

# A note to the phrase Kro Dhamani-Samtata

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## A NOTE ON THE PHRASE *KṚŚO DHAMANI-SAMTATA\**

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Those who read through the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa will soon be aware of the fact that there exist a number of phrases which are shared by both Epics. The presence of those phrases indicates that there once existed for ancient Indian rhapsodists a common stock of phrases, or stereotyped expressions, from which the singers of both Epics derived freely their usage for the sake of their oral transmission.

As early as the beginning of this century, E.W. HOPKINS collected some 330 phrases of this sort, that is, the phrases shared by both Epics and incorporated them in his *Great Epic of India*<sup>1</sup>. Since that time Epic scholars have followed this line of comparative studies.<sup>2</sup>

Side by side with these phrases shared by both Epics, there are also phrases not shared by them, despite the fact that singers of both Epics delineated the same themes. For example, in the description of asceticism which occurs frequently in both Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa, such a phrase as *tapasā dagdha-kilbiṣa*<sup>3</sup> is peculiar to the Mahābhārata. Also in the oft-recurring description of single combat the phrase *mṛtyum kṛtvā nivartanam*<sup>4</sup>

\* This is the text of a lecture given at the University of Lausanne on 4th June 1993. I would like to thank Professor J. BRONKHORST who invited me to give the lecture, and those who attended there and participated in the discussion. The original draft was made in winter 1993 during the tenure of a Clare Hall Visiting Fellowship, Cambridge. Thanks are due to Professor A. LOW, the President of Clare Hall, and my friends, Professor K.R. NORMAN and Dr.J. LIPNER, who read my original manuscript and corrected my English.

1 Cf. E.W. HOPKINS, *The Great Epic of India* (New Haven 1901) pp.403-445.

2 Cf. J.L.BROCKINGTON, "Stereotyped Expressions in the Rāmāyaṇa", JAOS 90 (1970), pp.210-227, and "Figures of Speech in the Rāmāyaṇa", JAOS 97 (1977), pp.414-459. For a detailed bibliographical reference, see my article mentioned in note 5.

3 Cf. MBh. 1.66.2, 3.32.35, 3.81.61, 3.107.4, 3.156.1, 12.139.91, 12.210.25, 13.129.42, 14.27.23, 15.26.9, 15.27.12, 15.27.14.

4 Cf. MBh. 6.53.2, 7.17.31, 7.127.20, 7.171.39, 8.26.32, 8.32.9, 8.41.7, 8.55.73, 8.56.47, 9.7.5, 9.9.7, 9.9.57, 9.10.8, 9.20.4, 9.27.21.

appears in the Mahābhārata, but never in the Rāmāyaṇa. The presence of such phrases not shared by both Epics is indicative of the existence of different sources from which they derived their technique of oral transmission.

At the International Conference of Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa held in Torino in April 1992, the present writer contributed a paper entitled "Phrases not shared by the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa," in which some twenty phrases of this sort were collected and discussed<sup>5</sup>. The study to be presented here is another contribution to this sort of comparative studies of Epic phrases.

The phrase in question is *kṛśo dhamani-saṃtata*, which is exclusive to the Mahābhārata. The phrase is remarkable, because despite its absence in the Rāmāyaṇa, it is shared by Buddhist Pāli literature. Yet, on further scrutiny it becomes clear that its use in the Mahābhārata is different from that in the Pāli texts. An examination of the heterogeneous contexts of Epic and Pāli literature leads us to another problem concerning the cultural background in which these texts developed. In the pages which follow, we shall first discuss the Epic passages and then those found in the Buddhist texts. After examining these passages, we shall compare one with the other and discuss consequent problems.

## I

The phrase *kṛśo dhamani-saṃtata* (emaciated to such an extent that veins appear all over the body) describes an ascetic who adopts an austere mode of life by restriction of food and drink. We shall list below the passages where the phrase occurs, and investigate their context.

(1) Arjuna reminds Kṛṣṇa of the ascetic practice he undertook in the past.

*apakṛṣṭottarāsaṅgaḥ kṛśo dhamani-saṃtataḥ  
āsīḥ kṛṣṇa sarasvatyāṃ satre dvādaśa-vārṣike* (MBh.3.13.13)

Removing your upper cloth, emaciated and held together by your veins, you dwelt on the Sarasvatī river, Kṛṣṇa, at the Twelve-years Session.

(2) In the description of Dhundhu's ascetic practice we read,

*atiṣṭhad eka-pādena kṛśo dhamani-saṃtataḥ  
tasmai brahmā dadau prīto varam vavre sa ca prabho* (MBh.3.195.2)

He stood on one foot, emaciated and held together by his veins. Pleased, Brahmā offered him a boon, and he chose a boon.

5 M. HARA, "On phrases not shared by the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa," to be published in the *Indologica Taurinensia*.

- (3) Similarly, in the description of Jayadratha's asceticism we read,

*indriyānīndriyārthebhyah priyebhyah samnivartya sah  
kṣut-pipāsātapa-sahah kṛśo dhamani-samtataḥ  
devam ārādhayac charvaṃ gr̥ṇan brahma sanātanam* (MBh.7.41.12)

Restraining his sense organs from all objects dear to them, bearing hunger, thirst and heat, emaciated and held together by his veins, and reciting the eternal brahman, he worshipped the god Śarva.

- (4) A fowler who killed pigeons decided to devote himself to asceticism.

*kṣut-pipāsātapa-sahah kṛśo dhamani-samtataḥ  
upavāsair bahuvidhaiś carisyē pāra-laukikam* (MBh.12.143.7)

Bearing hunger, thirst and heat, emaciated and held together by my veins, I shall perform something useful for the next world by means of various sorts of fasting.

- (5) In the description of Mataṅga's asceticism we read,

*suduṣkaram vahan yogam kṛśo dhamani-samtataḥ  
tvag-asthi-bhūto dharmātmā sa papātetī naḥ śrutam* (MBh.13.30.2)

Carrying out the discipline (*yoga*) hard of practice, emaciated and held together by his veins and becoming nothing but skin and bones, he, the pious man, finally fell down. Thus we have heard.

- (6) Dhṛtarāṣṭra answers Yudhiṣṭhira who is anxious about the tidings of Vidura.

*vāyu-bhakṣo nirāhārah kṛśo dhamani-samtataḥ  
kadācid dr̥śyate vipraiḥ śūnye 'smin kānane kvacit* (MBh.15.33.16)

Subsisting on air alone, abstaining from food, emaciated and held together by his veins, sometimes he is seen here and there in this empty forest by Brahmins.

- (7) King Dambhodbhava saw Nara and Nārāyaṇa engaged in the practice of severe asceticism.

*tau dr̥ṣtvā kṣut-pipāsābhyāṃ kṛśau dhamani-samtatau  
śīta-vātātapaiś caiva karṣitau puruṣottamau  
abhigamyopasaṃgr̥hya paryapṛcchad anāmayam* (MBh.5.94.18)

He found the best of men emaciated because of hunger and thirst, held together by their veins, and worn out by cold winds and the heat of the sun. He approached them, clasped their feet and asked about their health.

- (8) In the retreat called Badari, the same two practised severe asceticism.

*tatrādau loka-nāthau tau kṛśau dhamani-samtatau* (llcd)  
*tapasā tejasā caiva durnirīkṣau surair api* (MBh.12.321.12ab)

There, in the beginning (*kṛta yuga*), these regents of the world, emaciated and held together by their veins, who are hard to look at even by gods because of their effulgence, ascetic as well as majestic ...

(9) Yudhiṣṭhira grieves over Kuntī, wasted in forest fire in the practice of asceticism.

*manye pṛthā vepamānā kṛśā dhamani-saṃtatā*  
*hā tāta dharmarājeti samākrandan mahābhaye* (MBh.15.46.16)

I suppose that Pṛthā (my mother), emaciated and held together by her veins, trembling and calling (me) in great fear, 'oh my son, king of justice'.

(10) In the description of the ascetic Ārṣṭiṣeṇa we read,

*tatas taṃ tīvra-tapasam kṛśam dhamani-saṃtatam*  
*pāragam sarva-dharmāṇām ārṣṭiṣeṇam upāgaman* (MBh.3.155.90)

Then they approached Ārṣṭiṣeṇa, the seer of severe asceticism, versed in all the dharma, who was emaciated and held together by his veins.

Thus far we have seen the phrase used in connection with ascetics; it is also used, however, in other contexts. Two instances from the Mahābhārata are here quoted.

(11) Surabhi laments for her son as follows,

*aparo 'lpa-bala-prāṇaḥ kṛśo dhamani-saṃtataḥ*  
*kṛcchrād udvahate bhāraṃ taṃ vai śocāmi vāsava* (MBh.3.10.12c-f)

O Indra, the other one of little strength and vigour, emaciated and held together by his veins, could hardly pull the load. For him I grieve.

(12) Similarly this is how Bhīṣma describes the particular group of soldiers.

*jihmākṣāḥ pralalāṭās ca nirmāṃsa-hanavo 'pi ca*  
*vakra-bāhv-aṅgulī-saktāḥ kṛśā dhamani-saṃtatāḥ* (14)  
*praviśanty ativegena saṃparāye 'bhyupasthite* (MBh.12.102.15ab)

It is those who have crooked eyes and broad foreheads and cheek-bones not covered by flesh, who have bent arms and fingers, and who are emaciated and held together by their veins, that rush forward with great speed into the collision, when the battle takes place.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> We have other examples which do not contain the beginning, *kṛśo*, but *dhamani-saṃtata* only.

(1) In the description of the ascetic Nibandhana, we read,

*munim nibandhanam śuṣkam dhamanīyākṛtiṃ tathā*  
*nirārambham nirālbham asajjantam ca karmani*  
 (MBh.12. Appendix 1, No.15.5-6. vol.16. p.2022)

(2) In the description of ascetics who came with Śakuntalā to the city of Duḥṣyanta, we have the phrase *dhamanī-saṃtata*. People in the city, however, laughed at them as if they were *Piśācas*. This insulted the sages, who then made up their mind not to enter the city.

Nevertheless, the phrase *kṛśo dhamani-samtata* is usually used to describe ascetics.

As is well-known, Indian asceticism consists of restraint of the sense organs (*indriya-nigraha*), yogic practice, fasting (*upavāsa*), and other forms of self-mortification of the artificial nature. We have all these elements in the above examples (*indriyāṅindriyārthebhyaḥ ... samnivartya, suduṣkaram vahan yogam, kṣut-pipāsātapa-saha, upavāsa, tvag-asthi-bhūta, vāyu-bhakṣa, nirāhāra, atiṣṭhad ekapādena, śītavātātapa*). Their presence confirms that the phrase generally serves to illustrate the person who is engaged in severe ascetic practice. But the phrase *kṛśo dhamani-samtata* never appears in the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa.

## II

Curiously enough, however, the phrase is found in the Buddhist Pāli literature, its Prakrit form being *kiso dhamani-santata*, or *dhamani-santhata*, or even *dhamani-santhita*, though it is not used exclusively to describe ascetics as is the case with the Mahābhārata. Rather, it depicts any person in a miserable condition. Let us review these uses.

(1) To start with, as in the Epic, the phrase is used to describe a man who leads an austere way of life. Thus, we have in the Dhammapada:

*paṃsukūla-dharam jantum kisaṃ dhamani-samthatam  
ekam vanasmiṃ jhāyantam tam aham brūmi brāhmaṇam* (Dhammapada 395)

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*kṣut-pipāsārditān dīnān valkalājina-vāsasaḥ  
tvag-asthi-bhūtān nirmāmsān dhamanī-samtatān api*  
(MBh.1. Appendix 48, 53-54, vol.1, p.901)

(3) In the story of the rejuvenation of the old ascetic Cyavana by the twin gods, the Aśvins, we read in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa,

*ity uktvā jarayā grasta-deho dhamani-samtataḥ  
hradam praveśito 'śvibhyāṃ valī-palita-vipriyaḥ* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa 9.3.14)

(4) In the description of misery in the city abandoned by the king Saṃvaraṇa and destined to suffer twelve years of famine, we read,

*tat kṣudhārtair nirānandaiḥ śava-bhūtais tadā naraiḥ  
abhavat preta-rājasya puram pretair ivāvṛtam* (MBh.1.163.16)  
(*snāyv-asthi-śeṣair nirmāmsair dhamanī-samtatair bhṛśam*)(1743\*)

The examples 1-3 describe emaciated ascetics (*śuṣka, kṣutpipāsārdita, dīna, tvag-asthi-bhūta, nirmāmsa*), while the last describes people in misery, which may be compared with the description of the *pretas*, as we shall see later in the Petavatthu.

A man wearing rags from a dust heap, emaciated and held together by his veins, engaged solely in meditation in the forest, him I call a Brahmin.<sup>7</sup>

(2) Also, in the Theragāthā we read,

*kālāpabbaṅga-saṃkāso kiso dhamani-santato  
mattaññu anna-pānamhi adīna-manaso naro* (Theragāthā 243 = 683)

(Here is) a man with limbs like the knots of the Kālā-plant, thin, with his veins showing, knowing moderation in food and drink, with undaunted spirit. (K.R. Norman)<sup>8</sup>

(3) Almost the same verse is found in the Jaina text, Uttarādhyayanasūtra (ed., by J. Charpentier).

*kālī-pavvaṅga-saṃkāse kise dhamani-saṃtae  
māyanne asaṅga-pāṇassa adīna-maṇaso care* (Uttarādhyayanasūtra 2.3)

(4) In the Bhikkhāparampara Jātaka (496) we read,

*isiṅ ca dāni pucchāmi kisam dhamani-santhatam  
parūlha-kaccha-nakha-lomam paṃka-dantaṃ rajassiram* (J.4.371.19-20)

Now I ask the sage, emaciated and held together by his veins, with nails and hair like a grown thicket, with dirty teeth and dusty head.<sup>9</sup>

However, the same phrase is also used to describe an ignoble Brahmin.

(5) In the Mahākapi Jātaka (516) we read,

*tattha brāhmaṇaṃ addakkhi setaṃ citraṃ kilāsinam  
viddhastaṃ kuviḷāraṃ va kisaṃ dhamani-santhatam* (2) (J.5.69.1-2)

There he (the king of Kāśī) saw a Brahmin, white and spotted, suffering from leprosy, like the Kuvilāra tree, wasted, emaciated and held together by his veins.

(6) Similarly,

*ugghaṭṭa-pādo tasito kiso dhamani-santhato  
chāto ātatta-rūpo si, kuto nu tvam agacchasi* (6) (J.5.69.9-10)

Foot-sore and thirsty, emaciated and held together by your veins, hungry and with complexion scorched! Where have you come from.

7 Cf. Gāndhārī Dharmapada 38, Udānavarga 33.53.

8 Cf. also W.B. BOLLÉE, *Reverse Index of the Dhammapada, Suttanipāta, Thera- and Therīgāthā pādas with parallels from Āyāraṅga, Sūyagaḍa, Uttarajjhāya, Desaveyālya and Isibhāsiyaim*, Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik, Monographie 8 (Reinbek 1983) p.230.

9 The second line is the same as J.547.20.

These examples testify to the fact that this phrase in verse form is not confined to the description of an ascetic (*isi*), Brahmin, or man of undaunted spirit (*adīna-mañaso nara*), but extends also to an ignoble Brahmin.<sup>10</sup>

(7) However, the phrase *kiso dhamani-santata* is a part of a more composite Pāli stock phrase in prose, *kiso (hoti) lūkho dubbanno uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatto*<sup>11</sup>. This composite phrase serves to depict any person who stands in hardship, not merely ascetics. Guided by PTS Dictionary and Pāli Tipiṭakam Concordance, below we list its occurrences in Vinaya text.

*tena kho pana samayena āyasmā Seyyasako anabhirato brahmacariyaṃ carati, so tena kiso hoti lūkho dubbanno uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatto* (Vinaya-piṭaka 3, p.110, lines 5-8, cf. also lines 9-10, 11-12, and 28-29)

At that time, Seyyasaka devoted himself to religious vow with reluctance (*anabhirata*). Then he became emaciated, wretched, ugly, yellowish, held together by his veins all over his body.

This composite phrase *kiso lūkho dubbanno uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatto* appears in Pāli prose occasionally (Vin.1.199.5-6, 200.9-10, 16-17, 276.14-15, 3.19.17-19, 88.27-28, 4.24.33-34), its counterpart being *vannaṇvā pīnindriyo pasanna-mukha-vaṇṇo vippasanna-chavi-vaṇṇa* (Vin.3.19.22-23, 88.29-30, 110.24-25, 4.24.35-36). Since the portions other than *kiso dhamani-santhata*, viz. *lūkho* (Skt. *rūkṣa*, poor, miserable), *dubbanna* (Skt. *durvarṇa*, of bad complexion), *uppaṇḍu -ppaṇḍuka-jāto* (yellowish), describe wretched condition, the phrase does not necessarily depict an emaciated state as a result of ascetic practice. As a matter of fact, this lengthy expression is used to describe a man who is physically weak, either because of illness (*ābādha* Vin.1.199), or for want of food and drink under famine conditions (Vin.3.88, 4.24). Not only physically ill, but also mentally vexed persons are depicted by this phrase. Thus, a man who practises religious vows (*brahmacariya*) against his will (*anabhirata*) (Vin. 3.110.13, MN.2.121.11-12, cf. also 3.19.26), who conceals an evil act (*kiñci pāpaṃ kammaṃ kataṃ paṭichanna* MN.2.121.1213. cf. also 3.19.28), who has fear (Vin.3.146.14 *nāgassa bhayā*, J.2.283. 23ff. *tassa bhayena*), who misses a dear friend (Vin.3.147.11 and 17 *dassanīyassa adassanena*, J.2.285.12

10 Later we met an example where *kisa* is also construed with *paṇḍu* (yellowish)(verse 17, J.5.70.17).

11 cf. O. VON HINÜBER, *Untersuchungen zur Mündlichkeit früher mittelindischer Texte der Buddhisten* (Stuttgart 1994), p.38.



(*dassanīyassa nāgarājassa adassanena*), and who has some grievance because an earnest desire is unfulfilled (Vin.1.55 21 *pabbajam alabhamāno*), are all described by our expression.

(8) An abridged form, *kisa uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāta dhamani-santhata-gatta*, appears in the Sambulā-Jātaka (519), where the queen is described as becoming emaciated because of jealousy (*sapatti-rosena*).

*Sambulā sapatti-rosena kisā ahosi uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jātā dhamani-santhata-gattā* (J.5.95.18-19)

Sambulā, through jealousy of her rivals, grew thin and pale of countenance, held together by veins all over her body.

(9) The same phrase with transposed construction, that is, *kiso dhamani-santhata-gatto uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāta*, is found in the introductory portion of the Unmadantī-Jātaka (527), where a lovesick mendicant is described as follows,

*tato paṭṭhāya salla-viddho viya rāgāturo bhanta-miga-paṭibhāgo kiso dhamani-santhata-gatto uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto anabhirato ...* (J.5.209.25-26)

From that time onward, pierced with (love's) arrow as it were, and sick with desire, like a deer separated from his friends, he became emaciated and held together by his veins, yellowish, and no longer took delight in ...

(10) Its variant form, *kisa-sarīro (kiliṭṭha-cīvaro) uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatta*, appears in the introductory portion of the Kusa-Jātaka (531), where another love-sick mendicant is introduced as follows,

*kilesābhibhūto anabhirato vihāsi dīgha-kesa-nakho kisa-sarīro kiliṭṭha-cīvaro uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatto...* (J.5.278.6-8)

Overcome by his passion, he lead his life discontent, his hair and nails long grown. He became emaciated, wearing soiled robes, yellowish and held together by his veins ...

(11) A still more abridged form, *uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatta*, appears in the introductory story of the Illīsa-Jātaka (78), where a mean millionaire becomes emaciated through the tension of keeping his secret.

*so gacchante gacchante kāle uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamani-santhata-gatto jāto* (J.1.346.4-5)

As time passed, he grew yellowish and held together by his veins.

(12) A variant form *paṇḍu-sarīro (ahosi) dhamani-santhata-gatta* appears in the prose portion of the same Jātaka.

*so taṅhaṃ adhvāsento vicarivā gacchante kāle adhvāsetuṃ asakkonto vihaṭa-kappāso viya paṇḍu-sarīro ahosi dhamani-santhata-gatto jāto* (J.1.350.3-5)

So he walked about, bearing his thirst. But, as time went on, he could do so no longer; he grew as yellow as old cotton and was held together by his veins.

(13) Another variant form *naggā dubbaṅṇa-rūpā kisā dhamani-saṃṭhitā* appears in the Petavatthu in order to describe *petas* and *petīs*, unhappy ghosts in hell.

*naggā dubbaṅṇa-rūpāsi kisā dhamani-saṃṭhitā  
upphāsulike kisike kā nu tvam idha tiṭṭhasi* (Petavatthu 2.1.1)

Naked and of hideous appearance are you, emaciated and held together by your veins. You thin one, with your ribs standing out. Now, who are you, you who are here?

*naggā dubbaṅṇa-rūpa 'tha kisā dhamani-saṃṭhitā  
upphāsulikā kisakā ke nu tumhe 'tha mārisa* (Petavatthu 4.10.1)<sup>12</sup>

Naked and of hideous appearance are you, emaciated and held together by your veins, you thin ones, with your ribs standing out. Now, who are you, sirs.<sup>13</sup>

(14) And finally its most shortened form, *kisa dhamani-santhata*, serves to describe an evil Brahmin as well as a sage (*isi*), as we have seen above.

(15) The Sanskrit equivalent is met in the Lalitavistara. As is well known, the youthful Buddha saw an old man on his way to the pleasure-garden. This old man is here described as *dhamani-saṃtata*.

*atha bodhisattvasyaivānubhāvena śuddhāvāsa-kāyikair devaputrais tasmin mārgē puruṣo jirṇo vṛddho mahallako dhamanīsaṃtata-gātraḥ khaṇḍa-danto valī-nicita-kāyah ... upadarśito 'bhūt* (Lalitavistara ed. by S. Lefmann, p.187, line 21 - p.188, line 4)

Then, by the power of the Bodhisattva, gods who live in Śuddhāvāsa heaven showed on his way an old man, worn out, feeble, held together by veins all over his body, with defective teeth, his body a heap of wrinkles ...

(16) Two passages in the Mahāvastu-avadāna have our phrase, one in prose and the other in verse. Unhappy, miserable merchants who are captured in the island of the Rākṣasīs are described as follows,

12 For variant readings, cf. PTS text Series 168, *Vimānavatthu* and *Petavatthu*, New Edition by N.A. JAYAWICKRAMA (London 1977), pp.97-98.

13 Cf. *Petavatthu-vaṅṇanā* (*tattha dhamani-saṃṭhitā iti nimmaṃsalohitattāya sirā-jālā-vijāṭatattā*)(*aṭṭhi-camma-nahāru-matta-sarīratayā ativiyakisabhāva-dassanattamaṃ vuttam*), Minayeff ed., PTS text, London 1888, pp.77-78).

*tatra ca me bahūni vāñijaka-śatāni uparuddhāni dr̥ṣṭāni śuṣkāni dhamanī-santata-vātātapa-dagdha-tvaca-māṃsāni kṛṣṇāni malina-keśāni pāñiyārthaṃ nakhalīhi bhūmiṃ khananti kṣut-pipāsā-samarpitāni* (Mahāvastu ed., by E. Senart, 3.75.2-4)

There I saw hundreds of merchants confined (in the stronghold), all being scorched, held together by their veins, their skin and flesh shrivelled by the wind and heat. They are dark and their hair unkempt. They dug the ground with their nails to look for water, and they suffered pangs of hunger and thirst.

*abhiruhya taṃ śirīṣaṃ paśyati nagare śatāni manuḥjānām māṃsopavāsikānām virūḍha-nakha-keśa-śmaśrūnām dhamanī-santata-gātrā vātātapa-dagdha-tvaca-māṃsānām pūtika-khaṇḍavasanānām tṛṣṇārttā malina-keśānām* (Mahāvastu 3.83.10-13)

He climbed the Sirīṣa tree, and then he could see within the stronghold hundreds of men who had been fasting for months, and their nails, hair, and beards were long-grown. They were held together by their veins all over their body, their skin and flesh shrivelled by wind and heat, their clothes were rotting rags, they were tortured by thirst and their hair was unkempt.<sup>14</sup>

In the above, we have examined the prose stock phrase *kiso lūkho dubbanno uppaṇḍu-ppaṇḍuka-jāto dhamanī-santhata-gatta* (= *kṛśo rūkṣo durvarṇa utpaṇḍupaṇḍu-jāto dhamanī-samtata-gātra*) and its variations in Buddhist literature, Pāli as well as Sanskrit. From these examples, we note that the phrase enjoys a more extended usage relative to the Epic. It is used in order to describe those who perform their duty reluctantly (*anabhirata*), and those who suffer from mental anguish caused by fear (*bhaya*), jealousy (*sapattirosa*), love-sick, or any sort of frustration. It is even used of miserable unhappy ghosts (*preta*) who endure torments in hell. In the Lalitavistara, the poor, miserable old man, at whose sight the Bodhisattva made up his mind to renounce the world, and in the Mahāvastu, the merchants in lamentable condition in the island of the Rākṣasīs are all portrayed by our phrase (*dhamanī-samtata-gātra*).

### III

In the preceding two chapters, we have analysed the phrase *kṛśo dhamanī-samtata* as used in the Mahābhārata as well as in the Pāli Buddhist literature. The phrase serves to describe an ascetic in the Epic, but it is used in

14 In the Pāli Valāhassa-jātaka (196) and in the story of the merchant Siṃhala, our compound does not appear. I owe these references to my friends, Dr.H. NAKATANI and Professor S. LIENHARD.

Pāli much more freely. A comparison of the two contexts shows that its extension of usages are different from each other.

As regards the Pāli phrase, two possibilities suggest themselves. The phrase *kiso dhamani-samt(h)ata* was an abridged form of a more composite lengthy phrase in prose, or the latter was later extended from our phrase in verse.

If the phrase in verse was taken from a more composite stock phrase in prose, the Epic singers may have adopted it and used it in a more limited sense.

But, since its use in the older layer of Pāli literature like the Dhammapada and Theragāthā is confined to the description of the ascetic, and the younger layer has a wider application, it seems that the verse form *kiso dhamani-samt(h)ata* is original, and its more composite form in prose is a later innovation.

Furthermore, since the limited usage (in description of the ascetic) is shared by the Epic, Pāli and Jaina texts in oldest layer, the extended usage might be a modern amplification in Jātaka prose and other literature. This hypothesis seems to be further supported by the Harivaṃśa passages which contain our phrase in its extended form.

*munayo dīrgha-tapasah samādhau kṛta-niścayāḥ*  
*jaṭinā muṇḍinaḥ kecic chirā-dhamani-samtatāḥ* (H.3.77.2)  
*srkkiṇī lelihantau cā dantān kaṭakaṭāyinau*  
*asthi-snāyu-samākīrṇau dhamanī-rajju-samtatau* (H.3.79.6)  
*pibanto rudhiraṃ ghoram khaṇḍayantaḥ śavān bahūn*  
*karālā vitatā dīrghā dhamani-snāyu-samtatāḥ* (H.3.86.7)

Out of these three instances which I have come across so far, the first depicts a muni with *śirā-dhamani-samtata*, whereas the remaining two describe the Piśācas with *dhamani-rajju-samtata* and *dhamani-snāyu-samtata*. However, since the Poona Critical Edition does not include these instances, these extended forms of *dhamani-samtata* with *-snāyu*, *-rajju* and *śirā-* must be of the later innovations.<sup>15</sup>

15 Here we are reminded once again of the Epic examples cited above in note 6, which are not included in the Critical Edition.

*snāyv-asthi-śeṣair nirmāṃsair dhamanī-samtatair bhṛśam* (MBh.1.1743\*)  
*tvag-asthi-bhūtān nirmāṃsān dhamanī-samtatān api*  
 (MBh.1, Appendix 1, No.48, 54, vol.1, p.901)  
*munim nibandhanaṃ śuṣkaṃ dhamanīyākṛtiṃ tathā*  
 (MBh.12 Appendix 1, No.15, 5, vol.16, p.2022)

Cf. also the story of Cyavana related in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa 9.3.14 (*ity uktvā jarayā grasta-deho dhamani-samtataḥ*).

## IV

Those familiar with Buddhist art may be curious whether the phrase *dhamani-sant(h)ata-gātra* serves for the description of the Buddha in ascetic practice. As is well known, the Buddha resorted to severe asceticism for the six years before his final enlightenment. Realizing that self-mortification was useless for the attainment of enlightenment, he gave up asceticism. We have a beautiful and realistic representation of Buddha, the ascetic, preserved in the Lahore Museum. It depicts him so emaciated that veins are shown all over his body. It certainly seems that this remarkable piece of Indian art is nothing but an iconographical presentation of the textual expression *dhamani-sant(h)ata-* or *dhamani-sant(h)ata-gatta*.

Strangely enough, however, to the best of my knowledge, the phrase *dhamani-sant(h)ata-gatta* and its extended forms never appear in textual descriptions of Buddha engaged in asceticism. This is remarkable, because the Epic phrase *dhamani-samtata* is freely used to describe asceticism performed not only by respected ascetics, but even by divine figures like Kṛṣṇa, Nara and Nārāyaṇa. On the contrary, *nigūḍha-śira* (having his veins fully concealed, that is, fat enough), which is just the opposite concept to *dhamani-samtata*, is enumerated as one of Buddha's 80 *anuvyañjanas* (secondary marks).<sup>16</sup> As regards the phrase *dhamani-samtata-gātra* itself, it is located in chapter 192 of the Mahāvvyutpatti as the tenth item of the aspectual namings of old age and diseases (*dhamanī-samtata-gātra, jīrṇa, vṛddha, mahallaka, gata-yauvana, valī-nicita-kāya...*).<sup>17</sup> The absence of the phrase in the description of Buddha's asceticism is thus due to the unhealthy, miserable and even inauspicious implications attached to the stockphrase, which, as we have seen, can be applied even to the description of a disgusting old man (Lalitavistara) and to *peta* (*preta*), viz. an ugly ghost, in the Peta-vatthu. Our phrase, then, seems to have an ill-starred destiny in Buddhist literature!<sup>18, 19</sup>

16 Cf. Mahāvvyutpatti (Minayev) p.58 (192.10: *dhamanī-samtata-gātra*) = Sakaki p.276 (4094 CXCIIO)(*Rgas-pa daṅ na-baḥi miṅ-la, Rgan-po-la-sogs*). The list may be compared with the passage of the Lalitavistara p. 187, lines 21 ff, above quoted.

17 Cf. Mahāvvyutpatti (I.P. Minayev and N.D. Mironov ed., Bibliotheca Buddhica 13, 1911), p.6 (18.6: *nigūḍha-śira*) = Text ed., by R. Sakaki (Tokyo, reprint 1962) p.25 (275, XVIII.7). See also Mahāvastu 2.43.10 (*gūḍha-śira*) and Lalitavistara p.106, line 13 (*gūḍha-śira*).

18 In the resolute decision of Buddha as narrated in Nidāna-kathā and Lalitavistara, not to move a bit before he will attain the enlightenment, we read,

Abbreviations used in this article are as follows:

- H. : *Harivaṃśa*, Chitrashala Press, Poona 1936.  
 J. : *The Jātaka*, ed. by V. FAUSBØLL (PTS. text).  
 JAOS : *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (Baltimore).  
 MBh. : *The Mahābhārata*, Poona Critical Edition.  
 MN. : *The Majjhima-Nikāya* (vol.2) ed. by Lord CHALMERS (PTS. text).  
 PTS. : *The Pāli Text Society* (London).  
 Vin. : *The Vinaya Piṭaka*, ed. by H. OLDENBERG (PTS. text)

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*kāmaṃ taco ca nahāru ca aṭṭhi ca avasussatu, upasussatu sarīre maṃsa-lohitam  
 na tv-eva sammāsambodhiṃ appatvā imaṃ pallaṃkaṃ bhindissāmi (J.1.71.24-26)  
 ihāsane suṣyatu me śarīraṃ tvag-asthi-māṃsaṃ pralayaṃ ca yātu  
 aprāpya bodhiṃ bahu-kalpa-dullabhāṃ naivāsanāt kāyam ataś caliṣyate  
 (Lalitavistara p.289, lines 19-20)*

Here in the sublime decision, the phrase *dhamani-samthata* does not occur.

- 19 The absence of our phrase in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa suggests the following three possibilities, the first being literary and the second chronological.  
 First, its presence in the Mahābhārata and absence in the Rāmāyaṇa is indicative that the latter is an *ādi-kāvya*, avoiding inauspicious phraseology for the description of ascetics.  
 Second, a possible unhealthy and inauspicious connotation from some later stage of its development implies that the phrase's absence in the Rāmāyaṇa indicates the later composition of this text.  
 Third, presence and absence might just be a matter of coincidence!

