

A Summary of the Mahasamvartanikatha : A Chronology of the Universe According to the Sammitiyas

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A Summary of the *Mahāsaṃvartanīkathā*

A Chronology of the Universe According to the Sāṃmitīyas

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The *Mahāsaṃvartanīkathā* (“The great discourse on [the evolution and] the devolution [of the world],” abbr. MSK) is a treatise on Buddhist cosmology in the form of a Sanskrit kāvya. It aims to systematically represent the unique traditions of the cosmology of the Sāṃmitīya school of Indian Buddhism. This work was written in the 12th century.

I have studied the MSK as my dissertation under the guidance of Prof. Dr Michael Hahn and Prof. Dr Bhikkhu Pāsādika at Marburg. An unrevised pre-printed edition of my dissertation was published in Sendai (Japan) in 1998,¹ and I am now preparing a revised edition with the help of Prof. M. Hahn and other colleagues. It will be published in the series *Indica et Tibetica*.

The MSK consists of 390 stanzas divided into six chapters, each containing four sections. It is not only a scholastic work but also a highly sophisticated poem. Its author, the poet Sarvarakṣita, used 16 different types of metres (esp. āryā in 95 stanzas, upajāti in 71 stanzas, vaktra in 62 stanzas, vaṃśastha in 60 stanzas, vasantatilakā in 25 stanzas and aparavaktra in 21 stanzas); āryā appears to be his favourite metre. As for its rhetoric, the author skillfully displays many figures of speech. He excels in the use of a particular figure of speech called the yamaka, i.e., the repetition of groups of syllables in different meanings and word-separation.

The poet Sarvarakṣita is a Buddhist monk who belonged to the Sāṃmitīya school in the branch of the Sthaviras of Hīnayāna Buddhism. The name Sarvarakṣita is found in a famous grammatical work in Sanskrit, the *Durghaṭavṛtti*, which was written in A.D. 1172 by the grammarian Śaraṇadeva. In the introductory stanzas of the *Durghaṭavṛtti*, Śaraṇadeva writes that his work was summarized and revised by śrī-Sarvarakṣita. It appears that the grammarian Sarvarakṣita and the author of the MSK are the same person. In addition, Sarvarakṣita authored two other works, namely, the *Vāsavadattā-ṭīka* (a commentary on Subandhu’s prose poem *Vāsavadattā*; Raghunatha Temple Library No. 844), and the *Maṇicūḍa-jātaka* (a poetic work on the Maṇicūḍa legend). In 1998,

1 Kiyoshi Okano: *Sarvarakṣitas Mahāsaṃvartanīkathā. Ein Sanskrit-Kāvya über die Kosmologie der Sāṃmitīya-Schule des Hīnayāna-Buddhismus*, Tohoku-Indo-Tibetto-Kenkyūsho-Kankokai, Monograph Series I, Sendai, 1998.

Giuseppe Tucci's manuscript on the *Mañicūḍa-jātaka* was rediscovered in Rome by Dr Francesco Sferra; its text has been edited, translated, and studied by Dr Albrecht Hanisch under the guidance of Prof. Michael Hahn. The complete text of the *Mañicūḍa-jātaka* in the form of a diplomatic transcription of the manuscript (of the so-called "arrow-headed" script) will be published shortly by Dr Hanisch in *Manuscripta Buddhica*, Vol. I (Rome).

The MSK is based on previous cosmological works of the Sāṃmitīya school. A large part of the cosmological content (Chaps. 2–6) of the MSK is based on an unknown cosmological work of the Sāṃmitīyas as a direct source. I designate this direct source as "text X." A large part of text X is preserved in the Tibetan translation of the *Samskṛtāsamskṛta-viniścaya* (Tohoku No. 3897), written by a Buddhist scholar named Daśabalaśrīmitra, as a very long quotation. This quotation is very important for understanding the MSK. Text X, which is a systematic summary of the historical cosmology of Sāṃmitīyas, was probably written in the fifth century A.D. at the earliest, because this work includes a description of the fifth council of the Sāṃmitīya school; the fifth council was held in the eighth century after the death of Buddha. My own research has revealed that the Chinese translation of a cosmological work, the *Lokaprajñapti[-abhidharmaśāstra]* (Taisho No. 1644), also belongs to the tradition of the Sāṃmitīya school. This text was translated by Paramārtha in the year 559 A.D. The cosmological description of text X is based on Chapters 24 and 25 of the *Lokaprajñapti* (T23, 215b–226a), which is the oldest cosmological work of the Sāṃmitīyas. This *Lokaprajñapti*, which was originally written in Sanskrit (or Prakrit), was translated into Pali in the 11th or 12th century A.D. in Burma or northern Thailand, and this Pali version is called the *Lokapaññatti*. The complete Pali text of the *Lokapaññatti* was translated and published by Eugène Denis in 1977.

In consequence of studies started from the MSK, we have now rich resources at our disposal for researching the cosmology of the Sāṃmitīya school: the MSK, the text X, the *Lokaprajñapti* and the *Lokapaññatti*. By using these materials, we can discern the differences between the cosmologies of the Sāṃmitīya school and the other Hīnayāna schools (esp., Sarvāstivādins and Dharmaguptakas) or the Mahāyāna Vijñaptimātratā school.

The MSK is a rich, albeit condensed work, which is why it is not easy to extract from it an overview of its content. To understand this work, we need a detailed synopsis or summary of its contents besides its literal translation. That is why, in this paper, I provide a summary of the *Mahāsamvartanīkathā*. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Dr Bhikkhu Pāsādika, to whom I wish to dedicate this paper, for helping me with my four years of study at Marburg.

1 The Origin (*nidāna*)

1.1 Introduction (*upodghāta*)

- 1.1.1 A maṅgala verse as a prayer to the Buddha
 1.1.2–4 The author explains the aim in composing this work.

1.2 Buddha's Appearance as a Prince

- 1.2.1–7 There was a city named Kapilavastu decked with all kinds of splendours.
 1.2.8–13 A great king called Śuddhodana reigned over the country.
 1.2.14–17 He had a queen named Māyā who was divinely beautiful and very merciful to the people.
 1.2.18–25 A series of wonderful events occurred at the time that the Bodhisattva entered the womb of queen Māyā during her pregnancy and at his birth.
 1.2.26 Elders named the newborn prince Siddhārtha.
 1.2.27 A great sage (= Asita) predicted that the prince would become a Buddha.
 1.2.28 The prince dispensed alms freely to the needy.
 1.2.29 He grew to become a highly educated, handsome young man and soon married.
 1.2.30 Due to his righteous administration, the prince enjoyed fame throughout the world.
 1.2.31 The king let women wait upon the prince in order to prevent him from renouncing the world.
 1.2.32–33 All the women who attended the prince had unsurpassed beauty.
 1.2.34 After the prince came across an old man, a sick man, and a dead man, he began to practice chastity, although he was in the life-stage of a householder.

1.3 His Attainment of Buddhahood

- 1.3.1 The prince, who had been encouraged by the Kings of the Gods, left home as a mendicant.
 1.3.2 He tonsured himself and donned yellow robes.
 1.3.3 He received instructions from gurus but got no satisfaction from them.
 1.3.4 He approached the capital of saints, i.e., the great enlightenment, and defeated the army of Māra.

- 1.3.5 He obtained the ambrosia of immortality—Nirvāṇa.
- 1.3.6 He took the Middle Way and eradicated desires and attained the final stage of liberation.
- 1.3.7–10 A series of wonderful events occurred immediately after his enlightenment.
- 1.3.11 He hesitated to preach to the world because people enjoyed being in their ālaya.
- 1.3.12 Because of the exhortation of Brahmā, Buddha turned the wheel of the Law for the first time.
- 1.3.13–16 A series of wonderful events followed immediately after this first sermon.
- 1.3.17 Three Kāśyapa brothers and their disciples were converted by Buddha.
- 1.3.18 Buddha preached the Truth to king Bimbisāra.
- 1.3.19 The two chief disciples Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana joined the Saṅgha.

1.4 Defeat of Heretics

- 1.4.1 As the teachings of Buddha were held in great regard among sages, the assertions of heretics disappeared.
- 1.4.2 However, many communities of heretics arose, like mosquitoes rising from nowhere, and they buzzed around the Buddhists.
- 1.4.3 [Thesis 1] Some heretics asserted that this world was created by the Maker Īśvara.
- 1.4.4 [Thesis 2] Some other heretics asserted that this world was produced by natural and necessary actions of elements according to their inherent properties.
- 1.4.5 [Thesis 3] Some other heretics asserted that there is neither disappearance nor appearance in the world and all in this world are present eternally.
- 1.4.6 [Thesis 4] Some other heretics asserted that this world is just an illusion and that nothing exists.
- 1.4.7 Buddha refuted thesis 1 of the heretics.
- 1.4.8 Thesis 2 was also refuted.
- 1.4.9 Thesis 3 was also refuted.
- 1.4.10 Thesis 4 was also refuted.
- 1.4.11 Through this sermon, Buddha taught that the world arises and ceases through the principle of Dependent Origination.

2 The Period of Renovation

2.1 Appearance of the Gods Living in the Sky

[The 1st antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.1 The abode of god Mahābrahmā appeared first by the force of karma.
 2.1.2 Mahābrahmā came to be reborn in his abode from the Ābhāsvara heaven.

[From the 1st to the 10th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.3 Mahābrahmā meditated for 10 antarakaḷpas.

[The 11th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.4–6 Other Brahmās were born in the same heaven as the followers of Brahmā. They wrongly considered the Mahābrahmā as the Creator and the Mahābrahmā himself believed that he was the Creator.
 2.1.7 Births of the followers of the Mahābrahmā lasted for an antarakaḷpa.

[The 12th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.8 The Brahmakāyika gods and their abodes appeared directly below the followers of Brahmā.

[The 13th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.9 The Brahmāpurohita gods and their abodes appeared directly below the Brahmakāyika gods.

[The 14th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.10 The Paranirmitavaśavartin gods and their abodes appeared directly below the Brahmāpurohita gods. The residences of Māra (god Kāma) are situated on the top of that heaven.

[The 15th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.11 The Nirmāṇarati gods and their abodes appeared directly below the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods.

[The 16th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.12 The Tuṣita gods and their abodes appeared directly below the Nirmāṇarati gods.

[The 17th antarakaḷpa]

- 2.1.13 The Yāma gods and their abodes appeared directly below the Tuṣita gods.

2.2 *The Formation of the Earth as an Abode*

[The 18th antarakalpa]

- 2.2.1–2 Winds broke out from the bodies of the Yāma gods who wandered around the lower regions in groups in order to see and remember places of the past, lost earthly world.
- 2.2.3 Winds swelled and formed a wind-circle. They had the shape of a circular cylinder as the base of a new world.
- 2.2.4–6 A mass of water appeared above this wind-circle. It had the shape of a circular cylinder, and became the second layer over the wind circle.
- 2.2.7 A mass of earth appeared on the surface of the water. It had the shape of a circular cylinder, and became the third layer.
- 2.2.8 Winds began the formation of lands, seas, and mountains on the surface of the earth.
- 2.2.9 Mount Sumeru was formed by the winds.
- 2.2.10 Seven concentric mountain-ranges and seven “inner seas” were formed by the winds.
- 2.2.11 The Cakravāla-mountains and the exterior ocean were formed by the winds.
- 2.2.12 The four continents were formed by the winds.
- 2.2.13 The Sumeru, the Cakravāla, and the seven mountain ranges became solid, and changed into a state of gemstones.
- 2.2.14 Heavy rainfall filled all oceans, lakes, and ponds with water.

2.3 *Appearance of the Gods Who Lived in Mount Sumeru*

[Continuation of the 18th antarakalpa]

- 2.3.1–6 Details of the shape of Mount Sumeru were formed. Gods of the Trāyastriṃśa (the Thirty-three Gods) and of the Four Great Gods (Mahārājika) were born on the Sumeru mountain ranges.
- 2.3.7–12 Indra’s city Sudarśana was formed on the top of Mount Sumeru.
- 2.3.13 Four cities for the gods of the Four Great Gods were formed on the Yugaṃdhara mountain-range.
- 2.3.14–20 Gods of the Trāyastriṃśa and of the Four Great Gods lived happily under their kings and enjoyed sensuous pleasures.
- 2.3.21 The 18th antarakalpa elapsed.

2.4 Appearance of Mortals

[The 19th and 20th antarakalpa in the period of renovation]

- 2.4.1 Human beings (*sattva*) with physical attributes of their former existence as the Ābhāsvara gods had appeared on earth for two antarakalpas.
- 2.4.2–3 Gradually, they had formed the habit of eating Rasā—savory edible essence of the earth. As a result of eating, their bodies changed, and they permanently lost their bodily radiance and the ability to fly.
- 2.4.4 The sun, moon, and stars appeared in the sky for the first time.
- 2.4.5 When the sun and moon appeared in the sky, the 20th antarakalpa of the period of renovation was completed.

3 The State of Perfect Happiness in the Period of Duration

3.1 Appearance of Food

[The 1st and 2nd antarakalpa of the period of duration]

- 3.1.1 The more human beings ate Rasā, the more their bodies lost its fair complexion (*varṇa*). They realized diversity in physical appearance.
- 3.1.2 The fair, handsome human beings despised the ugly human beings with dark complexion, and as a result of the haughtiness of those human beings who had good looks, Rasā suddenly disappeared.
- 3.1.3–4 Parpaṭaka appeared and human beings started to eat it. However, owing to the growing haughtiness of human beings, Parpaṭaka also disappeared in the same way.
- 3.1.5–6 Vatālatā appeared, and people ate it. But their growing haughtiness resulted in its disappearance in the same way.
- 3.1.7 Rice, which was free from husk or red granules and which grew without cultivation, appeared.
- 3.1.8 As people continuously ate rice, the male organ and female organ appeared in their bodies. The difference between men and women arose for the first time.
- 3.1.9 Women were considered to be depraved men. (The discrimination against women began.)
- 3.1.10 Mythical wishing trees that produce clothes (*kalpaduṣya*) appeared, and mankind started wearing clothes.
- 3.1.11–12 As human beings began to look at each other, sexual desires arose, and some began to have sex.
- 3.1.13–14 Most others condemned the sexual act, and when they saw a couple having sex, they threw grass and lumps of earth at the couple.

- 3.1.15 Human beings who were ashamed of their sexual acts went to the forests for a while.
- 3.1.16 In order to hide their frequent sexual acts, they started to build houses for themselves.
- 3.1.17–25 Human beings who had begun to dwell in houses and went about twice daily, gathering rice that had sprung up naturally in wild fields, began to follow the example of some lazy ones and began to store up rice for many days in excess of their needs.
- 3.1.26 At that time, the 8th antarakalpa of the period of duration elapsed, and the 9th arrived.

3.2 *The Beginning of Various Means of Earning Livelihood*

[The 9th antarakalpa]

- 3.2.1 Owing to the greed of many human beings in stocking up rice, the attributes of rice began to worsen. Like the rice of the present day, it gained husk and red powder. When rice was reaped, it did not grow again. (It required cultivation.)
- 3.2.2–7 Seeing this result, human beings thought back to the history of food, and reflected on their bad conduct.
- 3.2.8 At a gathering, they decided that they should define the boundaries of rice fields for each individual.
- 3.2.9–11 They measured rice fields and gave an area of 4 yojanas to each woman and an area of 6 yojanas to each man.
- 3.2.12–13 The immorality of human beings brought about the disappearance of the mythical trees which gave clothes (*kalpaduṣya*), and instead cotton trees (*karpāsa*) arose from those seeds.
- 3.2.14–17 As a result of the private ownership of rice fields, the crime of stealing appeared for the first time in the world.
- 3.2.18 Subsequently, the crime of inflicting injury appeared for the first time.
- 3.2.19–24 All human beings lamented the appearance of crimes, and they decided that they should appoint an administrator of justice (i.e., a king).
- 3.2.25–32 They requested the most respectable man among them to accept the position of ruler and protector of men, and they promised to offer him a sixth portion of their harvest of rice. He agreed and became the first king.

3.3 Separation of the Castes

[Continuation of the 9th antarakaḷpa]

- 3.3.1–2 After the enthronement, the king meted out punishments appropriately.
- 3.3.3–12 The king pleased the people by preaching sermons about dharma. (The word *rājā* “king” is derived from the word *rañjayati* “he pleased [people]”).
- 3.3.13–16 At that time, under the influence of his sermons, the ten bad actions (*daśa akuśala-karmapatha*) existed only in name.
- 3.3.17 The king was called Mahāsaṃmata because he enjoyed the high esteem of many people.
- 3.3.18 A group of persons subordinate to the king was called Kṣatriya, because the king was the ruler of rice fields (*kṣetra*).
- 3.3.19 About that time, inclinations toward private property became stronger among ordinary people, and some of the ten bad actions made their appearance.
- 3.3.20 Some people blamed possessions and forsook all their possessions to lead a hermitic life in the woods. They were called Brāhmaṇa. (They later formed the Brahmin caste.)
- 3.3.21 They were also called Adhyāyaka, because they recited and learned Vedas which they composed themselves.
- 3.3.22 Some people quit the woods and took a strong liking for a worldly, house-dwelling life. They were called Vṛṣala, because they worked in rice fields as if they were bulls. (They later formed the Śūdra caste.)
- 3.3.23 Some other people engaged in all kinds of (*viśva*) arts and crafts and were called Viś (the Vaiśya caste).
- 3.3.24–25 Some other people executed robbers and were called Caṇḍāla (“killer of caṇḍas”). They were expelled from civil society. (They later formed the untouchables—the fifth caste.)

3.4 Appearances of Various Foods

[Continuation of the 9th antarakaḷpa]

- 3.4.1 The flavour of rice deteriorated. Rice changed into an unappetizing state.
- 3.4.2 Various “non-principal foods” (*anubhojana*), such as pulses, appeared in the world.
- 3.4.3 Sesame, barley, and other food plants appeared, whose seeds were very juicy.

- 3.4.4 Sugarcane appeared. It had neither a hard rind nor leaves and provided sweet juice for mankind.
- 3.4.5 Cows appeared and provided milk for mankind voluntarily.
- 3.4.6 Milk changed into fresh butter, ghee, and cheese without any effort by men.
- 3.4.7 Animals for riding (i.e., horses and elephants) appeared. They allowed themselves to be tamed by men.
- 3.4.8 Seven treasures appeared for the king Mahāsammata.
- 3.4.9–16 During the king's reign, the world was happy and at peace. Each person enjoyed sufficient food; owned a healthy, beautiful body; and had a very long lifespan.

4 The State of Happiness and Misery in the Period of Duration

4.1 *The Beginning of Making Efforts to Seek Foods*

[Continuation of the 9th antarakalpa]

- 4.1.1–2 The king Mahāsammata died. His successors also died, but the royal lineage continued.
- 4.1.3 Food bestowed by the earth had decreased because people had lost their good conduct. Seeing this situation, mankind began to dig the earth with the spade. (Agriculture by spade or plough began.)
- 4.1.4–5 As men gave oxen a promise to give a share of the harvest, oxen pulled ploughs for men.
- 4.1.6 In the same way, animals used for riding also began to work for men.
- 4.1.7 Cows had milk, which was unwillingly drawn by men.
- 4.1.8 Sugarcane began to grow leaves and covered themselves with leaves.
- 4.1.9 Sesame and other food plant seeds became less juicy.
- 4.1.10 As foods deteriorated, the average lifespan of human beings decreased.
- 4.1.11 Greedily, men did not give their oxen a share of the harvest. Because men broke the promise to oxen, oxen began to ploughing slowly.
- 4.1.12–13 Men whipped oxen while ploughing and put strings through the nostrils of the oxen. The fright of violence drove the oxen to lose their speaking ability and to slavery under men.
- 4.1.14 Men tied horses, elephants, and other animals that they rode with strings, and whipped them. These animals began to assume hostile attitudes towards men.
- 4.1.15 Men bound cows tightly with ropes while milking the very reluctant cows.

- 4.1.16 The shape of sugarcane changed and the canes became covered with thick rind; therefore, men had difficulty in expressing juice from sugarcane.
- 4.1.17 Seeds of sesame and other food plants lost their juiciness.
- 4.1.18 The still worsening food situation caused human bodies to become weaker.

4.2 *The Beginning of the Age of Kaliyuga*

[Continuation of the 9th antarakāpa (up to the present time)]

- 4.2.1 Teachers corrupted by the turbidity of the times (*samayakaṣāya*) instructed people on the wrong ways of life.
- 4.2.2 Looking for food, greedy men began to engage in various types of dirty work in farming, grazing, and so on.
- 4.2.3 All kinds of food deteriorated greatly. Despite their hard efforts, the people achieved poor gains and found little pleasure in their work.
- 4.2.4 Sesame, sugarcane, and milk, which were the results of the hard labour of men, began to require harder labour to obtain their essences (*rasa*), that is, sesame oil, sugarcane juice, and ghee.
- 4.2.5 As foods further deteriorated, the average lifespan and physical features of man respectively became much shorter and worse.
- 4.2.6 On earth, many cities and towns were built by mankind.
- 4.2.7 (After the three past Buddhas, the last age of Kaliyuga had come.) The Buddha Śākyamuni arrived in this world.
- 4.2.8 Under the guidance of the Buddha, the people's wrong ways of life disappeared.
- 4.2.9 Morality was established in the world as if the present age was Kṛtāyuga—the first age.
- 4.2.10 The Buddha instructed people on the right path to final emancipation, and many disciples achieved liberation.
- 4.2.11 The Buddha entered parinirvāṇa after he had organized the Saṅgha and established the continuity of his teachings.
- 4.2.12 In the second month after the parinirvāṇa, five hundred monks assembled in a council (*saṃgīti*). (This was called the First Council.)
- 4.2.13 One hundred years after the parinirvāṇa, seven hundred monks assembled in a council. (This was called the Second Council.)
- 4.2.14 Four hundred years after the parinirvāṇa, when the Buddhist Saṅgha had become divided into different schools, Vātsīputra chaired a council and formed a school, which came to be known as Vātsīputrīyas. (The Vātsīputrīya school was established in the Third Council.)

- 4.2.15 Seven hundred years after the parinirvāṇa, the holy Saṃmata chaired a council and formed a school, which came to be known as Sāṃmitīyas. (The Sāṃmitīya school was established in the Fourth Council.)
- 4.2.16 Eight hundred years after the parinirvāṇa, Bhūti and Buddhamitra chaired a council. (This was the Fifth Council by the Sāṃmitīyas.)
- 4.2.17 Bhūti and Buddhamitra declared that the present antarakaḷpa is the 9th and that seven hundred years remain until the end of this kalpa.
- 4.2.18 They declared that the essences (*sāra*), that is, sesame oil, sugarcane juice, ghee and so on, will be difficult to obtain hereafter in this world.
- 4.2.19 By virtue of the little good fortune (*bhāgya*) of present human beings, food has not yet shown a greater deterioration, and essences like sesame oil have not yet disappeared.

4.3 Occurrences of the Antarakaḷpa-Catastrophes

[Continuation of the 9th antarakaḷpa, after the present time]

- 4.3.1 The fire of the three catastrophes of famine (*durbhikṣa*), epidemics (*roga*), and weapons (*śastra*) have now sent up smoke; the fire will burn furiously at the end of this antarakaḷpa.
- 4.3.2 The increase of miserliness, malignancy, and anger in the minds of all the people has fuelled the fire of the three catastrophes.
- 4.3.3 Exceedingly heavy rains, droughts, localized downpours, and so on will increase famines.
- 4.3.4 At the end of this 9th antarakaḷpa, the catastrophe of famine will take the lead and the two catastrophes of epidemics and weapons will follow.
- 4.3.5 There will be severe famine in the world. Food will be difficult to obtain.
- 4.3.6 People will seek food desperately, and they will plunder and kill others.
- 4.3.7 All countries, villages, and families will perish gradually due to famine.
- 4.3.8 Owing to the immorality of mankind, the rotation of seasons will become irregular and the food situation will deteriorate further.
- 4.3.9 Bad food will cause the appearance of various epidemics accompanied by Piśāca demons.

- 4.3.10 Men who want to placate epidemics and demons will offer animal sacrifices to the demons. These improper acts will invite further disasters.
- 4.3.11 All countries, villages, and families will perish gradually because of epidemics.
- 4.3.12 Selfish people who are willing to hurt each other will bring about catastrophes with weapons.
- 4.3.13 Kings of the northern, southern, eastern, and western countries will attack each other in order to make other countries perish.
- 4.3.14 Rebellions among kings will cause ceaseless rises and falls of countries.
- 4.3.15 Royal families will burn in the fire of fury and will be consumed by it.
- 4.3.16 All countries, villages, and families will attack each other and fall to ruin in the fire of rage against others.
- 4.3.17 When people happen to meet by chance, they will kill each other. On such occasions, even the grass in hand will suddenly change into swords.
- 4.3.18 In the last period of the assailing of the three catastrophes, human beings will have a limited lifespan of ten years. That period will last seventy years.
- 4.3.19 The catastrophes will continue until the end of this antarakalpa. The catastrophe of famine will last 7 years, 7 months, and 7 days; that of epidemics will last 7 months and 7 days; and that of weapons will last 7 days.
- 4.3.20 During that time, most people who are engaged in evildoing will accept the worst evil destinies after death.
- 4.3.21 When the last catastrophes come, a person who lives an isolated life will awake to a feeling of compassion for the dying people.
- 4.3.22 Kings of Yakṣas will guard the surviving men who are good-natured despite experiencing the worst of times, so that mankind would not become extinct.
- 4.3.23 When the surviving people feel compassion, the terrible remainder of the 9th antarakalpa will disappear.

4.4 History of 11 Antarakalpas [from the 10th to the 20th]

[The first half of the 10th antarakalpa]

- 4.4.1 The new 10th antarakalpa will come as if it was a rescuer of mankind, and the survivors will exchange looks of great delight and embrace each other.

- 4.4.2 When men begin to follow the path of virtue, planets will also follow the right path, and the rotation of seasons will become regular.
- 4.4.3 When the inner states of the mind and the outer states of the world fall into conformity and are in harmony, the Law (*dharma*) will rule over the world, and the perfect happiness of men will be realized.
- 4.4.4 The lifespan of the next generation of survivors will reach 20,000 years, and that of the following generation will reach 40,000 years. After this, the lifespan of the next generation will reach 80,000 years.
- 4.4.5 When mankind reaches the peak of its lifespan, all daughters will be married at the age of 500.
- 4.4.6 In those days, all men will have good looks, physical strength, and so on.
- 4.4.7 Then the villages in Jambudvīpa will become closer to each other and have adjacency of kukkuṭa-sampātika.
- 4.4.8 The earth will split for every defecation and later close by itself.
- 4.4.9–10 Then, all men will live in extreme comfort without suffering.
- 4.4.11 Men will have only a few inconveniences, such as the feelings of heat and cold, hunger, sexual desire, and natural aging.
- 4.4.12 Then, they will enjoy the longest life span of 80,000 years and flourish.

[The second half of the 10th antarakalpa]

- 4.4.13 Men will suffer moral degradation and will begin to lose their lifespan again.
- 4.4.14–15 Mankind will lose the dharma and begin committing the ten bad actions. People's lifespan will reach 10 years at the end of the 10th antarakalpa, and a terrible state of the world will arise again.

[From the 11th to the 20th antarakalpa, i.e., the second half of the period of duration]

- 4.4.16 As was the case in the 10th antarakalpa, mankind will have happiness in the first half period and misery in the latter half in each of the following 10 antarakalpas (from the 11th to the 20th antarakalpa).
- 4.4.17 Twenty antarakalpas of the period of duration have elapsed.

5 The Period of Destruction

5.1 *The Destruction of the Living Beings' World (sattvaloka)*

[The first 10 antarakalpas, i.e., the first half of the period of destruction]

- 5.1.1 When the first antarakalpa begins, all the survivors of the last antarakalpa will exchange looks and rejoice with hearts full of love.
- 5.1.2 In the first period of destruction, the state of happiness will continue from the beginning to the end of the antarakalpa. Because all men have friendly feelings, the outer states of the world that conform with the inner state of the mind will become very comfortable.
- 5.1.3 The lifespan of mankind will reach 80,000 years, and people will enjoy prosperity produced by love until the destruction of this receptacle-world begins.
- 5.1.4 Even all the damned beings of hell, pretas, and animals produce feelings of love and become tender of heart.
- 5.1.5 All the prisoners and the jailers in the hells underground will regret their mutual feelings of anger, and they will transmigrate to the upper worlds.
- 5.1.6 Owing to the feeling of love, all pretas and animals will also transmigrate to the human beings or to the gods.
- 5.1.7 On the basis of the teachings left behind by the Buddha, the Law (*dharma*) will rule over the world.
- 5.1.8 At that time, many secular preachers, adherents of other religions, and the Ābhāsvara gods will announce that everyone should practice the second trance (*dhyāna*).
- 5.1.9–10 In these announcements all men will hear about the faults of desire, and therefore, they will wish to practice the second trance. After death, they will transmigrate to the Ābhāsvara heaven, which is a heaven of the second trance.
- 5.1.11 One can reach the same heaven of Ābhāsvara by means of some other types of meditations besides the second trance.
- 5.1.12 All human beings will transmigrate after death to the Ābhāsvara.
- 5.1.13 All gods who are inhabitants of the eight heavens situated under the Ābhāsvara, will abandon their own abodes and come to be reborn in the Ābhāsvara.
- 5.1.14 The movement of transmigration of all living beings to the heaven of the second trance that begins at the hells and progresses through the pretas and animals up to human and divine beings, will end with the death of the Mahābrahmā at the top of the heavens of the first

trance. The Mahābrahmā alone can witness all occurrences in history from the beginning to the end of this living beings' world (*sattvaloka*).

- 5.1.15 When this "chilicosm" no longer contains living beings, the first 10 antarakalpas of the period of destruction will pass away.

5.2 Appearances of the Suns

[From the beginning of the 11th to the first half of the 12th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.1 After the disappearance of living beings, no drop of rain will fall for one and a half antarakalpa; so all plants will die.

[From the second half of the 12th to the end of the 13th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.2 At the height of the Trāyastriṃśa heaven, the second sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. All the small and medium rivers will dry up.

[From the beginning of the 14th to the first half of the 15th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.3 At the height of the Yāma heaven, the third sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. All great lakes, such as the Anavatapta, will dry up.

[From the second half of the 15th to the end of the 16th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.4 At the height of the Tuṣita heaven, the fourth sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. The seven great rivers will dry up.

[From the beginning of the 17th to the first half of the 18th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.5 At the height of the Nirmāṇarati heaven, the fifth sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. The sun will gradually evaporate the oceans.
- 5.2.6 At that time, the oceans will gradually become shallow and reveal the ocean floor.
- 5.2.7 The fact that oceans can also run dry shows us the truth that all things in this world are transient (*anitya*).
- 5.2.8 All things are not permanent (*na dhruva*).
- 5.2.9 All things are unreliable (*na āśvāsika*).
- 5.2.10 All things are momentary (*na anitvara*).
- 5.2.11 All things are fragile (*bhidura*).
- 5.2.12 All things are frail (*jarjara*) and provide no relief (*na trāṇa*).
- 5.2.13 All things provide no rest (*na layana*) and no refuge (*na śaraṇa*).

- 5.2.14 These facts show us that Saṃsāra should be renounced in disgust (*vinirvid-*).
- 5.2.15 The facts show us that we should lose all interest (*virañj-*) in the existence in Saṃsāra.

[From the second half of the 18th to the end of 19th antarakalpa]

- 5.2.16 At the height of the Paranirmitavaśavartin heaven, the sixth sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. The earth will begin to smoke.

[The 20th antarakalpa in the period of destruction]

- 5.2.17 At the height of the Brahmā heaven, the seventh sun, which is twice as large as the former, will appear and burn the lower region. The whole universe under the heavens of the second trance will burn out.
- 5.2.18 At that time, in each of a thousand universes, the seven suns will stand in a line over each of a thousand Sumerus.

5.3 *The Destruction of the Receptacle-World (bhājanaloka)*

- 5.3.1 The seven suns will cremate the body of the universe.
- 5.3.2 The earth will be consumed by fire.
- 5.3.3 The remains of the oceans will burn out.
- 5.3.4 The bright burning Sumeru will collapse completely.
- 5.3.5 By the heat of the red-glowing earth, a mass of water (= *jalamaṇḍala*) under the earth will evaporate completely.
- 5.3.6 The fire will burn itself out after it has consumed the whole receptacle-world.
- 5.3.7 From the first to the sixth sun, each sun takes the time of one and a half antarakalpa for burning, but the last (seventh) sun takes only one antarakalpa.
- 5.3.8 All seven suns will burn themselves away and cease to exist together with the world.
- 5.3.9 Just before the fire reaches the abode of the Mahābrahmā, the Mahābrahmā will die, and be reborn in the Ābhāsvara.
- 5.3.10 The abode of the Mahābrahmā will be destroyed by the fire.
- 5.3.11 The whole world called Sahā will disappear in the fire.
- 5.3.12 All 20 antarakalpas of the period of destruction will elapse.

5.4 Awakening of Disgust in Saṃsāra

- 5.4.1 Thus all the things of this world are transient (*anitya*).
- 5.4.2 All things are not permanent (*adhruva*).
- 5.4.3 All things are unreliable (*anāśvāsika*).
- 5.4.4 All things are momentary (*itvara*).
- 5.4.5 All things are fragile (*bhidura*).
- 5.4.6 All things are frail (*vjarjara*).
- 5.4.7 All things provide no relief (*na trāṇa*).
- 5.4.8 All things provide no rest (*na layana*).
- 5.4.9 All things provide no refuge (*na śaraṇa*).
- 5.4.10 Therefore, Saṃsāra should be renounced in disgust (*nirvid-*).
- 5.4.11 We should lose all interest (*virañj-*) in the existence of Saṃsāra.

6 On Various Topics

6.1 A Description of the Period of Duration of the Destruction

- 6.1.1 After the above mentioned period of destruction, a pure empty space will remain in the place where the receptacle-world ceased to exist.
- 6.1.2 During the period of duration of the destruction, the vacant state continues for 20 antarakalpas.
- 6.1.3 We must learn the Buddha's explanations for the length of time of an antarakalpa and a mahākalpa as units of time of the universe.
- 6.1.4–5 The Buddha preached the following simile: An antarakalpa is the time required to take away all the mustard seeds stored in an iron castle of 2 cubic krośas if one seed is removed every hundred years.
- 6.1.6 The length of a mahākalpa exceeds the time required to take away all the mustard seeds heaped up in a castle of one cubic yojana if one seed is removed every hundred years.
- 6.1.7 After the period of duration of the destruction, namely, after the end of a mahākalpa comprising 80 antarakalpas, the period of renovation begins again.
- 6.1.8 In every rotation of the mahākalpa, all the events of the universe are repeated in the same order.

6.2 The Way in which the Two Destructions of the World Will Occur

- 6.2.1 When the time of the destruction of the receptacle-world by water comes, all living beings will attain reincarnation in the heaven of Śubhākḥila (= Śubhakarṣna) by practicing the third trance.

- 6.2.2 Water, swollen by the appearance of seven moons, will destroy the receptacle-world.
- 6.2.3 When the time of the destruction by wind comes, all living beings will attain reincarnation in the Bṛhatphala heaven by practicing the fourth trance.
- 6.2.4 The destruction will blow up everything everywhere and destroy the receptacle-world completely. The receptacles of the earth, water, and wind will disappear with the furious vibrations of the winds.
- 6.2.5 Other worlds will also perish in the same way as this Sahā world. The words of the Buddha—that all the things of the world are transient—are an eternal truth.

6.3 *An Explanation of the Meaning of the Truth*

- 6.3.1 The Buddha's sermon on karma rebutted the assertions of heretics regarding the beginning of the universe, namely ahetu-vāda, śiva-vāda, and sadāstivāda.
- 6.3.2 The Buddha's sermon on the three cosmic destructions by fire, water, and wind rebutted the assertions of heretics regarding the events in the future of the universe.
- 6.3.3 The Buddha's sermon on the activities of fire, water, wind, and so on, rebutted the Ucchedavādins, who asserted that nothing exists (*nāsti*).
- 6.3.4 The Buddha taught about the Truth of duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, and mārga and indicated the stage of darśanamārga to cut the kleśas of darśanaheya.
- 6.3.5 The Buddha indicated the stage of bhāvanāmārga to cut the kleśas of bhāvanāheya, and furthermore, the stage of Aśaikṣa to cut all the kleśas completely.
- 6.3.6 Disciples should listen to the Buddha's words and follow the path of the above mentioned three stages. It is not difficult for earnest ones to attain the final goal.

6.4 *Passage of the Eras (parvan) of the Patriarchs (guru)*

- 6.4.1–5 A series of wonderful events occurred as the Buddha finished this discourse (kathā).
- 6.4.6–7 The Buddha continued to teach until his death.
- 6.4.8–11 The funeral of the Buddha took place amidst deep grief of all human beings.
- 6.4.12 The Buddha left behind his bodily relics.

- 6.4.13 After the death of the Buddha many evil people appeared.
- 6.4.14 In order to check them, monks assembled councils (*saṃgīti*).
- 6.4.15 On the basis of the right tradition fixed by the councils, the author composed this discourse (*kathā*) for the benefit of the world.
- 6.4.16 The author said that all merits of this work must be attributed to the Buddha and all the faults to the author.
- 6.4.17 The author mentions that his ambition is to know all truths and to share them with people.

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