

The Prince and Princess of the Heart

(From The Book of the Roots of the Holy Kammattāna)



Translation of F. Bizot *Le Figueur à Cinq Branches: Recherche sur le bouddhisme khmer*. Ecole Française D'Extrême-Orient: Paris, 1976. pp. 74-84. Translated by Isabel Pack and L.S. Cousins.

At that time the holy Buddha, the master, (just about to) enter Nibbāna, experienced compassion for the countless beings who stagnate in the hell worlds, overcome by suffering and unhappiness. The Holy One considered in his heart:

“Since things are so, it is fitting that I, the Tathāgata, have King Yama (King Death) come in order to entrust to him the holy teaching.”

King Yama was introduced and the Holy One uttered his noble words:

“Great King Yama! The Tathāgata is shortly to enter Nibbana. To you he entrusts the noble teaching. From now on all the beings of the cosmos, all the gods of the ten thousand worlds, including Lord Indra and Lord Brahma and likewise all the deities of the sixteen levels of [the Brahma] heaven — all without exception will be inscribed in your royal register. Yet, do not enter in it those who, keeping themselves within the net of knowledge (sammāññāna) of the Tathāgata, close their eyes so as to see the three crystal spheres, that is Buddha-ratana, Dhamma-ratana, Sangha-ratana and in this way distinguish the flash of light.”

King Yama bows down and replies:

“Sādhu! Sādhu! Well spoken, Lord. Just so, Lord Indra, Lord Brahma, the four Lords Guardian of the World, all the gods and all men who do not know either the four elements or the three crystal spheres — Buddha-ratana, Dhamma-ratana and Sangha-ratana — will be placed on the list drawn up on my register. They will not be able to slip away and will regain the hell worlds. Even if they perform meritorious acts and give dāna, if when they close their eyes, they see only a vague red emptiness, they will fall without fail into the hell worlds.”

Our self, that is to say the sphere of the heart, is like a fish trapped in a net. It is unable to get out due to lack of strength and remains

unmoving within the entrance to the net. When the fish frees itself, the net breaks and gives way.

Within our bodily form there are two children: the Prince of the Heart and the Princess of the Heart. If one departs, the other remains to guard the body. On his return the two children build up our form. Men suppose them to be like spirits (asurakāya), but it is a matter rather of the nāma of the holy Dhamma and the rūpa of the holy Dhamma which are formed by the holy Dhamma for the purpose of conception.

When beings come to take conception, if it's a girl, she enters by the left nostril, if it's a boy, he enters by the right nostril and positions himself at the righthand side of the womb. At that very moment [the parents] are sleeping together. This is like a shower of rain. The Children of the Heart are content like frogs and tree frogs in rainwater. The fluid of passion from the mother is clear like sesame oil. This is what is called the twelve waters. The fluid of passion from the father is like the juice from coconut pulp. This is what is called the twenty-one waters. Then comes a wind to fan the fire in order to reduce the water through boiling so as to clarify it, in the same way that sesame oil is reduced. After seven days the syllable named SAM is born. Then the fire is fanned again so that the heat can dry it further and so that the syllable named VI can be born. The fire is again revived in order to evaporate the water and thicken it. After seven days the syllable named DHĀ is born. The wind continues to enliven the fire, which causes another syllable named PU to be born. Then the wind again fans the fire and causes the birth after seven days of the syllable named KA. The wind continues to fan the fire, which again produces after seven days a syllable named YA. At last, the wind constantly enlivening the fire, after seven days the syllable named PA is born. This is called the quintessence of the seven books of the holy Abhidhamma.

We should all reflect upon these stages of formation in order to obtain happiness. May the impermanence of the rūpa of the holy Dhamma and the nāma of the holy Dhamma be clearly understood.

This has been enough for a ball of flesh. We have reached the path of unbreath. Now our body divides into five branches. The Prince of the Heart and the Princess of the Heart represent the form we take at conception.

So we will take leave of King Yama:

“I have been here a very long time. The price of my misdeeds has been paid. I take leave of Your Majesty and set off to perform skilful deeds in the land of the Rose-apple tree. I ask to reach the age of a thousand years.”

King Yama replies to the Princess of the Heart:

“Alas, lady. It is not possible to live for a thousand years. If you had to stay as long as that, you would out of carelessness perform much evil kamma. Do not speak thus. Out of pity for you and all beings, I allow only one hundred years so as to reduce the number of misdeeds. But, if you are leaving, do not err. If you do wrong, your life-span will be even further reduced. In fifty or sixty years I will send Lord Time to bring you to order by turning your hair white, destroying your teeth, dimming your eyesight, dulling your hearing and causing the maladies of old age to come upon you. Children! Instead of doing wrong, strive to perform good deeds. Give dāna, undertake the precepts, have loving-kindness, practise bhāvanā. Then you will have the great happiness in prospect. Children! As soon as you commit evil deeds, whether you are reborn as Lord Indra or Lord Brahma, whether you are reborn on the Iron Mountain, the Bronze Mountain or on glorious Sumeru, prince of mountains, I will send Lord Time hurrying in your pursuit. You will not escape Lord Time. If you recognize him, you will try in vain to deceive him.”

The Children of the Heart both listened to the words of King Yama, bowed down and took their leave of him. They set off on a path which took them far away and then came to a tall and branching

tree named Enjoyer of Light (Ūsokbhoktar).¹ They sat beneath its foliage and reflected upon anicca. They lamented:

“Alas for us! What can we do to escape Lord Time and King Yama?”

The younger of the two replied:

“Alas, elder brother! It’s hard to understand the way to do this. Whether we go to be reborn in the abode of Lord Brahma or in Lord Indra’s abode or to the land of the Eastern Videhas or to the land of the Western Goyānas or to the land of the Northern Kurus — whatever abode we go to, however far, King Yama will send Lord Time to get us.”

The two children, seeing clearly how difficult it would be for them to escape capture, groaned and wept, commiserating with one another about their future. At that moment a devatā in human form, possessing attainment in the holy Dhamma — that is, the precious crystal sphere with sparkling rays — was travelling through the air and heard the two children lamenting beneath the tree named Enjoyer of Light. The devatā placed himself at the top of the tree and asked them:

“Where have you come from that you weep so beneath this tree? Who have you lost? Your father, your mother or some dear friend? Explain to me.”

The Princess of the Heart replied to the devatā:

“Alas, my lord. I weep out of pity for myself; for I do not know where to flee in order to escape from Lord Time and King Yama. That is the only reason why I am lamenting here.”

The devatā in human form replied:

¹ Or Enjoyer of Bliss

“Well, children, you came and took birth in the country of King Yama and Lord Time, where, turning like a chariot wheel, one is born and dies, dies and is born for an uncounted number of lives. But before coming here, from what abode did you come? Tell me that and I will tell you how to escape from Lord Time.”

Having listened, the Children of the Heart replied:

“Alas, my lord. We are like mad and deluded people who cannot find their way in the forest. We know not what to say in reply to this. All is concealed.”

When he had heard this, the devatā exclaimed:

“Sādhu! Sādhu!”

Then he enquired again:

“Alas, children. When you were born as a human being or animal, in the hell realms or in heaven, what was the name of your mother and father who fashioned your bodily form? Tell me exactly who your father and mother were and I will tell you exactly how to escape from King Yama and Lord Time.”

Then the Children of the Heart lamented:

“We are unable to tell you, my lord. We are like a blind dog that knows not where it goes.”

At that moment the devatā said:

“Children! If you want to know your father and your mother, learn what earth is, what water is, what fire is, what wind is. In this way you will be famous and will know your parents. This mother is fragrant. She loves all human beings. In the future, when you realize this, you will embark your kin seven times removed on board the golden boat which leads to the city of Nibbāna — the peaceful

and glorious abode of the highest happiness.

*Buddham — incomparably magnificent!
Dhammam — fragrance sweeter than the scent of flowers!
Sangham — the path which leads to Nibbana!*

O Children of the Heart! If you want to know your father and mother, go and seek them in the land of the Rose-apple tree. For, in order to slip away from King Yama and Lord Time, you must obtain the shining crystal sphere. Close your eyes in order to discover this sparkling light. It is found only in the land of the Rose-apple tree. In no other land does the crystal sphere exist. If you acquire the crystal sphere like the one which I have just obtained, its power will be able to instantly transport you to the land without rebirth, to the city of Nibbāna — the abode of the highest happiness, peaceful, pleasant, happy, without suffering or fear or sickness, free from old age and death. Yes, Children of the Heart, hear this. This city has, placed above each door, fortifications fashioned of diamond. As soon as anyone who possesses a shining crystal sphere approaches, the seven diamond walls open and let him through.”

After hearing this the Children of the Heart exclaimed:

“Sāddhu! Sāddhu! My lord, we are delighted to have heard these excellent words. Yet, we wish to ask a question. Whereabouts in the land of the Rose-apple tree is the crystal sphere to be found? Is there a sign or anything which will enable us to locate it? Please be so good as to explain this to us clearly.”

The devatā replied:

“O Children of the Heart! In that place there is a fig tree with each of its fruits concealing a precious crystal sphere. It casts a delicious scent over countless world spheres. This is the holy Dhamma. The crystal sphere placed in the flowers of the fig tree — magnificent and glorious — this is the holy Buddha. The fig tree has four long

branches, which extend in the four directions beyond the limits of the world sphere. Its roots extend downwards as far as the lightless Unending (*Avīci*) hell. *Its topmost spike reaches to the Great Brahma realm of the Eldest devas. Indriya birds, which feed on living human beings, watch over the four branches in order to protect the crystal spheres in the branches of the fig tree. These indriya birds are very savage. They devour all who come close to the tree. If you want the crystal sphere, you have to kill the four indriya birds. Then the power of the crystal sphere will lead you to the city of Nibbāna — realm of the highest happiness.*

The Children of the Heart asked the devatā:

“My lord! What are these four indriya birds called? What is the name of the four crystal spheres ? We beg you to reveal this clearly so that we may find them easily.”

The devatā revealed the names of the four indriya birds:

“Cakkhindriyam — the creature in the eyes; Sotindriyam — the creature in the ears; Ghānindriyam — the creature in the nose; Jivhindriyam — the creature in the tongue; Kāyindriyam — the creature in the body. Yes, Children of the Heart, hear this. In order to kill these four indriya birds, you must take the knee of a rabbit in order to fashion the staff of a bow, its hair to make the string and its large vessel by way of an arrow. Kill the birds and you will be able to get the crystal sphere.”

The two children listened carefully to the devatā and registered his words deeply. Then they took their leave. Next they set off on the path of birth and were reborn in the land of the Rose-apple tree in the world of human beings.

Unbreath — cessation (nirodha)

Let him who practises *yoga* find himself carefully upon this holy Dhamma. Even although one has obtained conception as a human being, it is rare to meet with the holy teaching of a Lord Buddha. One should persevere desperately hard and without break in performing skilful actions, in giving and practising the perfections in order to develop swiftly the knowledge of *bodhi* within the heart. For, seven times by day and by night, King Yama urges Lord Time to go and spy upon men. The road to death remains within us and it waits only upon the moment to root out our vital forces. That is why it is necessary to guard one's *citta*, one's body, one's eyes, one's mouth, one's feet and one's hands so as to not perform evil *kamma* or turn aside from the way of Lord Buddha, the excellent master.

The Lord taught all beings:

"Those who do not know the Buddha, the giver of instruction, will not hear the holy teaching and will most surely fall into the great Unending hell. Those who know how to amend themselves in accordance with the instructions of the word of the Buddha, will be known as those whose heart has reached the path of entry."

This is the book of the roots of the holy Kammaṭṭhāna of the Children of the Heart.

Pathavī, earth; āpo, water; THA vāyo, wind; BHA tejo, fire; YA ākāsa, space — these are the names of the four elements.

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Bejjhisūr, guard the earth element.
Bejjhaprāp, guard the water element.
Bejjhaprān, guard the fire element.
Bejjhadhan, guard the wind element.
Bejjhadhān, guard the space element.²

Ehi catubhūtaṃ kālindriyaṃ bhaggaṛatīr.
Ehi catubhūtā ratīr.
Ehi catubhūtā kar cicerunīr āgamāmi.
[Recite three times.]

Sabejjan sappānaṃ sālīnaṃ bhojanaṃ uttakaṃ varaṃ catu-
bhūtāraṇaṃ ehi āgacchantu
svāhā.
[Recite seven times'- this is the food.]

Assāso nibbānaṃ Suññaṃ etvaṇaṃ pavasathayatvaṃ cicerunī
[Recite three times — make this enter the body.]

Namaddapatur bhūtānaṃ vasār rathaṇaṃ bandhaṃ nadhānakaṃ
ehi catubhūtaṃ jivhābaddhaṃ
svāhā.
[Recite three times in order to link it.]

So Buddhaṃ āraṃetīr.
[108 times.]

So so Dhammika metrī.
[108 times.]

So trī na so sanghaṭ.
[108 times.]
Catu dāṃṇaṃ dhātu the na na.

² Every night, the four (or five) guards, which are the constituent elements of the body, are invoked by the faithful so that during the night they do not escape, abandoning the body they guard. (F. Bizot's note)

Let us speak of the one who practises yoga who learns the roots of the holy Kammaṭṭhāna.

When the Children of the Heart are reborn in the mother's womb, it is in order to take possession of the crystal sphere in the flower of the five-branched fig tree. When they obtain it and hold on to it firmly, the power of the crystal sphere leads one who practises *yoga* through the air, right to the city of Nibbāna. Lord Time cannot enter there. The city of Nibbāna includes seven glittering crystal walls with no gate for entry. The potent virtue of the crystal sphere enables one to open the way into it. This crystal sphere is the four silas,³ the four paths. Keep them and never fall short in regard to them.

Furthermore, as long as we remain in the defilement of passion of our mother and father, we experience indescribable painful feeling. A girl, a female, enters by the left nostril in order to take conception in the mother's womb; a boy, a male, enters by the right nostril and positions himself on the right in the womb. At that moment the father is sleeping. He is woken up and so is the mother, who is still asleep, so that they are awake together. The earth quakes, thunder sounds, rain falls. The Children of the Heart establish themselves in the womb — full of delight, like frogs and tree frogs in rainwater.

The passion fluid of the mother is like clear, fresh sesame oil. It is this which gives birth to the twelve waters. The passion fluid of the father is like juice from coconut pulp [which has been left to stand overnight]. It is this which gives birth to the twenty-one earths.

When one takes conception, a wind fans the fire, reducing the water which dries up.

After seven days the syllable named **SAM** is born. Then the water gradually thickens.

After another seven days the syllable named **VI** is born and the water thickens again. After seven days the syllable named **DHĀ** is born. After another seven days the syllable named **PU** is born. After another seven days the syllable named **KA** is born. After another seven days the syllable named **YA** is born. The water gradually thickens. Then after another seven days the syllable named **PA** is born and produces a piece of flesh.

³ The four are: (i) Pātimokkha restraint; (ii) restraint of the faculties; (iii) purity of the means of sustenance; (iv) sīla connected with the requisites.

SAṂ VI DHĀ PU KA YA PA — this is called the quintessence of the seven books of the holy Abhidhamma.

In this way the piece of flesh takes form. All of us who follow the path to Nibbāna are divided into five branches: the head, the two hands, the two feet. It is the maternal and paternal waters which give birth to the piece of flesh which divides in this way into five branches. The syllables are: **NA 12; MO 21; BU 6; DDHĀ 7; YA 10.** **YA** is the ten gates. This includes the virtues of the Buddha, numbering 56.

Our navel is like the creeper 'ghlok'⁴ whose numerous fruits are supported by a single stem. When the piece of flesh has formed, the mother is fully aware. Everyone is sure that she is pregnant. If the mother wants to eat sharp tasting foods, a being from the hell realm has taken conception. She will be delivered after seven months. If the mother wants to eat tree bark, an animal has taken conception. She will be delivered after eight months. If the mother wants to eat pleasant smelling earth, a ghost has taken conception. She will be relieved after nine months. If the mother wants to eat many-flavoured sweet things, a person from the heaven realm has taken conception. She will be relieved after ten months.

If the passion fluid of the mother flows first, the child will resemble the mother. If the passion fluid of the father comes first, the child will resemble the father. If the child's tuft of hair is not right in the middle, it is because the father and mother do not get on well together.

⁴ Gnetum latifolium — common jungle creeper (relatively hard, black core.)