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place in the post Mauryan Indian art history. Primarily Buddhist in theme, the rich material obtained at both these sites, furnishes an eloquent testimony to the happy blending of ethics and aesthetics. The broad-based Buddhist philosophy was popularised through various manifestations of art. At Bhārhat and Sānchī life of different grades of society has been portrayed with a good deal of success. The common people have been given considerable coverage in that art. This attests to the position enjoyed by them in the society of the Śūṅga period. The art-remains at Sānchī are more precise and variegated than at Bhārhat. Right from the time of the Maurya emperor Aśoka to the early Medieval epoch, Sānchī continued as a religious and art centre. This is borne out by the remains preserved in and around Sānchī, including monuments, sculptures and inscriptions. Sānchī can be called an epic of architecture and sculpture, wherein other fine arts have harmoniously been merged to form an integrated whole. The remains of śālās, temples, monasteries, sculptures and of the minor antiquities contain much useful material for the study of various facets of culture of Central India extending over a period of about a thousand years.

Ancient Indian artists (ṛupa-dakṣaṇa) and artisans (śilpīs) may have undergone a course of training in the arts, aesthetics, iconography and mythology. Vidisha, the capital of Daśārpa daesa, was one of the great centres of art, similar to Taksāli, Mathurā, Bhārhat, KauśaΜ, Bodh-gaya and Tāmrālipī (Tāmluk), in north-western and northern India. The inscription of the ivory workers carved on a terrace at Sānchī attests to the artistic achievement (ṛupa-karṇa) of the Vidiṣha-artists.

The Śūṅga art at Bhārhat, Sānchī, Bodh-gaya and Mathurā provided a background for the later classical art, which blossomed in its full form during the Gupta age. The examples from Aśchhātra, Mathurā and Sārnath can be cited in this regard. During the time of the Prathāhāra, the Chandellas, the Kalachuris, the Paramaras, the Pālas and the Senas, art developed in various forms in the northern, eastern and central India.

The Gandhāra art of the north-west-flourished at several centres, such as Vāhilika (Bactria), Taksāli, Purusapura (Peshawar) and PuṣkalaVāti (Chāṇḍdā). In Western India, architecture and art developed at various centres. Mention may be made of Karle, Bhājā, Kanheri, Nāisī, Nande-ghat and others. That region has preserved some rare forms of the ‘rock-art’. The Vengi region, with its well-known centres of Amrāvati, Nāgarjunakoṇḍa and several others, contributed considerably to Indian art. The combination of the two main arts, ethics and aesthetics, is clearly discernible in the Vengi area. The blossoming of art continued during the reigns of the Chāṇḍulas the Pallavas, the Rāstrakutas, the Gāliyas the Cholas and the Hoysalas.

Indian philosophy, including Jainism and Buddhism, has achieved the highest place to human values. This philosophy was not an abstract speculation but was closely related to humanity. Various Indian literary and art-manifestations have given practical forms to this philosophy, which emphasized on the values of life. Indian art, as a whole, strives for social morality, as against selfish enjoyment. The Indian ideal of a harmonious combination of bhoga and succa has been successfully achieved in art of the country.

**SOME THOUGHTS ON ĀTMAN-BRAHMAN IN EARLY BUDDHISM**

KAMAÑESWAR BHATTACHARYA

The publications that have appeared over the past ten years or so seem to show that interest in this problem has not lapsed. Various attempts have been made, either to prove or to disprove that the Buddha denied the ātman. It does not seem that the conclusions reached in 1973 have been seriously shaken. Some kind of confusion seems to persist, though—a confusion due to the fact that the professional Buddhist scholars do not realize the specificity of the Upaniṣadic ātman, which, I believe, the Buddha admitted. There is, indeed, a great deal of difference between the Upaniṣadic conception of ātman and the conceptions of ātman as found in other Brahmanical systems, e. g., Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, with whose ātman the pugoda of the Pudgalavādin has much in common. The Upaniṣadic ātman is not a soul, but the Being itself, beyond the subject-object split, and thus the ground of all our authentic knowledge—a conception clearly recognized in a Mahāyāna text, the Suvikrantaśrīmānipariśīlā-Pratāhariśamāta-vrata, as well.

In a way, it may be said, the Upaniṣads deny the ātman as much as the Buddha does—if by ātman is understood the psychophysical individual or any of the elements (however privileged it may be, especially consciousness, sāyāna; Pali sīla) of which this individual is composed. But, if the equation ātman = brahman, in the Upaniṣads, means—as it really does—that the individual in its immost essence is not an individual but the Being itself—an identity which it realizes in Liberation, through the negation of its individuality?—then the Buddha admits the ātman as much as the Upaniṣads do. In fact, the ātman-brahman of the Upaniṣads is asāṃtā, nirātman, nirātmanakā. And two Mahāyāna texts, the Mahāyānottarottāraṭaka and the commentary on the Ratnagotraśrīhīga-Mahāyānottarottāraṭaśra, similarly consider nairutmya to be a synonym for mahātman (parātman). Vasubandhu clearly defines nairutmya, in his Vīśeṣākhyōṣī: yo kālaṁ dharmadān svabhāvāḥ grhītyagṛihakāśid pariśaltanā tene kālpitiṣṭhānaṁ, maṅgam nairutmyam, na te anabhiṣekyaṁ ātmano yo buddhānś ca evaṁ, “It is by virtue of that nature of things, consisting in subject and object, etc., which the ignorant imagine, that the things are devoid of ātman, not by virtue of that ineffable ātman which is the domain of the Buddhās."

A kind of nairutmya doctrine is also to be found in the Brahmanical tradition. Hari-vṛṣabha (whoever he may be, Bhārhati or some other author), in his Prti on Bhārhati’s Vākṣyapadīya I, 5, mentions, among the “conceptions of access (to brahman)” [prāptivaiśekā], sarvottamā nairutmyam “complete negation of ātman”. Vṛṣabha explains, using Buddhist terminology: nairutmyam iti: nairukṣṭhāmya, brahmanabhāmya nīrapītum vakaṁ cālayanām, brahma iti api tattvam ity api rājanām, grhītyagṛihakāśid pitaḥ iti, “nairutmya: the meaning is absence of own-nature, since it is impossible to determine the own-nature of brahman.
and to speak of it. There is, indeed, in it, cessation of the nature 'brahman' as well as of the nature 'truth' (tattva); or, there is in it cessation of subject and object.**

In the Sāṅkhyavāda of the Mahābhūtās we read:

omātīc cāmātāc prātāhā śīlābāḥ nīrātmānām /
brahmābhuțānā sa nīrāmdāyaṃ sukti śūnta nīrāmāyaḥ ||

This verse also recalls the utterance often met with in the Pali Canon: so anotananto aparantano dīthe va dhamme niĉhīte nibbuto śīlībhaḥ sukhopatīsangvedi brahmābhūtā anatā vihaśāti.11

Nirvāṇa is, indeed, often designated as brahman in the Pali Canon, and it is—as a verse of the Parivāra says—but a ‘designation without anātman’ (paṁkuttī anatā).11

Nor is the insistence on anātman (Pali anatta) unique in Buddhism. Aspiring to the ātman, striving to know it, is it not making of it an object, thus depriving it of all encompassing character and, consequently, making of it something which it is not? As an Upaniṣad states, “It is not known to those who know it; it is known to those who do not know it.”12

In classical Vedānta, the psychophysical complex is called anātman, as in Buddhism. And, in a remarkable text, Sāṅkara states, at the end of a discussion on the ātman’s “not being an object” (aṇīṣṭāvatra): “Thus one must not exert oneself to know [the ātman], but solely to make cease the notion of ātman in what is non-ātman.”13

All his life, the Buddha,—who wanted not so much to be a philosopher as to be a saviour,—taught this doctrine of anātman, in order, precisely, to make cease the notion of ātman (Pali atta) in what is anātman—one of the four “errors” (vipāryaṭa; Pali vipallāsa). The ātman cannot be an object of knowledge, as we have just seen. It is realized in the immediate intuition, “It is” (aati), as an Upaniṣad states,14—i.e., beyond the subject-object split inherent in our ordinary way of knowing,—when the false identification of ātman with the psychophysical complex has been dispelled, when all individuality has been denied, is extinct, when there is no concept “I am” (asmiṃnā), a concept which has no other origin than this false identification.15—technically named sākhyāvādikī in Pali.

This is Nirvāṇa/Nibbāna—the “unborn, unproduced, uncreated, unborn” (ajīt ātmanākta bhūtaṃ sāsyahātanaḥ), the “issue” (niṣaṅgaro) of the “born, produced, created, formed” (jīvam bhūtān karanā sāsyahātanaḥ). It has no origin; therefore, it neither decays nor dies. It is eternal (nīcca, dhava, sassata), in the sense that it is beyond time. It is not another world located beyond the “born, produced, created, formed”: it is in us, in ourselves, and we have to discover it in our innermost being, by transcending our phenomenal existence. As one of the texts says, it is not by a spatial movement (ganaṃ which one attains to the “end of the world” (lokasāna ante), or the “end of sorrow” (dukkhasāna ante): it is in this cubit-long body, endowed with consciousness, that are to be found the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, and the way that leads to the cessation of the world; and he who thus knows, in himself, the end of the world, aspires neither to this world nor to the other.16

The Upaniṣads had initiated the negative way of speaking of the Absolute. The Buddha, too, speaks negatively of Nibbāna.18 But he also describes it as imperceptible, infinite, universal consciousness (vīśāṅga), in which the phenomenal world with all its categories, as well as our individuality, ceases to exist. It is attained only when our empirical consciousness,—which is the foundation of our empirical existence,—comes to an end:

vīśāṅgām anādassanān anantaṃ sabbatopāhān/
ettha āpè ca paññati tejo vāya na gāhāhī||
ettha dīghoḥ ca rassati ca avayaṃ bhūtaṃ nībhoṣanāh||
ettha nāmām ca rūpām ca asesaṃ uparujjhursti||
vīśāṅgassa nirodhena ettha etam uparujjhusi||

Our empirical consciousness binds us; but it is also that through which we attain our liberation—as the formulation of the Four Noble Truths cited before seems to indicate. It is through consciousness that we must transcend consciousness, in order to become Consciousness.

In another passage we read that the “vehicle that leads to the brahman” (brahmāyana), i.e. to Nirvāṇa, has its origin in ourselves (anatā sambhūtanāṃ):

stod atatān sambhūtanā brahmāyanāṃ anantatratāni,
niyamantā dhātā lokakārī aḥātadvātā vajayāt vajaya||

These views clearly recall Upaniṣadic ideas. When the Buddha said that the psychophysical complex, composed of the khandhas, is not ātman—“not man—itself, nor ‘man’; neither a ‘man’, nor a ‘man’” (aati, m. eso atāt. “This is not mine, I am not this; this is not my ātman”—, he certainly was not denying ātman as such. The logic of these statements was explained in ancient times by Uddyotakara, the author of the Nyāyāvitikā (although he unduly saw in them an affirmation of the ātman as conceived in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, i.e. as an individual ego, “object of the notion ‘I’” (aṁkhārāsajja, aṁkhāpratijñāsajja), which is distinct from the psychophysical complex): This is a particular negation (viśeṣopatijñā), not a universal negation (sāmīṃya- pratijñā), and a particular negation invariably implies a corresponding affirmation; when I am, e.g., that I do not see with the left eye, I certainly do not mean that I do not see at all, but that I see with the right eye.19

As Karl Jaspers has sufficiently observed, by denying the psychophysical complex as ātman,—because it is impermanent (anicca) and hence painful (dukkha)—the Buddha was only judging what is not ātman in terms of the standard of the true ātman.

One cannot attribute to the Buddha—as the most prestigious Buddhist theologian of our day does—in the statement, without qualification, n’ūthi niṣca dhava sasata atapiṣaḥdhammo, the text in question—Sāṃyutta-Niśāṇa, III, p. 144—conundrums, not the belief in a timeless Absolute that is “permanent”, “stable”, “eternal”, “immutable”, but merely the conception of a psychophysical individuality possessing all these qualities!

It should be emphasized once more—in order to avoid misunderstanding—that the ātman that is being spoken of is not a soul, but the Being itself. It is in this sense that it is identified, in the Pali Canon, with the brahman or the dhamma (Sanskrit drsma) as it is in the Upaniṣads.20

Wilhelm Geiger—to whom we owe the most detailed study of the question—arrived at a substitution theory. According to him, the term dhamma was, for the Buddha, but the “venerable receptacle that he filled with new content” (das ehrengertliche Gefäß, das er mit neuem Inhalt füllte). The Buddha’s intention was—thought Geiger—to replace the idea of brahman with that of dhamma, i.e., to replace the idea of eternity with that of change, the idea of ātman...
with that of non-ātman (anatā). So the term brahman, in Geiger's view, "receives a particular shading, is seen in a new light" (erhält ... eine besondere Färbung, eine neue Beleuchtung).14

So far as I can see, this kind of interpretation finds no support in the Canon, nor in the traditional commentaries.

The Buddha, steering between the two extreme standpoints, eternalism (sasatātā) on the one hand and nihilism (nechatātā) on the other, did condemn eternalism. But, as several canonical texts show, this "eternity" is nothing but time extended, either in this world or in a higher world.15 As pointed out above, the Buddha did admit an Absolute that is eternal, in the sense that it is timeless. It is enough, for being convinced of this, to have a glance at the Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary, p. 364, giving the various epithets of Nibbāna: aceuṭaṇ padoṇa, acolotīkhaṇa, atamata, dhuvāṇa, niecaṃ, sasataṇ. Buddhaghosa, in the Visuddhimagga, clearly explains: apphaṅhavatā ajārārāmaṇa; pabhavaṅhavatārāraṇaṇaḥ abhāvato niecaṃ.16 He also refers to the epithets of Nibbāna: sasata, etc.17 So too, in the Upaniṣads, the brahman is eternal because it is timeless. They, too, reject the idea of a temporal eternity.

Thus it seems that Buddhism is both "eternalist" and "non-eternalist", just as the Upaniṣads are,—depending on how "eternity" is conceived of. Similar is the case with anatā, as we have already seen above : the Buddha admits and denies ātman as much as the Upaniṣads do—depending on how ātman is conceived of.

A study of the term brahman, as interpreted in the Pali commentaries, has proved illuminating in this respect. Here we have, among others, a clear indication of how the traditional commentators, in their eagerness to isolate Buddhism from the Brahmanical tradition, sought to obscure the original meaning of an important term; but, through the various attempts of these commentators, can be discerned—so it seems to me—this original meaning.

The traditional view about brahman is summarized, in identical terms, in Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Mūlajīma-Nikāya, the Pāpiṇciśālī,18 as well as in Buddhadatta's commentary on the Buddhavamsa, the Mahākathāvīsālī.19 It is also given, in the same words, in the twelfth-century Pali grammar by Aggavaṇa, the Saddāni.20 Following the traditional etymology, current in the Brahmanical tradition, the Pali commentators derive the word from the root brūk—(Sanskrit brūk)—"to grow, increase". Brahman—masculine according to these authorities—means, we are told, someone "who has been caused to grow" (brūkāti by such and such specific qualities" (tehi tehi gāvāvasakhi), or "someone who grows (brūhai) through such and such qualities" (tehi tehi gusheki)."21 Different occurrences of the word in the Pali Canon are enumerated and its meanings in different contexts are defined. Brahma, it is said, is used in the following meanings: "Great Brahma" (Mahābrāhma), "Tathāgata" "brāhmaṁ" (brāhmaṇa, "the parents") (mātpātā), "the highest" (sēṭṭha). In such instances as sahaṇa Brahma, deiṭsahana Brahman,22 Brahma means "Great Brahman". In such instances as bhāh man tī, bhēkhāman, tathāgato, evaḥ adhivacanaḥ,23 brahman means "Tathāgata". In such instances as Suṇāṇipada 1133, brahma means "brāhmaṁ".24 When it is said : brahman tī māṭiṭārato pūṣkārīyati ti vacca,22 the word means "the parents". Finally, when it is said :

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brahmacaṅkhaṇa vacca,22 brahmaṁ means "the highest".24 The Saddāni in this connection has the following verse which gives in a nutshell all the meanings of brahman :

Mahābrāhmaṇi evpe ca ato māṭiyāviṣṇa ca / tathāgata ca sēṭṭha ca brahmaṣaṭeva vacca \n
How uncertain this tradition was is seen, however, immediately after. The Saddāni records another interpretation, which is, in fact, the same as the one given by Dhammapāla in his commentary Paramatamaṇḍalīya (Māṭikī) on Buddhaghosa's Visuddhimagga.25 According to this second, and later,24 interpretation, there are three kinds of brahman (śivida brāhmaṇa) : samātibrahmaṇa "brāhmaṁ by convention", upapattibrahmaṇa "brāhmaṁ by birth", and viśuddhibrahmaṇa "brāhmaṁ by purity", to which is added a fourth, "the supreme Brahman" (uttanabrāhmaṇa),26 namely the "Perfectly Enlightened One" (sammāsambuddha). The three kinds of "gods", sammātideva, upapattideva and viśuddhīdeva, are mentioned elsewhere in Pali literature. Here the word brahma in the utterance brahmacaṅkhaṇa vacca is considered to be a substantivized adjective,27 referring to the "Noble Doctrines" (brahman ti ariyadhamma vacca). And we are told that the "Noble Ones" (ariyī) who have sprung forth from this,—as personal manifestations as it were of this impersonal principle,—are without discrimination called "brāhmaṁ by purity", for they are "brāhmaṁ in the true sense" (paramatathabrahmatāya). In particular, however, we are told, by virtue of such utterances as brahmati ti, bhikkhave, tathāgato ti, adhivacanaṁ,28 the "Perfectly Enlightened One" is called "the supreme Brahman", because, by virtue of his qualities which are "the highest", he has attained the highest degree of excellence in the world including the gods.29

In another connection, too, the Saddāni interprets brahma as a substantivized adjective. While discussing the verbal root bhū, Aggavaṇa takes up the question of brahmabhūsa and similar expressions occurring in the Canon, and, following the interpretations to the two verbal roots bhū—belonging to different two groups and used, respectively, in the sense of "being" (sattā) and of that of "attaining" (patti = Sanskrit prajāt).30 Brahmapāthā is thus explained : "brahmati, in the sense of 'the highest',31 of brahma (substantivized adjective) means 'The Way' (magga), and one is brahmabhūsa because one has attained it.32 There is a textual problem here, of which I shall speak later.

Here again, it is clear that the tradition is not sure.

There is no doubt that by brahma (whatever it may be), used as first member of compounds, Nirvāṇa is often meant. The utterance se anatātapa...has already been quoted above. The Sannyutta-Nikāya in one passage says of the Arahants : loke anupallīte te brahmapi bhūṣa ṅa anissā.34 A Sanskrit text, Bhiṅku Vīryaśīlada's commentary on the Arthavānicīyā-sūtra, clearly says: nirānjaṇa brahmoṣṭate, paramapradhamāte, tuvā eva "ity api sa bhaveti lāhitaḥ iti śīlaḥ brahmabhūtesaḥ iti Sūtra.33 The term paraṁ, used in this passage, recalls sēṭṭha of the pali commentaries, and both Vīryaśīlada and the authors of these commentaries had perhaps the same thing in mind. Buddhaghosa, for instance, in his various commentaries, glosses brahmabhūtesa aṭṭhānā by sēṭṭhabhūte aṭṭhānā. In numerous other instances, too, he uses the term sēṭṭha to gloss brahma; and the term sēṭṭha, as well as paraṁ in the commentary on the Arthavānicīyā-sūtra, has led scholars to think that these commentators had in mind the
neuter brahmā, which they interpreted in the sense of “the highest” in order to indicate that it designates the Absolute—as it does in the Upaniṣadic tradition** (though may be, in some of these scriptures, the difference between the Upaniṣadic conception of the Absolute and the Buddhist conception of it). But, according to the pali commentators, as we have seen, seṭṭha “the highest” is one of the “meanings” of brahmā (masculine), which neither in the Upaniṣads nor in Buddhism can designate the Absolute. It might be thought that, in the first interpretation noted earlier, “the highest” (seṭṭha) is but a conventional meaning of the word brahmā, having nothing to do with the Brahmā gods (Buddhism knows several of them). It is often so indeed, in the commentaries. But the commentators—as we are going to see—also refer to the Brahmās by the term seṭṭha. The Brahmās, it is true, hold an important place in the Pali Canon. But, as shown elsewhere, this was merely a concession to the beliefs prevalent in the time when Buddhism originated.** Sometimes the Buddha and the Arahants are called Brahmās, for the Brahmānic ritual practices Buddhism substituted ethical-meditation practices, the famous Brahmavihāras, as the means to attain to the world of the Brahmās (Brahmaloka) and to live in communion with them (Brahmasaṅgha, which is the same as the Brahmavīrula of the ritualists, as the Akiṇkhāmarūpa shows beyond all doubt**), to be equal to the Brahmās (Brahmasama), to attain to the status of the Brahmās (Brahmapatta): those practices, we are told, are typical of the Brahmās.** However, the Brahmaloka is no longer “the highest” in the real sense as it used to be with the ritualists, nor have the Brahmās a claim to unconditionalness any more.** The Brahmavihāras, like all other meditation practices, are considered to be impermanent because they are conditioned.** Nevertheless, Buddhaghoṣa uses the term seṭṭha in relation to the Brahmās and the Brahmavihāras. Evidently, he cannot mean by “the highest,” in this context, what the Brahmās themselves mean when they claim to be so—the highest Reality.* What he means is purely ethical. He says, indeed, in the Visuddhimagga, while explaining the expression Brahmavihāra: Seṭṭhatthaṁ tava nissaro dhāraṇāya ettha Brahmavihāraṁ vedabbā. Suttasu samāpatis-patthānena hi seṭṭha ati vikkara. Yathā ettha Brahmāno nissaro viharanī evam ethi sampayuttay yegino Brahmaśamānī hata viharantarī seṭṭhatthaṁ nissaro dhāraṇāya eva Brahmābhāri ti vucoha.*

*It should be understood that the Brahmavihāras are so called in the sense of ‘the highest’ and because of their faultless nature. For these practices, in being the right mode of conduct toward beings, are the highest. And, as the Brahmās live with faultless thoughts, so do the yogins, who, being associated with these practices, become equal to the Brahmās. Thus these practices are called Brahmavihāra in the sense of the ‘highest’ and because of their faultless nature.*

To the idea of “the highest” (seṭṭha) Buddhaghoṣa adds here that of “faultlessness” (nissaro dhāraṇā). This occurs elsewhere, too. Thus Buddhaghoṣa explains the expression Brahmavihāra in Aṅguttara-Nikāya (11, p. 104): Brahmavihāra ti nissaro dhāraṇā Brahmābhāra-sādhakaṁ Brahmābhāraṁ...* In the Sīlaṭṭhakakāliṁ, he explains seṭṭha “the highest” itself by “faultlessness,” when he interprets the expression brahmavihāra.*

As we saw earlier, according to the conventions established by the commentators, one of the meanings of brahmā, in the Canon, is “the parent” (mātāpi). This, of course, throws no light on the utterance cited to illustrate this “meaning”: brahmā ti mātāpiaro.... In actual practice, however, the commentators say that the word brahmā is used, here too, in the sense of “the highest” (seṭṭha),** and they compare the attitudes of the parents toward their children in different periods of their (the children’s) lives to the four Brahmavihāras which characterize the Brahmās! Thus Buddhaghoṣa writes in the Manorathapāraṁ, while commenting upon Aṅguttara-Nikāya, I, p. 132: brahmā ti mātāpiaro ti seṭṭhāṁ devicaravaṁ. Yathā Mahābrahmās cattāra viharanī ti honti: matti kuru yuddhati upbhātī ti, evan eva mātāpiaro putteva cattāra viharanī ti honti.** Dhammapalī, Buddhaghoṣa’s commentator, writes similarly when he comments on Visuttaṁ, I, p. 110.*

All this seems irreproachable. But how can Nirvāṇa be called brahmā, even in this specific sense of “the highest”? As we shall presently see, the commentators themselves do not seem to be quite at ease on this point. However, the instance cited earlier is not the only one where brahmā, in relation to the highest Truth, is interpreted in this sense. There are many passages in the Canon where the Buddha is called brahmabhūta, and the expression is often used along with dharmabhūta.** Undoubtedly brahma and dhamma are considered to be synonyms. Thus in the Aggaṁutta-sutta of the Dīgha-Nikāya we read: tathāgatassu h etan adhivacanā: dhammakoṣa iti pi brahmakoṣa iti pi, dhammaḥbhūta iti pi brahmaṁbhūta iti pi, “The Tathāgata is so called: dhammakoṣa ‘One whose body is the dhamma,’ or brahmakoṣa ‘One whose body is brahma’; dhammaḥbhūta ‘One who is (or: has become) the dhamma,’ or brahmaḥbhūta ‘One who is (or: has become) brahma.’” - Here also, Buddhaghoṣa has nothing else to say than dhamma hi seṭṭhatthaṁ brahmā ti vucocti.** “The dhamma is called brahmā in the sense of the ‘highest.’” But, whatever the meaning of the term dhamma in this and similar contexts,—the Doctrine, or the “ninefold supramundane dhamma” (navavibhihokutuddharaṁ), or the “true nature” (avapitisābhāra), as the commentators say,—in no way, it seems, is it possible to equate dhamma with brahmā (bhramā).

The early commentators themselves, it would seem, are not always at ease when they resort to this equation. Thus, while commenting upon Theragāthā 689,—a verse attributed to Āṭṭālivā Thera, which occurs also in the Aṅguttara-Nikāya (III, p. 346), and where by brahma Nirvāṇa is clearly meant, since one of the manuscripts of the Aṅgutta-Nikāya adds to brahmamahī the gloss anumati-pātha,—Dhammapalī first states that by brahmakoṣa the four Brahmavihāras are meant; but he then gives an alternative explanation according to which the first member of the compound is brahma, an adjective (Sanskrit brāhma), meaning “the highest” (seṭṭha).** In various other contexts, too, brahma is interpreted as an adjective. As we saw earlier, in the enumeration of the different “meanings” of brahma the sentence brahmacakkaṁ pavoṭteṣi—which often occurs in place of dhammaṁ pavoṭteṣi, being one more illustration of the equivalence brahma—dhamma—is cited to illustrate the meaning “the highest” (seṭṭha). But, in actual practice, we find the first member of the compound brahmacakka interpreted as the adjective brahma “the highest”: ettha brahmaṁ ti seṭṭhaṁ utamam viṣāthāya; ** ettha brahmaṁ ti seṭṭhaṁ viṣāthāya; ** ettha brahmaṁ ti seṭṭhaṁ utamam, viśuddhaṁ dhammacakkaṁ etan adhivacanān.** In brahmakoṣa (Sanskrit brahmakoṣa),—an expression that in the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad designates the discipline that leads to the brahman, and which, according to the Buddhist tradition, designates the discipline—the Noble Eightfold Path—
(ariya athhaṅgiko magga) that leads to Nirvāṇa, called brahma,10—is brahma sometimes interpreted in the same manner.15 In the Canon itself, brahma (as a simple word) is occasionally found used as an adjective, and the commentators gloss it by seṭṭha “the highest”: thus in Suttapāla 151 and 205, in connection with the Brahmaśālaṁ:20 in the Samyutta-Nikāya, in connection with yāna.21 On the other hand, there are in the old commentaries instances of interpretation where brahma can be understood as a substantival adjective. Thus, in one passage of the Samādhisamādhi Sutta, Buddhaghosa explains brahmaciṁ (n) as follows: seṭṭhassa bhavanti brahmam ariyamaggo carati caranī bhavanti brahmaciṁ.12 It may be thought that, for Buddhaghosa, brahma here is a substantival adjective, meaning “the highest” (seṭṭha) and designating the “Noble Path” (ariya maggo)—an interpretation that we found recorded in the Saddāna.13 This way of understanding may be questioned, in view of what Dhammapāla says in the Itivuttaka-Aṭṭhakathā.14 He first interprets brahmaciṁ as brahmaṁ setṭhaṁ carati caranī bhavanti—an interpretation where, again, brahma can be understood as a substantival adjective. But, immediately after, he gives an alternative explanation which brings us back to brahmaṁ “the highest”: brahmā u pそれに seṭṭha u cādi etassa athitī brahmaciṁ. According to this interpretation, therefore, brahmad, in this context, means “the highest conduct” (seṭṭha u cādi); and, if this interpretation is to be taken seriously, in the Samādhisamādhi Sutta, too, we have to understand brahmaṁ, not as the Accusative singular of brahma, substantival adjective, but as the Accusative singular of brahma (masculine) designating the “Noble Path”. In Dhammapāla’s first interpretation, of course, we have to understand brahmaṁ similarly: and the word is explained there as meaning “the highest” (seṭṭha). The same would hold for both brahmaṁ in other interpretations of brahmaciṁ (n) and sabrahmacāri (n),15 as well as in the interpretation given by Dhammapāla of brahmacārī in the Itivuttaka-Aṭṭhakathā;16 (brahmabhājīta) brahmaṁ u setṭhaṁ arahattaphalana putten—an interpretation according to which this expression means “one who has attained the highest Fruit consisting in Arahantship”.17 However, in the Nettipakaraṇa-Aṭṭhakathā we find the following interpretation of sabrahmacāri: brahmaṁ vuccati setṭhatthena sakulam sakulassanam, samānaha u vā brahmaṁ carati passajjatāt sabrahmacāri.18 “No teaching of the Buddha is called brahmaṁ, in the sense of ‘the highest’...”19 Here there can be no question of brahmad. And Buddhaghosa does use brahmaṁ as a substantival adjective designating Omnicence (sabrahamabhāvanā) “in the sense of ‘the highest’”, when he explains the expression brahmaṁ aśīla in the Brahmajāla-sutta: yassa ca ettha seṭṭhassa brahmaṁ sabrahamabhāvdhātānāṁ vihittham tasmā Brahmajālan ti pa ya dhārēti.20 Beautifully, Mahānāma, in the Saddāna-mahāpāsākiṁ (Pañcuphidāna-sutta-Aṭṭhakathā), explains brahmaciṁ as that conduct which leads to Nirvāṇa, called brahma “in the sense of ‘the highest’” (u tattthathaṁ): utamaṁnāṇaṁ nībhānan brahmaṁ nāma. Sikkhāyānam nibbānathāya parattana brahmabhyāya caryāti ti brahmaciṁ ti vuccati.21 And again: ariyamaggo nibbānena sammāśanato brahmaciṁ caryati ti brahmaciṁ ti vuccati.22 Although theoretically possible, it does not seem that brahmaṁ, in the Pali commentaries just cited and in the passage of the Piṭṭhamaṁsathī and the Saddāna quoted earlier, is the Nominative-Accusative singular of the neuter noun brahma (n), rather than—as I believe—the Nominative-Accusative singular of brahma, substantival adjective, which is also neutral. Unfortunately, the Āṭṭhakathā sheds no light on the question. Thus, e. g., the suttas
we are concerned here. Buddhaghosa does use it, but in the sense of “Vedic text” and in that of “brahminhood”, in his fanciful etymologies."

To return to the Canon. We may today discard Rhyys Davids’s view, still largely followed in some way or other; “The newer Brahman is...entirely unknown in the Nikayas.” The concept of brahman in the Pali Canon appears to me to be the same as that with which the Upanisads have made us familiar, in the light of what has been stated above. The cases where the Absolute is clearly meant ought to be carefully distinguished from others where Brahman is referred to, e. g., the case of the Brahmaninikāras and that of the utterance Brahmaciti mādhipatam. As to the fact that the Buddha is sometimes called brahmā in the Canon, we should not see here—as Geiger did—a confusion between the neuter brahman and the masculine Brahman—a confusion which is sometimes noticed in the early Upanisads themselves. As elsewhere shown, in these cases—which, again, ought to be carefully distinguished from those where the Buddha and the Arahants are compared to Brahmacitam, as a concession to the belief prevalent in the time—brahmā means bhikkhu, as in the Brahmanical tradition. And the Buddha and the Arahants are often called bhikkhu in the Buddhist tradition; whether one should understand by this term brahmā as “knower of the Brahman”, i. e., “one who has become the brahman” (brahmabuddha), as in the Upanisadic tradition, also echoed by a Buddhist text in Sanskrit: brahmavīd bhikṣuṇa brahmā brahmānirūpya āptasthāna, or “one who has expelled evil” (ākāsa), following the fanciful but pregnant etymology of the Buddhist, a different matter.

The specific expressions employed in the Pali Canon seem to suggest, however, a stage of development later than the earliest Upanisads, although the ideas expressed can be traced there. Thus the expression bhāmakīrti is found, e. g., in the Bhavaguddatī, which also uses the expression bhāmodekṣa. But the idea is as old as the Bhāvadevanayaka-Upanisad (IV, 4, 6): bhāmakīrti sam bhāmakīrti. Attaining the brahma, i. e., Liberation, is, indeed, nothing short of being. The expression bhāmapatī, in the sense of “one who has attained the brahma (and not “the status of Brahman”), as is the case sometime,” occurs once in the Majjhima-Nikāya and, its Sanskrit equivalent, bhāmapatī, is found in the Kaṭha-Upanisad. The expression bhāmapatī, in the sense of “the way that leads to the brahma (and not “to Brahmacitam”), as in a passage of the Čandogyo-Upanisad, as well as in a passage of the Samyutta-Nikāya, is found in the Maitri-Upanisad, and the Bhavaguddatī uses the equivalent expression bhāmapatī path, glossed by Śāṅkara as bhāmapatīśīrdhe, which, in its turn, recalls the Pali expression majo bhāmapatīyād. It is also significant that the simile of the extinction of fire, with which is explained the concept of Nirvāṇa in the Buddhist texts, makes its appearance in such texts as the Sāratvāvratara-Upanisad and the Maitriy-and Maitri-Upanisad.

The existence of similarities between the two traditions does not imply total identity. But the difference between the teachings of the Pali Canon and those of the Upanisads has too often been exaggerated. The Buddha’s Absolute appears to be the same as that of the Upanisads.
36. Untraced. See, however, n. 66 ; p. 14 below. —Vasubandhu, in the Abhidharmakosa-abhaya, quotes the Sutra : esa ki bhagavan brahma tiy api jatisati kati katiusa iti api (see also Dhammacakkhiyakah, quoted by L. de Vaillante Pousin in his translation of the Abhidharmakosa, VI, p. 245, n. 2). According to Yasomitra, this sentence was uttered by Jivaka. Abhidharmakosa & Bhikya of Asarya Vasubandhu with Sphutattha Commentary of Asarya Yasomitra, edited by Swami Dwarkadas Shastri, Part III, Varanasi, 1972 (Baudhā Bhārata Sāra-sāra, 7), p. 982 : VI, 54. If this is true, then the reference is to Brahmā, to whom the Buddha is compared because he practises the Bhavaviharās (p. 8 below) : Majjhimo-Nikaya, I, pp. 369-370 ; L. Āṭṭhamana, , pp. 150-151. This, however, does not seem to be the case. See also n. 77 below.
37. Cf. L. Āṭṭhamana, , pp. 149-150.
41. Saddaniti, p. 459.
42. PP. 459-460.
43. Siamese edition (2468-2470=1924-1926), Vol. II, pp. 128-129. H. Smith did not identify this passage (see also Critical Pāli Dictionary, s. v. upapattibhāma [ni]). Dhammapāla gives this interpretation while commenting upon the expression Brahmatta-ta "the highest among the Brahmās", applied to the Buddha in Visukhīmayāga IX, 91 (in the edition referred to above) ; cf. Athāśāsāni, § 423). The passage begins as follows : Brahmattamana ti etathā samuttikārāni upapattibhāma visukhīmayāga ti cattārī brahmāna. The remainder is identical with the passage of the Saddaniti, apart from some insignificant variants.
45. See pp. 12-13 below.
46. One may thus see the relationship between the neuter brahma and the masculine bhrama in the Brahmanical tradition.
47. See p. 6, and n. 36 above.
49. "brahmācaṃkāṃ pavaṭte" ti idēva navata brahma ti ariyadhamma vuccati, tato nibbatā avasasa sobbe pi ariyā ānuddhatānaṃ nāma, paramatthabrahmatāna, avasa so paṇa "brahma ti khe (particle omitted in the Paramathamaññajāta), bhikkhave, tathāgatas" etāṃ "adhivaranne" ti (the Paramathamaññajāta adds dī) navatacāmamuddha utama-brahma nāma, sudevaka loke brahmābhūtehi gacchati ukaṇṇāsāpāparimpatitā "Saddhanīti, pp. 459-460.


51. "bhā satayāni; bhā puttāni" ti devakīkānāṃ devaṃna jāhiniya vasena attakākkādi-ākāramaḥniyena attakākkādi-ākāramaḥniyena kusallāvata "Saddhanīti, II, p. 555. —In connection with kānā "to attain," reference is made (cf. e. g., Kītarranāgājo, p. 190) to the term used in Grammar; ākāramaḥniyena (Pāṇini I, 4, 90; II, 3, 21; VI, 2, 149). Ākāramaḥniyena is thus explained: ākāmaṃṇaḥ kānta paccaya ākkantayena (Saddhanīti, II, p. 555; cf. III, p. 719, § 598; p. 805, 27: ākāmaṃṇaḥ kānta paccaya ākkantayena) an interpretation that goes back to the Kālikaśa. Thus Kālikāśa on Pāṇini I, 3, 21: kānti prakaraṇa prāpna ākāramaḥniyena, and on Pāṇini VI, 1, 249: ākāmaṃṇaḥ ākkantayena ākāramaḥniyena.

—In the exegetical literature, both Sanskrit and Pali, this meaning of kānā is often referred to an explanation "kānta." The Saddhanīti (p. 555) cites Dharmapāla's explanation of mūnasūkṣaḥ in the Patañjala-Āṭhakatā (p. 71). See also, e. g., Theraṇīṭhā-Āṭhakatā, III, p. 9 (on Theraṇīṭhā 689); ibid., II, p. 205 (explanation of dhammabhūtha in Theraṇīṭhā 491); and the explanation of brahmābhūtha in the Patañjala-Āṭhakatā, as quoted below, p. 11.

52. sethābhāna brahmābhūtha, ahā vā brahmaṃ vuccati moggave... evaṃ sa yahābhānaṃ brahmābhūtha paccaya ākkantayena "Saddhanīti, p. 555. (sethābhāna brahmābhūtha: cf. Pāṇiniśānti, II, p. 76; Sāruttappakṣiṇī, II, p. 389). Buddhaghosta gives two different interpretations of brahmābhūtha and similar expressions: sethābhāna, etc. ("bhā satayāni"); or Brahmā bhūtha bhūta [jito nibbatā], i. e. "become like Brahmā" etc. Cf. Smārakamālaśāstra, II, p. 865 (dhammabhūtha = dhammasabbe); Manorathakūriṇī, V, p. 72. See also Upasena, Saddhammappajjotisā (Nīdānasā-Āṭhakatā), II, p. 293; Mahānāma, Saddhammappajjotisā (Pāṭimakābhāgama-Āṭhakatā), III, p. 646, and cf. Saddhanīti, p. 555, 6 8)


54. The Aṭṭhakīnicīyā-tūra and its Commentary (Nībandhāana), edited by N. H. Samtanī, Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1971 (Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series XIII), p. 81. (The form brahmabhirāhā, which is met with in the Brahmanical tradition as well—see, e. g., Śaṅkarā, Brahmastūpaṭhāyna I, 5, 15—clearly expresses the idea of "becoming." Late grammarians—Rāmacanda, Prakīnikāvaidummi, Bhaṭṭojī Dīkaṭa, Siddhānaskaumādī—cite brahmābhūtha in connection with Pāṇini, VI, 2, 40 and VII, 4, 32. Refer, however, to Nāgēṣa's observations in his various writings: e. g., Bhāchabhandalakāra [ed. Sītrārma Śāstrī, Varanāsi, 1960; Sarasvatībhāvana—Granthāmala 87], Vol. I, pp. 1544-1545; Llaghūbhandalakāra [Chowkhamba edition, 1903: no other edition is available to me], p. 355; Udāya on Kālīya's Prātipāda on Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini V, 2, 40; Pāṇīkāmarasiddhāntakagha...


56. L'Atman-Brahma..., p. 150.


58. See L'Atman-Brahma..., pp. 150-151.

59. Ibid., p. 55 (n. 2 to p. 54).

60. Ibid., p. 81 (n. 3 to p. 80).


63. "brahmānaṃ ti upanittā-brahmānaṃ, te hi bhā bhāvabhāvaṃ vihāra-viṣayānāyitā bhūtā brahma-kākhaṇṇa tattva yātāyāyāyāyāyāyātā kariṇṇa vā honti, taṃ nādiṇācītā viharānti vadanti. But he then gives an alternative interpretation according to which the word refers to the "great beings" (mahāsattā)—the Bodhisattvas, whose qualities have been "caused to grow" (brūka: cf. p. 6 above) through the fulfillment of the Perfections, "giving" (dāna), etc., which make a Buddha and which are the source of all Buddha-qualities: Brahmano ti sākkhādhammaṇāya ākāramaḥnaṁ ca pārīkṣita vasaṇā brahmānaṃ māhārātā honti... Paramathamaññajāta, II, p. 147.). —brāhmaṇanuṣṭhitā Brahmano: Dhammapāla, Sānyuttaniyakathākathā, Burmese edition, 1961, Vol. I, p. 242.

64. Manorathakūriṇī, III, p. 169.


66. There is a divergence between the Manorathakūriṇī and the Paramatthajātikī (Commentary on the Suttanipāta) concerning the interpretation of the term brahma, when applied to the Buddha. According to the conventions mentioned earlier (p. 6 above), "Tathāgata" (or the "Perfectly Enlightened One", sammāsambuddha) is "meanings" of brahmā, and Buddhaghosta says so when he comments on a passage of the Āguttara-Nīkāya where the Buddha is called brahmā: brahmā vuccati sammāsambuddha (Manorathakūriṇī, II, p. 322). The Paramatthajātikī (II, 2, p. 592), however, says in its comment upon Suttanipāta 1065, where also this term is applied to the Buddha, that it is a designation of "the highest": brahmā ti sethābhāvaṃvuccato (cf. Upasena, Saddhammappajjotisā, III, p. 29). See L'Atman-Brahma..., p. 149 and n. 3.
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Dhammapāla, too, in his comment on Therāgāthā 182, where by brahmā the Buddha is meant, interprets the term in the sense of “the highest”.

67. Manorathapūrṇi, II, p. 204.


69. See Mahānīkāya, I, p. 111; III, pp. 195, 224; Sāntutā, IV, p. 94; Anguttara, V, pp. 226, 295; Icīutta-Atthā, p. 57; Suttanipāta 561, 563 (= Therāgāthā 831, 833); Patimokkhādhamma, II, p. 194.


72. See ‘Sāmaññhālavinissīhi, ... pp. 90-91.

73. brahmapate ti catubbāde pī bhavavikāraṇaṃ, brahmaṃ eva sethā phosalamāpātipatāhaṃ: Paramathadhipani: Therāgāthā-Atthakathā, III, p. 9 (corrected reading; see Sīnhasale edition, II [Colombo, 1925: Simon Hewatrain Bequest XVIII], p. 8).”

74. Pañcāsidasīnī, II, p. 27.

75. Manorathapūrṇi, V, p. 12.

76. Sāratthapakkāsīni, II, p. 46. —Of Saṅghavivadāna (Viṅghāga-Atthakathā), p. 399; Mahānāma, Saddhammapakkāsīni, III, p. 626; Kassapa, Mahavijjācāra (Abhidhamma-maṃṅkakatavatāmaṇi), p. 196. —In the Sanskrit texts, too, we meet with the compound brahmacara as well as the analytical expression brahmam cacram: Bodhisattavatāmaṇi (ed. U. Waghara, Tokyo, 1900-1930), pp. 385-386; Arthavinicīya-sutta (see n. 54 above), p. 50, 51: cf. Abhidhammacakkaikīya-Atthakathā, VI, 54 (brahmam). The Bodhisattavatāmaṇi and the Abhidhamma-kakkaikīya derive brahma from brahman (masculine): tosyaveda cacram iti bhāman (Abhidhamma-kakkaikīya). The “wheel”, we are told, is qualified as bhāra because it was for the first time set in motion by the Buddha, called brahmā (on the Sūtra cited in this connection see n. 36 above). According to Vasmabandhu, the Buddha is called brahmā because of his “supreme brahminhood” (anuttarārāhām-yaṅgoyā bhaṅgam brahmā: Abhidhammakakkaikīya, loc. cit.). The term, therefore, is interpreted in the sense of bhāman (see p. 14 below). The commentary on the Arthavinicīya-sūtra does not explain the meaning.


79. Suttanipāta 151, with Paramathājōti, I (Commentary on the Khudakapaññāha, I), pp. 250-251, and Suttanipāta 285, with Paramathājōti, I, p. 315. —In Therāgāthā 649, Dhammapāla reads brahmaṃ vihāraṃ (in place of brahmavihāraṃ) bhāvemi, and comments: brahmaṃ ṣāriyaṃ nīdossan (so read) mettiddhiḥ bhāvemi vaṃjñitthiḥ uṣṭvaḥ. Dhammapāla, Paramathadhipani: Therāgāthā-Atthakathā, II, p. 274 (on the explanation of ṣāriyaḥ by nīdossan see n. 9 above). The Sanskrit texts, too, sometimes use the adjectives brahmaḥ and bhīmaḥ in this connection: see Edgerton, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary, s. v. brahma-vihaṃ: also Arthavinicīya-sūtra, p. 19 (brahmavihāraḥ), where the commentator glosses brahmaḥ by bhūtaḥ, in accordance with the notion that bhūtaḥ is often associated in the Brahmical tradition (Gonda, op. cit., pp. 31 ff.). The later Pali commentators often interpret brahmavihāra as “the highest vihāra” or “vihāra of the highest”. Thus Sumaṅgala in his Ṭīkā on Anuruddha’s Abhidhammakathāsanga: uttama vihaṃbhūtto uttamamaṃ vihaṃbhūtto brahmavihāraḥ (Abhidhammakathāsangaḥ, Siamese edition, p. 260). —brahmavasāda c’etha uttama vihaṃbhārō. Utama vihaṃ brahmavihāraḥ. Brahmavihārammaṃ uttamaṃ puggalāmaṇaṃ vihāraṃ brahmavihāraḥ: Silācara, Abhidhammakathāsanghabihāra (Burmese edition, 1928), p. 317. See also p. 102 below, and cf. the interpretations of brahmacayārtha quote in the preceding note.
81. Samyutak-Nikaya, V, pp. 4-6, with Srahathappakasini, III, pp. 120-121, 122 (see p. 9 above).

82. Samagaloavisissi, III, p. 737.

83. P. 7 above.


88. Netippakaraṇo-Aṭṭhakathā (Sinhalese edition; see n. 12 above), p. 45.

89. Samagaloavisissi, I, p. 129.

90. Sadhāmphappakasini, I, 380.

91. Ādīd, p. 582. — On the “merging” of the ariyamagga and Nibbāna, see Dīgha-Nikāya, II, p. 223.


93. I wish to express my deep sense of obligation to Professors Albrecht Wezler and Heinz Becker for the facilities offered me in consulting the rich collections at Hamburg and at Göttingen, respectively.

94. See p. 7 above.


97. See n. 44 above.


102. Brahmā, in the sense of “brahma in birth”, is thus explained: brahma anupati bhavamā, mante soṣṭhāya vihāra āttha. Idem he āttha bhavatīs naṇīriyavocce. These brahmas are so called because they “recite Vedic texts”. As a designation of the “Noble Ones”, however, adds Buddhaṅghosa, the word is explained differently: ārūṇa paṇī bhadātipattihārī tathāva ti rassavi. These “Noble Ones” are called brahma because they have “expelled evil”. Samāsappāsadi, I, p. 111; Samagaloavisissi, I, p. 244 (=Papoṭsaddani, I, p. 109). Cf. Dhammapali, Paramadhipani: Udāna-Aṭṭhakathā, pp. 58, 377-378; Ariaṭṭhāna, Sāsādon, II, p. 357. (On bhātipaṇī see L’Amouros-Braham... p. 86 and n. 3; see also J. Brough, The Gāndharī Dhammapada [London, 1962], p. 178.) In Itivuttaka-Aṭṭhakathā, II, p. 141. Dhammapali combines the two interpretations to account for the fact that the Buddha calls himself brahma. The Buddha—says Dhammapali—is called brahma “in the true sense” (paramathato, paramatho), he possesses the “true brahmindhood” (aṇutaraṃ brahmarāhākaṃ) or (Abhidhammakālahāka, quoted above, n. 77), because he, on the one hand, has “expelled evil” (bhātipattihārī) and, on the other, “expounds the brahma (a)” (brahmaa ca aṇgaṇi aṇkathano—“the supreme brahma (a) named the Noble Path” (anuttaro āriyamaññhaṅkhātaṃ brahmaa). Here Dhammapali uses the neuter word brahma in the sense of the “Noble Path”—as
"Buddhist antithesis to the authority of the Veda" (for similar ideas see L’Åman-Brahman..., p. 87 [n. 3 to p. 86]; see also "The Criterion of Orthodoxy in India and the Case of Jainism and Buddhism", in Jagnnath Upadhyaya Commemoration Volume [see n. 19 above], pp. 101 ff.; Buddhaghosa compares the three Pītakas to the three Vedas: Manorathapārapā, I, p. 95).

In Padvīdavāsatika, III, p. 443 (cf. Paramadhvojika, II, 2, p. 472, on Sūtadipīta 655), Buddhaghosa explains the variant reading brahmāna in the sense of “(deed) that brings brahmīness”: brahmāna tī pi pātho, ayaṁ pan’ ettha vacanatho: brahmaṇa nāveti brahmānaṇā, brahmānaḥkāṣeṇā ṛṣaḥatītī suttān hati.

It may be noted in this connection that Mogollāna’s Abhidhānappadipikā (812 in W. Subhāti’s edition, Colombo, 1865) records the meanings of the masculine brahman we saw earlier, namely “Brahma” (Pañcama), "Buddha" (Jina), “the highest”, “the parents", and, for the neuter brahma (n) [Nominative singular: brahmaṇa], the meanings of “Veda” and “religious austerity”:
pitāmaha jīne setthe brāhmaṇa ca pituṇa api /
brahmaṇa vutto sathā brahmaṇa veda tapasi vuccate
(It does not seem that, in the sense of “religious austerity”, brahmaṇa is actually attested in Pali literature; but Mogollāna’s source here may well have been, as elsewhere, the Asaravāhika. Thus Asaravāhika III, 3, 114 [in the Nīruṇaya-Sāgar Press edition with the commentary Vībhavāsudha by Bhānuji Dīkṣita, Bombay, 1944]: vedas tattvaṇa tapo brāhma brahmaṇā vipraṇi Pratijñāpati.)


105. See pp. 8-9 above.


107. L’Åman-Brahman..., p. 151 and n. 2.

108. Ibid., pp. 149-151.

109. Ibid., p. 88 and n. 7; p. 150 and n. 1. See also Gonda, op. cit., p. 52 and p. 83, n. 13.

110. See n. 103 above.

111. For details concerning the following, see L’Åman-Brahman..., Chapter II. Also: “On the Brahman in Buddhist Literature”, in Sīr Venkateswara University Oriental Journal (Tirupati) XVIII (1975), pp. 1 ff. (P. 5, read : ...for attaining the brahman is, in fact, becoming it: brahmaṇaṇa suṇ brahmāṇena.** The highest goal is said to be the ‘attainment of brahman’ (brahmaputti)**.)

112. See pp. 8-9 above.

113. See p. 10 above.

114. It should be clearly borne in mind that these expressions are not to be taken literally. There is no one who becomes the brahman (brahmabhūta); or whose self becomes the brahman (brahmabhūta); attanā viharat, no one who attains the brahmaṇ (brahmāṇa), no way that leads to the brahmaṇ (brahmmapatha)...But these expressions are employed in view of the state of ignorance in which we are,—a state where we take ourselves for this and that individual.