells; the art of war; poetry; conveyancing in a word, the whole nineteen. As a disputant he was hard to equal, harder still to overcome; the acknowledged superior of all the founders of the various schools of thought. And as in wisdom so in strength of body, swiftness, and valour there was found none equal to Milinda in all India. He was rich too, mighty in wealth and prosperity, and the number of his armed hosts knew no end.[224]

After Milinda, his son Strato I and several other subsequent Indo-Greek rulers, viz., Amyntas, Nicias, Peukolaos, and Hermaeus came to power and used Buddhist themes in their coinage. At the same time, right after the death of Milinda, several Indo-Greek rulers also started to use the Pali title of "*Dharmikasa,*" (follower of the Dhamma) on coins. This usage was also followed by Strato I, Zoilos I, Heliokles II, Theophilos, Peukolaos, and Archebios.[225]

Perhaps because of both his conversion to Buddhism and his larger territorial expansion, Milinda may have contributed to the expansion of Buddhism in Central Asia, China, and eventually beyond Asia as well. However, the spread of Buddhism to Central Asia, China, and beyond Asia is usually credited to King Kaniṣka of the Kushan dynasty; it is possible that Buddhism reached there from Gandhara during Milinda's or an Indo-Greek ruler's time.

Because of the Indo-Greek influence, Indian art and sculpture found a new direction and style, reflected in Gandhara arts, a distinct artistic feature reflecting the

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[224] T. W. Rhys Davids, Eng. trans. *The Questions of King Milinda,* 1890. 6-7
[225] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism,* 380.

Greco-Roman arts. There were two huge Buddha statues hewn from rock in Bamiyan in modern Afghanistan. The Buddha is first shown here in Gandhara in human form, with the classic "*Mahāpuruṣa*" characteristics. Thus, Benjamin Rowland observes,

> These two statues present us with the first appearance of the colossal cult image in Buddhist art. There are a number of reasons, both stylistic and iconographic, for these more than life-size representations of the great teacher. We have, of course, the precedent of the famous colossal of Greek world, and, more nearly contemporary, the later Roman fashion of erecting colossal images of the deified Caesars. The purpose of a colossal image is twofold: to attract attention and communal respect by its gigantic dimensions and, by the same token, to suggest the superhuman nature of the personage portrayed. If the giant statues of Constantine were intended to represent that Emperor's role as *Kosmokrator*, the Bāmiyān statues, no less, were meant to indicate the statue of the Buddha as Mahāpuruṣa, or as Brahmin comprising all worlds within himself. The iconography of the paintings decorating the niches of the two colossal at Bāmiyān leaves no doubt that both were conceptions of Śākyamuni as Lokattara or Lord of the World.[226]

King Milinda made some coinage with the Buddhist "Wheel of *Dharmacakra*" as he built a monastery for his preceptor, Nāgasena. A "*cakravartin*" or a "universal monarch" ideal also developed in him, as it did in his Indian predecessor, Emperor Aśoka. K. L. Hazra observes:

> The patronage of Buddhism during the rule of the Indo-Greek rulers becomes evident from a number of inscriptions which refer to the donations of the Greeks who appear to have been Buddhists. The inscription of Theodorus, the Meridarch, found in Swat, describes the restoration of some relics of the Buddha for the purpose of the security of many people.[227]

After the Indo-Greek rulers, there were different Indo-Scythian rulers who reigned for a number of years in North and North-West India, many of whom were the followers of Buddhism and hence supported Buddhist causes in their empire. Among

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[226] Benjamin Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (New York: Penguin Books,1981), 172.
[227] Hazra, *Royal Patronage,* 119.

these Scythian rulers, Maues (c. 20 B.C. -22 A.D.), Azes I (or Aya) (c. 5 B.C. – 30 A.D.), and Azilises (Ailisha) (c. 21 -40 A.D.) are noteworthy. Then the Parthians ruled these areas. Maues was the earliest Scythian king to rule the lower Indus area. Hazra describes:

> The Taxila copper-plate inscription of Patika is important from the religious point of view. It records the deposition of a relic of Śākyamuni (the Buddha) and the construction of a Saṅghārāma or monastery at Chhema (Kshema) to the north-east Taxila, which has been identified by A. Cunningham with the modern Sirsukh. … Thus the Taxila copper-plate and Maues's coins clearly prove that Buddhism flourished in the Taxilā-Gandhāra region under the patronage of the royal house.[228]

After Maues, Azes I, a son of the powerful Śaka ruler Śpalirises, came to power. It is said that Azes came from eastern Iran and ended the Greek rule in Punjab by occupying the kingdom of Hippostratos; he brought the Jumna valley and Puṣkalāvati region under his rule. Azilises (Ailisha) ascended the throne after Azes I, and then Azes II (c. 35 A. D.) ruled. Thus, K. L. Hazra further observes, "It shows that the people took keen interest in the religion of the Buddha which undoubtedly became the most popular religion during the Scythian rule in Northern India."[229]

King Kaniṣka of Kushana Empire (c. AD 127–163)

The Greek state of Bactria was conquered by a race known as Scythian or Yüeh-chih—a group of mixed Chinese people who were eventually driven out by the Turkish tribe known as Hsiung-nu around c. 175 B.C. The Scythians, however, conquered and settled down in the entire Indus Valley and entered northern parts of India. The Kushan Dynasty was established around c. 130 B.C. King Kaniṣka the Great was the emperor of the Kushan dynasty and achieved political power. He came to rule an empire in Bactria extending from the Turfan of Central Asian to Paṭalīputra on the Gangetic valley of

[228] Hazra, *Royal Patronage,* 122 -123.
[229] Hazra, *Royal Patronage,* 124.

central India. His capital was located in Puruṣapura (Peshawar in modern Pakistan) with two other major cities, one in Kapiśa (modern Bagram, Afghanistan), and the other in Mathura, India. His patronage of Buddhism played an important part in the development of the Silk Road from Gandhara across the Karakoram mountain range and Tunhuang to China, and the transmission of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Central Asia, China, and beyond Asia. Kaniṣka's empire was as vast extending towards the east as it was in the case of Aśoka in South Asia. He also patronized both the Gandhara school of Greco-Buddhist art and Buddhist missionary activities, as well as other causes. One of his greatest contributions to Buddhist art and architecture was the Kaniṣka stupa in Peshawar, Pakistan. The Chinese pilgrims Xuan Zang witnessed that its height was 600 to 700 "feet," covered with various jewels and ornaments. [230] Certainly, this gigantic multi-storied building ranks among the wonders of the ancient world.

However, as far as the missionary zeal of King Kaniṣka is concerned, it was due to his influence that the Kushan monk Lokakṣema (c. 178 A.D.) became the first translator of Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Chinese and established a translation bureau at the Chinese capital of Loyang. King Kaniṣka holds an important position in the spread of Mahāyāna Buddhism to Central Asia, China, and further east, as much as Emperor Aśoka holds with respect to Theravāda Buddhism. In fact, King Kaniṣka followed the footstep of Aśoka in terms of popularizing Buddhism as his own imperial success. He saw that a religion of the masses could bolster his popularity and support his rule over the country. Being of foreign origin, it was not easy to rule another country; hence, he utilized the local religion as a good instrument. King Kaniṣka's reign

[230] Rowland, *Art and Architecture,* 171.

witnessed the rise of the Mahāyāna School of Buddhism and remarkable literary activities led by various scholar monks like Pārṣva, Aśvaghoṣa, Vasumitra, and others.

It is during these periods that the term "Hīnayāna" (lesser vehicle) as well as "Mahāyāna" (greater vehicle) came to define major Buddhist sects. Among the many Sanskrit Buddhist literatures, the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika Sūtra* (*Lotus Sutra*) was composed during these periods in which the term "Hīnayāna" is found—opposing the term Mahāyāna even though it is not mentioned. The Sarvāstivāda School of Buddhism took firm ground in this period. The Fourth Buddhist Council was convened under the patronage of King Kaniṣka; Vasumitra was the president, whereas Aśvaghoṣa was invited to serve as vice-president and prepare the commentaries. Five-hundred monks took part to recite the canon and compose the 1,000,000 stanzas of the *Upadeśa-śāstras*, 1,000,000 stanzas of *Vinaya-vibhāṣā-śāstras* and 1,000,000 stanzas of the *Abhidharma-vibhāṣā-śāstras* in this council. The early Pali version of the Abhidharma Piṭaka was transformed into a different version in Sanskrit. Hazra concluded:

> The great interest taken by Kanishka in the affairs of the religion of Śākyamuni brought about a revival of Buddhist learning which created a rich literature during this period. … His patronage of religion and learning could not fail to be productive of great literary achievement and for this reason his reign is renowned as an age of numerous scholars of high repute. This king extended his patronage to the Buddhist scholars like Pārṣva, Vasumitra, Aśvaghosha, Saṅgharaksha, Dharmatrāta, Ghoshaka, and Buddhadeva who were regarded as men of great wisdom and devotion.[231]

Kaniṣka died in 101 A.D. and his son Vāśishka (c. 102 -106 A.D.) took over the empire and ruled for years. Vāśishka, like his father, was a Buddhist who patronized Buddhist causes. Thus, K. L. Hazra quotes from the chronology *Rājataraṅgiṇī*:

[231] Hazra, *Royal Patronage,* 151.

> There were in this land three kings, Hushkha, Jushka and Kanishka who built three towns named after them. That king Jushka, who built Jushkapura with its vihāra, was also the founder of Jayasvāmipura. These kings, who were given to acts of piety, though descended from the Turushka race, built at Sushkaletra and other places mathas, chaityas and similar (structures). During the powerful reign of these (kings) the land of Kashmir was, to a great extent, in the possession of Buddha, who by (practising) the Law of religious mendicancy had acquired great renown….[232]

Two of the major Buddhist sectarian schools, the Sautrāntika school, which relied on the Sutra and the Vaibhāṣika school, based on Vibhāṣā, were born around this period, especially after the reclassification of the *Piṭaka* at the Fourth Buddhist Council. There have been several other dynastic rulers in different parts of India, like the Sātavāhana dynasty, Ikhvakus, the Gupta dynasty, and the Pāla dynasty of Bengal, who supported and patronized Buddhist causes, more or less.

Mahāyāna Buddhism, by this period of time, had taken a firm root with different local as well as foreign elements, like the Bodhisattva ideal, which is a re-interpretation of the early Pali term "*Bodhisatta*," Pāramitā, Daśabhūmī, Trikāya, and a synthesis of various indigenous and foreign deities. With an amalgamation of all of these elements, a remarkable sectarian, synthetic Buddhism took a turn in between 1st B.C. -2nd B.C., especially in Bactria, Central Asia and further east, wherein the ancient Iranian religious philosophy had great influence. Kenneth Ch'en, thus summarized such syncretism briefly as:

> Mention of the *Pure Land Sutra* brings us to a consideration of possible Iranian influences on Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially the Amitābha cult based on that sutra. There are some reasons to believe that the sun-worship of the Zoroastrians had influenced Mahāyāna Buddhism. The word "Amitābha" means infinite light. The Buddha Amitābha presides over a paradise of light inhabited by pure, stainless beings who are reborn there after invoking the name of Amitābha. In Zoroastrianism there is the

[232] Hazra, *Royal Patronage,* 155.

> heaven of boundless light presided over by Ahuramazda, described as full of light and brilliance. Such Mahāyāna Buddhas as Vairocana, the Brilliant One, and Dīpaṅkara, Light Maker, also may be indicative of sun worship. Amitābha also bears the name Amitāyus, Infinite Life. An Iranian deity, Zurvan Akaranak, who has the connotation of infinite time and space …. As further support of this line of reasoning, it is pointed out that these ideas in Buddhism developed not in India proper but in those areas in northwest India and beyond where the Kushan Dynasty was dominant and where Iranian influences were uppermost. Moreover, the first monk to introduce and translate a Pure Land Sutra in China was An Shih-kao, a Parthian; he was followed by other monks from Central Asia Chih Ch`in, whose ancestors were from the Yüeh-chih (Scythian), and K'ang Seng-hui, a Sogdian. Taken singly, these points may not have very much significance, but taken as a whole, they provide strong reasons to believe that the Mahāyāna development was influenced by Iranian elements.[233]

Etymologically the term "Amitābha" = *Amita* (unlimited) + *Ābhā* (light, radiance); "Amitāyus" = *Amita* (unlimited) +*Āyus* (age or space or time). Hence, several Buddhist texts such as the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra* and *Sukhavati Vyuha Sūtra* were composed by non-Indians: Indo-Parthian or Indo-Greco, Indo-Scythian monks, like Lokakṣema and his disciples. Lokakṣema's work also includes the first translation of the Sanskrit *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sūtra*, in which the first-known mention of Amitābha and the Pure Land doctrine is found.

The Sātavāhana Dynasty (c. 17 B.C. – 106 A.D.)

When the Mauryan Empire weakened, there was another smaller, but powerful dynasty known as the Sātavāhana Dynasty that came to the power under its founder Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi. Mgr. Etienne Lamotte identifies them as one of the non-Ariyan, Andhra tribes of Deccan.[234] The Sātavāhanas reigned over a large and comparatively powerful empire that covered from Central Asia to the Gangetic Valley in India. The Aśokan Edicts (6th Pillar Edicts) mention the Sātavāhanas as feudatories; nevertheless,

[233] Ch'en, *Buddhism in China,* 15-16.
[234] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, 474.

they were under the control of Emperor Aśoka. The Sātavāhanas declared themselves independent probably sometime after the death of Emperor Aśoka (232 B.C.), as the Maurya Empire began to weaken.

The Sātavāhanas are also well known for their contributions to Buddhism and Buddhist art and architecture. They built stupas in the Krishna River Valley, which includes the great stupa at Amarāvatī in Andhra Pradesh. The stupas were decorated with scenes from the life of the Buddha, portrayed in a characteristic, elegant style. The Karle Cave bears the testimony of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi's patronage of Buddhist themes and his support of a Buddhist sect called Mahāsaghiya. The Sātavāhana Empire spread Buddhist culture, especially the Amaravati style of sculpture, to Southeast Asia.

The Sātavāhanas also contributed in the establishment of the Sāñchi stupa. An inscription testifies to the gift of part of the Southern Gateway by the artisans of the Sātavāhana Emperor Satakarni.

The Pāla Dynasty of Bengal (c.8th A.D.–12th A.D)

Even though there were other ruling dynasties in Bengal who supported Buddhist causes partially or completely, the Pāla was the first independent Buddhist dynasty of Bengal that followed Buddhism and patronized Buddhist causes (together with other religions). King Gopāla was the first ruler and the founder of this dynasty. He was selected as a king in 750 A. D. in Gaur by a democratic election. This event could be referenced with respect to the early Buddhist practice of democracy as stated in several suttas, such as the *Aggañña Sutta* and the *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Gopala reigned from 750–770 A.D. and later consolidated his position by extending his control all over the Bengal. This Buddhist dynasty lasted for four-hundred

years (750–1120 A.D.) and brought prosperity in culture, economics, politics and especially education in Bengal.

The Pāla Empire reached its peak under both Gopāla and his son Dharmapāla. Dharmapāla extended his empire towards the northern parts of the Bengal and western parts, including Magadha in Bihar. This, of course, triggered a power struggle for the control of the Indian subcontinent. It is also during this period that the legendary political theory "*Matsyanyāya*" (the big fish eat small ones) developed. There were almost 21 Pāla kings within these four hundred years, most of whom were devout Buddhists; Tantrism was their practice.

King Devapāla, successor of Dharmapāla, extended the empire to cover much of the southeastern part of South Asia and beyond the first ruler, Gopāla of the Pala dynasty, who came to power during the 750 A.D. in a landmark election by common. Subsequently, Pāla power declined, and they were eventually dethroned by the Senas. The Pālas were the last major Buddhist dynasty to rule in South Asia. In 1199 A.D. the Turkish invader Iktiar ud-Di Mohammad Bakhtiar Khilji, along with his army, attacked and massacred monks, students, professors of Nālandā, Vikramaśīlā and other Buddhist institutions, ending the last breath of life in the history of Indian Buddhism.

The Pālas practised and were patrons of Tantric Buddhism, and all of the subsequent Pala kings were definitely Buddhists. King Dharmapāla made Haribhadra, one of the well-known Buddhist philosophers, his spiritual preceptor. They supported many monasteries, such as Somapura Mahāvihāra (one of the greatest Buddhist *vihāra*s in the Indian subcontinent, built by King Dharmapāla). King Devapāla enlarged the Somapura Mahāvihāra, which also bears several themes from the Brahmanic epics

Rāmāyana and *Mahābhārata,* symbolizing religious tolerance. King Mahipāla (I) sponsored construction and repairs of Buddhist sacred places such as Sāranāth, Nālandā and Bodh Gaya.

The Pāla supported education very highly and provided support for many educational institutions, such as Nālandā University and Vikramaśīlā University. Among other educational monasteries built by the Pāla rulers are Pandita Vihāra of Chittagong, Bangladesh, in which Naropa was involved. Nālandā University was considered one of the first great universities in recorded history, where many international students attended including the Chinese pilgrim Xuan Zang. Internationally noted Buddhist scholars from the Pāla period include Dīpankara Śrījñāna or Atisha, Sāntarakṣita, Sarahapada, Tilopada, Sīlabhadra, and Kamalaśīla, etc.

The Pāla Dynasty acquired a great reputation in the outside world, including with King Balaputradeva, the Śailendra king of Java, who sent an ambassador requesting for a grant of five villages to build a monastery in Nālandā. King Devapāla granted the request. Many Buddhist scholars from the Pāla Empire travelled from Bengal to other parts of the world to preach Buddhism. Atisha Dīpankara Śrījñāna, for example, went to Sumatra, Java and Tibet, to spread and reform Mahāyāna Buddhism there in the11th century. The Atisha Dipankara Śrījñāna went to Tibet with a special invitation from the King of Tibet and there reformed and firmly established Buddhism, which had become corrupted with indigenous religions.

From the very beginning, the Buddhist monastic system was a synthesis of different racial and social groups; there were members from all four major castes and clans. There were priestly groups, as there were sectarians who brought different rites and

rituals into the monastic environment. The Buddha did not oppose them, but was tolerant. Hence, different devotional groups as well as mystical groups developed within the Buddhist fold. By the time or the end of the Guptas, sectarian Buddhism took a different turn; the Tantrayāna, the Mantrayāna, Vajrayāna, Kālacakrayāna, Sahajayāna and different other mystical sects emerged. From the 8th century were seen the proto-Bengali *Caryāgitī* (Buddhist mystical songs) in *sandhyābhāṣā* (twilight language), from which the *lingua franca* of modern Bangladesh and West Bengal and their surrounding neighborhoods developed.

Individual Scholar Monks' Contributions

In addition to the influence exerted by royal patronage, several prominent monastic scholars individually contributed in the formation and spread of sects and sectarian Buddhism. Though there are numerous, a few must be recorded within the scope of this study, i.e., from the time of the First Buddhist Council under King Ajātasatru to the Fourth Buddhist Council under King Kaniṣka. In the period of King Ajātasatru, Mahākāssapa took a great interest in collecting and formulating the Buddha's teachings. As discussed earlier in this paper, in a later period a Buddhist sect, the Kāśyapīyas, emerges; however, it is difficult to link Mahākāssapa with the sect since there was neither a formal schism nor a formulated sect *per se* during the First Buddhist Council. During the Second Buddhist Council, there were several prominent Elders involved, in addition to the well-known Vajjiputtaka bhikkhus, who were supported by the royals. Among the Elders, Sambhūta Sānavāsī, Sabbakāmī, Revata, Yasa, Khujjasobhita, Sāḷha, Sunana and Vāsabhagāmika were well known. Each of these Elders individually or collectively exhorted the king to support their cause. Further down in

history, during the Third Buddhist Council, the involvement of Elders and the Emperor Aśoka has been recorded. The Elder Moggalīputta Tissa became prominent in this case. He guided Emperor Aśoka in the convening of the council as he composed the *Kathāvatthuppakaraṇa* at its conclusion. It was he alone who formulated the questions, which were put forward before the heretics, and he alone provided the answer to them as well. The *Kathāvatthuppakaraṇa* later on became one of the seven books of the *Abhidharma Piṭaka* of the Theravāda Buddhism. Emperor Aśoka's son Mahinda took a Buddhist mission to the island of nation of Sīnhaladvīpa, where King Devanāmpiya Tissa received him wholeheartedly. Gradually, three of the sectarian groups of the Theravāda School, and in the long run, a few more sects, developed there. Each of these three sects was supported by a king, and the kings built three *Ārāma*s for them: Jetavanārāma, in which the Jetavanavāsin sect dwelt, Abhayagiri Ārāma, in which the Abhayagirivāsins sect dwelt, and Mahāvihāra Ārāma, where the largest one, the Mahāvihāravāsin sect, lived, and so on.

During the Fourth Buddhist Council under the patronage of King Kaniṣka, several scholar monastics played an important role. Among them, Aśvaghoṣa, Vasumitra, and Pārśva were noteworthy; Aśvaghoṣa wrote several Buddhist texts in Sanskrit, among which the *Buddhacarita* (*Acts of the Buddha*), *Saundarananda Kāvya*, and (allegedly) *Mahāyānaśraddhotpādasūtra* (*Awakening of Mahayana Faith*) are well known. Vasumitra helped reinterpret the *Piṭaka* for the Sarvāstivādins in Sanskrit; he is also well known for his history of Buddhist sects, *Samayabhedoparacaṇacakra,* noted earlier.

Nāgasena is well known for his patron, the Indo-Greco King Milinda, who had a long syllogism with Nāgasena, recorded in the *Milindapañha* (*Questions of Milinda*).

After hearing this teaching, King Milinda converted to Buddhism and supported Buddhist causes. The Parthian Bhikkhu Lokakṣema also played an important role in translating, editing, composing and popularizing different Buddhist texts in Central Asia and farther east in Asia with the help from the king in central Asia. Further down in the history, though without royal support, many other scholar monastics have contributed in the formation and spread of Buddhist sects and sectarianism, including Asaṃgha, Vasubandhu, who is famous for his *Abhidharmakośa* and other writings, Nāgārjuna, known for his *Mūlamādhyamika Kārikā* and more, Āryadeva and his *Cittaparisuddhiprakaraṇa,* etc. Furthermore, Buddhaghosa, who is famous for his Pali commentaries and most importantly the Buddhist encyclopedic work *Visuddhimagga,* and Anuruddha, known for his *Abhidhammathasaṁgaha*, should also be added to this list.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

The Buddha preached his teachings for 45 years to unite his followers, not to separate one from other. He wanted his disciples to be under one umbrella called "*Saṁgha*." Unfortunately, the *Saṁgha* did not remain under one umbrella for long. Within a hundred years after the passing of the Buddha, his *Saṁgha* split into different sects and sub-sects. Two reasons for this splits are given by Buddhist Studies specialists: a split due to a disputation over monastic discipline, and on the other hand, a disputation due to a controversy on doctrinal issues.

At the beginning of this dissertation, a passage was quoted from Charles Prebish to estalish a hypothesis and directive statement for this study. In this quotation, Prebish stated that there were two different causes regarding the schism; the first one being between the Sthaviravādin, a conservative group, and the second being the Mahāsāṁghika, a liberal group of Buddhist monastics. After thorough studies of the works by Marcel Hofinger, Wang Pachow, Nalinaksha Dutt, and André Bareau, Prebish rejected both these reasons for the schism and suggested that Buddhist scholarship must investigate other reason or reasons for the schism. Hence, the present researcher attempted to examine the cause of schism from a different perspective. After investigation, this study shows here that there were many incidents in the Buddhist monastic system during the lifetime of the Buddha that were "precursorial" in nature, and that "prototypical" elements eventually led to formation of different sects.

The analysis made in this study shows that there was no such *saṁghabheda* in early Buddhism, and, if there was one *per se*, it was not acceptable, for the Buddha has strongly denounced any *saṁghabheda* or split in the saṁgha. This study addressed that the Buddhist *nikāya*s are not "sects" in the traditional Western usages of the term, and that the development of the different *nikāya*s does not constitute a schism. Furthermore, the separation of the *nikāya*s is not due to *dasavatthu* and *pañcavatthu*, as has been argued both by traditional Buddhist historians and by modern Buddhologists, but rather is a result of pre-existing socio-political-geographical factors.

From this standpoint, the author examines how the *nikāyabheda* (sectarianism) begun and wherein lies the root, since there was no *saṁghabheda* (schism), yet many splits were recorded. This researcher suggests that there were merely, indeed, a series of *bhedas* (separation) within the Buddhist monastic system, fraternity-style splits or pupillary successions. *Nikāya*s (sects) eventually gave birth to *nikāyabheda*s (sectarianism) due to certain precursorsial and prototypical activities of the monastics—a perspective that counters the *saṁghabheda* (schism) long believed in by Buddhologists. A brief history of both *dasavatthu* and *pañacavatthu* was provided and the origin of both these terms (as the purported cause of schism) was examined from a historical background.

The title of this dissertation, "Saṁghabheda and Nikāyabheda: A Critical Study of the Schism, Origin, and Formation of Sects and Sectarianism in Early Buddhism," has different segments: *saṁghabheda*, *nikāyabheda*, schism, the formation of sects and sectarianism. Keeping these elements in mind, this dissertation took shape. In order to find an answer, this researcher followed several steps. After introducing opinions of

several modern Buddhist Studies specialists on schism in the first chapter, various issues have been addressed, such as the meaning and scope of the *saṁghabheda* in accordance with the Buddha's prohibition of it in the Vinaya and the consequences of it within the *Saṁgha* community. Yet, there were splits among the monastics due to certain issues. It was then discussed if these splits (*bheda*) among the monastic groups or sects (*nikāya*) are different from the Western interpretation or meaning of the term "sect." A few schismatic (prototypical) elements and (precursorial) episodes involving Devadatta, the Buddha's cousin, and two groups of bhikkhus who created havoc in the community, have been discussed in chapter two. Several examples were given from different perspectives— religious, philosophical, and sociological among others—and several Buddhist sects as recorded in non-canonical early Buddhist literatures were introduced. Then throughout the rest of the chapters, various incidents, minor personal conflicts (which were precursorial elements) among the major disciples of the Buddha were examined. The convening of the Second Buddhist Council, in which the first "schism" among the monastics took place, was discussed from the standpoints of two different interpretations; one related to the Pali tradition and on the other side, the Sanskrit tradition. In a later chapter, my personal theories were introduced, the three reasons for the splits, viz., socio-racial stratifications of ancient India, political pursuit of dominance through religion, and geographical aloofness, which isolated the Buddhist monastics from each other and gradually caused them to formulate a separate fraternity *(nikāya*) or sect. The socio-cultural influence was discussed here, including how ancient Indian clans (*kula*), lineage (*gotra)*, and pupillary succession (*guruparamparā*) played an important part in the formation of small groups or sects, such as Gokulika, Śailīya, Vātsiputrīya,

Kāśyapīya, Dharmaguptika, Siddhārthika, Hīmanantika, Avantika, etc. In order to argue in favor of my theory, I have also drawn attention to the fact that there were several prominent disciples who each had 500 disciples and (sub)disciples, who could have formed a separate fraternity (*nikāya*) later.

In addition, there were numerous episodes showing that the monastic community members were not united all the time; they had personal conflicts, which is another cause to form a separate fraternity within. All of these minor conflicts and misunderstandings could be placed into the parameter of "precursorial" elements in the formation of sectarianism. In Chapter four, a group of senior bhikkhu leaders were cited who each had, at least, five-hundred disciples or more; these leaders actually were internal sect leaders who could be counted as "prototypical" or "forerunners" of the sectarianism in early Buddhist monastic system. The disciples who were under these leaders could have been from different socio-racial groups as well. In the sixth chapter, it was examined how the political elite or royalty supported the monastics from the very beginning of the organization, starting from the pre-common era with King Ajātasatru to the Pala kings of Bengal in medieval India. In between King Ajatasatru and Pala Kings, many rulers of foreign origin also supported sectarian Buddhism. All of these rulers, it seems, used Buddhism in order to fulfill their political ambitions and win the minds of subjects they ruled. The concept of the *chakravarti rājā* (universal king) became a pivotal point for many ambitious rulers. Apart from the royalty, some scholar monastics also played an important role in supporting the growth of sectarianism by composing various monographs in favor of certain sects.

Considering all of the above points, I conclude that there was no schism (*saṁghabheda*) in early Buddhism, but rather a number of minor, prototypical pupillary successions under the leadership of certain prominent disciples of the Buddha, which later became sectarianism (*nikāyabheda*).

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