

*Religious Suicide in Early Buddhism*, by Étienne Lamotte

Buddhist Studies Review 4, 2 (1987) pp. 105 – 118; Buddhism: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies, Vol. I, P. Williams; 2005

## RELIGIOUS SUICIDE IN EARLY BUDDHISM\*

*Étienne Lamotte*

Source: *Buddhist Studies Review* 4, 2 (1987): 105–18.

Whether of religious inspiration or not, suicide is hardly the usual theme of an academic lecture. To the Western mind it is a troublesome subject. We are none too sure whether it is a matter of morality, psychiatry or both, and should a thought of suicidal tendency chance to arise in our mind, we hurriedly swerve away from it by means of a simple auto-defensive reflex. And who would blame us?

Easterners in general and Buddhists in particular consider the problem more calmly, and with that sense of the relative which is characteristic of them.

Let us leaf through their voluminous treatises on morality and stop at the following passage<sup>1</sup>:

If a monk, with deliberate intent, takes with his own hands the life of a human being or anything resembling a human being, if he himself gives him a weapon and tells him to kill himself; if he praises death to him; if for example he says to him, 'Fie on you! What good does this miserable life do you? Far better to die than live', in such a way that the other conceives in his heart a delight in dying; if in these various fashions he tells him to die or praises death to him, and later that man, because of this, dies, that monk is blameworthy of a very grave offence and should be excluded from the Community.

The text is conclusive, you would say: Buddhists, in the name of their morality, condemn suicide. No! They prohibit an instigation to suicide, but leave each person free to end his own days. For them morality only rules our behaviour in relation to others, but does not impose on us any duty with regard to ourselves. When Buddhist morality prohibits murder, theft, sensual misconduct, ill-will and false views, this is because these bodily, vocal and mental misdeeds are harmful to others. As to the rest, each acts according to his understanding.

The sage Nāgārjuna explains<sup>2</sup>:

According to the Treatise on Discipline, suicide is not murder. Fault and merit result respectively from a wrong done to others or the good done to others. It is not by caring for one's own body or killing one's own body that one acquires merit or commits a misdeed.

However, if suicide is not a moral fault properly speaking, it is nonetheless a conscious and voluntary action, subject as such to the law of Karma, that is, the fruition of actions. Good or bad, every human action is vitiated by desire and by the triple poison of greed, hatred and delusion. Every action brings in its wake a fruit of fruition to be gathered in the present existence or in future existences: pleasant fruit if the action is good, unpleasant if the action is bad. Good or bad, our actions draw us into the round of rebirth, into the world of rebecoming, an unpleasant world since it is unstable and subject to perpetual change.

The desire which vitiates action should be understood in its widest meaning: 1. the thirst for pleasure – a desire which wakens and takes root when faced with agreeable objects and pleasant ideas: 2. the thirst for existence – a desire associated with the belief in the continued enduring of existence; 3. the thirst for annihilation – a desire associated with the belief that everything ends with death.

The desperate person who takes his own life obviously aspires to annihilation: his suicide, instigated by desire, will not omit him from fruition, and he will have to partake of the fruit of his action. In the case of the ordinary man, suicide is a folly and does not achieve the intended aim.

In contrast, suicide is justified in the persons of the Noble Ones who have already cut off desire and by so doing neutralised their actions by making them incapable of producing further fruit of fruition.

From the point of view of Early Buddhism, suicide is a normal matter in the case of the Noble Ones who, having completed their work, sever their last link with the world and voluntarily pass into Nirvāṇa, thus definitively escaping from the world of rebirths. This is the first form of suicide, which I would call suicide through disgust for the world.

## I

The Noble Ones who normally practise this are the Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas and Arhats.

The Buddhas are those fully and perfectly enlightened beings who, having acquired omniscience, expound the Buddhist Doctrine to mankind. The Pratyekabuddhas also understand perfectly the mechanism of cause and effect but, through fear of exhausting themselves uselessly, they do not teach. As for the Arhats, in the main these are disciples of the Buddha who, basing themselves on the Master's teaching, understand the general characteristics of phenomena: impermanence, suffering and impersonality, and who, owing to this wisdom, have eliminated the delusions and passions which attached them to the world.

Very often these Noble Ones, to whichever category they belong, take their

own lives when they consider they have done what had to be done. Fully lucid, they pass into Nirvāṇa like a flame which is extinguished through lack of fuel. They will not be seen again by gods or men.

The last Buddha to appear in the world was Śākyamuni. He was born in India about 566 B.C. At the age of twenty-nine, he left home to take up the life of a religious mendicant. Six years later he reached enlightenment and thus became a Buddha. He taught the Buddhist Truths for forty-five years. Finally, in 486 B.C., when he was eighty years old, he entered Nirvāṇa.

This death or, if you prefer, this disappearance was voluntary. One day in Vaiśālī he declared<sup>3</sup>:

‘Today my disciples are instructed, formed and intelligent; they will be able to refute all their adversaries, and the pure conduct I have taught is wide-spread throughout the whole world. Three months from today I shall enter Nirvāṇa’. Having said this, he threw off his vital forces (*āyusaṅkhāraṃ ossaji*).

Three months later, at the hour he had fixed, he reached the town of Kuśinagara and had his death-bed prepared in the Sāla Grove. There he lay down on his right side, with his head turned to the north. He entered the first absorption, and from one absorption to the next, went up to the ninth. The monks gathered around him thought him to be dead, as this absorption is a cataleptic state devoid of consciousness and feeling. However, he came down to the fourth, a state of consciousness and perfect lucidity. From there he passed into Nirvāṇa<sup>4</sup>.

The Pratyekabuddhas are inferior to the Buddhas, but their deaths are often more spectacular. When Śākyamuni entered his mother’s womb, five hundred Pratyekabuddhas were assembled in the Deer Park, present-day Sārnāth, a few kilometres from Vārāṇasī. The appearance of a Buddha meant their stay here in this world was superfluous. They rose into the air to the height of seven palm trees and, having attained the fire-element, burned themselves up. Then, like extinguished torches, they entered complete Nirvāṇa. Whatever they had in the way of bile and phlegm, fibres and nerves, bones, flesh and blood, all completely disappeared, consumed by the fire. Their pure relics alone fell to earth<sup>5</sup>.

On the decease of the Buddha, a great number of Arhats passed into Nirvāṇa with him. This was not through grief or despair but because they had understood that everything that is born must perish. The majority of them abandoned their bodies in mountains and forests, in gorges and ravines, near water courses and streams. Some, like the royal swans, took flight and disappeared into space<sup>6</sup>.

These are out of the ordinary deaths, making use of supernormal powers. The latter are not within the reach of everyone. We know from the canonical texts that certain disciples of the Buddha, who were already Arhats or on the point of becoming so, took their lives by quite ordinary means: the rope or the knife.

The suicide of Vālkali is so characteristic it deserves to be told in full<sup>7</sup>.

Vālkali was a young brahmin from Śrāvastī who assiduously devoted himself to the study of the Vedas, the sacred books of Brahminism. One day he met the Buddha Śākyamuni and was so struck by his splendour and majesty that he could not take his eyes off him. Giving up the privileges of his caste, he entered

the Buddhist Order so as to be always at the Master's side. Apart from meal and bath time he never stopped gazing at him. This assiduity ended by making the Buddha tired: one day, at the end of the rainy season, he dismissed Vālkali and suggested he go elsewhere. Deeply upset, Vālkali went to the Vulture Peak mountain while the Buddha remained at the Bamboo Grove in Rājagṛha.

One day, however, the Buddha recalled his disciple. Overjoyed, the latter was hurrying at the invitation when, on the way, he was taken ill and had to stop at the Potter's House in Rājagṛha. He said to his companions: 'Please go, Venerable Sirs, to the Blessed One and, in my name, prostrate yourselves at his feet. Tell him that Vālkali is sick, suffering and greatly weakened. It would be good if the Blessed One, through pity for him, were to come here.'

Vālkali's colleagues therefore went to the Buddha and transmitted the message. As was his wont, the Buddha consented by remaining silent. The next day, he dressed, took his begging bowl and his cloak and went to the sick man. The latter, seeing the Master from afar, became restless on his couch. The Master approached and said to him: 'Do not move, Vālkali, there are seats quite near and I shall sit there.' Having sat down, he went on: 'Friend, is it tolerable? Is it viable? Are the painful feelings you are experiencing on the decrease and not on the increase?'

'No, Master,' replied Vālkali, 'it is neither tolerable nor viable. The painful feelings are on the increase and not on the decrease.'

'Then have you some regret and some remorse?'

'Yes, Master,' confessed Vālkali, 'I have much regret and much remorse.'

'Does your conscience reproach you for something from the moral point of view?'

'No, my conscience does not reproach me for anything from the moral point of view.'

'And yet,' stated the Buddha, 'you have regret and remorse.'

'This is because for a long time I have wanted to go and look at the Master, but I do not find the strength in my body to do it.'

'For shame, Vālkali' cried the Buddha, 'What good would it do you to see my body of filth. Vālkali, whoever sees my Doctrine, sees me; whoever sees me sees my Doctrine. And what is my Doctrine?'

'The phenomena of existence: form, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness, which we call a Self, are not a Self and do not belong to a Self. These aggregates are transitory, and that which is transitory is painful. That which is transitory, painful and subject to change does not merit either desire, love or affection. Seeing in this way, the Noble One is disgusted with the body, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness. Being disgusted, he is detached from them. As a result of that detachment he is delivered. Being delivered he obtains this knowledge: "I am delivered", and he discovers this: "I have understood the Noble Truths, destroyed rebirths, lived the pure life and accomplished my duty; there will henceforth be no new births for me.'

Having spoken thus, the Buddha went to the Vulture Peak, while Vālkali had

himself carried to the Black Rock on the Seers' Mount. During the night two deities warned the Buddha that Vālkali was thinking of liberating himself and that, once liberated, he would be delivered.

The Buddha despatched some monks to Vālkali to tell him: 'Blameless will be your death, blameless the end of your days.'

'Return to the Master,' said Vālkali, 'and in my name prostrate yourselves at his feet. Be sure and tell him that I no longer feel any doubt regarding the transitory, painful and unstable nature of all the phenomena of existence.'

The monks had hardly left when Vālkali 'took the knife' (*sattham āhāresi*) and killed himself. The Buddha, being doubtful about this, immediately went to the Black Rock in the company of several disciples. Vālkali lay dying on his couch, his shoulders turned to the right, for it is thus that the Noble Ones die'. A cloud of black dust moved around him.

'Do you see, O Monks,' the Buddha asked, 'that cloud of dust which is drifting in all directions around the corpse? It is Māra the Malign One who is seeking the whereabouts of Vālkali's consciousness. But Vālkali's consciousness is nowhere: Vālkali is in complete Nirvāṇa.'

Hence the Noble Ones who have triumphed over delusion and eliminated passion can, once their task is done, speed the hour of deliverance by voluntarily taking their own lives. Whatever the means used, act of will, recourse to the supernatural, or quite simply the rope or knife, their suicide is *apāpika* 'blameless'<sup>8</sup>.

## II

Another form of voluntary death is the giving of life, commonly undertaken by the Bodhisattvas or future Buddhas. Correctly speaking, a Bodhisattva is not a Noble One since he has not entirely eliminated delusion and passion. He has, however, made an aspiration one day to reach supreme and perfect enlightenment which leads to Buddhahood in order to devote himself to the welfare and happiness of all beings.

To reach Buddhahood, the Bodhisattva has to go through a long career. For countless existences over three, seven or thirty-three incalculable periods, he has to practise the perfect virtues and thus acquire the mass of merits needed to become a Buddha. These perfect virtues, or perfections, are giving, morality, patience, vigour, concentration and wisdom.

The first of these virtues is giving: the Bodhisattva is above all else an altruist, and his generosity knows no limits. He gives unstintingly his goods, riches, wife, children, blood, flesh, eyes, head and whole body.

In the course of his previous lives, he who was one day to become the Buddha Śākyamuni boundlessly multiplied his deeds of generosity. A great deal of literature is devoted to them: this is the literature known as the Jātakas or 'Stories of Previous Lives'.

Giving of the body, – In the person of Mahāsattva, a prince of the Pañcalas,

the Bodhisattva, seeing a starving tigress on the point of devouring her young ones, made her a gift of his body<sup>9</sup>.

Giving of flesh. – When he was the king Śibi, the Bodhisattva, seeing a pigeon being pursued by a falcon, undertook to redeem the bird. He cut from his thigh a piece of flesh equal in weight to the pigeon's. When it was weighed the pigeon always turned out to be heavier than the weight of the severed flesh and, to account for this, the compassionate king ended by cutting up the whole of his body into pieces<sup>10</sup>.

Giving of eyes. – The same king Śibi tore out his eyes in order to give sight to a blind brahmin<sup>11</sup>.

Giving of the head. – King Candragarbha is famous for his generosity. The brahmin Raudrākṣa came and asked for his head. The ministers implored him to accept a head made of precious substances instead, but the brahmin refused to accept. The king attached his hair to a tree and cut off his head himself in order to offer it to the brahmin<sup>12</sup>.

These charitable deeds performed by the future Buddha were commemorated, on the very spots where they occurred, by sumptuous funerary monuments: the four great stūpas of Northern India. Chinese pilgrims who went to India did not fail to visit them: Fa-hsien about the year 400, Sung Yun in approximately 520 and Hsüan-tsang about 630. Their exact location have been precisely determined by archaeologists. The giving of the head would explain the name of Takṣaśilā, 'cut rock', for Takṣaśira, 'cut head', given to the great town in North-West India, well-known to the Greek historians and geographers by the name of Taxila.

Altruism, the spirit of solidarity, is one of the elements that caused, around the beginning of the Christian era, the blossoming of a Buddhist revival which, in opposition to the early Buddhism known as the Small Vehicle (Hīnayāna), assumed the grandiose title of Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna). A new ideal inspired its adherents. It was less a matter of winning holiness and acceding to Nirvāṇa, as the earlier disciples of the Buddha required, than reproducing in one's everyday life the charitable deeds of a Bodhisattva, solely concerned with the welfare of others. Henceforth charity took precedence over everything else. Any bodily, vocal or mental action became permissible as long as it was favourable to beings. Giving is perfect, transcendent, when whoever gives, inspired by supreme wisdom, no longer distinguishes between donor, beneficiary and the thing given.

### III

Alongside the Noble Ones who hastened their death when they had done what they had to do, alongside the Bodhisattvas who gave their life for beings, there were also Buddhists who attempted suicide in order to pay homage to the Buddha and his Doctrine. This third form of suicide was generally carried out by auto-cremation.

The Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra or 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine', which was translated into Chinese towards the end of the third century, relates the following legend<sup>13</sup>:

In bygone days, innumerable cosmic periods ago, the Buddha Candrasūrya appeared in the world. He expounded the 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine' at length to a great assembly of Disciples and Bodhisattvas, beginning with the Bodhisattva Priyadarśana. Under the teaching of the Buddha, Priyadarśana applied himself to the practice of difficult tasks. He spent twelve thousand years wandering, exclusively engaged in meditation on the 'Lotus' through the development of intense application. He thus acquired the supernormal power of being voluntarily able to manifest all forms. Gladdened, delighted, overjoyed and filled with joy, satisfaction and pleasure, he had the following thought: 'Supposing I were to pay homage (*pūjā*) to the Blessed Lord Buddha and the 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine' which he has taught me?' He immediately put into action the power which he possessed to manifest all forms and, from on high, caused a shower of blossoms and perfumes to fall. The nature of those essences was such that a single gramme of those perfumes was worth the whole universe.

However, on further reflection, this homage seemed inadequate to him. 'The spectacle of my supernormal power,' he said to himself, 'is not likely to honour the Blessed Lord Buddha as much as would the abandoning of my own body. Thereupon Priyadarśana began to eat Agarū (aloe), incense and olibanum, and to drink Campaka (castor-oil). He thus spent twelve years in ceaselessly and constantly partaking of inflammable substances. At the end of those twelve years, Priyadarśana, having clothed his body in heavenly garments and sprinkled it with scented oils, made his benedictory aspiration and then burnt his body, in order to honour the Buddha Candrasūrya and the discourse of the 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine'.

Universes as numerous as the sands of the eighty Ganges were illuminated by the splendour of the flames thrown off by the blazing body of the Bodhisattva Priyadarśana. The Buddhas who were in those universes all expressed their approval: 'Excellent, excellent, O son of good family! This is the true homage due to the Buddha; this is the homage due to the Doctrine. This is the most distinguished, the foremost, the best, the most eminent, the most perfect of homages paid to the Doctrine, this homage which is paid to it by abandoning one's own body.'

Twelve hundred years went by, while the body of Priyadarśana continued to burn. Finally, at the end of those twelve hundred years, the fire stopped.

This sacrifice was repeated by the Bodhisattva Priyadarśana through the ages in various forms. He is, at present, the Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajyarāja, 'King of Medicinal Plants', in our universe.

Priyadarśana's feat would doubtless seem to us more admirable than imitable; anyway, the methods used for burning for twelve hundred years are not within our reach. We do not know to what degree his example was followed in India. We only know through a seventh century witness that religious suicides were common at that time<sup>14</sup>:

[In India] an action such as burning the body is regarded usually as the mode of showing inward sincerity . . . In the River Ganges many men drown themselves everyday. On the hill of Buddhagayā too there are not unfrequently cases of suicide. Some starve themselves to death and eat nothing. Others climb up trees and throw themselves down. . . . Some intentionally destroy their manhood and become eunuchs.

Little can be gathered from such vague information. In contrast in China, where the 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine' (Hua yĕn ching) was highly successful, Priyadarśana's example was taken literally, and self-cremation as he had practised it constituted a ritual act which was regulated by a tradition and bound by a collection of beliefs. From the fifth to the tenth centuries religious suicides were very common, and it is believed that they continued long after that date since, clearly, recent events in Vietnam have re-established them (since June 1963).

With regard to the great period of religious fervour, details are supplied by three successive biographies devoted to the 'Lives of Eminent Monks' (Kao sĕng chuan) respectively published in 544, 667 and 988<sup>15</sup>. From the point of view that concerns us here, these biographies have been studied by Jacques Gernet in his remarkable article 'Les suicides par le feu chez les bouddhistes chinois du V<sup>e</sup> au X<sup>e</sup> siècle' (*Mélanges publiés par l'Institut des Hautes Études chinoises*, II, Paris 1960). Eleven cases of suicide by fire are shown noted between 451 and 501, two in the sixth century, three in the seventh, four in the ninth and four in the tenth.

They all took place according to the formalised ritual: it was not a question of a 'minor incident' but a definite religious ceremony. This is the oldest case:

Fa-yü came from the prefecture of Chi (near present-day Yung-chi, the extreme south of Shansi). He took the robe when aged fifteen and was the disciple of Hui-shih who had founded a method of asceticism and cultivation of the *dhutas* (purification procedures). Fa-yü, who was full of energy and courage, penetrated (the secrets of) his method in depth. He constantly aspired to follow in the steps of the King of Medicinal Plants (Bhaiṣaj-yarāja) and burn himself in homage (to the Buddha). At that time, Yao Hsü, the fake prince of the Chin (Later Ch'in), had set up his garrison in Pu-fan (to the north of Yungchi). Fa-yü informed the prince of his intention. 'There are,' said Yao Hsü, 'many ways of entering the Path (*ju tao*). Why do you necessarily have to burn yourself? I do not dare oppose your plan categorically. However, I would be pleased if you would consider carefully.' Since Fa-yü's determination was unflinching, he instantly began to eat small pieces of incense and wrapped his body in oil-soaked cloths. He recited the chapter on the Abandoning of the Body (*shê shĕn p'fn*) and, finally, he set fire to himself. The monks and laymen who were present at this spectacle were all filled with compassion. Fa-yü was then forty-five years old (tr. after J. Gernet)<sup>16</sup>.

This short account condenses in a few lines all the phases of the ceremony: the prior initiation into a method of asceticism; the formation of the intention to

burn oneself in homage to the Buddha, on the example of the Bodhisattva Priyadarśana; the authorisation sought from public powers and given, though not without reluctance; the recitation of a text, usually that of the 'Lotus', Ch. XXII; the cremation itself and, finally, the wonder of those present.

The influence of the 'Lotus of the Good Doctrine' on Buddhist customs appears even more clearly in the Brahmajālasūtra 'The Sūtra of Brahma's Net', an extremely widespread work in the whole of the Far East which constitutes the Code of the Mahāyāna in China. It would seem to have been translated by Kumārajīva in 406, but this has not been authenticated. In it it is said that if one does not burn one's body, arm or finger as an offering to the Buddhas, one is not a Bodhisattva. In order to obey this rule, Chinese monks, on the eve of their ordination, have fairly deep burns made on the top of their heads so as to destroy the hair roots. Small cylinders of carbonised aromatic wood are burnt on their skulls. That is why this ceremony is called *jên hsiang* or *chu hsiang* 'burning by incense'. On those who perform it, it confers a merit equal to that of a complete burning of the body since, in matters of ritual, the part equals the whole<sup>17</sup>.

In brief then, if suicide was practised widely in Buddhist circles, this was due to three reasons. In the Hīnayāna the Noble Ones – whether Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas or Arhats – once their work was done, met death voluntarily in order to enter Nirvāṇa as soon as possible. In the Mahāyāna, the Bodhisattvas offered up their bodies and lives for the welfare of beings or in order to pay homage to the Buddhas.

As was only to be expected, there was some resistance. It is said that the Buddha taught us to control ourselves: how could suicide contribute to the destruction of our passions? It is unworthy of a monk to cut off a piece of his flesh in exchange for a pigeon. It is not in our power to initiate a Bodhisattva, but it is to conform ourselves scrupulously to the rules of the religious life.

The Buddha Śākyamuni proclaimed Śāriputra to be the wisest of his disciples. It is to him that we owe this stanza with the stamp of wisdom<sup>18</sup>:

I do not yearn for death,  
I do not yearn for life;  
I only wait for the hour to come,  
Conscious and with mind alert.

## Notes

Translator's note: This is a transcript of a lecture given to a predominantly Roman Catholic audience, which explains the lack of technical terms and annotation. I have taken the liberty of attempting to trace at least the main sources consulted and the notes which follow are entirely mine.

Pāli texts are cited according to the Pali Text Society editions.

T = *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (The Tripiṭaka in Chinese), tr. J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe, Tokyo 1924–35.

*Traité* = E. Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna*, I–V, Louvain/Louvain-la-Neuve 1949–80.

\* This paper first appeared under the title ‘Le Suicide religieux dans le bouddhisme ancien’ in the *Bulletin de l’Académie Royale de Belgique – Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, 5<sup>e</sup> série, LI, 1965 – 5, pp. 156–68. Translated by Sara Boin-Webb with grateful acknowledgements to the original publisher for permitting this English version to appear.

- 1 Vinaya III 72.
- 2 *Traité* II, pp. 740–2.
- 3 Dīgha II 106.
- 4 Dīgha II 156 ff.
- 5 Mahāvastu I 357; Lalitavistara 18–19; Fo pên hsing chi ching, T 190, ch. 6, p. 677a (tr. S. Beal, *The Romantic Legend of Śākya Buddha*, London 1875 – repr. Delhi 1985 – pp. 25–6); cf. *Traité* I, p. 182.
- 6 Cf. *Traité* I, p. 89, with many sources in n. 2.
- 7 Cf. Saṃyutta II 119–24; Tsa a han, T 99, No. 1265, ch. 47, pp. 345b–347b; Tsêng i a han, T 125, ch. 19, pp. 642b–643a; Pāli Apādāna II 465.
- 8 Cf. Vinaya III 68 ff; Majjhima III 266; Saṃyutta IV 59.
- 9 Suvarṇaprabhāsa, Ch. 18: Vyāgrhīparivarta; Jātakamālā, Ch. 1; Avadānakalpalatā, Ch. 51, vv. 28–50.
- 10 Laṅkāvatāra, p. 251; Avadānakalpalatā II, v. 109; pp. 119–35; Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā, p. 181; for further references, see *Traité*, p. 255 and note.
- 11 Jātaka No. 499; Jātakamālā No.2.
- 12 Divyāvadāna, Ch. 22, pp. 314–28; Avadānakalpalatā, Ch. 5 (I, pp. 154–75).
- 13 T 262, VI, p’in 22, p. 52b 4 ff (Bhaiṣajyarāja-pūrvayoga). Cf. L. Hurvitz, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*, New York 1976, p. 293 ff.
- 14 The Chinese pilgrim I-ching, as translated by J. Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-tsing* (London 1896), repr. Delhi 1966, pp. 197–9.
- 15 Cf R. Shih, *Biographies des Moines Eminents de Houei-kiao* I, Louvain 1968.
- 16 Gernet, *op. cit.*, p. 531.
- 17 J.J.M. de Croot, *Le Code du Mahāyāna en Chine* (tr. of the Brahmajālasūtra = Fan wan ching), Amsterdam 1893, repr. New York 1979, p. 231.
- 18 Theragāthā v. 1003.