

# Sutta Nipāta: The Khaggavisāṇa Sutta'

## I

**T**HIS sutta like the Uruga Sutta<sup>2</sup> derives its name from the simile used in the refrain,

*eko care khaggavisāṇakaḥḥpo*

(let him wander alone like a rhinoceros). The lonely habits of the rhinoceros are symbolic of the solitary wanderings of the ascetic—*muni*. Rhinoceroses like elephants expelled from the herd are known to lead a solitary life. Yet, there seems to be some disagreement about the title which is often rendered as "The Horn of the Rhinoceros" following the explanation in the Comy., *ettha khaggavisāṇaṃ nāma khaggamiga-siṅgaṃ* (*khaggavisāṇa* in this context means the horn of the rhinoceros—SnA. 65). This explanation may be accepted on the mere coincidence that both species of the rhinoceros seen in India, viz. the "Indian" and the "Javanese" possess only one horn,<sup>3</sup> and that the animal itself is called *khagga* in Pāli and *khadga* in Classical Sanskrit. The explanation of *khaggavisāṇakaḥḥpo* at Nd2. 129, *yathā khaggassa nāma visāṇaṃ ekaṃ hoti adutiyaṃ . . .* (just as a rhinoceros possesses only one horn and not a second . . .) also justifies the explanation in the Comy. In spite of all this the simile would be considered more apt if the life of the lone-sojourner was compared with the lonely habits of the rhinoceros than with its single horn.

In other places in the Pāli Canon the idea of wandering alone is compared with the movements of animals of solitary habits rather than with parts of their anatomy. The simile employed at J. II. 220 is with reference to an elephant that wanders alone—*gajam iva ekacārinam*. The simile, *eko care mātaṅg' araṇṇe va nāgo* (let one wander alone as an elephant in the forest frequented by *mātaṅga*-elephants) at M. III. 154, Dh. 329, 330 and J. III. 488 cp. V. 190 too makes it clear. The similes, *migo araṇṇamhi yathā abaddho yenicchakam gacchati gocarāya* (as an untethered deer in the forest-glade roams at will for pasture) at Sn. 39ab, and *nāgo va yūthāni vivajjayitvā* (as an elephant that forsakes the herds) at Sn. 53a can be compared with that in the refrain. It will be clear from these examples that the point of contact of the comparison is an action (i.e. the wandering—*cariyā*) and not an object. Moreover, even in the similes employed in the poem where inanimate objects are compared it is rather some action that stands for comparison than those objects; e.g.

1. Extract from *A Critical Analysis of the Pāli Sutta Nipāta Illustrating its Gradual Growth*. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, November, 1947.

2. *Vide* University of Ceylon Review, Vol. V, 1.

3. *Sub voce* Encyclopaedia Britannica.

*vaṃsūkaḷīro va asaḷḷamāno* (like a bamboo-shoot *not clinging* to anything) at Sn. 38c, *samsīṇaḷḷaṃ yathā kovīḷāro* (like a *kovīḷāra* tree with its *scattered-leaves*) at Sn. 44b, *aggī va daḍḍhaṃ anivattamāno* (like fire *not returning* where it had burnt) at Sn. 62c and *sañchinnaḷḷaṃ yathā pārīchatta*<sup>4</sup> (as a *pārīchatta* tree with its *leaves cut off*) at Sn. 64b.

From these examples it is rather convincing that the point of contact in the simile of the *khaggavisāṇa* is not *khaggassa visāṇa* (rh.'s horn) nor the *cariyā* (movement) of the *visāṇa* (horn) of the *khagga*; but the *cariyā* of the *khaggavisāṇa*, the sword-horn (the rhinoceros) itself. It is quite probable that the rhinoceros was known in earlier Pāli as *khaggavisāṇa*—that which possesses a sword-like horn<sup>5</sup> and that the term *khagga* came into usage later on. This is further testified by the few comparatively late passages in which the animal is called *khagga* viz. Nd2. 129, SnA. 65, J.V. 406, 416, VI. 277 and 538. It would therefore, be more correct to interpret the word *khaggavisāṇa* as “rhinoceros” and not “rhinoceros’ horn”.

## II

The sutta on the whole deals with a life of solitude. It advocates the cessation from attachment to family life, friends and companions and society in general. The refrain *eko care* is employed to exhort one to adopt a life of solitude. The idea so colourfully painted in the simile is stressed over and over again in other similes.<sup>6</sup> All the stanzas are connected with the central theme, yet in certain places the connecting thread appears rather thin. A few apparent repetitions and the interruption of the logical trend seem to suggest that the present sutta is an enlarged version of an earlier nucleus. It is of interest here to note that the *Khaddhavisāṇa Gāthā* at Mvastu. I. 357, consist of only 12 stanzas. A comparison of the two versions shows that both deal with the same topic and that the BSk. sūtra, though short, discusses the question of solitude as fully as the Pāli version with all its digressions and apparent contradictions. While the central idea of the Pāli sutta is the giving up of friends and companions, sons and household life and all forms of *samsagga* and *santhava* (ties and attachments), there are occasional references to an “ideal companion”<sup>7</sup>—an idea which appears to be an importation to the original sutta. There is also other extraneous matter such as the mention made of certain recluses (*paribbājakas*?) who are virtually householders (Sn. 43ab), the reference to the theory of *mettā* at Sn. 42a and the four items of the *brahmvihāras* at Sn. 73, a digression on *kāma* and other *upaddavas* (hindrances) at

4. Cp. Mvastu. I, 258, *samsīṇa-ḷḷaṃ* (with scattered-leaves).

5. Cp. English, horn-bill, sword-fish, etc.

6. At Sn. 38, 39, 44, 46, 53, 62, 64, 71 and 72.

7. At Sn. 45-47 and 58.

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Sn. 50-56—though the stanzas conform to the central theme, the repetition of the idea at Sn. 46 in different words at Sn. 57 thus re-introducing the topic of *mittaṃ uḷāraṃ* (a noble companion), and the introduction of a complete list of Buddhist terms at Sn. 69. Besides these, there are numerous repetitions of ideas and wholesale lines and phrases.

The 12 stanzas in Mvastu. roughly correspond to 7 stanzas in Sn. in the following manner:— St. 1//Sn. 68, st. 2//Sn. 73, st. 3abd//Sn. 35abd, st. 3c//?, st. 4// Sn. 64, st. 5abd// Sn. 62abd, st. 5c// Sn. 64c, stt. 6abd-10abd// Sn. 36abd, (st. 6c// ?Sn. 36c, st. 7c// ?Sn. 37c, st. 8c// Sn. 41c, st. 9c// ?Sn. 37c, st. 10c// ?Sn. 36c), st. 11abd// Sn. 37abd, st. 11c//Sn. 35c and st. 11 = st. 12 with *jñāti* for *putraṃ* in line c. This table is not quite complete, for there are many words in the two versions which are quite different in their corresponding lines. Stt. 6-10 are mere repetitions of the same idea with a different word in line c. in each stanza. In the 12 stanzas of the *Khaggaṅgaviṣāṇa Gāthā* could be seen the theme of the Pāli sutta fully discussed and developed, and likewise the seven corresponding stanzas in the Pāli deal with the topic to a satisfactory degree. The rest of the stanzas express the same ideas in different words dwelling on the theme at length.

There is an apparent contradiction in Sn. 45 when it mentions a *nīpakaṃ saḥāyaṃ* as contrasted with *na puttā iccheyya kuto saḥāyaṃ* (Sn. 35c, cp. Sn. 37, 40 and 41). This *kalyāṇa mitta*, as other texts would have it, is not to be categorised as a *santhava*, according to the sutta. The same idea is reflected at Sn. 94, 185, 187, 254 and 255; and Sn. 338 in Rāhula Sutta makes specific mention of *kalyāṇa mitta*. It is interesting to note that this topic is discussed at two different places in the sutta (viz. Sn. 45-47 and Sn. 57-58). This shows that either the intervening stanzas were interpolated at a certain stage or Sn. 47 marks the end of the section dealing with *mitta* and that Sn. 57-58 were added later. (The concluding stanza too makes a casual reference to this type of "noble companion"). The internal evidence of the sutta does not necessarily warrant such a conclusion if the criticism is based on linguistic data and other evidence alone. The sutta differentiates between two kinds of friends: those in the household life; e.g. Sn. 40-41 and those in the *brahmacariyā*; e.g. Sn. 45, 47, 50. Perhaps it is possible that the "friends in *brahmacariyā*" is an allusion to the *ācariya-antevāsika* and *upajjhāya-saddhivihārika* relationships in monastic life. The insistence on a life devoid of any associates was perhaps felt to be too exacting and therefore a compromise was reached by putting forward the "ideal companion."<sup>8</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy (H.O.S Miscellany of Pāli Terms, s.v.) equates *kalyāṇamitta* to *mahātma* or *mahatta*; but this is not very convincing. The uniformity of the language of these stanzas and the absence of other evidence prevents one from classing

8. I am indebted to Miss. I. B. Horner for this observation.

some verses to be earlier or later than the rest. It may be only *probable* that the stanzas in Mvastu. preserve an older version, though both Pāli and BSk. may be traced to an older source which is now lost.

It is also noticeable, from the repetitions in stanzas 6-10 and 11-12 (in Mvastu.) that the version there is also an enlargement of an earlier sūtra, but it seems, on the whole, to represent an earlier stratum than the Pāli, though the latter will be seen later to be considerably old. The possibility of the BSk. being a condensed version of an earlier sūtra is out of the question, for as a rule, no such tendency could be observed in BSk. works, and it is customary for them to contain expanded and enlarged versions of the same sections that are found more briefly in Pāli. What is significant here is that the *gāthās* in Mvastu. are far less enlarged than the corresponding sutta in Pāli, and besides, the stanzas do not occur in the order in which the corresponding stanzas occur in Sn. A stanza parallel to Sn. 36 occurs at Divy. 294. It runs

*Samsevamānasya bhavanti snehāḥ  
snehānvayaṃ sambhavatīha duḥkhaṃ /  
ādinavaṃ snehagataṃ viditvā  
kaś caret khadgaviṣūṇakalpaḥ //*

(Attachments arise to him who associates with companions; misery in this world comes into being through attachment. Realizing the evil consequences bound up with attachments let him wander alone as the rhinoceros). The stanza that bears the closest resemblance in Mvastu. is st. 10,

*Samsevamānasya siyāti sneho  
snehānvayaṃ duḥkhamidaṃ prabhoti /  
putreṣu ādinavaṃ sammr̥ṣanto  
eko care khadgaviṣūṇakalpo //*

The occurrence of this stanza in Divy. may equally suggest that both Mvastu. and Divy. have drawn from an original Khaggavisāṇa Sutta which is perhaps preserved in entirety in Sn. along with subsequent additions and there is sufficient proof to show that the Pāli version is an enlargement of an earlier existing nucleus. The fact that the Pāli sutta abounds in lyrical beauty and that its general diction of poetical expression is highly refined, the existence of a super-abundance of similes and the use of illustrative examples (e.g. Sn. 48) are in support of it. The uniformity of the stanzas in language, syntax, style and metre shows that the expansion has taken place very early. Both Nd2 and Ap. (I. 8-13) contain the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta in full, and this shows that the sutta as is found now was known from comparatively early times.

### III

Before examining linguistic and other internal data it would be of some use to see how later writers looked upon this sutta. The Comy. and Nd2 divide it up into four vaggas. The division is as follows:—

**Comy.** Vagga I, Sn. 35-44; II, Sn. 45-54; III, Sn. 55-64; IV, Sn. 65-75.

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**Nd2.** Vagga I, Sn. 35-44 ; II, Sn. 45-55 ; III, Sn. 56-65 ; IV, Sn. 66-75. The Commentator states that all the stanzas were uttered as *udāna* by *Pacceka Buddhas* and gives the *atthupṣatti* (context) of each stanza with the stories of these *Pacceka Buddhas*, some of whom he mentions by name. The 41 stanzas of the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta are incorporated in the Paccekabuddhāpadāna (Ap. I, 7 ff.). The additional gāthās there (i.e. 1-7 and 50-58) serve as an introduction and a conclusion respectively. An extra stanza is added to the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta proper, i.e. stanza 8 which differs from 9 (= Sn. 35) only in line c ; *mettena cītena hitānukampī* (= Mvastu. st. 2c). The Comy. of the Apadāna too mentions the names of several *Pacceka Buddhas*, but they are different from those given in SnA. The inclusion of this sutta in Ap. and the fact that it is commented in Nd2 prove that it was known to the compilers of these respective works as it exists to-day. The independent existence of this sutta prior to the compilation of Sn. is seen from Nd2 and Mvastu, which do not place it in a particular group such as the Uraga Vagga.

### IV

This sutta, like the Uraga Sutta, is undoubtedly meant for the benefit of the *muni* and belongs to that category of suttas which may be termed the "muni-class". Forty of the forty-one stanzas contain the refrain exhorting one to lead a life of solitude.<sup>9</sup>

The **language** of the sutta, on the whole is rather old, and may be said to belong to stratum of early gāthā-Pāli. Old forms, both verbal and nominal, archaic compounds, the vocabulary free from any late words, the simple constructions and very easy syntax suggest that the gāthās are rather old. The easy and fluent style and the diction which is definitely poetic add much to the lyrical beauty of the poem. The abundance of similes and the occasional imagery used may lead one to assign a more recent date to the poem, but these two facts merely emphasise the merits of the sutta as a ballad. The absence of anything artificial or laboured removes all doubts of its early date. The external evidence from Nd2 and Ap. is quite overwhelming in favour of a comparatively early date, though Mvastu. seems to suggest that there may have existed a version still earlier than that found at Sn., from which both Sn. and Mvastu, developed their respective versions.

9. Sn. 45 which contains no refrain is to be found at Vin. I, 350, M. III, 154, Dh. 328, 329, J. III, 488 and DhA. I, 52 along with Sn. 46. In the above instances the line *eko care mātaṅgaraññe va nāgo* (vide I) is to be seen in place of the usual refrain. It is probable that the simile with the elephant was earlier than that with the rhinoceros whose solitary habits were not so well-known as those of the elephant. It is significant that in the older "lists" of wild animals *khagga* is not mentioned. (J.V. 416 is obviously late). In view of the above facts it is highly probable that Sn. 45 and 46 were importations to this sutta and that the line d of Sn. 46 was changed to suit the sutta.

The **metre** of the poem is regular Triṣṭubh with anacrusis<sup>10</sup> and *jagatī-pādas*<sup>11</sup> in a few lines. Neumann (Reden. p. 413) points out tmesis in Sn. 53b, which should normally read, *sañjāta padumikkhandho ulāro*. Tmesis is a very old poetical device which is rather frequent even in the Rgveda.

The sutta contains many **linguistic forms** that may be classified as old. There are three old ppr. forms in -am, old absolutives as *chetvāna* Sn. 44c, *bhetvā* Sn. 62b, agent nouns like *sahitā* Sn. 42c and *sammasitā* Sn. 69c, many historical absolutives ending in -ya, e.g. *aññāya*, *vineyya* Sn. 58c, *abhibhuyya* Sn. 45c, etc., optative 3rd singulars in -etha, e.g. *labhetha* Sn. 45a, 46a, etc. (usually confined to the poetic language), probable dialectical forms as *kammāra-* Sn. 48b, *suhajje* Sn. 37a, and poetical forms as *seritaṃ* Sn. 39c, 40c, *vaco* (Vedic) Sn. 54c, *rakkhitamānasāno* Sn. 63b, *upekkaṃ* Sn. 67c, 73a, *apekkhā* Sn. 38b, and many elements which can be traced to Vedic, e.g. *atho*, etc. Some of the numerous cpds. used in the sutta seem to have become stereotyped already. Metrical lengthening is to be seen at Sn. 38c *vamsākaṭṭiro*, Sn. 49a *sahā*, Sn. 61c *mutimā* and Sn. 70b *satimā*. *Dukha* is found for *dukkha* at Sn. 67a probably on the analogy of *sukha* or for purposes of metre. Similarly *aṭṭhānaṃ* and *kāraṇatthāya* are contracted to *aṭṭhāna* Sn. 54a and *kāraṇatthā* Sn. 75a respectively. Judging from these instances the sutta as a whole bears a stamp of antiquity.

A few linguistic forms and other peculiarities of interest are :—**Khagga-vīsāṇakappo** Sn. 35d-44d and 46d-75d (already discussed), vide Nd2. 129 and SnA. 65. This sutta abounds in cpds; some of them like *yenicchakaṃ* Sn. 39b, *itaritarena* Sn. 42b, *yathābhirantaṃ* Sn. 53c, *analaṃkaritvā* Sn. 59b, are of special interest here as they occur in the prose Canonical idiom as well. **Sneho** Sn. 36a cp. 36c. Both *sneha* and *sineha* occur in this sutta : see *sinehadosaṃ* at Sn. 66c. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the consonantal group *sn-* in poetry, though prose generally prefers the forms with *svrabhakti*; (also vide Geiger, §52). Statistics would throw hardly any light on this point, for the use of forms with or without *svrabhakti* is mainly governed by metrical exigencies and poetic idiosyncrasies. **Pahoti** Sn. 36b is used in both prose and verse in the sense of “arise” though *pabhavati* is restricted to poetry (s.v., P.T.S.). **Pekkhamaṇo** Sn. 36c, etc. There are 18 medial ppr. forms in *-māna* in this sutta. Of the 350 ppr. forms in Sn. as many as 139 are medials, 107 of which end in *-māna*. The fact that this form is used in all periods of Pāli does not preclude the possibilities of the stanzas being old when other corroborative evidence is taken into account. **Suhajje** Sn. 37a (cp. *kosajja*) appears to be a dialectical word. The Pāli word parallel to Sk. *suhṛd* is *suhada*,

10. Vide Helmer Smith, SnA. 638. He points out anacrusis in Sn. 35b, 40c, 41c, 45c, 59b, 63c, 68c, 69c and 71c.

11. *Ibid.* Sn. 47a, 50a, 60ab, 66a and 70c.

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but this form probably was an analogical derivation from the abstract *sau-hṛd-ya* > *sohajja*. The other possibility is that *sohajja* the secondary form from *suhada* became *suhajja* by the weakening of the vowel *o*; *o* > *u* cp. Sk. *asau* > Māgadhī *aso* > P. *asu*, also Gen. pl. *gunṇaṃ* (Sk. *gonam*) and Sk. *sadyaḥ* > P. *sajju*. **Sahitā** Sn. 42c (cp. *sammasitā* Sn. 69c.) There are 21 such historical agent nouns in Sn. which should all be ascribed to an early stratum in Pāli though Canonical and later prose also contains them. **Atho** Sn. 43b, *atho* is formed from the copulative (and adverbial) particle *atha* and the enclitic *u*, and can be traced back to the later hymns of the Ṛgveda and the Śathapatha Brāhmaṇa<sup>12</sup>. This compound particle appears to be restricted to poetry and occurs no less than 25 times in Sn. alone. **Saddhiṅcaraṃ** Sn. 45b, 46b, *saddhiṃ + cara* (the adjectival suffix from  $\sqrt{\text{car}}$ ) cp. *dada* in *paññādada* Kh. VIII. 10 or *kāmadada* Pv. II, 9.1. As the cpd. is formed from the indeclinable *saddhiṃ* and it retains the nasal as in *analaṃkaritvā* Sn. 59b, *rattimdivaṃ* Sn. 507c, 1142b it is of special interest. **Kammāra** Sn. 48a is a Prakritism used in all stages of the language, in the specialised meaning of "smith". Sk. *karma-kāra* > P. *kamma-kāra* > *kamma-āra* (cp. *ajja-utta* for *ārya-putra*) > P. *kammāra*; cp. *Kṛṣṇinagara* > P. *Kusinārā*. **Phassaye** Sn. 54b is probably a dialectical form. The root *spṛś* is treated as a verb in class X, perhaps on the analogy of forms like *cintaye*. The direct historical forms should be *phasse* and *phuse*. **Rakkhitamānasāno** Sn. 63b, *nom. sg.* is formed by adding the adjectival sfx. *-na* to *mānasa* the secondary form of *manas*. This too is a pure poetic form.

### V

The **doctrinal import** of this sutta has already been touched upon. It has been emphasised earlier that the quest of the secluded life pertains to the earliest stage of Buddhism, and sheds much light on the life of the hermits (*munayo*). A noticeable development in doctrine in the sutta is the concept of a noble companion (II). It has been pointed out above that the Khagḍavisāna Gāthā at Mvastu. make no mention of this type of companion. If the version in Mvastu. is considered as representing an earlier form of this sutta, perhaps a form nearer the nucleus out of which the present long sutta has developed, it may be justifiable to infer that this concept is a later accretion. On the other hand, it is more probable that the idea of a *kalyāṇa-mitta* developed in the Theravāda Schools before the time of composition of the Pāli Khagḍavisāna Sutta. The references to *kalyāṇa-mitta* (virtuous companion) at Sn. 338a, *mittasampadaṃ* (good companionship) at Kh. VIII, 14, *sahāya-sampadaṃ* at Sn. 47a, etc. (s.v., P.T.S. for more references) do not make it clear whether the idea developed early or not, but the idea of the *kalyāṇa-mitta* as the spiritual advisor or guide appears frequently in younger contexts (s.v.,

12. Vide Macdonell, Vedic Grammar for Students, pp. 214-215.

P.T.S.). The term parallel to the earlier concept in Buddhism is to be found in *sādhusaṅga* of the epics (Mbh.). It is not in the latter developed meaning that these terms occur in this sutta. Although this idea is rather contradictory to that of “*ekacariyā*” it cannot be considered as late. The uniformity in language and metre makes the possibilities of a wholesale interpolation improbable. The lack of consistency in the logical trend of the sutta may indicate that the verses had existed earlier in some unsettled order and that the present order is due to the efforts of a monastic editor.

Another important concept that is taken for granted is “*mettā*”. It is alluded to at Sn. 42a, *Cātuddiso appaṭigho ca hoti*. (He has no conflicts from the four quarters), and is mentioned later on in the sutta at Sn. 73 along with *upe(k)kkhā*, *karuṇā*, *vimutti* and *muditā*. The idea *mettā* (friendliness, amity) is a central concept in Buddhism, both early and late. Four of the five items mentioned at Sn. 73 came later to be classified as the “*brahmavihāras*”. Besides the fact that no specific mention of the *brahmavihāras* is made, the four items which constitute it do not occur here in their classified order; i.e. *mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā* and *upekkhā*. There is no doubt whatsoever that these concepts go back to the earliest phase of Buddhism and perhaps Mrs. Rhys Davids is right when she speaks of *brahmavihāra* as a later term for these four items,<sup>13</sup> though the name itself is not late and is applied to *mettā* alone at Sn. 151d. This sutta thus reflects a time prior to these concepts being labelled as *brahmavihāras*.

The expression *aññāya atthāni* at Sn. 58c (having known the “*atthas*”) demands attention. The explanation at Nd2. 85, *atta'ttha*, *para'ttha*, *ubhaya'ttha*, *ditṭhadhamma'ttha*, *samparāyika'ttha* and *parama'ttha* (own welfare, others' welfare, welfare of both, welfare in this world, welfare after death and highest welfare), merely suggests the various implications. SnA. III agrees with this explanation. It is quite probable that **attha** here meant not only *paramattha*—the *summum bonum* in Buddhism, but embraces a still wider meaning as suggested by the commentaries and is probably connected with the *attha* suggested earlier in connection with the *Aṭṭhaka Vagga* (U.C.R. Vol. VI, 4).

All the other terms and topics of doctrinal import in the sutta are to be met with in other Pāli works, both old and young, and therefore demand no particular attention. Worldly attachments and ties (Sn. 35 ff.), lustful tendencies (Sn. 50), materialistic leanings (Sn. 54), and perverse views (Sn. 55), are denounced. The five obstacles to progress (mentioned by number only) are to be abandoned (Sn. 66) and *upe(k)kkhā* is to be developed (Sn. 67). The positive side of the life of a muni discussed in Sn. 65-74 necessitates the mention

13. Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Outlines of Buddhism*, pp 32 ff. and “What was the Original, Gospel in Buddhism?” pp. 92 ff.



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of many terms which have acquired a technical significance. The complete list of instructions at Sn. 69 may seem to appear rather late on account of the fact that many important concepts are heaped together, but the haphazard manner in which the items occur does not show any sign of lateness. Moreover, all the topics mentioned there are quite consistent with the general theme of the sutta as well as the life of the early hermits. *Rāga*, *dosa* and *moha* which are mentioned at Sn. 74a suggest that they have almost reached the stage of being classified into the stereotyped group of the three *akusalamūlāni* ; but the term as such does not occur here. Generally speaking, the sutta on doctrinal evidence represents an early phase of Buddhism.

### VI

**Other internal evidence** consists of social conditions reflected in the sutta, and other casual references. As far as social conditions go not many data can be gathered, as the sutta paints a picture of the life of recluses only. The reference made to some (*eke*) discontented *ṭṭabbajītas* at Sn. 43 may be an allusion to a contemporary sect or class. It is difficult to say who these recluses were from the scanty evidence available. The stanza seems to bear a faint connection with Sn. 45ab, which can be considered as referring to the philosophy of such a sect. Yet, it is not possible to establish a definite link between the two, as *sāmayikaṃ vimuttiṃ*, may not refer to any particular view, but to temporal joys.<sup>14</sup> It is only probable that these two stanzas refer to a sect of materialists (Cārvākas). There are numerous references to materialists and their doctrines in the Nikāyas (Sāmaññaphala Sutta, etc.), and according to Rhys Davids, they must have preceded Buddhism as early Buddhist literature mentions them.<sup>15</sup>

The line Sn. 75b, *nikkūraṇā dullabhā ajja mittā* (friends without a motive are rare today) seems to refer to the time of composition of the sutta. This by itself is of no great significance, for human nature has been the same through the ages. Along with this may be compared Th. I, 949-980 where Phussa prophesies that the future of the Sangha would be gloomy. The passage is a condemnation of the white-robed ascetics, and shows the rivalry between the ascetics and the monks. The prophecy actually alludes to the time of compilation of these gāthās. In the Sutta Nipāta the significant point is the mention of the word *ajja*, though it does not in any way help to determine the date of the sutta.

14. Vide SnA. 105, *sāmayikaṃ vimuttiṃ ti lokiyasamāpattiṃ, sā hi appitappitasamaye eva paccanīkehi vimuccanato sāmayikā vimuttiṃ ti vuccati* (cp. PtsA. III, 552 ff.)—Temporal emancipation means worldly attainments. It is called temporal emancipation because whenever one indulges (in these pleasures, cp. Sn. 54b) one is emancipated from what is unpleasant.

15. Rhys Davids, American Lectures, p. 24.

VII

Taking all the evidence into consideration an early date may be assigned to the sutta. Linguistically, it is seen to preserve an early stratum of Pāli. Doctrinally, it represents an early phase of Buddhism, tinged with the germs of some important tenets of that phase of Buddhism which came to be termed Theravāda. External evidence within the Pāli Canon itself suggests an early date for all the stanzas of the sutta, but evidence from *Mvastu.* and *Divy.* seem to indicate that the Pāli sutta was an enlargement of an earlier nucleus. Metre shows that all the stanzas in the poem should belong to the same period if not to one author. The style too is uniform throughout the sutta.

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