

The Valuation of *Saddhā* in Early Buddhist Texts.

I would be generally agreed that it is faith which forms the kernel of the Christian's attitude towards the object of his worship, and that in Christianity faith is of prime importance for the achievement of salvation. As the same word "faith" has been used in translations from the Pali to render the term *saddhā*, an investigation of the original texts would show whether in fact these two words are synonymous, or how far their meanings are related. Undoubtedly most of the connotations included in the English word are expressed through *saddhā*. The question however is whether *saddhā* is given the same kind of valuation in Buddhism as *faith* in Christianity. If there is a marked difference in the role played by these two concepts in the two systems, it will be granted that to translate *saddhā* by "faith" may be misleading.

Passages like this: "*Yesam mayi saddhāmatam pemaṃattam sabbe te saṅga parāyaṇā*" rendered into English: "All those whose mere faith and whose affection is alone in me are bound for heaven" might suggest to the Western reader, "Heaven" expressing for him the happy hereafter, the Christian eternity of bliss, salvation. But what does it mean for the Buddhist? Not the supreme goal but an existence of doubtful value which, pleasant though it may be for a short time, does not in any way guarantee the happy end. After Heaven a man may be reborn on earth again, even as an animal, or he may have to go to the state of hell. So heaven becomes a reward for a minor virtue only, if it is correct to speak of a reward at all. One ought to call it not reward but the consequence of a useful but incomplete attitude. How incomplete, is expressed very plainly in the *Aṅuttara Nikāya*:

"Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu is a 'believer' but not virtuous. So he is not complete with regard to this quality. He should complete this, thinking: 'It would be good if I (would) become both a 'believer' and virtuous.' But, bhikkhus, if a bhikkhu is a 'believer' and virtuous, then he is complete with regard to this? "

Bhikkhus, a bhikkhu may be both a 'believer' and virtuous, but not learned; a 'believer', virtuous and learned, yet not an expounder of the Dhamma, he may be an expounder of the Dhamma but not able to address an assembly; he may be able to address an assembly but not

1. Majjhima Nikāya, PTS, 1935, I, p. 142.

2. Here and elsewhere in this article wherever the word "faith" is used in connection with Buddhist ideas it has been put into inverted commas, to draw attention to its problematical significance.

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confident in expounding the Dhamma in an assembly; he may be confident in expounding the Dhamma in an assembly, but not expert in discipline; he may be expert in discipline but no forest dweller living in solitude, not one who attains at will without difficulty or trouble the four jhānas which belong to the higher mental states providing happiness in this very life; nor does he live having attained to the release through insight and the heart's release in this very life through his own realisation after destroying the āsavas. So he is incomplete with regard to this.

He should complete this, thinking: 'it would be good if I would be . . . (all these)'.³

The same idea is expressed in other places with this difference only, that the qualities, which the bhikkhu has to have in addition to "faith," vary in number, or that some of the qualities listed are not exactly the same.

That *saddhā* is not regarded as a state of high achievement in the development of a bhikkhu becomes even clearer when one reads the words of the venerable *Sona*:

"Whoever among the bhikkhus, Lord, is an arahant, who has destroyed the āsavas, who has reached perfection (in chaste living), who has achieved what has to be done, who has laid aside all burdens, who has attained to his noble goal, who has destroyed the bonds of a (future) existence, who is released by perfect insight,—on six things is he intent: on renunciation, on solitude, on kindness, on the destruction of attachment and of craving, on the getting free from delusions.

It is possible however, Lord, that it may occur to some venerable one: 'Surely dependent upon 'faith' alone is this venerable one intent on renunciation.' But certainly, Lord, it should not be viewed in this way. The bhikkhu in whom the āsavas are destroyed, who reached perfection (in chaste living), who has achieved what has to be done, does not regard himself as one who has still something to do or does not contemplate on the accumulation of (the fruits of) his actions. He is intent on renunciation being free from passions (in consequence of) the destruction of attachment. He is intent on renunciation being free from hatred (in consequence of) the destruction of hatred, he is intent on renunciation being free from delusions (in consequence of) the destruction of delusions."⁴

It would seem from the above that *saddhā* alone is insufficient for the highest achievement.

3. *Aṅuttara Nikāya*, PTS, 1888-1910, V. p. 10 f.

4. *Vinaya Pitakam*, Williams and Norgate, 1879, I, p. 183.

There is also the story of *Meghiya*, who is anxious to get the permission of the Buddha to go to a certain mango-grove and strive there in solitude for the truth. The Buddha wishes him to wait, according to the commentary, because he knows that Meghiya is not yet mature. Meghiya, at last succeeds in being allowed to do according to his wish.

"And to the venerable Meghiya, who was then dwelling in the mango grove, as a rule three wicked, evil thoughts kept returning, that is to say, sensual thoughts, malign thoughts, cruel thoughts.

And it occurred to the venerable Meghiya: 'It is amazing and astonishing. By 'faith' indeed did I leave my home for this homeless state; yet still these three wicked, evil thoughts befall me, sensual thoughts, malign thoughts, cruel thoughts'.⁵

Furthermore "faith" has to be regarded with caution because it is subjective. We have this stated in Gotama's own words. He says in a discussion with the brahmin *Bhāradvāja*:

"First, Bhāradvāja, you have referred to 'faith,' now you speak of tradition.—There are five conditions. These five conditions have twofold results in this very life. What are the five? 'Faith,' inclination, tradition, careful consideration and delighting in speculation (*saddhā*, *ruci*, *anussava*, *ākāraparivāka*, *dīṭṭhimijjhānakkhanti*). These five conditions, Bhāradvāja, have twofold results in this very life. Now, Bhāradvāja, something may be well 'believed' in and yet it may be empty, vain and false; it may be not well 'believed' in and yet be true, real and not otherwise... (Similarly regarding the other four conditions). It is not proper for an intelligent man, Bhāradvāja, who maintains a truth, to conclude definitely that this alone is true and everything else is vain."⁶

At the same time "faith" is recommended in many instances and is regarded as being very valuable and of great importance even for the devas. Devas reflect on the exceptional advantage of being born as man, because a man can acquire "faith" hearing the teaching of the Buddha. This "faith," if it is well rooted, well established in a person, is something devas hold in great esteem.⁷

What then does this *saddhā* mean which is not enough by itself, which is only one feature among others in the mental state of a bhikkhu, which yet at the same time is highly desirable, and regarded even by the devas themselves as reason enough to wish to be reborn as a human being?

5. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, IV, p. 356.

6. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II, p. 170 f.

7. *Itivuttaka*, PTS, 1919, p. 77.

"Faith" in the sense of trust, confidence in the teacher can be easily understood as an emotion insufficient for salvation but extremely important on the way to it. "Der Buddha verlangt . . . nicht mehr Vertrauen, als man ihnen Wegweiser entgegenbringen muss, aber auch nicht weniger," says Grimm.⁸

The Abhidhamma definition of *saddhā* is as follows: "*Yā saddhā saddaḥanā okappanā abhipasādo saddhā saddhindriyam saddhābalam: idaṃ puccati saddhindriyam.*"⁹

We may, for the time being, rest content with the three synonyms *saddaḥanā*, *okappanā*, *abhipasādo*, meaning: believing, confidence, the state of being greatly pleased. That confidence is the first step to the attainment of truth and therefore of the highest value is repeatedly expounded. Without it nothing can be done, but it is only the first step on the path, nothing more.

"How, O bhikkhus, does the accomplishing of perfect knowledge through gradual training, gradual working, gradual practice, happen?"

In this case, O bhikkhus, one who has 'faith' approaches the teacher, approaching (him) he associates (with him) constantly, associating (with him) constantly he listens (to him), listening (to him) he hears the Dhamma, hearing the Dhamma, he bears it in his mind. Bearing it in his mind he examines the meaning of it, examining the meaning of it the Dhamma commends itself to his insight. The Dhamma commending itself to his insight a desire for it arises in him. A desire (for the Dhamma) arising in him he strives (for the Dhamma), striving (for it) he weighs it in his mind. Weighing it in his mind he exerts himself, exerting himself he realises through his bodily senses the most supreme truth and penetrating it with his intellect perceives it.

If there had not been 'faith,' then, O bhikkhus, he would not have approached (the teacher) . . . he would not have associated (with him) . . . He would have failed here, O bhikkhus, he would lead a wrong life . . .¹⁰ Rarely would one choose a teacher if one had no confidence in him. Without confidence no one would be attracted by anyone else. Therefore without *saddhā* the first step would not be taken. On the other hand, every teacher would expect his pupils to accept the fact of his greater knowledge—how else could he train him? Even a person wishing to learn carpentry chooses as a teacher a carpenter who, he believes, knows his profession thoroughly, and is able to impart his knowledge to others. And even a carpenter keeps his apprentices under strict discipline or how would they learn their craft? The reason for such a strict discipline is set out by Gotama in the following words:

8. The Buddha demands not more confidence than one has to have in a guide, but certainly not less. G. Grimm, *Die Lehre des Buddha*, Piper und Co., München, 1919, p. 22.

9. *Dhammasaṅgani*, 12, 15, *Vibhaṅga*, p. 123.

10. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, p. 480.

"Bhikkhus, even (towards) a teacher given up to the pursuit of material things, who makes them his heritage, who is bound up with material (interests), even towards him there will not arise (on the part of his pupils) such a bargaining attitude (?panopanavidhā), as: 'Should that please us we will do it, should it not please us, we will not do it.' How much should it be so in the case of the Tathāgata! To the disciple with 'faith,' bhikkhus, who dwells penetrating into the teaching of his master, the master's teaching increases in strength and grows (in his understanding). To the disciple with 'faith,' bhikkhus, who dwells penetrating into the teaching of his master this is a principle: Let only skin and sinews and bones be left over while flesh and blood wither in (my) body, there shall be no slackening of effort (on my part) until that is attained which can be reached through a man's strength, a man's power and a man's energy."¹¹

Gotama addressed this to two of his disciples, *Assaji* and *Punabbasu* who refused to follow the rule laid down for the bhikkhusangha of not eating a meal at night. He expects obedience to the rules and confidence in his person as the teacher. But that does not mean that he expects them to accept everything without contradiction, he certainly does not prohibit criticism and judgment. The oft quoted passage of the *Āṅguttara*, the *Kālāma Sutta* is a classical instance showing that absolute, a *priori* faith is never demanded of anybody.

"It is proper, O Kālāmas, for you to doubt and to waver. In a doubtful matter wavering does arise. Now look you Kālāmas, do not be led by reports, or tradition, or hearsay. Be not led by proficiency in the collections, nor by mere logic or inference, nor by considering appearances, nor by delighting in speculation. Be not led by the appearance of possibilities nor thinking: 'The recluse is our respected (teacher)'. But, Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves: these things are unprofitable, these things are condemned by the intelligent, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to loss and sorrow,--then, Kālāmas, do you reject them."¹²

If effective contrast is needed, surely it will be provided by placing beside this sutta the earnest recommendation of St. Augustine: "But before all things, brethren, we warn you in the name of God of this, that when ye hear the Holy Scriptures expounded, telling you what has happened, ye first believe that what is being read happened just as ye read it, and that ye seek not, by taking away the foundation of the actual event, to build, as it were, in the air."¹³

11. *Ibid.*, I, p. 480.

12. *Āṅguttara Nikāya*, I, p. 189.

13. Quoted from R. C. Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of our Lord*, Kegan Paul, 1900, p. 87.

This exactly is what Gotama warns the Kālāmas against. He reminds them not to accept a thing only on the ground of tradition or of the authority of their teacher, but to weigh it in their minds, and examine it and judge for themselves whether it is true or not.

Wherever the word *saddhā* is met with in the early Pali texts a notable difference between its importance and that of faith in Christianity will be observed. For the Christian faith is the *via regia* to the comprehension of the mysteries of religion. The word "faith" is used in English to express confidence, trust, conviction too, but *saddhā*, while it has these senses, lacks the primary significance of the word in English, the special emotional colour it derives from Christianity. The difference between the two words will be clearer when the contrast between the valuation placed upon "faith" and "knowledge" in the Pali texts is demonstrated. This will make it even clearer that *saddhā* alone cannot enable one to attain Enlightenment.

There is a story in the *Samyutta Nikāya* which will reveal the contrast immediately and which will make longer discussion almost unnecessary. *Nigantha Nālaputta* questions *Citta* the householder, whether he has "faith" in the teachings of Gotama. "No, not 'faith,' replies *Citta* to the great satisfaction of the *Nigantha*, who praises him for it. Then *Citta* asks in turn: "Now, what do you think, sir, which is the finer, knowledge or 'faith'?" "O housefather, certainly knowledge is finer than 'faith.'" Only then does *Citta* reveal that he is a follower of the Buddha and the *Nigantha* in his dis-appointment abuses him.¹⁴

"Buddhist Philosophy," writes Mrs. Rhys Davids, "... has nearly a dozen words built on the proper 'know' stems alone (*√jān*, *√vid*). And the question for the student of Buddhist Philosophy arises: how far does the greater richness in Buddhist intellectual nomenclature correspond to a greater manifold in modes of knowing and of knowledge?"¹⁵

There may be a "greater manifold in modes of knowing," but what leaps out of the philological reference is that knowing had a special value in this culture. It is not by chance that the ten powers of a Buddha are all intellectual.

"Ten are, *Sāriputta*, the Tathāgata's powers, endowed with which powers the Tathāgata knows his eminent position, sounds his lion's roar in the assembly, sets rolling the wheel of the Dhamma. What are the ten?"

I. Herein, *Sāriputta*, the Tathāgata knows absolutely how to draw a logical inference from what is a proper ground for inference.

14. *Samyutta Nikāya*, PTS, 1884-1904, IV, p. 297 ff.

15. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Philosophy*, Luzac, 1924.

2. He knows absolutely, according to causal conditions the con-
sequence resulting from actions done in the past, in the present and in the
future.
 3. He knows absolutely the practice leading to all ends.
 4. He knows absolutely the (nature of the) world of the various
elements.
 5. He knows absolutely the various dispositions of living beings
 6. He knows absolutely what is going on in the senses of other beings
and individuals and their intentions.
 7. He knows absolutely the arising, the purification and the defle-
ment of *jhāna*, *vimokkha*, *samāhī* and *samāpatti*.
 8. He recalls to mind his various existences in the past . . . right
up to his present life here.
 9. He sees with his divine eye, pure and surpassing that of ordinary
men, beings passing away and being reborn, oflow and of excellent birth . . .
 10. Having realised by himself, through his insight in this very life
release through insight and the heart's release which is free from āsavas
on account of the destruction of the āsavas . . . and abides therein."¹⁶
- What differentiates these qualities from those of the arahants is the fact
alone that the Buddha founds his doctrine by himself, whereas the arahant has
a teacher.

Although the Buddha possesses these ten powers, no "divine" quality
is attributed to his intellect. It is normal human intellect developed to its
highest potency. He does know everything but not in a *supernatural* way as
the following dialogue illustrates:

"I heard that the samana Gotama said this: There is no samana
or brāhmaṇa who is all-knowing and who perceives everything and who will
acknowledge complete knowledge and insight. Do those who say (so) . . . ?
speak what the Lord declared and do they not misrepresent the Lord . . . ?

'Those, Mahārāja, who say (so) . . . do not speak what I have
declared and they misrepresent me . . . What I acknowledge to have said
is that there is no samana or brāhmaṇa who will know and see everything
at one and the same time.'¹⁷

Knowledge is not the monopoly of the Buddha. Intelligence is the first
requisite of all who wish to assimilate the doctrine and it is praised as the highest

16. Majjhima Nikāya, I, p. 69 ff.

17. *Ibid.*, II, p. 126 ff. This knowledge of everything at one and the same time was
attributed by the Jains to Mahāvīra. See also E. J. Thomas. The History of Buddhist
Thought, p. 150.

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To quote T. W. Rhys Davids:

"But under Intelligence they always distinguish two phases—the
enquiring, and necessarily therefore doubting activity of the mind; and the
final stage of emancipation and peace, when the laws and the universe are
clearly seen and firmly grasped and cheerfully acquiesced in. It is this
latter case which they call Wisdom (*vijjā*)—the contrary of the *avijjā*
which is ignorance of the action of karma, of the Four Noble Truths, and of
the doctrine of the Āsavas or Intoxications. The man who knows these,
who finally and permanently, out of the jungle and in the open, quite
beyond the stage of 'wasting his wonder on the fabulous soul' has attained
to and remains in this state of Nirvāna in Arahantship, is not only in
Buddhist terminology, called a Brahman, but is in fact declared to be the
only true Brahman."¹⁸

Wisdom is the supreme aim, ignorance is the cause of all evil.
"Conditioned by ignorance (*avijjā*) activities arise; conditioned by
activities consciousness; conditioned by consciousness mind and matter;
conditioned by mind and matter the six senses; conditioned by the six
senses contact; conditioned by contact feeling; conditioned by feeling
craving; conditioned by craving grasping; conditioned by grasping becoming;
conditioned by becoming birth; conditioned by birth, old age and death,
grief, lamenting, suffering, sorrow, dejection arise. Such is the arising
of the whole volume of suffering. This, bhikkhus, is called dependent
origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).

By the absolute annihilation and stopping of ignorance the activities
are stopped; by the stopping of the activities consciousness is stopped . . .
Such is the annihilation of the whole volume of suffering."¹⁹

If the Buddha praises one of his more advanced disciples it is not for
possessing "faith," but the keyword in his praise is Wisdom.

"Certainly, Sāriputta, I do not blame you in word or in deed. You
are wise, Sāriputta, you have great Wisdom, you are versatile in your
Wisdom; quick-witted are you Sāriputta, you are fast in understanding;
sharp-witted and piercing are you. Just as the eldest son of a universal
monarch continues the reign established by his father, so do you, Sāriputta,
continue the reign of the unsurpassable Dhamma established by me."²⁰

It could be argued that, as it is known that Sāriputta was noted as "the
highest among those of great wisdom,"²¹ it is not surprising that just he

18. Dialogues of the Buddha, SBB, 1923, I, p. 137 ff.

19. Saṃyutta Nikāya, II, p. 1 ff.

20. *Ibid.*, I, p. 191.

21. Aṅguttara Nikāya, I, p. 23.

among them all was praised for this quality. But in the list of the "pre-eminent ones" there is another disciple, *Vakkali*, "highest among those who are of implicit 'faith'"²². Was his 'faith' not regarded as praiseworthy?

The story of *Vakkali* will furnish the answer. The *Samyutta* describes only his sickness and his extreme longing to see the Buddha. It tells how the Buddha admonishes him not to be so attached to his person but to concentrate upon the Dhamma. (*Yo kho Dhamman passati so man passati; yo man passati so Dhamman passati*. He, who sees the Dhamma, sees me; he who sees me sees the Dhamma). *Vakkali* later is able to get rid of his attachment. He at the end commits suicide and attains arahantship before he dies.²³

The commentaries give a much more detailed account. They all describe how *Vakkali* followed the teacher everywhere wherever he went, and always seated himself so as to be able to see him. He never moved his eyes away from the Buddha (*yoniso manasikāram pahāya*—abandoning all the proper ways of thinking, foolishly)²⁴ forgetting all his duties. The teacher rebukes him and sends him away. *Vakkali* goes to the mountain *Gijjhakūṭa* where he makes a great effort, tries to strive hard but fails. On account of his extreme "faith" he is unable to attain to meditation. (*Kim te Vakkali te ādinā sathhāra ovaḍḍito Gijjhakūṭe viharanto vipassanam paṭṭha pesi. Tassa saddhā-balana-bhāvato eva vipassanāvīhin na oṭarati*).²⁵ Only later, when he is able to rid himself of this hindrance he wins insight and attains arahantship.²⁶

We come in this way to the conclusion that even in commentarial times it was understood that *saddhā*, though of extreme importance as the first step in obtaining the right knowledge, might even develop into a major hindrance in attaining insight. Knowledge on the other hand can never be a hindrance, it can only help on the way.

In spite of the great emphasis laid upon knowing, Gotama does not advocate abstract speculation, metaphysical excursions into the realm of the unknown. His knowledge is a practical one, the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. He warns his disciples not to ponder on questions which only lead away from the real ones, and which unproductive of any solution result only in morbid depression.

22. *Ibid.*, I, p. 24.

23. *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, p. 119 ff.

24. *Manorathapūraṇi*, *Āṅguttara Commentary*, FTS, 1924-1940, I, p. 249.

25. *Theragāthā*—Commentary, SBB, 1918, p. 420.

26. *Monier Williams* in his Dictionary gives for *śraddhāvimukta* "released from faith," a *Śrāvaka* at a particular stage of his religious life—and refers to the *Divyāvadāna*. In the *Divyāvadāna* the word does not occur and it is very likely that—may be on account of an unclear manuscript—the word *śraddhādhimukta* was misread for *śraddhāvimukta*. The misunderstanding must have occurred because this particular word which means "intent upon 'faith'" is used in connection with *Vakkali* who had first to get rid of his exaggerated *saddhā* in order to be able to progress further on the way.

"*Bhikkhus*, there are these four things, unthinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which one would become mad and come to ruin. What are the four?"

The realm of a Buddha, O *bhikkhus*, is unthinkable, not to be thought of . . . The realm of one who has entered upon *jhāna* is unthinkable, not to be thought of . . . The result of action is unthinkable, not to be thought of . . . Problems of the nature of the world (*loka-cintā*) are unthinkable, not to be thought of, thinking of which one would become mad, and come to ruin. These, O *bhikkhus*, are the four unthinkables."²⁷

This by no means is a prohibition of thinking, it is only a warning against uneconomical thinking. Right thinking is of the highest importance and is the only means of attaining ultimately the supreme goal. By knowing their character one is able to destroy the hindrances, and to acquire that calmness of mind which is the attribute of the wise.

What are the characteristics of arahantship? We read that a person is called an arahant who sees in their true nature the arising of and the passing away, the satisfaction of, the misery in and the escape from the five grasping groups (*upādāmakkhanda*),²⁸ of the five *indriyas* (controlling faculties),²⁹ the six sense faculties,³⁰ who has gained right insight into the nature of the *saṅkhāras*,³¹ who understands fully the Four Noble Truths as they really are.³² Arahantship is the destruction of lust, hatred and delusion and the path thereto is the Noble Eightfold Path.³³ The Four Noble Truths are: the truth of pain, of the cause of pain, of the cessation of pain and of the way leading to the cessation of pain. The Noble Eightfold Path is: right views, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This eightfold division corresponds according to the *Majjhima* to the division of the three—morality, concentration, complete knowledge.³⁴ As we see *saddhā* has no place in these basic principles. If *saddhā* had been regarded as essential to the attaining of *Nibbāna*, it certainly would have found its place in the Noble Eightfold Path, or by its presence it would have made it a Ninefold Path. What is emphasised in the characteristics of the arahant is the full understanding of the Doctrine, the complete knowledge, *paññā*. The arahant is released, *vimutto*.

27. *Āṅguttara Nikāya*, II, p. 80.

28. *Samyutta Nikāya*, III, p. 161.

29. *Ibid.*, V, p. 194.

30. *Ibid.*, V, p. 205.

31. *Ibid.*, III, p. 82 ff.

32. *Ibid.*, V, p. 433.

33. *Samyutta Nikāya*, IV, p. 252.

34. *Majjhima Nikāya*, I, p. 301.

On the subject of the arahants Barua suggests :

“ There is another classification by which the Arahats are divided into three orders, *viz.*, (1) *Kāyasakkhī*, the Intuitionist, (2) *Ditthipatta*, the Intellectualist, (3) *Saddhāvīṃṣatta*, the Rationalist. Savittha considered the devout mystic as the best of all, Sāriputta preferred the Intellectualist, and Mahākōṭṭhita preferred the Intuitionist. When the matter was referred to the Buddha for a final decision, he regretted his inability to make any dogmatic assertion, for anyone of these three classes might appear to be superior to others according to circumstances. Although in this particular passage of the *Anguttara Nikāya* (III. 21) the Buddha refrained from delivering a definite judgment on the question at issue, there are other passages to indicate his real position. There he enumerates seven classes of Arahats according to the highest place to the Uḥatobhāgavīṃṣatta, one who attains perfection by means of concentration and reason. The second place in his opinion is occupied by Paññāvīṃṣatta, one who attains mukti by means of reason. Below him stands the Kāyasakkhī, the Intuitionist who aspires to envisage the real as a single whole. To the Intuitionist analytical functions of the understanding, that is all perceptual and conceptual reconstructions of reality are ultimately futile. The Intellectualist (*Ditthipatta*) standing fourth in order of merit is a learned man who has ability to grasp and explain the philosophy of the Buddha. The Rationalist (*Saddhāvīṃṣatta*) who occupies the fifth place is a strong believer plus one who fairly understands the import of the Buddha's system. Next comes Dhammānūsārī, the good man, who develops the five faculties by faithfully carrying out the moral principles of the teacher. In the lowest rank is placed *Saddhānūsārī*, who develops the five faculties essential to mukti, by way of blind faith in and through the love of the Buddha. Here Buddha adds a word of explanation. In the case of the first two classes there is no further need of earnestness for it is impossible for them to be careless. The remaining classes are nevertheless recognised in his system because all cannot attend to a complete course of spiritual training.³⁵

The problem presenting itself on reading this is puzzling. Are the conclusions drawn above false, and has *saddhā* a greater importance than it is supposed to have according to the findings of the present investigation? There is the expression *saddhāvīṃṣatta* - unaccountably translated as “ rationalist.” The PTS Dictionary translates it as “ emancipated through faith,” and it seems that this interpretation is widely accepted as we see even by a scholar of the eminence of Dr. Barua. *Vīṃṣatta* occurs in three different, but in form

35. Dr. B. M. Barua, *Buddhist Studies*, Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta, 1931, p. 345ff.

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similar, compounds : *paññāvīṃṣatta*, *cetovīṃṣatta* and *saddhāvīṃṣatta*. The first two occur usually together in the conventional formula describing the arahant,³⁶ meaning literally : released by insight and released in heart. There is no explanation why these two should be so coupled. It is likely to express the psychological fact that complete insight can never be *only* emotional *only* intellectual, but that complete understanding is possible only if it touches both the intellectual and emotional faculties. Only the two together can bring full wisdom within one's reach. The position of *saddhāvīṃṣatta* is not so clear and has to be examined.

In order to enable a discussion on Barua's view it would be well to compare his interpretation with the two passages referred to by him. The Buddha's words in the *Anguttara* passage quoted by him are :

“ It is not easy indeed, Sāriputta, to answer in this matter definitely which of these three persons is most excellent and distinguished. It is possible indeed, Sāriputta, that a person who is released by ‘ faith ’ (*saddhāvīṃṣatta*) is an arahant or is on the path of arahantship : that a person who has realised the true nature of the body (*kāyasakkhī*) is a once returner (*sakadāgāmi*) or a non-returner (*anāgāmi*), that this one who has attained to the view (*ditthipatto*) is a once-returner or a non-returner. It is not easy indeed in this matter, Sāriputta, to answer definitely which of these three persons is most excellent and distinguished. It is possible indeed, Sāriputta, that a person who has realised the true nature of the body is an arahant or on the path of arahantship and . . . (that the other two are once-returners or non-returners) . . . It is possible (that the other two are once-returners or non-returners) . . . indeed, Sāriputta, that the person who has attained to the view is an arahant or on the path of arahantship and . . . (that the other two are once-returners or non-returners). It is not easy indeed, Sāriputta, to answer in this matter definitely, which of these three persons is most excellent and distinguished.”³⁷

This certainly is no classification of arahants. Each of these three *may be an arahant or not*. He may be a *sakadāgāmi* or an *anāgāmi* even. This must mean that the qualities they possess are by themselves not enough, they *alone* do not guarantee arahantship. If this passage proves anything, it proves that to be *saddhāvīṃṣatta* does not necessarily mean that one is an arahant. A person can be released by “ faith ” and yet not have attained arahantship.

36. The PTS. Dictionary under *ceto*- and *paññā*-states that the two expressions occur always together. This is obviously an oversight as for instance Notes 39 and 40 will show.

37. *Anguttara Nikāya*, I. p. 120.

The second instance quoted by Barua occurs in the Kitāgiri Sutta. The Buddha says :

“ There are seven (types of) persons existing in the world. Which are the seven ? 1. He who is released in both ways (ubhatobhāgavimutta) ; 2. He who is released by insight (paññāvimutta) ; 3. He who has realised the true nature of the body (kāyasakkhi) ; 4. He who has attained to the view (ditthipatta) ; 5. He who is released by ‘ faith ’ (saddhāvimutto) ; 6. He who is following the Dhamma (dhammānūsārī) ; 7. He who is following ‘ faith ’ (saddhānūsārī).

Which type of person is delivered both ways ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person has reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances which are immaterial having transcended the material, and having understood them through his insight, his āsavas are destroyed. This, bhikkhus is the (type of person) who is delivered both ways. I do not say, bhikkhus, that this bhikkhu has to work on with diligence. Why ? Because he has done everything with diligence. He is incapable of indolence.

Which (type of) person is delivered through insight, bhikkhus ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person, though he has not reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances which are immaterial having transcended the material, has understood (the āsavas) through insight and his āsavas are destroyed. I do not say, bhikkhus, that this bhikkhu has to work on with diligence. Why ? Because he has done everything with diligence. He is incapable of indolence.

Which (type of) person has realised the true nature of the body ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person has reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances which are immaterial having transcended the material, has destroyed some (*ekacce*) of the āsavas having understood them through insight. I do say, bhikkhus, that such a bhikkhu has still to work on with diligence. Why ? Because it would be good if this venerable one, living in suitable dwelling places, associating with good friends, controlling his senses, should attain through his own realisation in this very life to that superb state which is the utmost result of noble life for the sake of which noble youths leave rightly home for homelessness.

Which is the (type of) person who attained to the view, bhikkhus ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person, though he has not reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances . . . has destroyed some (*ekacce*) of the āsavas through his insight and understood through his insight the states which the Tathāgata has expounded. Of this bhikkhu I too say that he has to work on with diligence . . .

Which is the (type of) person who is released by ‘ faith ’ ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person, though he has not reached through his physical senses . . . has destroyed some (*ekacce*) of the āsavas through his insight, and his ‘ faith ’ in the Tathāgata has gone deep and is rooted and established. Of this bhikkhu too I do say that he has to work on with diligence . . .

Which is the (type of) person who is following the Dhamma, bhikkhus ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person, though he has not reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances . . . and though he has *not destroyed the āsavas*, (*italics mine*) has understood the teaching of the Tathāgata to some extent through his insight, and has such qualities as the faculty of ‘ faith, ’ the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration and the faculty of insight. Of such a bhikkhu too I do say that he has to work on with diligence . . .

Which is (the type) of person who is following ‘ faith, ’ bhikkhus ?

In this case, bhikkhus, a person, who has not reached through his physical senses those tranquil deliverances . . . and has *not destroyed the āsavas* (*italics mine*), has only ‘ faith ’ in and attachment to the Tathāgata. Yet he has such qualities as the faculty of ‘ faith, ’ the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, and the faculty of insight. Of such a bhikkhu too I do say that he has to work on diligently . . . ”³⁸

Can a person attain to arahantship without destroying *all the āsavas* ? And has an arahant still to “ work on with diligence ” ? We read here of persons who have destroyed some of the āsavas and of others who have destroyed none. This indeed is just as little a classification of the arahants as the Aṅguttara passage. And here too it is stated that a disciple who is *saddhāvimutta* has destroyed only *some* of the āsavas, and has still “ to work on with diligence ” until he attains that “ for the sake of which noble youths leave rightly their home for homelessness.”

No one can doubt that a *sakalāgāmī* or an *anāgāmī* is not an arahant. Neither do these texts leave any room for uncertainty about *saddhāvimutta*. A person who is *saddhāvimutta* may be on the better part of the way to arahantship, but that he is *saddhāvimutta* does not mean that he has attained the last release. Misunderstanding of this term may be due to the fact that *saddhāvimutta* echoes *paññāvimutta* in sound, and that *vimutta* itself means “ released.” So it happens that the neglect of the special valuation placed upon

38. Majjhima Nikāya, I. p. 177.

saddhā in Buddhism produces the effect that *saddhāvīṃṭti* and *paññāvīṃṭti* + *cetovīṃṭti* are considered to be identical in result, and different only in the way of approach. A closer examination however makes it clear that there may be releases from different hindrances and fetters which are releases indeed, but these do not remove *all* obstacles in the way to the goal.

This is so with regard to *cetovīṃṭti*. Various passages in the Aṅguttara dealing with the four brahnavihāras make it quite obvious that their practice results in *cetovīṃṭti* and that the person attaining this, becomes an *anāgāmi*.

"Thus, O bhikkhus, the heart's release developed through (amity, compassion, sympathy) equanimity conduces to the state of non-return of the wise bhikkhu *who is not penetrating* into further release..."³⁹ (Italics mine).

As we see, he is *cetovīṃṭta* but not yet an arahant because "he is not penetrating into further release."

Another passage establishes this beyond doubt:

"Thus he ponders: This heart's release through (amity, compassion, sympathy) equanimity is produced, thought out. But he knows that whatever is produced, thought out is impermanent and subject to cessation."⁴⁰

It seems that *cetovīṃṭti* is a state which is not beyond impermanence. Though it is a release, it is an intermediate release.

The Netti-pakarana which is of course outside the field of this examination as a later text, makes a clear distinction between *paññāvīṃṭti* and *cetovīṃṭti* which appears to be in conformity with the interpretation of these conceptions in the Tipitaka. "*Cetovīṃṭti*, freedom of heart, because of the weaning of passion, is both the fruit of the learner and the fruit of non-return, but *paññāvīṃṭti*, because of the weaning of ignorance is both the fruit of the adept and the highest fruit, arahantship."⁴¹

In the same way as *cetovīṃṭti*, *saddhāvīṃṭti* too is an "intermediate" release, which is not the last, nor complete but it enables further progress.⁴² A *saddhāvīṃṭta* has every chance of attaining ultimate release but he still has

39. Aṅguttara Nikāya, V, p. 301.

40. Aṅguttara Nikāya, V, p. 345. See I. B. Horner, Freedom of Mind (Cetovīṃṭti) and a changing Piṭakan value, Ācārya Puspāñjali, Vol. 182, Ed. B. C. Law, 1940.

41. I. B. Horner, The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected, 1936, p. 182.

42. It is interesting to note that the Commentary (MA. I, p. 188 ff.) says of the first types mentioned in the Majjhima passage discussed above that they have got rid of the āsavas; the next following in the list have got rid of some of the āsavas. The *saddhāvīṃṭta* is here said to be kilesakhayo (one whose kilesas are destroyed). The word *kilesa* occurs very rarely in the Tipitaka, nowadays it seems to be regarded as a synonym for āsavas. The passage in the Commentary together with the words of the text indicates that there was undoubtedly a difference in the meanings of the two expressions. It would be an interesting task to investigate this further.

to strive hard and work on with diligence. If he does so he will attain *paññāvīṃṭti* + *cetovīṃṭti*. One who has reached the stage of *Paññāvīṃṭti* + *cetovīṃṭti* is not urged more by Gotama to go on with persevering. He has passed beyond such a need, there are no more hindrances for him and the master calls him "diamond minded."

"How is the person, bhikkhus, who is diamond minded? In this case, bhikkhus, a certain person has by the destruction of the āsavas realised and attained through insight, by himself, in this very life the release through insight and the heart's release, free from āsavas, and abides therein. Just as, bhikkhus, there is no gem nor stone that cannot be cut by a diamond, just so bhikkhus, a certain person has by the destruction of the āsavas... attained... release through insight and the heart's release... and abides therein.

This person, bhikkhus, is called diamond minded.⁴³

A great deal of material could be collected to demonstrate the difference between the valuation of knowledge and of "faith" in Buddhism, but it would add little to the passages selected above and accumulation at this stage seems unnecessary. There is no question of "blind faith" being regarded as a prominent quality of the ideal disciple. For the Buddhist *saddhā* is useful and desirable but it is not the best nor the only vehicle to carry one to Nibbāna. It is certainly valued as the best attitude for the beginning of the training and it is even doubted whether a successful journey on the road to final release begin without *saddhā*. But this is all. A verse of the Sutta Nipāta completed with the remarks of the Commentary as quoted by I. B. Horner furnishes an excellent illustration of the valuation of "faith" in Buddhism.

The Verse says:

By "faith" the flood is crossed	..	the attainment of the First Way is by crossing the flood of <i>dīṭṭhi</i> .
By zeal the deep is crossed	..	the attainment of the Second Way is by crossing the flood of <i>bhava</i> .
By effort ill is overcome	..	the attainment of the Third Way is by crossing the flood of <i>kāma</i> .
By knowledge one is purified	..	the attainment of the Fourth Way is by crossing the flood of <i>avijjā</i> .

She goes on:

"Giving the passage in full the Commentary declares in accordance with the verse that a man crosses the flood by 'faith.' But he who is without 'faith' cannot spring across the flood; and he who is negligent with regard to the five bonds of sensual pleasure does not cross the deep of

43. Aṅguttara Nikāya, I, p. 124.

samsāra. It is because the flood is crossed by 'faith' that the faculty of 'faith' is called the "proximate cause" of the Way of stream-entry; and for this reason crossing the flood of wrong views is called the Way of stream-entry and also stream-entry. Further if the stream-entrant after cultivating good states is endowed with zeal, he is established in the second Way, that of the once-returner to this world. For having crossed the flood of becoming by means of the Way of stream-entry he crosses the deep of *samsāra*. Therefore the crossing of the flood of becoming is called the Way of once-return or simply once-returning. Anyone on this way putting forth effort, achieves the third Way, and overcoming the flood of sensuous pleasures overcomes ill; and crossing this flood is known as non-returner. If this person by ridding himself of the mud of sensuous desire, by purification and by knowledge achieves the fourth Way, he has destroyed the constituent of ignorance by means of the third Way. For this reason crossing the flood of ignorance is known as the Way to arahanship, or arahanship. Thus one established in the fruit of stream-attainment may rise to the goal and climax of arahanship."⁴⁴

This is the exact position of *saddhā* in the Tipitaka. In later literature the attitude towards *saddhā* is not so uniform. As long as Buddhism was a religion and a philosophy of the few, of the select, knowledge, and insight were emphasised as the road leading to Nibbāna. For the great masses this way was too difficult and too arduous; it was easier to believe without trying to understand. In addition as time went on the *bhakti* cult paved the way for a new and higher valuation of *saddhā*. The senses of faith conveyed by *bhakti* are closely related to those of the English word. And under the influence of *bhakti*, *saddhā* too begins later to change its character. In *bhakti* devotion is the dominating sense. It is derived from the root *bhaj* meaning in this connection "to adore." This devotion is directed not towards a system of thought but towards the person of the Lord. *Sā paramivaktiśvare*—the Primary Devotion is the attachment to the Lord.⁴⁵ This is always emphasised. *Sa tuasmin paramaprema rūpā*—It is of the form of intense love towards Him.⁴⁶ *Bhakti* presupposes a concentration on the object of love even to the extent of complete neglect of the study of the texts. *Yo vedānāpi sammasyati kevalama-bicchimmāvirgam labhate*—Who lays aside even the sacred writings, and who develops an undivided and uninterrupted flow of love towards God.⁴⁷

44. I. B. Horner, *The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected*, p. 276.

45. *The One Hundred Aphorisms of Śāṅgīliya with the Commentary of Svapneśvara*. SBH, 1911 verse 2.

46. *Bhakti Śūtras of Nārada*, SBH, 1911, verse 2.

47. *Ibid.*, verse 49.

THE VALUATION OF SADDHĀ IN EARLY BUDDHIST TEXTS

The *saddhā* of the Tipitaka is as far removed from the emotion expressed in *bhakti* as it is from the *faith* of Christianity. If in using the word "faith" for *saddhā* in translations one restricts oneself to its meaning of "confidence, trust, belief," no objection can be raised to it. But as the associations of the word in English, especially if it is used in connection with a religion, are invariably those of Christianity, it will be more appropriate to leave *saddhā* untranslated. Otherwise there is the danger that the valuations of one religious system will be involuntarily transferred to the other.

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