The techniques of organization found in the pedagogical commentaries of the reform era are complemented by those of the new handbooks composed during the period. Many of these handbooks differ from the earlier condensations of Buddhist doctrine and practice in that they can be defined more precisely as anthologies, that is, they cut, rearrange and weave together passages mostly from the commentaries in order to create new formulations of Buddhist thought more suited to the monastic community’s changed circumstances. The creation of anthologies involved also the development of new philological practices of compilation, including, for instance, the creation of contents lists, detailed referencing and forms of bibliography. This need for textual control not only related to the educational function of these works but also, this chapter argues, to the desire for concise, comprehensive and efficient charters for Buddhist practice in an age of foreseen civilizational collapse.

In one sense, an intellectual tendency towards condensation and encyclopedism has been ever-present in Buddhist thought, even in the earliest Pali literature. The Buddha of the Suttas, for instance, often favoured explaining his doctrine using numerical lists, such as the four noble truths or noble eight-fold path. These mnemonic lists were then systematized and consolidated in the conceptual matrices (mātikā) of the Abhidhamma. In the Khuddaka Nikāya of the Suttapiṭaka we also find early anthologies of teachings, such as the Khuddakapāṭha (‘Short recitation’), in which different discourses of the Pali canon were collected and rearranged. The first evidence of the handbook as a distinct genre, however, can be traced to the fourth or fifth century. Buddhaghosa composed the Visuddhimagga (‘Path of purification’), which, to some extent, summarizes the ideas contained in his commentaries on the Suttapiṭaka. After Buddhaghosa we then find Buddhadatta’s two primers for the Vinaya and two more for the Abhidhamma. We also know of a
few handbooks composed in the second half of the first millennium, such as Dhammasiri’s fifth- or sixth-century Khuddasikkhā (‘Minor rules’) and the post-fifth-century (?) Saccasaṅkhepa (‘Summary of truth’).6

The reform era witnessed increased interest in the study and composition of handbooks. Scholar-monks wrote new Pali and Sinhala commentaries for older works, as discussed in the previous chapter, and translated early handbooks into Sinhala too. The most striking formal innovation during the period, however, was the creation of anthologies of Buddhist doctrine and practice.7 One new anthology in particular stands out for its unique scope. The Sārasaṅgaha (‘Compendium of the essence’), composed in the late thirteenth century by a monk known as Siddhattha,8 was the first work in Pali history that attempted to collate in a single text information from the three baskets of the canon and its commentaries that Siddhattha deemed essential (sāra) for happiness and well-being.9 Siddhattha’s work, then, provides us with a unique insight into the ways in which monastic elites were using their Pali textual tradition in practice and how new techniques of compilation enabled them to innovate in representing the religious outlook of their canon and its commentaries.10

The ‘essence’ of Buddhism for Siddhattha, in this regard, focuses almost exclusively on what Melford Spiro called ‘kammatic’ Buddhism, that is, the accrual of merit and better rebirth, not necessarily to the exclusion of nirvana as a soteriological goal, but certainly as part of an awareness of the ever-tightening karmic limits on human effort.11 Siddhattha’s soteriology calls into question a common sociological assumption in Buddhist history that such a shift in emphasis towards kammatic practices primarily developed to accommodate the laity as part of the emergence of Buddhism as a cultural religion of the masses.12 The Sārasaṅgaha shows us, however, that the shift in orientation towards karma and rebirth may not have been solely a result of popular diffusion but was simultaneously a form of Buddhist life cultivated at the very heart of elite intellectual culture. The increased emphasis on kammatic practices that we see, at least in the Sārasaṅgaha, was rather likely a response to the social and political chaos of the era; a conscious decision by elites to involve themselves more intensely with the karmic conditions that shaped their lives.

6.1. Embattled Encyclopedists

It is difficult to define the term saṅgaha (lit. ‘gathering together’) since it can refer to a variety of different types of compendia. Early handbooks, such as
the aforementioned treatises of Buddhadatta and those of Anuruddha, discussed in the previous chapter, summarize the meaning (attha) of either the Abhidhamma or Vinaya in a new composition. Most of the handbooks of the reform era differ, however, in that four of them, namely, Sāriputta’s Vinayas-aṅgaha (‘Compendium of the Discipline’), Ānanda’s Upāsakajanālaṅkāra (‘Ornament of lay followers’), Siddhattha’s Sārasaṅgaha, and the Bhesajjamañjūsā (‘Casket of medicine’), can be thought of as anthologies, since they compile material largely excised from the canon and its commentarial tradition or, in the case of the Bhesajjamañjūsā, other Sanskrit medical works. These anthologies are more encyclopedic in nature in that, rather than summarizing a single basket of the canon, they attempt to consolidate and organize a diverse array of canonical and commentarial material that the tradition had produced over more than a thousand years. Ānanda acknowledges and celebrates the broad scope of his source material in his opening, stating that ‘craftsmen make the best crown with gems coming from several mines’. Siddhattha similarly boasts in his colophon of memorizing 100,000 books, though frames this goal in terms of his desire to protect his scriptural tradition.

This interest in encyclopedism in reform-era Sri Lanka mirrors to some degree contemporary developments in Sanskrit literature throughout South Asia. The early second millennium, for instance, witnessed the first digests of Hindu Dharma (nibandha), Jain manuals of lay conduct (śrāvakācāra) and also the earliest anthology of Sanskrit court poetry. Sri Lanka played an important but little recognized role in this development and monks on the island wrote the earliest known Sanskrit grammatical handbook as well as the first Sanskrit digest of astronomy and astrology. Sheldon Pollock has speculated that the production of digests of Hindu Dharma, in particular, may be connected with the Turkic invasions of North India, noting that ‘totalizing conceptualizations of society became possible only by juxtaposition with alternative lifeworlds’, and that, ‘they became necessary only at the moment when the total form of the society was for the first time believed, by the privileged theorists of society, to be threatened’.

Setting aside possible objections to the specifics of his historical analysis, Pollock’s general observation concerning the connection between encyclopedism and perceived threats to the social order may be useful for thinking about the creative influence of the reform era’s chaotic political environment, described in part one of this book. Many of the authors of these reform-era handbooks were responding to social and political changes that often had directly impacted their lives. We learn from the colophon to the Upāsakajanālaṅkāra, for instance, that Ānanda composed his work in exile in Pāṇḍya country in South India. Remembering the events that had caused him to flee to South India, he writes that:
When the whole island of Lanka was destabilized (samākula) by the fire of the Damilas, in order to protect themselves for the future growth of the teaching, the elders came and resided there. They were like banners [to the island of] Tambapâṇi, always abiding in the pasture land of the true Doctrine, preserving the tradition.22

It is likely that Ānanda here was referring to the rule of the anti-Buddhist Kâlîṅga king Mâgha (1215–36), who having invaded Sri Lanka with an army of South Indian mercenaries remained a destructive force in Buddhist politics until his death in 1255.23 These political events radically altered Ānanda’s social environment and in the opening of his work he states that he composed the treatise for those he describes as ‘people who recently became pious’ (abhinava-sādhujana), likely pointing to the fact that his benefactors in Pâṇḍya country had only latterly begun to favour his Buddhist tradition. He explains too that the expanded scope of his work was suitable for these newcomers (abhinavāvatāri) who were not satisfied with an older work on lay conduct, the Paṭipattisaṅgaha (‘Compendium of conduct’).24 Ānanda is explicit then that his encyclopedic concerns were inspired by existential threats to his religious community and the perceived need to protect and transmit his religious heritage in a new social environment.

Our author Siddhattha, unlike Ānanda, never directly addresses his specific social circumstances, though we know that the upheaval Ānanda experienced persisted late into the thirteenth century. The colophon to the Sārasaṅgaha states that Siddhattha was the governor (pati) of the Dakkhiṇārâma monastery, a temple possibly located in Poḷonnaruva, and that he was the last pupil of his teacher, Buddhappiya.25 We can tentatively identify this Buddhappiya with the thirteenth-century scholar-monk who composed the Pajjamadhu (‘Nectar of verse’), an ornate, devotional poem to the Buddha. We know that other pupils of Buddhappiya, such as Vedeha, author of the Rasavāhinī (‘Stream of aesthetic moods’), likely wrote during the reign of Parâkramabâhu II (1236–70) and it is reasonable to think that Siddhattha was also active towards the end of his rule, if not shortly after.26

The relatively long reign of Parâkramabâhu II and its eulogistic portrayal in the Cūḷavaṃsa (‘Little history’) masks the fact that his beleaguered rule was marred by continuous wars with foreign invaders, in particular Mâgha, who we discussed above, the ascendant Pâṇḍya kings, Sundara Pâṇḍya (a. 1251) and Vîra Pâṇḍya (a. 1253/4), who record military victories in Sri Lanka between 1258–63, and the Javanese king Candrabhânu, who invaded twice in 1247 and 1261. Such was Parâkramabâhu II’s frailty that his forces were only able to enter Poḷonnaruva in 1262, twenty-six years after his coronation, as a result of a fragile peace brokered by Vîra Pâṇḍya, who, having killed
Candrabhānu alongside Parākramabāhu’s forces, reinstated Candrabhānu’s son to maintain a fragmented political landscape on the island advantageous to his South Indian kingdom.  

Ensconced for much of his reign on the rocky outcrop of Daṁbadeṇiya situated 150 kilometres southwest of Poḷonnaruva, Parākramabāhu II’s struggle to protect and preserve his power in a small fortress mirrors somewhat the battle of Siddhattha, our reform-era archivist, who was intent on protecting the essence of his religion from destruction and decline. These events, we can speculate, may have fuelled Siddhattha’s karmic and eschatological interests. The first twelve chapters of his work, for instance, broadly focus on buddhas, in particular, future buddhas, the Dhamma and Saṅgha as objects of devotion and sources of merit, with a particular interest in their ritual veneration. After three short chapters dealing with morality, meditation and nirvana, perhaps consciously echoing the arrangement of Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga* (‘Path of purification’), Siddhattha attends solely to issues of karma and rebirth. He describes in chapters sixteen to twenty-four different types of karma and their consequences and continues in chapters twenty-five to thirty-four to categorize the various living beings in the universe and the different types of rebirth possible. He concludes his work with six detailed chapters describing the life-cycle and physical attributes of the universe.  

G.P. Malalasekera wrote with some bemusement about the work’s focus that, it is ‘a curious medley of matter of diverse interest, jumbled together anyhow, with no attempt at arrangement.’ We do not, however, need to assume, like Malalasekera, that the work had been ‘tampered with by later editors’ to account for its karmic and eschatological interests. Siddhattha’s focus can make sense if we view it as a hopeful response to his political circumstances, one that saw in the chaos of his era signs and portents of a new buddha age in the distant future. As Steven Collins once noted, ‘just as one can be sure that knowledge of the truth will fade so one can (now, in the present) be reassured that someday – even if theoretically very far distant – there will be Buddhas to rediscover it’. It is relevant in this respect that in his colophon Siddhattha explicitly declares that he desired to become a bodhisattva himself, that is, a buddha-to-be, and, in comparing his own path with the previous lives of Gotama Buddha, dedicates the merit accrued in writing the work to his fulfilment of the ten perfections of a bodhisattva:  

… with this merit, in birth after birth until enlightenment,  
having fulfilled all perfections – that is, by giving like Sasarāja,  
being moral like Saṅkhapāla, in renouncing like Hatthipāla,  
being wise like Sānaka, having energy like king Janaka,  
by being patient like Khantivāda, truthful like Sutasoma,
determined like Mūgapakkha, by being kind like Ekarāja, and having equanimity like Lomahaṃsa – may I obtain the ultimate, perfect enlightenment and teach the immaculate four truths to all living beings.\(^{34}\)

Siddhattha is but one of a number of scholar-monks in the reform era who primarily aspired to buddhahood or at least better rebirths instead of nirvana.\(^{35}\) This shift in attention away from nirvana to the attainment of a remote and distant buddhahood involved, perhaps paradoxically, an intensified engagement with the world, since it was the main task of a bodhisattva to accumulate vast merit capable of producing a birth in which buddhahood is possible.\(^{36}\) We can possibly view the spread of the bodhisattva ideal among elites during the reform era as a lingering residue of the esoteric Buddhist practices cultivated, in particular, when the Abhayagiri was at the height of its powers before the tenth century.\(^{37}\) Yet there is only so far that such external contact can be used as a total explanation for cultural change. For whether or not the bodhisattva path as imagined by the Mahāvihāra developed, even in part, due to attraction or rivalry with the previous era’s Mahayana and Tantric practices, it is clear from reform-era writings that the pursuit of buddhahood was a genuine response to the chaos of the reform period and that Mahāvihāran monks created a conceptual framework for this path from within their own Pali tradition.

6.2. Authority, Control and the Art of the Anthology

We have already seen in the preceding chapters how the intertwined exigen-
cies of staving off religious decline and establishing monastic unification had brought about a new systematicity in the way the Saṅgha handled its scriptural tradition. The anthologists, in this regard, shared the same desire for systematicity, concision and comprehensiveness as the reform-era commentators, indicated in particular by the word sāra (‘essence’) found in the title of Siddhattha’s Sārasaṅgaha, or ‘Sārattha’-saṅgaha (‘essential meaning’) as attested by later tradition;\(^{38}\) a word which, as discussed in chapter five, denotes both semantic totality and also compact utility.\(^{39}\)

Like the commentators, the anthologists employed new philological approaches to recover and control this essence. One such technique that became pervasive in reform-era works was the introduction of a contents list at the beginning of each handbook, often referred to as a mātikā (‘matrix’), providing the chapter divisions of the work. Prior to the reform era, the only handbook to include such a list was Dhammasiri’s fifth- or sixth-century Khuddasikkhā.\(^{40}\) There is no other evidence, as far as I am aware, of the
use of a contents list in works contemporary with Dhammasiri, even in Sanskrit, and this possibly represents the first use of such a metatextual device in South Asian intellectual history. The list re-emerges in Sāriputta’s *Vinayaśaṅgaha* and can be found in the other anthologies of the era, including the *Sārasaṅgaha*, the *Upāsakajanālāṅkāra*, the *Bhesajjamañjūsā* and the *Daivajñakāmadhenu* (‘Wish-fulfilling cow of divine insight’). The device also emerges outside of the Sri Lankan tradition in contemporary twelfth-century works, such as the *Kṛtyakalpataru* (‘Wish-fulfilling tree of rites’), a manual of *Dharmaśāstra* or Hindu law, though it is referred to there as the ‘introduction’ (*pratijñā*).  

The term *mātikā* has a long history in Buddhist thought. It refers most commonly to the lists of phenomena that were derived from the Suttas and systematized in the Abhidhamma. These lists of entities, sometimes referred to also as *uddesa* (‘topics’), begin certain Abhidhamma texts, such as the *Vibhaṅga* (‘Analysis’), and are then explained at length in the so-called *niddesa* (‘explication’) section. Even in certain Suttas, such as the *Bhaddekaratta Sutta* (‘One fortunate attachment’), the Buddha explicitly separates his discourse into an initial summary (*uddesa*) followed by an extended explanation (*vibhaṅga*). Commenting on this Sutta, Buddhaghosa defines *uddesa* simply as *mātikā*. Writing sometime after the seventh century, Dhammapāla adds here that, ‘He (Buddhaghosa) uses [the word] *mātikā* as it (i.e. the ‘summary’) is like a mother (*mātā*) since it is engaged in producing words of explication (*niddesapada*).  

The exegetical character of the early *mātikā* continues in the commentarial tradition in the form of exegetical schemas (also called *mātikā*) used to guide commentarial analysis, as discussed in the previous chapter. There is a clear conceptual continuity, then, throughout the tradition’s history in the productive and exegetical function of these lists. In the reform-era handbooks, however, we begin to see a subtle shift in the perceived role played by these schemas. Sāriputta, for instance, when defining the term *mātikā* used to introduce the contents list of his Vinaya handbook, differs from previous tradition by explicitly stating that this schema serves as a ‘finding device’ in that it enables those searching for a particular disciplinary judgement to find it easily and thus remove their doubts (*kaṅkhā*). It is perhaps for this reason that the contents lists of the anthologies were more elaborate than the exegetical schemas of the commentaries. See, for instance, the contents list of Siddhattha’s *Sārasaṅgaha*:

This here is the contents list (*mātikā*):

(1) The resolve of buddhas, etc.; (2) the marvellous deeds of the teacher;
(3) the five disappearances; (4) defining a Wheel-Turning monarch;
characterizing the shrines of buddhas and Wheel-Turning monarchs; (6) the benefits of sweeping [a shrine]; (7) the marvel of the Dhamma; (8), the marvel of the Saṅgha; (9) defining sleep; (10) explaining dreams; (11) exchanging things belonging to the Buddha and Dhamma; (12) types of refuge; (13) types of morals; (14) meditation; (15) nirvana (anālaya); (16) disrespecting the [three] jewels; (17) defining the types of karma; (18) karma with immediate [consequences]; (19) defining false views; (20) the karma of finding fault with the noble; (21) the danger of deceit; (22) types of envy; (23) characterising the three-fold fire; (24) meritorious karma, such as, giving; (25) specifying the nutriments of living things; (26) types of reproductive structure of living things; (27) exchanging male and female genders; (28) types of women; (29) types of eunuch (paṇḍaka); (30) types of dragons; (31) types of snakes; (32) types of ghost; (33) types of demigod; (34) types of god; (35) the evolution of the earth; (36) earthquakes; (37) explaining rain and wind, etc.; (38) miscellaneous discussions; (39) extraordinary powers; (40) the form of the world.⁴⁹

These contents lists usually give the book’s chapters in order and are often composed in verse, presumably to facilitate memorization. Handbooks, like the Sārasaṅgaha, clearly demarcate the beginning and end of each chapter by citing the name of the topic as given in the contents list. Echoing older textual models, Siddhattha presents each chapter, at least at the outset, as an exegesis on the wording of the topic given in the contents. This all helps bind the work’s content to its organizational structure and allows the reader to browse topics of interest more easily.

Another complementary innovation that we find in the anthologies of the reform era is that authors provide detailed information about the works used as source material. Unlike older commentaries and handbooks, for instance, there is an increasing tendency in works such as the Sārasaṅgaha and, to a lesser extent, the Upāsakajanālaṅkāra, to cite with great specificity the authoritative source for a particular passage or quotation.⁵⁰ While Siddhattha usually provides the name of his source immediately after citing a particular text, on occasion he also innovatively chooses to provide a list of the sources he has used at the very end of a longer passage or chapter in the form of a bibliography. This enables him to seamlessly weave his disparate source material together without interruption. We can speculate that this strategy also allowed him to mask the fact that some passages in his work cannot be traced to any of the texts that he cites as sources.⁵¹ The occasional preference for endnotes rather than in-text citations is most pronounced in his final discussion of cosmology (lokaṭṭhiti)
where the entire chapter is appended with a long list of authoritative sources, the beginning of which is as follows:

In this chapter, then: (1) the mode of destroying and establishing an eon (kappa) due to three causes is taken from the Aggañña Sutta (‘What is primary’) in the Dīgha Nikāya and the Visuddhimagga; (2) how the seat of awakening (bodhimanda) is established is mentioned in the commentary on the Mahāpadāna Sutta (‘Great lineage’) in the Dīgha Nikāya; (3) the two-fold division of an established eon as either ‘empty’ or ‘not empty’ is mentioned in the commentary on the history of Padumuttara Buddha in the Buddhavamsa (‘History of the buddhas’); (4) the analysis (vibhāga) of the size and motion of the moon and sun is mentioned in the commentary on the Aggañña Sutta, etc.; (5) the seizing [of the sun] by Rāhu (i.e. an eclipse), furthermore, is mentioned in the commentary on the Devaputtasamyutta in the Sānyutta Nikāya ...

Chiara Neri in a recent pioneering study has pointed to a couple of passages in the Sārasaṅgaha where Siddhattha explains the purpose of such detailed referencing. Early on in his work he specifically asks the question, ‘What is the purpose in saying “this here is stated in such and such a source (ṭhāna)”?’ Siddhattha’s answer indicates that he was concerned primarily with the legitimacy and credibility of his sources, in particular the authoritative status of his commentarial material, which by far represents the main source of information for his handbook.

He first paraphrases a discussion found in Sāriputta’s Vinaya subcommentary, already discussed in our previous chapter, where commentaries are referred to as the ‘miscellaneous teachings’ (pakkinnakadesanā) of the Buddha himself since ‘only the perfectly enlightened one uttered the method (kkama) of commenting on the meaning of the three baskets’. He continues, ‘only the miscellaneous teachings that were initiated by the Buddha here and there are called a commentary (aṭṭhakathā). More generally, however, in some cases they are called a commentary (aṭṭhakathā) and in others a subcommentary (ṭīkā).’ Siddhattha, then, differs from Sāriputta by including here even the subcommentaries as ‘teachings initiated by the Buddha’ and it is noteworthy that he also cites doctrinal handbooks in his anthology, further indicating that these works were now treated as commentaries. Siddhattha viewed his sources as part of a tradition established by the Buddha and our anthologist concludes that, ‘therefore when a source is specified the wise understand this well’.

These references, according to Siddhattha, were not only provided to lend authority to his work but served a practical purpose in that they could act as a guide for students who wished to study a topic in more detail. He writes at
the end of his thirty-eighth chapter, to quote Chiara Neri’s translation, that ‘it is necessary to refer back [to the quoted texts] continually so as to understand the true essence (sāra) [of these teachings] and furthermore to understand the essence [of the teachings] not explained here’. To this end, the references in the Sārasaṅgaha act as a further matrix that orients and organizes the reader’s systematic investigation of the Pali textual tradition as a whole. The effect of this ‘binding back’ into his sprawling textual heritage is that, through the lens of the anthology, the canon and its commentaries appear organized and coherent and can be studied as such. By shifting the framework in which the Pali textual tradition is analysed, Siddhattha, with the aim of conserving the tradition of the Mahāvihāra, is able to innovate in the way he represents the essence of his tradition and can provide a creative reading of this material to accommodate the interests of his contemporary monastic community.

6.3. Buddhology, Eschatology and Immanence

We can better appreciate the creativity inherent in the practice of compilation by exploring in more detail the emphasis the Sārasaṅgaha places on Buddhology, eschatology and karma, characterized, in particular, by the cultivation of merit and the pursuit of better rebirths. This reformulation of what was thought to be essential in the Buddha’s teachings represented a marked shift from the earliest tradition. Siddhattha, for instance, spends a good forty-three pages in the Pali Text Society edition discussing the ‘form of the world’ and only one-and-a-half on the topic of nirvana. Rather than viewing these topics as a ‘curious medley’ with little connection to one another, it is possible by exploring how Siddhattha knits together in his anthology diverse topics, such as the portents of dreams and the cleaning of shrines, to discern how they form part of a coherent religious orientation.

The work’s fundamental concern with the bodhisattva path is apparent at the outset where it begins with a chapter dedicated to the formal ‘undertaking’ (abhinīhāra) of buddhahood, that is, the resolution one makes to become a buddha when entering the bodhisattva path. Excised almost exclusively from the opening or nidāna to the commentary on the Khaggavisāṇa Sutta (‘Rhinoceros horn’), Siddhattha includes detailed descriptions of the length of time needed to achieve buddhahood, the eight prerequisites needed to make such an undertaking, as well as details on when and how a buddha arises in the world. He includes, for instance, information that buddhahood takes a minimum of ‘four incalculables and one hundred thousand eons’ to achieve and that to make a formal aspiration to buddhahood one must be a human, a male, a renunciate, have the capacity to achieve Arahatship, possess excellent
qualities, have performed exceptional deeds of self-sacrifice, harbour the strong desire to achieve the goal and, importantly, make one’s formal aspiration only after having personally seen a buddha.

This commentarial introduction originally served to contextualize the commentator’s subsequent discussions on the nature of a pacceka-buddha (‘solitary buddha’), so-called because these buddhas do not teach others and live, supposedly like rhinoceroses, as solitary ascetics. Siddhattha, however, skilfully excises key passages from the commentary and uses them as a source to teach the doctrinal technicalities and prerequisites of making an aspiration to pursue buddhahood.60

We can detect a concern in Siddhattha’s work also for information on how one can gain certainty that buddhahood will be obtained. It is in this light that we can understand the two chapters in the first quarter of his work concerning sleep (niddā) and dreams (supina).61 He shows an interest in explanations of how we dream as well as the types of dream one can have, in particular prognosticatory dreams (pubbanimittabhūta).62 These dreams are further classified by the level of truth (sacca) that one can derive from such visions. The omens from prognosticatory dreams, for instance, are regarded by the commentarial tradition as entirely true (ekantasacca).63 Siddhattha’s main concern in his chapter are the five great dreams (mahāsupina) that a bodhisatta sees in his last birth before enlightenment. G.P. Malalasekera summarizes them as follows:

(i) that the world is his couch with the Himalaya as his pillow, his left hand resting on the eastern sea, his right on the western and his feet on the southern; (ii) that a blade of tiriyā (kusa) grass, growing from his navel touches the clouds; (iii) that white worms with black heads creep up from his feet, covering his knees; (iv) that four birds of varied hues from the four quarters of the world fall at his feet and become white; and (v) that he walks to and fro on a heap of dung, by which he remains unsullied.64

His concern for prognosticatory signs extends to cosmological portents and their relationship with the fate of his Buddhist tradition (sāsana). This is most evident in the prominent place Siddhattha assigns in his work to the so-called ‘five disappearances’ (pañca-antaradhāna), discussed in chapter three, that are said to characterize the inevitable decline and destruction of Buddhism, namely the gradual disappearance of realization, practice, scripture, monastic signs and relics.65 Siddhattha’s discussion of this topic is based largely on Buddhaghosa’s prophecy in his Aṅguttara Nikāya commentary concerning the decline of the Buddhist tradition over the course of 5,000 years
after the Buddha’s death. This decline, Buddhaghosa writes, is ultimately brought about by the disappearance of scriptural knowledge due to kings whose immorality (adhammika) causes the rain gods to create a drought. This results in famine and the ultimate loss of religious patronage due to the impoverishment of society.

Siddhattha further cites in the chapter a number of other commentarial accounts of religious decline, focusing in particular on the diminishing scope of religious attainments possible in each age. In the most pessimistic but widely cited of these accounts, the commentator on the Vinaya states that the first 1,000 years after the Buddha’s death will mark the end of the attainment of the so-called ‘analytical insights’ (paṭisambhidā) and that after the second 1,000 years monks will lose the possibility of ‘dry insight’ (sukkhavipassana) and, seemingly, of enlightenment itself. The remaining 3,000 years witness the disappearance, in turn, of becoming a ‘non returner’ who is spontaneously reborn in the realm of form, a ‘once returner’ who has one life left, and finally a ‘stream enterer’ who has entered onto the path of enlightenment.

There is a connection in Buddhist eschatology between the decline of the Dhamma, the destruction of the cosmos as a whole and the appearance of buddhas. Siddhattha writes at length about cosmic decline and he dedicates the final and longest chapter in the work to a detailed description of the cosmos, its creation, maintenance and eventual destruction. There, he quotes Buddhaghosa’s Visuddhimagga and describes the three ways the universe can be destroyed, either by fire, water or wind. With respect to fire, for instance, he describes the future appearance of seven suns that will eventually destroy the universe in an apocalyptic inferno, ‘leaving no ash like a flame burning ghee and oil’.

The Buddha’s relationship to this universe is characterized as a three-fold ‘Buddha field’ (buddhakhetta), divided into his ‘field of birth’ (jātikhetta), ‘field of influence’ (āṇākhetta) and ‘field of scope’ (visayakhetta). His ‘field of birth’ extends to the 10,000 world-systems (cakkavāḷa) that shook upon his entrance into his mother’s womb. His ‘field of influence’, defined as the scope of the power of certain protective Suttas (paritta), further extends to 100,000 myriad world-systems. Finally, his ‘field of scope’, that is, the scope of his omniscience, is boundless and has no spatial limit. It is the end of the Buddha’s ‘field of influence’, Buddhaghosa writes, that brings about the destruction of the 10,000 world systems that constitute his ‘field of birth’ and the world as we know it. The root cause of this destruction is said to be the accumulation of the so-called ‘three fires’, namely, greed (rāga), hatred (dosa) and delusion (moha).

Implicit in the stages of religious decline set out in the ‘five disappearances’ is a steady transition from religious transcendence to immanence.
the possibility of transcendent enlightenment and other realizations (adhipama)
has been lost along with doctrine (pariyatti) and correct practice (patipatti), we
are left with only the outward, worldly signs (liṅga) of the religious tradition –
those who look like monks, for instance, despite being morally corrupt – and,
finally, also the Buddha’s relics (dhātu). It is perhaps owing to his eschatolog-
ical interests, then, that Siddhattha places such emphasis on relic worship. In a
detailed description of the types of relics and the benefits of worshipping them in
chapter five, Siddhattha cites the Buddha’s statement in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (‘Great passing’) that, ‘Whoever, Ānanda, wanders visiting shrines and
dies with a serene (pasanna) mind will, after the break-up of the body at death,
be reborn in a good destiny, a heavenly world.’ Siddhattha then immediately
quotes Buddhaghosa’s explanation:

Here, **wanders visiting shrines** means those who, so far, wander
(āhiṇḍati), i.e. roam (vicareati), here and there sweeping a shrine’s court-
yard, washing its seats and watering the Bodhi tree. These need no explana-
tion. [The Buddha] reveals that those possessed of a serene heart, even if
they die having set out with the intention, ‘we will worship the shrine at
such and such a monastery’, will in fact immediately reappear in heaven.

He explains here a stipulation that was originally about making pilgrimages
to shrines in terms that instead emphasize their maintenance. Of the ritual acts
mentioned, the sweeping of a shrine in particular appears to have captured the
monastic imagination in the reform era. Siddhattha devotes an entire chapter
to the topic including a passage in the Vinaya dedicated to the five benefits of
sweeping and its commentarial explanation. The passage states, ‘there are
five benefits in sweeping: one pleases (pasīdati) one’s own mind, one pleases
the mind of another, deities become delighted, one accumulates merit that
leads to what is pleasing (pasādika), and, after the break-up of the body, that
is, after death, one is reborn in a good destiny, a heavenly world’. We can see from the Buddha’s statement in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta
and from this Vinaya passage that even in the very earliest tradition the reli-
gious importance of shrines and their associated ritual acts lay in their role as
emotional stimulants, in particular their ability to bring about pleasing feel-
ings. The words used here are the verb pasīdati (pa + sad, Sk. pra + sad), its
nominal derivative pasāda or its past participle pasanna. It literally means to
be ‘bright’ or ‘pleased’ but it is also used in the sense of gaining peace, clarity
and confidence. Summarizing well the wide semantic range of the word, Edith
Ludowyk-Gyömröi wrote that it refers to ‘a mental attitude which unites deep
feeling, intellectual appreciation and satisfaction, clarification of thought and
attraction toward the teacher’.
Throughout his work but in particular when discussing the ‘marvels’ (acchariya) of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha in his opening chapters, Siddhāṭṭha emphasizes the role of these devotional objects in inspiring among Buddhist devotees this feeling of ‘serene joy’, as Kevin Trainor succinctly renders the term.80 These are not passive aesthetic objects, rather they are described as agents inculturating pasāda among devotees: the Buddha is a ‘conveyor’ (āvaha) of this emotion, the Dhamma actively ‘pleases’ (pasīdati) and monks are ‘stimulators’ (saṃvaddhaka) of pasāda.81 Even in the earliest tradition this emotion is highlighted as an important karmic condition for bringing about a heavenly rebirth and even buddhahood itself. The enacting of wholesome karma through relic worship was traditionally always tied to the arising of the emotion, for, as Jonathan Walters states, ‘such mental pleasure constitutes the operative element of meritorious karma, good actions being efficacious to the extent that they are performed with delight …’.82 A soteriology centred on devotion, then, was primarily focused on finding ways to cultivate in oneself and others this serene joy since, throughout the tradition’s history, it was this emotion that was a primary means of karmic transformation.

This fact is underlined by a charming story from Buddhaghosa’s Majjhima Nikāya commentary that Siddhattha relates at the end of his chapter on the marvel of the Saṅgha, where an owl comes to worship the Buddha, bowing its head and folding its wings together in reverence. The Buddha smiles and declares that ‘having cultivated serene joy (pasādetvā) in his heart with respect to me and the unsurpassed monastic community, he will not go to a bad rebirth for 100,000 eons. Having left the realm of the gods, impelled by a virtuous beginning (mūla), he will become an omniscient buddha named Somanassa.’83 The prominence given to such stories reflects Siddhattha’s soteriological interest in the transformative capacity of serene joy as one of the most potent means by which he could escape the chaos of his social and political circumstances and ensure a heavenly rebirth or perhaps even buddhahood in the distant future.

6.4. The Cult of the Book and Monastic Property

The widespread eschatological concerns and increasing popularity of the bodhisattva path among high status intellectuals must have rebalanced the social order by shifting the collective aim of a good number of monastic elites towards rebirth-orientated practices, in particular the cultivation of favourable emotions using the island’s aesthetically-charged relics and other pleasing traces of Gotama Buddha’s dispensation.84 The danger, however, of shifting religious hierarchies around the immanent power of the Buddha, as embodied
in his shrines in particular, is that it made the monastic elite more vulnerable to competition from other religious groups since it could allow the concentration of elite monastic power to weaken through the loss of control and possible proliferation of relics. Such a concern is evident in Siddhattha’s handling of one of the reform era’s most striking developments in ritual practice, namely the acceptance of scriptural texts as Buddha relics.

Prior to tenth century, relic worship had been particularly prominent in the royalty-favoured Abhayagiri fraternity, as a result, perhaps, of the court’s interest in their apotropaic power. After the unification of 1165 there is evidence that certain ritual practices found originally in the Abhayagiri appear to have continued within the Mahāvihāra, the most prominent of which was the practice of depositing scriptural texts in shrines and worshipping them as relics of the Buddha. Gregory Schopen famously referred to this long-standing practice among Mahayana and Tantric Buddhists as the ‘cult of the book’. From at least the second century, as Daniel Boucher has described, we find Sanskrit inscriptions of short sūtras describing the Buddhist doctrine of dependent co-arising (pratītyasamutpāda, P. paṭiccasamuppāda) etched on reliquaries (stūpa) in India and Central Asia. We also find, from around the sixth century until the twelfth, variations on the following Sanskrit verse summarizing the doctrine of dependent co-arising deposited as a relic itself often etched on clay tablets inside reliquaries:

ye dharma hetuprabhava hetum teṣāṃ tathāgato hy avadat
teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ.

The Buddha spoke of the cause of those dhammas that arise from a cause and the cessation of them. The great renunciate has taught this much. The worship of scripture as a relic of the Buddha was based in part on the ancient identification of the Buddha with his teachings as reflected in scriptural statements found also in the Pali canon, such as, ‘One who sees the Dhamma, Vakkali, sees me; one who sees me, sees the Dhamma.’ As the central doctrine of Buddhist thought, dependent co-arising was regarded by the earliest tradition as the epitome of the Buddha’s teachings. Developing on the perceived identity between the Buddha and his doctrine, early Mahayana sūtras explicitly equate the doctrine of dependent co-arising with the Buddha himself. In the Śālistamba Sūtra (‘Rice stalk’) the bodhisattva Maitreya addresses Śāriputra as follows: ‘He, monks, who sees dependent co-arising sees the Dharma; he who sees the Dharma sees the Buddha.’ It is not difficult to see, then, how scripture began to be treated as a relic equivalent to the
Buddha’s body. The middle of the first millennium further witnessed a parallel development where these textual formulas became increasingly cryptic and were deposited as relics in the form of dhāraṇīs, that is, ‘coded systems of the Buddha’s speech’ often consisting of ritualized symbols sometimes in the form of mantras. These mantras served in Tantric soteriology to expedite religious attainments and also as apotropaic spells for karmic protection.92

The Pali tradition in Sri Lanka by contrast remained for much of its history remarkably ambivalent about such ritual practices.93 This is not to say that the ‘cult of the book’ was not found in Sri Lanka. In fact there is some evidence that the ritual use of Sanskrit texts, incised as inscriptions or deposited as relics, was not uncommon on the island.94 While we can conventionally speak of these as evidence of Mahayana or Tantric Buddhism in Sri Lanka, the boundaries between Buddhist traditions are much harder to differentiate in practice. We have already discussed in chapter one that the Abhayagiri fraternity, in particular, embraced Tantric Buddhist practices, including the enshrining of protective dhāraṇīs. One dhāraṇī dating to around the ninth century is especially interesting since it was inscribed on six tablets at the Abhayagiri monastery in Anurādhapura.95 It records a discourse between the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi and the Buddha in which the Buddha proclaims that if someone were to deposit the sūtra within a reliquary or stūpa then ‘that stūpa would become a stūpa of the relics of the “essence” of vajra of all Tathāgata’.96

There are some rare examples too of ritual deposits of Pali canonical formulas in Sri Lanka at sites associated with the Abhayagiri in particular. A gold foil Pali eulogy, giving the iti pi so formula, for instance, was discovered under a pillar of a relic shrine (vaṭadāge) at Mādirigiriya, which, according to Jeffrey Sundberg, may have been affiliated with the Abhayagiri fraternity. The first account of the etching dates it to the construction of the shrine in the reign of Aggabodhi VI (733–72). Sundberg, however, has recently speculated that it may date to one of the later renovations of the shrine and represent an attempt on the part of Abhayagiri monks to ‘accommodate’ or ‘revalorize’ Pali religious symbolism.97 Sundberg has also plausibly suggested that the revival of the Mahāvihāra after Sena II (853–87) led the fraternity to adopt some of the ritual practices of their competitors and it is possible that the use of the Pali canon as a ritual deposit, first among Abhayagiri monks, was incorporated by Mahāvihāran monks into their own ritual repertoire during the tenth century.98 It appears, for instance, that Kassapa V (914–23), an ardent supporter of the Mahāvihāra, enshrined the Abhidhamma text, the Dhammasaṅgani (‘Enumeration of dhammas’), within a temple in Anurādhapura, and that this relic became an important ritual object for his successors, in particular, Mahinda IV (954–72).99
By the reform era the treatment of scripture as a relic had become formally incorporated within the Pali matrix. Writing in his voluminous commentary on the Vinaya, for instance, Sāriputta states that there are three types of shrine to the Buddha (buddhacetiya), namely a shrine to items he used (paribhogacetiya), a shrine to his corporeal relics (dhātucetiya) and finally a shrine to his teachings (dhammacetiya). He defines the latter in terms familiar from Mahayana practice as ‘a shrine built having deposited therein a book inscribed with dependent co-arising, etc.’

Siddhattha in his Sārasaṅgaha incorporates this passage in his discussion in chapter five of the shrines of Sages and Wheel-Turning kings. He also further dedicates an entire chapter to a particularly creative discussion on the legal status of offerings made to such a Dhamma shrine and their interchangeability with offerings made to the Buddha’s corporeal relics:

The exchange of things belonging to the Buddha and Dhamma:
This here is an explanation. Is it permissible to make an offering to the Buddha with the property of the Dhamma or an offering to the Dhamma with the property of the Buddha or not? They say that it is permissible since there is the statement (vacana), ‘This, Vāsetṭha, is a designation of the Tathāgata, namely, the body of Dhamma (dhammakāya)’ (Dīgha Nikāya III, 84, 23-4), and also, ‘one who sees the Dhamma, Vakkali, sees me’ (Samyutta Nikāya III, 120, 28-31).

Some, however, say that it is not permissible since, if this were the case, due to the statement ‘a monk who would care for me, should care for the ill’ (Vinaya I, 302, 19-30), there would be the unwanted consequence that one would be allowed to make medicine also for an ill [person] using the property of the Buddha (on account of a perceived equivalence between the two).

This is baseless since, in the statement ‘a monk who would care for me, should care for the ill’, not a single similarity (ekasadisatā) is mentioned between himself (Buddha) and the ill, nor is an equal benefit (samaphalatā) mentioned for the one who cares for them. For this here is the meaning: One who would care for me by delivering advice (ovāda) and instruction (anusāsanī) should care for the ill. By delivering my advice, the ill are to be cared for. In terms of any similarity between caring for the Buddha and for the ill, however, we do not accept such a sense here.

Because of the statement, ‘the doctrine and discipline, Ānanda, that I taught and declared to you will be your teacher after my passing’ (Dīgha Nikāya II, 154, 6-8); and because it was said, ‘at present, furthermore, it is I alone who admonishes and instructs you. After I have completely
passed away these 84,000 buddhas will admonish and instruct you’; and because, when praising a learned monk, it was also said, ‘You should not call him a “hearer”, Cunda, this one is called “awakened”’ (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī III, 912, 11–12); and because the Buddha has the status of teacher of the Dhamma, only the first reasoning should be praised (i.e. it is permissible to exchange the property of the Buddha and Dhamma).

This is mentioned in the subcommentary (ṭīkā) on the Vinaya.\(^{102}\)

In this fascinating discussion taken from Sāriputta’s Sāratthadīpanī (‘Illuminator of essential meaning’) we can see that reform-era scholar-monks were less concerned with the doctrinal implications of the cult of the book than with the social and economic consequences of this ritual practice. Sāriputta, for instance, cites a number of key passages where the ontological and functional equivalence between the Buddha and his Dhamma is made explicit.

His imagined opponent argues against this not on any philosophical basis but simply because of what he perceives to be the possible economic consequences of this doctrine. Sāriputta’s adversary argues that if the Buddha and Dhamma are treated as identical on account of passages comparing them, then – since there is also a canonical passage that seems to compare caring for the Buddha with caring for the ill – one unwanted consequence of this logic would be that the Buddha’s property may be used to care for the ill as well. While Sāriputta does not disagree with his opponent’s fear about the distribution of the Buddha’s wealth, he views the comparison between the Buddha and the ill as different from passages comparing the Buddha and Dhamma. It is possible, therefore, to transfer property between shrines to the Buddha and Dhamma, though this logic should not extend to the comparison between the Buddha and the ill, and thus the Buddha’s wealth cannot be used for the commonweal. This passage is buried deep within Sāriputta’s Vinaya commentary and could easily be missed. Its relative importance, however, for reform-era practice is reflected in the fact that Siddhattha highlighted it and placed it as a chapter at the beginning of his anthology.

Siddhattha at the end of the chapter departs from Sāriputta’s Vinaya sub-commentary and, for good measure, reminds his reader also about the legal rules concerning the exchangeability of the property of relic shrines and that of the monastic community as a whole. He quotes Buddhaghosa’s Vinaya commentary, for instance, as stating:

It is permissible to have the property of a relic shrine maintained with the property of either a relic shrine or the Saṅgha. It is not permissible to have the Saṅgha’s property maintained with the property of a relic shrine. The property of the Saṅgha, however, which is deposited together with
the property of a relic shrine, can only be maintained when the property of the relic shrine is maintained.103

Buddaghosa here states quite clearly that the property of a shrine cannot be transferred to the Saṅgha whereas the Saṅgha’s property can be invested in a shrine. We can infer from this that the elite monks who managed such shrines must have long formed a fiscally and in part legally independent faction within the Saṅgha. There was an economic incentive in the post-reform era then to maintain control of such shrines, not only because of their ritual power in facilitating karmic transformation, but because these sites represented a common market for the Buddha’s transferable property and the pinnacle of wealth within the Saṅgha’s own courtly hierarchy. We can speculate further that Dhamma shrines, while a useful karmic technology, represented an economic challenge to monastic elites since they had the potential to radically distribute the Buddha’s power and wealth on the island through proliferation. By incorporating Dhamma shrines within the Pali matrix and by legislating for the transferability of wealth between Dhamma shrines and Buddha shrines, the monastic leadership, in principle, was able to maintain control of the Buddha’s immanent power on the island within their protectionist relic market.

6.5. Summary

The Sārasaṅgaha in many ways sits at the nexus of the main strands of thought that governed reform-era monastic life. As one of the new anthologies composed during the reform era, the Sārasaṅgaha displays a number of innovative philological techniques to extract and organize the semantic essence of the Pali scriptural tradition, using contents lists, citations and bibliographies to curate the substance of the canon into something that could stand for scripture in its totality as well as in its compact utility. Siddhattha’s decision to present a totalizing depiction of his scriptural tradition in an anthology stems perhaps from the threat posed by the social and political turmoil of the age and his desire to intervene in these circumstances by pursuing Buddhahood. This required a new charter for monastic action based on an engagement with karmic rituals that could bring vast amounts of merit, centred primarily on cultivating the transformative emotion of serene joy. To some extent, then, the task of a bodhisattva was to seek out stimulation, in particular from the inspiring traces of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. This shift in soteriological emphasis among elites, however, while encouraged by the eschatologically orientated reforms, also needed to be formalized in Pali theory due to its concurrent potential to undermine the reformed Saṅgha’s authority and economic
hierarchy. Relics and other such sacred stimulants are treated in Siddhattha’s manual not only as objects of religious transformation but also as potentially destabilizing entities that had to be controlled and legislated for within the monastic disciplinary code.

Notes

6. See Kieffer-Pülz, 2013, 194–7; 2015, 435. On the authorship of the Saccasamkhāpa, see Von Hinüber, 1996, §351; Cousins, 2013; Kieffer-Pülz, 2018, 190, n. 4. Other handbooks from this era include Mahāsāmi’s (?) Mālaśikkhā and possibly also the Abhidhamma works of Anuruddha.
12. As well as Spiro, 1982, esp. 69–70, see Ames, 1963; Deegalle, 1997; 2006; Keyes, 1995, 86; Reynolds and Hallsey, 1989. This is not to deny that a form of Buddhist public did start to emerge during this period or that this was linked to the development of vernacular preaching texts, but simply to question whether this process was the sole cause for the kammatic focus of much of the literature composed during the reform era and its aftermath. On the connection between eschatological notions of decline and popular religion in Japan, see Strathern, 2019.
13. One exception is Vācissara’s Simālaṅkārasaṅgaha. Another anthology is the Suttasaṅgaha, though attempts to date the work are highly speculative. See Chaudhuri and Guha, eds. 1957, xii–xiii.
14. I use the term ‘encyclopedism’ advisedly to denote the compilation of material from a wide range of disciplines, often collected in relation to a single topic. On the history of the term in early modern Europe, see Blair, 2013. See also, Blair, 2010, 168–72.
20. For possible objections, see Brick, 2015, 14–15, also discussed in De Simini, 2016, 428–34.
21. Vācissara, author of the Simālaṅkārasaṅgaha, may also have fled to South India during the invasion of Māgha, if the author is identical with a Vācissara mentioned in Cūḷavamsa 81.17–22. See Kieffer-Pülz, 1999b, 2020.
26. It is more likely that Siddhattha is referring here to the thirteenth-century Buddhappiya, author of the Pajjamadhū, rather than the eleventh or early twelfth-century author of the Rūpasiddhi. The Sārasaṅgaha must date after the 1165 reform since it cites Sumaṅgala. See Sārasaṅgaha of Siddhattha, 105, 16–18 = Abhidhammatthavībhāvīni of Sumāngala, 201, 19–20 cited in Von Hinüber, 1996, §385.


30. Other scholars have identified patterns in the work’s arrangement of topics. Citing N. Nobuaki’s work, which I have not been able to access, Chiara Neri quotes Nobuaki as identifying ‘five macro subjects in the chapters of the Ss: Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha; spiritual exercises; problems linked to kamma in the saṃsaric [sic.] life; the various types of sentient beings; issues concerning the natural world.’ See Nobuaki, 1998, 2, cited in Neri, 2015, 338.


32. The category ‘millennialism’ has been used in this context as a catch-all description for both the devotional, karmic soteriology of the bodhisattva path and its attendant eschatological concerns. For an overview of studies relating to Theravada Buddhism and millennialism, see Collins, 1998, 395–413. If, as Collins argues, we take millennialism in a Theravada context as ‘an overall category for Buddhist ideas of future felicity associated with Metteyya and other future Buddhas’ (413), then I think the term only covers a part of the mentality of scholars such as Siddhattha. While our author certainly hoped to be consecrated as a bodhisattva in the presence of Metteyya, he is aware that this will only occur in the unfathomable future and much of his concern as a bodhisattva is drawn rather to karmic practices in the here and now.


34. The Sārasaṅgaha of Siddhattha, 344, …

35. Here is an admittedly tentative list of authors, who either directly state that they aspired to buddhahood or who hint at it. In this regard, see also Dimitrov, 2016, 226; 230; 375; 548.

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<th>Text</th>
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<td>Buddhahood</td>
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See R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, 1966, also cited in Holt, 1991, 66. More generally, Jeffrey Sundberg has argued that after the reign of Sena II the Mahāvihāra incorporated a number of ‘Esoteric Buddhist practices’ within their Pali-based religious framework, perhaps in order to compete with the apotropaic expertise of the Abhayagiri. See, in particular, Sundberg, 2018, 214.

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kim ettha-m-idam asuкаthâne vuttan ti kathane payojanan ti ce. sammäsambuddhen’ eva hi tinnam pi pîtakânam athavânamânakkam boêsito. tattha tattha bhagavātâ pavattti pakinânakadesanâ yeva hi aṭṭhakathâ nàma. yebhûyyena pana aṇṇaṭhâ aṭṭhakathâ, aṇṇathâ tîkâ nàma. tasmâ thãnaniyame kate medhâvino idam suthu ghanânti ti. idam ettha thãnaniyame prayojanan ti.

58. I borrow the idea of a commentary ‘binding’ a root text back within a wider textual tradition from Hallisey, 2017.
61. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 76–82.
63. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 79, 13, 34.
64. Malalasekera, 1938, 326; Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 80, 41, 82, 25.
65. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 27–37. See chapter four.
66. Manorathapûrâni of Buddhaghosa I, 87, 73, 29, 35. See also Clark, 2018; Endo, 2013, 121–42.
67. Manorathapûrâni of Buddhaghosa I, 88, 13, 34.
68. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 36, 30, 37, citing Samantapâsâdikâ VI, 1291, 116, 35.
70. On parîtta, see most recently Shulman, 2019.
71. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 302, 131, 303.
72. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 314, 16, 31. That a new buddha arises only after the cosmos has been destroyed is made clear in the Anâgatavamsa Desanâ. See Meddega, trans. 1993, 26.
73. On the analytical distinction between ‘immanentism’ and ‘transcendentalism’, see Strathern, 2019, 27–106.
74. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 28, 14, 32, 225.
75. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 40, 32, citing Dîgha Nikâya II, 141, 344; ye hi keci Ânanda cetiyaârâ­kâm âhîndantâ pasanaccittâ kâlam karissanti, sabbbe te kâyasâ bhedâ param maraÇâ sugatim saggam lokam uppatissanti. See also Schopen, 1997, 115–18.
76. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 40, 32, 36, citing Suanâgalaveilâsini of Buddhaghosa II, 582, 28, 28; tattha cetiyanârâkâm âhîndantâ ti ye tavata taththa cetiyaâgañanam samajjante âsananâ dvovanta bodhînhi udekam ašiçañcami âhîndanti vicarananti. tesu vattabba eva n’avatthi. “asuka-vâhe cetiyam vandis vandisam” ti nikkhanniâtvâ pasanaccittâ antarâ kâlam karontâ pi anantarâ yeva saggâ patiṭṭhabhisanti yevâ ti dassef ti.
77. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 42–4.
78. Sārasāṅgaha of Siddhattha, 42, 14, 32, 225; pañâchenasam saṃmajañjâvi; sakacittam pasidati, paracittam pasi­dadi, devatâ ataCâna honti, pasâdikasamvattanikam puññam upacinnati, kâyasâ bhedâ param maraÇâ sugatim saggam lokam uppatijjati ti.
81. Sârâsaṅga of Siddhattha, 26, 14, 35, 225, 15, 35; 62, 14, 35, 15. Andy Rotman has noted that this experience is involuntary for there is a presumption within Buddhist texts ‘that Buddhist cognitive and causal realities are natural laws, not religious creations.’ See Rotman, 2003, 561.
83. Sârâsaṅga of Siddhattha, 73, 24, 41, citing Papañcasûdâni of Buddhaghosa II, 17, 1, 4. mayi cittaṃ pasâdetvâ bhikkusânghe anuttare kappâni satasaahasâni duggatim so na gagchati. devalûkâ cavîtvâna kusalamûlêna vodito bhavissati anantañâno somanasso ti vissuto.
84. See chapter seven.
86. Sundberg, 2018, 214.
87. Schopen, 1975.
89. This verse is also found in the Pali canon. See Vinaya I, 40, 26, 5.
90. Samyutta Nikâya III, 120, 26, 31.
92. Davidson, 2009, 141.
This is not the case for the Theravada world in general. See, most recently, Skilling, 2008.

Mudiyanse, 1967; Von Hinüber, 1983. Daniel Drewes, however, has questioned whether the gold plates of the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā found deposited in an earthenware pot at the Jetavanārāma in Anurādhapura were buried for ritual purposes. See Drewes, 2007, 132.

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Mudiyanse, 1967, 99–105. Schopen, 1982, 104. Schopen identified the inscription on these stones with the Ārya-sarva-tathāgatadīhiṣṭhāna-hṛdaya-guhyā-dhātu-karaṇa-mudra-nāma-dhārani Sūtra. Chandawimala has further identified stones VI and VII with the Sarvatathāgataattvasamgraha, an influential esoteric Buddhist work that had a wide circulation in Sri Lanka and an important place in esoteric Buddhist practice on the island. Chandawimala, 2016, 165–90. See also Powell, 2018, 5–26; Sundberg, 2017, 294–9; 2018, n. 222.


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