

The classification of nouns (*nāma*) in Buddhaghosa

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Abstract

This paper provides the first detailed analysis of the models for classing nouns found in the early Pali exegetical texts traditionally assigned to the fifth-century monk-scholar Buddhaghosa. It identifies three fourfold models and argues that: (a) each model has a distinctive distribution; (b) the original occurrence in each model serves a specific purpose, which can be identified through studying the relation between these original occurrences and their respective context; (c) Buddhaghosa did not invent these models but repurposed pre-existing models to fit specific exegetical needs; (d) Buddhaghosa's reuse of these inherited models is consistent with his view expressed elsewhere that Pali is a sacred, perfect language; and (e) in developing these models, the unknown authors combined influences from the Pali canon and Sanskrit grammatical sources. Finally, I briefly consider whether studying the models sheds new light on the early history of Pali grammar.

Keywords: Buddhaghosa, Linguistic speculations, Pali canon and commentaries, Pali grammar, Nouns (*nāma*), Sanskrit grammar

1. Introduction

Three fourfold models for classing nouns (*nāma*) are found in texts traditionally attributed to the fifth-century scholar-monk Buddhaghosa. Although brief references are scattered in literature,¹ a systematic analysis of these models has not to my knowledge yet been undertaken. Two partial exceptions are Pind (1992: 65–6) and Collins (1993: 385–6). Pind considers these models as instances of the “grammatical vocabulary that is specific to the Aṭṭhakathās”. Collins discusses what I label below as model 2 in the context of exploring the name of the first king in the *Aggāññasutta*, *mahāsammata*, a name that is given as a noun example to illustrate one noun category in said model. While they offer valuable insights, neither contribution provides a full discussion of these models.

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1 See Smith (2001 [1949]: 1111) and Balbir (1991: 126). Levman (2017: 37–9; 46–8) translates and comments on some of the passages that are analysed in this paper.

Table 1. The three models for classifying nouns²

	Noun categories			
Model 1	<i>āvattika</i> nouns expressive of a stage (of life)	<i>līngika</i> nouns expressive of a characteristic (exterior) mark	(<i>guṇa</i>) <i>nemittika</i> ³ nouns expressive of a (quality) cause	<i>adhiccasamuppanna</i> nouns fortuitously arisen <i>ya(ā)dicchaka</i> ⁴ nouns in accordance with (the user/ namer's) wish
Model 2	<i>sa(ā)mañña- nāma</i> ⁵ nouns given by general consent	<i>guṇa-nāma</i> nouns expressive of a quality	<i>kittima-nāma</i> artificial nouns	<i>opapātika-nāma</i> nouns spontaneously arisen
Model 3	[<i>sāmañña- nāma</i>] ⁶	<i>kittima-nāma</i>	[<i>guṇa-nāma</i>]	[<i>opapātika-nāma</i>]

As illustrated in Table 1, the first model (model 1) uses a distinctive set of noun categories. The other two models (models 2 and 3) share the same noun categories. There are several occurrences of each model in the texts ascribed to Buddhaghosa.

For each model, I aim to show three things: first, its occurrences have a distinctive distribution; second, it is possible to identify the original occurrence from which the others were derived; and third, studying the relation between

- 2 I here give the occurrences of the three models in the Pali texts considered in this paper. The occurrences in texts traditionally ascribed to Buddhaghosa are in bold. Model 1: **Vism 209_{,28}–210_{,9}/HOS 173–5** [§§ 53–64] ≈ **Vin-a 122_{,19–26}** ≈ **Khp-a 107_{,4–14}** ≈ **Nidd-1-a 263_{,26}–264_{,4}** ≠ **Sadd 879_{,22–7}**. Model 2: **Dhs-a 390_{,27}–391_{,15}** ≈ **Paṭi-s-a 306_{,20}–307_{,16}** ≠ **Moh 110_{,25–36}** ≠ **Sadd 879_{,4–21}**; cf. **SN-a I 95_{,7–8}**. Model 3: **Dhs-a 392_{,2–27}** ≈ **DN-a 977_{,13–33}**.

≈ stands between (almost) identical passages.

≠ stands between parallel, yet different, passages.

When they are used in a series, as in note 2, these symbols should be understood as follows: **Vism 209_{,28}–210_{,9}** ≈ **Vin-a 122_{,19–26}** ≈ **Khp-a 107_{,4–14}** ≈ **Nidd-1-a 263_{,26}–264_{,4}** ≠ **Sadd 879_{,22–7}** means that the first four items are almost identical, whereas the last one, though parallel, is different.

While both tradition and modern scholarship agree that the *Vism* is Buddhaghosa's work, the attribution of the other texts to Buddhaghosa has been disputed by some modern scholars; see von Hinüber (1996: 104 §209/126 §251; 128 §254). For a more recent discussion of Buddhaghosa and his workshop, see von Hinüber 2015.

- 3 Why *guṇa* is within brackets is explained in §2.1.
 4 While *Vism* reads *yadicchaka*, *Khp-a*, *Nidd-1-a*, and *Sadd* read *yādicchaka*. *Vin-a* reads *yadicchaka* and records *yādicchaka* in apparatus. I henceforth refer to this noun category as *yadicchaka*.
 5 While the other texts read *sāmañña*, *Sadd* reads *samañña* and gives *sāmañña* in apparatus. I henceforth use *sāmañña*.
 6 The square brackets indicate that the name of the noun category is not explicitly mentioned; see §5.

the original occurrences and their respective contexts reveals that each model's original occurrence serves a specific purpose.

Building on these observations, I then argue that Buddhaghosa (here understood as a label for the author/s of the early stratum of commentaries) inherited these models from unspecified sources and repurposed them to tackle contextual exegetical needs. I also propose that Buddhaghosa's reuse of these inherited models is consistent with his view that Pali is a natural or perfect language, namely, the only language that has a direct or intrinsic connection to reality. Further, I focus on the names designating the noun categories and suggest that the original author/s of the models developed them by combining influences stemming from both the Pali canon and Sanskrit grammatical sources.

Before we begin, it is opportune to gain clarity on the term *nāma*. The translation "noun" is an approximation. The term *nāma* designates one of the four word-classes according to a fourfold classification often found in Sanskrit and Pali texts, the remaining classes being *ākhyāta* "verbs", *upasarga* (P. *upasagga*) "preverb/prepositions", and *nipāta* "particles". This fourfold classification is already found in texts as early as the *Nirukta* and the *Prātiśākhya*s. The term *nāma* has a semantic range that is broader than "noun", for it refers to what in Western grammatical terminology would be called nouns, both common and proper, adjectives, pronouns, and participles. Therefore, *nāma* is sometimes rendered with "nominals". For the sake of simplicity, however, I will use the word "noun".⁷

This article is divided into three main parts. First (§§2–4), for each model, I describe the noun categories and show the distribution of the occurrences of the models. I then determine each model's original occurrence and identify its purpose through studying how it relates to its context. Second (§5), I examine the three models in relation to each other. And third (§6), I explore the names designating the noun categories for what they reveal about the origins of the models.

2. Model 1: Noun categories

1. *āvathika*: "nouns expressive of a stage [of life]" designate their referent in relation to its life-stages. Noun examples are *vaccha* "calf", *damma* "young bull", and *balivadda* "full grown bull".⁸

2. *liṅgika*: "nouns expressive of a characteristic [exterior] mark" designate their referent in relation to a characteristic, yet external, feature. The noun examples are words of the kind "x-in", "provided with x", where "x" refers to a visible external mark, such as the umbrella (*chatta*) carried by the umbrella-bearer (*chattin*), or the tuft of hair (*sikha*) of the "topknot-wearer" (*sikhin*).

3. (*guṇa*)*nemittika*: "nouns expressive of a (quality) cause" designate their referent in relation to one of its defining qualities (*guṇa*). Such qualities are the cause ([**nimitta*>] *nemittika*) or reason (*kāraṇa*: Vism 198,_{9,11}, 212,_{16–17}/HOS 162,_{2,33}, 175,_{12–13})⁹ why a given name is ascribed to a given referent. The

7 For *nāma* in Sanskrit linguistic texts, see Cardona (2019: 3–5). For *nāma* in Pali grammatical literature, see Deokar (2008: 226–8); cf. also Ñānamoli (1977: 55 note 1).

8 Appendix 2 presents a complete list of the noun examples given in the models' occurrences considered in this paper.

9 Vism 198,₁₁ reads *kaṛaṇa*, which must be an error.

noun examples are words denoting Buddhist religious qualities: *tevijja* “possessed of the three knowledges” and *chalabhiñña* “possessed of the six direct-knowledges”. This category also includes the term *bhagavan*, the epithet of the Buddha.

4. *adhiccasamuppanna/yadicchaka*: “nouns fortuitously arisen/nouns in accordance with [the user/namer’s] wish” designate their referent in relation to the user/namer’s wish. Two names are given to this noun category. As shown below (§6), *adhiccasamuppanna* is likely to be a borrowing from the Pali canon, while *yadicchaka* seems to have its origins in Sanskrit grammatical sources.

This noun category is accompanied by the following terse definition:

[Nouns] fortuitously arisen, such as “Splendour/Glory-increaser”, “Wealth-increaser”, are used without taking into consideration the [nouns’] etymological meaning.¹⁰ (Sirivaḍḍhako Dhanavaḍḍhako ti evamādi vacanattham anapekkhitvā pavattaṃ *adhiccasamuppannaṃ*.)

The point seems to be this: proper names such as “Splendour/Glory increaser” and “Wealth-increaser” are chosen by a user/namer because of their auspicious meaning, whether or not their etymological or literal meaning conforms to their referent. In other words, individuals so named do not necessarily increase splendour/glory or wealth, either their own or that of others.

§2.1. Model 1: Distribution, original occurrence, and purpose

All occurrences of model 1 show a clear distribution: they occur within a passage that describes the Buddha’s epithet *bhagavan*.¹¹ Gaining clarity on the purpose served by model 1 requires an understanding of the relation between the model’s original occurrence and its context.

Vism can be identified as the original occurrence of model 1, for two reasons. First, the Vism is regarded by both tradition and modern scholars as the earliest text among those that feature model 1. Second, the passage describing *Bhagavan*, within which model 1 occurs, forms a self-contained passage in the other texts, but it constitutes an integral part of the Vism section, a section that explains the nine main epithets of the Buddha (Vism 198,₁–213,₉ /HOS 162–73 [§§ 2–67]).

Considering the original occurrence of model 1 in the Vism in relation to its immediate context (namely, the passage describing *bhagavan*) shows that Buddhaghosa did not invent this model but inherited it from previous

10 On the technical sense of *vacanattha* “etymological meaning”, i.e. the meaning which is obtained through an etymological or grammatical analysis of the word-constituents, see Smith (2001 [1949]: 1133 §6.0.1) “the meaning that is derived from the grammatical analysis only (*vacanattha*), *nibbacanattha*”.

11 See Vism 209,₂₄–212,₁₅/HOS 173–75 [§§ 53–64] ≈ Vin-a 122,₁₆–125,₉ ≈ Khp-a 106,₂₇–109,₂₇ ≈ Nidd-1-a 263,₂₁–266,₂₁. This passage is nearly identical in Vism, Vin-a and Khp-a, whereas Nidd-1-a omits a few lines (corresponding to Vism 210,_{13–21}) and adds one section (Nidd-1-a 264,_{11–28}). The occurrence of model 1 in Sadd (879,_{22–27}) differs from the others in that model 1 is not mentioned within a passage describing the epithet *bhagavan* but it occurs in a section recording many ways of classing nouns (Sadd 878,₁₄–880,₁₃).

unspecified sources. Buddhaghosa mentions model 1 in the context of recording various interpretations of the epithet *bhagavan*.¹² Buddhaghosa records the interpretation advanced by the ancients (§53 *porāṇā*), by Sariputta (§55 as recorded in the Nidd), by the Nidd (§56), and by the etymologists and grammarians (§§57–8). It is fairly clear that model 1 (§54) is one of these interpretations drawn from previous sources.

However, Buddhaghosa modified this inherited model by making two adjustments. First, he expanded the model to include the epithet *bhagavan* within the *nemittika* noun category. This is consistent with the fact that when the model is introduced (§54) no mention is made of *bhagavan*. But it is due to Buddhaghosa's own addition that *bhagavan* is classified explicitly as a *nemittika* noun (§55 “Here, then, *bhagavan* is a noun expressive of a cause” *idaṃ pana Bhagavā ti nāmaṃ nemittikaṃ*).

Second, Buddhaghosa tacitly revised the purport of the original *nemittika* noun category through describing the epithet *bhagavan* as denoting a quality-cause (§56 [*yaṃ*] *guṇanemittikaṃ*). The addition of the word *guṇa* to the inherited term *nemittika* is, I believe, significant. In doing so, Buddhaghosa repurposed the inherited model in accordance with the larger Vism section of which the passage describing *bhagavan* constitutes an organic part. This section details the meditative practice of recollecting the Buddha (*buddhānussati*), a practice which consists of focusing on the Buddha's qualities or *guṇas* through visualizing the reasons (*kāraṇa*) why the Buddha is called “x”, “x” being the Buddha's nine main epithets.¹³

What, then, is the purpose of model 1? Buddhaghosa repurposed a pre-existing model to show that the epithet *bhagavan* is superior to the other kind of nouns in that it expresses the Buddha's unique qualities. In doing so, Buddhaghosa adjusted the inherited model in accordance with the overall purport of the Vism section, namely, to detail the meditative practice of recollecting the Buddha's qualities as encoded in his epithets.

§3. Model 2: Noun categories

1. *sāmañña-nāma*: “nouns given by general consent” designate their referent through general agreement. Only one noun example is supplied in all texts, *mahāsammata*, the name of the first king in the *Aggaññasutta*'s narrative of the origins of the world.

In his perceptive discussion of model 2, Collins (1993: 385–6) argues that *sāmañña-nāma* means “‘general term/description’ as opposed to ‘specific (proper) name’”. He further explains that although the name *mahāsammata* “denotes a specific individual in each cosmic age, the name is a ‘general name’ referring to his role rather than being a ‘made-up’ name for a person

12 For text and translation of the relevant Vism passage, see Appendix 1.1.

13 The terms *guṇa* and *kāraṇa* occur in Vism 198,₆/HOS 162,₃₀ and Vism 198,₉=212,₁₆/HOS 162,₃₃=175,_{12–13}, respectively. The nine main epithets of the Buddha are given in Vism 198,_{3–6}/HOS 162,_{27–29}: *arahaṃ, sammāsambuddho, vijjācaraṇasampanno, sugato, lokavidū, anuttaro purisadammasārathi, satthā devamanussānaṃ, buddho, bhagavā ti* [the commas are my own addition].

such as Tissa or Phussa. It is like ‘President of the United States’ rather than (in 1993) ‘Bill Clinton’”.

The translation “nouns given by general consent”, however, seems to be supported by the explanations of this noun category given in the texts. In Dhs-a 390,_{29–33} (\approx Paṭis-a 306,_{21–25} \approx Moh 110,_{26–28}), the name of the first king “Great Assent” (*mahāsammato*) is explained etymologically as meaning that which has been assented to (*sammannitvā*) by many people (*mahājanena*).¹⁴ Both *mahāsammato* and *sammannitvā* are derived from *sam*√*man* “assent, agree upon”. This explanation builds on the citation from the *Aggaññasutta* which similarly explains the name *mahāsammata* as being derived from “assented to by many people” (*mahājanasammato*).

The Sadd likewise explains *samañña* as arising from many people’s agreement:

“samañña-nāma” is [like] the noun of the king Mahāsammato (“Great Assent”): it has been agreed upon (*sammannitvā*), i.e. established, by many people (*mahājanena*) among those of the first ages. To explain, “samañña-nāma” is a name that is used by designation, i.e. by common assent among the people (Sadd 879,_{7–9}: *paṭhamakappikesu mahājanena sammannitvā ṭhapitattā Mahāsammato ti rañño nāmaṃ samaññānāmaṃ* [v.r. *sāmaññānāmaṃ* < 880,₁₀] *nāma, tathā hi taṃ samaññāya janasammutiya pavattaṃ nāman ti samaññānāmaṃ* [v.r. *sāmaññānāmaṃ* < 880,₁₀]).¹⁵

2. *guṇa-nāma*: “nouns expressive of a quality”. As is explained below (§5), it seems that this category presupposes and elaborates on the category (*guṇa*) *nemittika* in model 1.

3. *kittima-nāma*: “artificial nouns” designate proper names that are assigned to a newborn child by a namer, such as by parents and relatives.

4. *opapātika-nāma*: “spontaneously arisen nouns” designate natural phenomena, like the moon, sun, and earth. Such nouns are said to spontaneously drop (√*pat* = *opapātika*) from one aeon to the next one, i.e. they remain the same across eons.

§3.1. Model 2: Distribution, original occurrence, and purpose

The two earliest occurrences of model 2 (Dhs-a 390,_{27–39}1,₁₅ \approx Paṭis-a 306,_{20–30}7,₁₆) show the same distribution: they relate to and provide an explanation of

14 For text and translation of the relevant Dhs-a passage, see Appendix 1.2.

15 Collins (1993: 386) takes *samaññāya* as a gerund from *sam-ā*√*jñā* and renders *taṃ samaññāya janasammutiya pavattaṃ nāman* as “this name occurs by the agreement of people acknowledging him (as the holder of the role)”. I take *samaññāya* as the instrumental of *samañña*; cf. Sn 611 cited in note 25.

Interestingly, the Pali *paṭhamakappika* “a person of the early ages” (the same term is also used in Dhs-a given in Appendix 1.2) corresponds to the Sanskrit word *prathamakalpika*, which is used in a comparable sense in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (MBh II.367,19,22 [commenting on the fifth *vārtika* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 5.1.119]). For several similarities between some of the noun categories used in the models and the *Mahābhāṣya*, see §6 below.

the term *nāma*.¹⁶ In Dhs-a, model 2 relates to *nāma* mentioned in the Dhs root-text (226,₂₃). In Paṭis-a, model 2 relates to *nāma* which is introduced by Paṭis-a to explain the term *byañjananiruttābhilāpā* “enunciation of word-language” (Ñānamoli’s translation, 2009 [1982]: 88 §427) mentioned in the Paṭis root-text (90,₁₀).

Given that Mahānāma’s Paṭis-a is unanimously regarded as posterior to the Dhs-a, it can safely be concluded that the original occurrence of model 2 is in Dhs-a. Considering the relation between model 2 in Dhs-a and the context in which it occurs allows us to gain clarity on the purpose served by the model’s original occurrence.

Dhs-a explains *nāma* (Dhs 226,₂₃) as meaning the four kinds of nouns, and proceeds to illustrate them by introducing model 2. It seems that Dhs-a uses model 2 to emphasize that *nāma* here refers to the totality of nouns. This interpretation is consistent with the fact that the pervasive nature of nouns is emphasized both in the Dhs root-text and in a Dhs-a passage that follows immediately the mention of model 2. I consider both these passages below.

Explaining a dyad (*duka*) listed in the initial *Suttānta-mātikā*,¹⁷ the Dhs root-text states that all dhammas are “ways of locutions” (*adhivacanapathā*):

What dhammas are locutions (*adhivacana*)? That label, conventional name, designation, common usage, **name**, appellation, naming, expression, phrasing, utterance of this or that dhamma. These dhammas are locutions. All [the other] dhammas are ways of locutions (Dhs 226,_{21–25}: katame dhammā adhvacaṇā? ya tesam tesam dhammānaṃ saṅkhā samaññā paññatti vohāro **nāmaṃ** nāmakammaṃ nāmadheyyaṃ nirutti vyañjanaṃ abhilāpo – ime dhamma adhvacaṇā. Sabb’eva dhammā adhvacaṇapathā [emphasis added]).

This passage distinguishes between two kinds of dhammas: those that are verbal locutions (*adhivacana*), such as label, conventional name, etc., and all the other

16 I here do not consider SN-a I 95,_{7–8}. Even though SN-a is traditionally ascribed to Buddhaghosa, SN-a I 95,_{7–8} does not constitute a full-fledged occurrence of model 2, for it only mentions two terms, *opapātika* and *kittima*. Note however an intriguing similarity between SN and SN-a, on the one hand, and Dhs and Dhs-a, on the other. In both cases, both the respective root-text and the associated commentarial passage likewise emphasize the pervasive nature of nouns. Strikingly, the pertinent SN-a passage is reminiscent of Dhs-a cited below. I cite and discuss Dhs-a in the main text; I here give the comparable SN-a passage:

SN-a I 95,_{6–10}: *Nāmaṃ sabbam anvabhavī* [v.r. “addhabhavi, aṭṭha-, anda-, andha-]” [SN I 39,₁] ti, nāmaṃ sabbam abhibhavati, anupatati. Opapātikena vā hi kittimena vā nāmena mutto satto vā saṅkhāro vā n’ atthi. Yassa pi hi rukkhasa vā pāsānassa vā idaṃ nāma nāman ti na jānanti, anāmako tveva tassa nāmaṃ hoti “Name has overcome everything’ [SN I 39,₁]: names overpower, i.e. fall upon, everything. There is no living being or thing that is devoid of a name, be it spontaneously arisen or artificial. Even when the name of a tree or rock is not known, that is called ‘the nameless one’”. In translating SN I 39,₁, I follow Bodhi (2000: 380 note 121) and read *addhabhavi*, the aorist of *abhibhavati* “to overcome, to overpower”.

17 Dhs 7,₁₁: *adhivacaṇā dhammā, adhvacaṇapathā dhammā* “there are dhammas that are locutions; there are dhammas that are ways of locutions”.

dhammas, which are ways of locutions (*adhivacanapathā*). The point of the passage seems this: all dhammas can be expressed linguistically through the verbal locution dhammas, i.e. all dhammas are nameable.

The pervasive and universal nature of nouns is further reinforced in Dhs-a (391_{,25–31}), a passage which immediately follows the mention of model 2:

There is no living being or thing (*saṅkhāra*) that is devoid of a name. In forests or mountains, etc., even trees are the business (*bhāra*) of the countryfolk. For when they are asked “what is the name of this tree”, they reply with the names known to them: “Cutch” or “Palash”. That [tree] of which they do not know the name, that too they say it is called “the nameless one”. This [nameless], too, becomes just the name of that [tree]. This same principle also applies to the fish or turtles, etc., in the ocean. (Satto pi saṅkhāro pi nāmato muttako nāma natthi. Aṭavīpabbatādīsu rukkhā pi jānapadānaṃ bhāro. Te hi “ayaṃ rukkho kiṃ nāmā” ti puṭṭhā “khadiro palāso” ti attanā jānanakanāmaṃ¹⁸ kathenti. Yassa nāmaṃ na jānanti tam pi “anāmako nāmā ti” vadanti. Tam pi tassa nāmadheyyam eva hutvā tiṭṭhati. Samudde macchakacchapādīsu pi es’ eva nayo.)

Names (*nāma*) are ubiquitous. Even a tree or a sea creature whose name is unknown receives the surrogate name “the nameless one” (*anāmaka*).

Thus, the original occurrence of model 2 in Dhs-a relates to the exegetical need to explain that, in the associated Dhs root-text, the term *nāma* refers to the totality of nouns.

§4. Model 3: Distribution, original occurrence, and purpose

Model 3 employs the same noun categories as model 2. The two occurrences of model 3 (Dhs-a 392_{,2–27} ≈ DN-a 977_{,13–33}) show the same distribution. They relate to and provide an explanation of the term *nāma* as part of the dyad *nāma-rūpa* “name-form”, which is mentioned in the respective root-text (Dhs 226_{,36}; DN III 212_{,9}).

The purpose of model 3 can be appreciated by considering the relation between the occurrence of model 3 in Dhs-a and the associated passage in the Dhs root-text.¹⁹

The relevant Dhs passage is itself an explanation of the ninth dyad “name-form” listed in the initial *Suttānta-mātikā* (Dhs 7_{,14}: *nāmañ ca rūpañ ca*). Dhs explains that the term *nāma* here refers to the names of the four formless aggregates and that of the unconditioned state (= nibbana):

Thus, what is **Noun**? Feeling-aggregate, perception-aggregate, formation-aggregate, consciousness-aggregate and the unconditioned state – this is called *nāma* (Dhs 226_{,36–38} [§1309]: *Tattha katamaṃ nāmaṃ? Vedanākkhandho*

18 I read *jānanakaṃ nāmaṃ* with DOP 2010 s.v. *jānanaka*, 2: “known, in one’s knowledge, what is known”.

19 For text and translation, see Appendix 1.3.

saññākkhandho sañkhārakkhandho viññānakkhandho – asaṅkhatā ca dhātu – idaṃ vuccati nāmaṃ [emphasis added]).

Commenting directly on this passage, model 3 in Dhs-a states that the nouns designating the four formless aggregates and that of nibbana are *opapāttika* or spontaneously arisen. In contradistinction to the other three kinds of nouns featuring in model 3 (nouns given by general consent [*sāmañña-nāma*]; artificial nouns [*kittima-nāma*]; and nouns expressive of a quality [*guṇa-nāma*]), such nouns resemble nouns designating natural phenomena in that like “earth” and “moon” they arise spontaneously, independently of a name-giver.

Thus, model 3 in Dhs-a relates to the exegetical need to highlight the special status that *nāma* has in the Dhs root-text, where *nāma* refers specifically to the names of the four formless aggregates and nibbana.²⁰

§5. The three models in relation to each other

In the above sections, the three models have been considered individually. This section considers them in relation to each other. I first examine the relation between models 2 and 3, then how both relate to model 1.

While models 2 and 3 employ the same four noun categories, they exhibit several noteworthy differences:

- a) Model 2 mentions all the names of the noun categories: nouns given by general consent (*sāmañña-nāma*); nouns expressive of a quality (*guṇa-nāma*); artificial nouns (*kittima-nāma*); and nouns spontaneously arisen (*opapāttika-nāma*). By contrast, model 3 mentions explicitly only *kittima-nāma*.
- b) Model 2 gives roughly the same attention to each noun category. By contrast, model 3 mentions the first three categories in passing (only *c.* 5 lines of text in the PTS edition vs. *c.* 15 ½ lines in model 2) and focuses on *opapāttika* nouns (12 lines vs. 5 lines in model 2).
- c) In the context of discussing *opapāttika* nouns, model 2 only mentions nouns referring to natural phenomena such as “earth” and “moon”. In addition to such names, model 3 also mentions the names of the four formless aggregates (*vedanā* “feeling”; *saññā* “perception”; *sañkhāra* “formations”; *viññāṇa* “consciousness”) and the name *nibbāna*.
- d) Models 2 and 3 highlight different features as the defining characteristic of *opapāttika* nouns. Model 2 states that such nouns do not change across time: they drop in (*ni√pat = opapāttika*) spontaneously from one eon to the next. Model 3 repeats this statement but takes the defining characteristic of *opapāttika* nouns as arising independently of any name-giver – as they arise, the object-referents make their own names (Dhs-a 392,9 = DN-a 977,19: *attano nāmaṃ karontāva uppajjanti*).

20 In both its occurrences in Dhs-a and DN-a, model 3 presupposes the explanation advanced in Dhs 226,36–38 [§1309]. From this it would seem to follow that Dhs-a is a better candidate to be the original occurrence of model 3. However, while tradition ascribes both Dhs-a and DN-a to Buddhaghosa, modern scholars consider Dhs-a as a later work composed by anonymous authors; see von Hinüber 1996: 149 §307.

- e) The order of the two intermediate noun categories is inverted in model 2 (*guṇa-nāma*; *kittima-nāma*) and in model 3 (*kittima-nāma*; *guṇa-nāma*).

Differences (a)–(d) are consistent with the different purposes served by the original occurrences of the two models. Specifically, the distinctive features that characterize model 3 in opposition to model 2 are amenable to the specific purpose served by model 3. Unlike model 2, model 3 does not aim to provide a full description of the four kinds of nouns. Rather, in direct relation to the Dhs root-text, model 3 in Dhs-a aims to show that the names of certain dhammas enjoy a special status, namely, they arise independently of a name-giver.

Recognition of the marked degree in which model 3 in Dhs-a is shaped by its relation to the Dhs-a root-text suggests that Buddhaghosa did not invent model 3 but – as he did with model 1 – adapted a pre-existing model to the exegetical needs of the context. It is unclear whether model 2 can be regarded as the source of model 3, or whether each model derived from two prototypes. Difference (e) suggests that the latter scenario is more plausible.

I now turn to how models 2 and 3 relate to model 1. Model 1, on the one hand, and models 2 and 3, on the other, form two distinct kinds of classificatory models. While three of their respective noun categories bear no relation to each other, both kinds of models may, however, share one noun category: *guṇa-nemittika* nouns in model 1 seem to relate to *guṇa-nāma* nouns in models 2 and 3. Such a relationship is twofold: first, the term *guṇa* occurs in both names. Second, and more importantly, model 1 and model 2 use similar noun examples (no noun examples are provided in model 3). Model 1 exemplifies *guṇa-nemittika* nouns with *tevijja* “possessed of the three knowledges”, *chaḷabhiñña* “possessed of the six direct-knowledges”, and *bhagavan* (which, as we saw in §2.1, is Buddhaghosa’s own addition). Model 2 states that: “several hundred names of the Lord, such as ‘bhagavan’, ‘arahant’, ‘perfectly enlightened one’, etc., are precisely nouns expressive of a quality” (Bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho ti ādīni pi Tathāgatassa anekāni nāmasatāni guṇanāmān’ eva). It is conceivable that *guṇa-nāma* in model 2 presupposes and builds on *guṇa-nemittika* in model 1.

§6. The sources of the models: Pali canon and Sanskrit grammar

Studying the relation between the original occurrence of each model and its respective context allowed us to conclude that Buddhaghosa did not invent models 1 and 3. (Lack of probative evidence does not permit us to draw the same conclusion about model 2, though it is likely that this model too pre-dates Buddhaghosa.) Rather, Buddhaghosa inherited and repurposed pre-existing models to fit specific exegetical needs. What are the sources of these models? No direct evidence about these sources or their authors is available. Indirect evidence, however, can be obtained through examining the names of the noun categories. This examination will show that the authors of these models combined influences from both the Pali canon and Sanskrit grammatical sources.

In model 1, the names *guṇa-nemittika* and *yadicchaka* are reminiscent of *guṇa-śabda* and *yadrcchā-śabda*, two noun categories found in a Sanskritic fourfold classification that is first attested in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya*:

Words are used in four ways: words signifying universals, signifying qualities, signifying activities and signifying just whatever one might wish to have (trans. Dasgupta 1991: 91; MBh [on śivasūtra 2] I 19,20–2: *catuṣṭayī śabdānāṃ pravṛttiḥ | jātīśabdā guṇāśabdāḥ kriyāśabdā yādṛcchāśabdāś caturthāḥ*).²¹

The similarity between *guṇa-nemittika* and *guṇa-śabda* should not, however, be overemphasized. As we saw, the word *guṇa* in *guṇa-nemittika* seems to have been added by Buddhaghosa in order to reconcile the inherited noun category with the practice of recollecting the Buddha’s qualities (*guṇas*) as outlined in the *Vism*.

The influence of the Sanskritic model on *yadicchaka* is somewhat clearer. The word *yadicchaka* is said to be the name by which the *adhiccasamuppanna* category is known in common usage (*lokiyavohāra*) (see Appendix 1.1, §54). These two names, designating the same noun category, have a different origin. While, as I show below, *adhiccasamuppanna* is derived from the Pali canon, *yadicchaka* is likely to have been borrowed from Sanskrit grammatical sources. The latter point is supported by two observations. First, the word *loka*, which is related to *lokiyavohāra*, seems to refer to grammar in the same explanation of the epithet *bhagavan* in the *Vism* (*Vism* 212,15/HOS 175,10 §64).²² Second, *yadicchaka* unambiguously corresponds to the Sanskritic category *yādṛcchaka* in a passage in the *Sadd*.²³

The word *adhiccasamuppanna* comes from the Pali canon, where it designates the heretic view of “fortuitous origination” (D I 28,20–30₂) according to which the self and the world are neither self-created, nor created by others (D III 138,1–2: *asayaṃkāro aparāṃkāro adhiccasamuppanno attā ca loko ca*). The semantic similarity between the term’s canonical occurrences and the

21 This fourfold classification is traditionally exemplified with the following sentence: *gauḥ śuklaḥ calati Dīthtaḥ* “the white cow [named] Dīthta goes”; see Joshi 1966: 24–5. Note that Patañjali later proposes (MBh I 20,8–9) a threefold classification of nouns, by subsuming *yādṛcchāśabda* under *kriyāśabda*. For other Sanskrit texts which likewise reject *yādṛcchāśabda* as an independent noun category, see the passages collected in Mīmāṃsaka (1985 [1973]: 9–10).

22 In this *Vism* passage, the epithet *bhagavan* is said to be formed with the three syllables from the phrase *bhavesu vantagamano* “he has rejected going in the kinds of becoming” (trans. Nāṇamoli 2010 [1956]: 208). A similar explanation is mentioned for the word *mekhala* “waist-girdle”, which is taken to derive from “garland for the urinating part” (*mehanassa khassa mālā*). The latter explanation is introduced with *yathā loke* “like in the world”, which Nāṇamoli translates, correctly I think, as “just as is done in the world [of the grammarians outside the Dispensation]”. Vimalabuddhi (Mmd Be 14,1), the commentator on Kaccāyana, makes the full statement explicit: *yathā loke tathā sad-dasatthe* “as in the world, so in the grammatical science”. I owe this reference to one of the reviewers.

23 *Sadd* 880,10–11 mentions a fourfold classification of nouns, which is modelled on the Sanskritic one: (a) *sāmañña*: nouns expressive of a generality, e.g. *rukkha* “tree”; (b) *guṇa*: nouns expressive of a property/quality, e.g. *nīla* “blue”; (c) *kiriya*: nouns expressive of an action, e.g. *pācaka* “one who cooks”; and (d) *yadicchaka*: nouns expressive of [the user’s] wish, e.g. *sirivaḍḍha* (catubbidham · sāmañña-guṇa-kiriya-yadicchakavasena, *yathā rukkho nīlo pācako Sirivaḍḍho* [v.r. *Sirivaḍḍhano*]). Note that the noun example *Sirivaḍḍha* matches *Sirivaḍḍhako* mentioned in model 1.

sense ascribed to it in model 1 is highlighted by the commentarial explanations, which gloss *adhiccasamuppanna* as “to originate without a cause” (*akāraṇa-samuppanna* DN-a 118,⁷ [on DN I 28,₂₁]) or “to originate by chance” (*yadicchāya* Ud-a 345,⁶ [on Ud 69,₃₀]).

The names *āvattika* and *liṅika*, too, are reminiscent of Sanskrit grammatical sources. The Sanskrit word *avasthā* is used in grammar in a sense that is partly comparable to *āvattika*. Bhartṛhari (fifth century) employs *avasthā-viśeṣa* “specific stages” to refer to the different stages of milk, each of which is designated with a distinct name, such as “curds” (*maṇḍaka*) etc. (*Vākyapādīya* 1.94; see Ogawa 2010: 404). Madhva (thirteenth century) uses *avasthā* to refer to the life stages of the individual named Devadatta, to make the point that this name remains the same, no matter whether the referent Devadatta is a child, a boy, or a youth.²⁴

Further, consider the two following *Mahābhāṣya* passages. The first mentions the word *liṅga* together with three words that are used as noun examples to illustrate the *liṅika* noun category in model 1:

So among the people, one would speak to Devadatta as follows: here, shave away your hair, or here get your locks tangled, or here have only one tuft of hair at the middle of the head. So whatever mark is suggested the person appears there with that mark (trans. Dasgupta 1991: 77; MBh (on *śivasūtra* 2) I.17,_{18–20}: *loke kaścit devadattam āha | iha muṇḍo bhava | iha jaṭī bhava | iha śikhī bhaveti | yalliṅgo yatrocyaṭe talliṅgas tatropatiṣṭhate* [emphasis added]).

In accordance with different marks (*liṅga*), Devadatta is addressed with different appellatives as “the shaven-headed one” (*muṇḍa*), “the matted-haired one” (*jaṭin*), or “the topknotted one” (*śikhin*).

The second passage mentions the same words that are used as noun examples to illustrate the *āvattika* and *liṅika* categories in model 1:

Thus the same Devadatta with a shaven head, or with a tuft of hair, or with long-plaited hair does not lose his own name. So also are the calf, the heifer and the bull the same though they differ in age as too young,

24 *Sarvadarśana-saṃgraha* (1924: 307–8,_{240–42}): *saṃjñāśabdānām utpattiṣṭhāy ā vināśāc chaiśavakauṃṛayauvanādyavasthādībhede ’pi sa evāyam ity abhinnaṣṭyāyabalāt siddhā devadattatvādijātīr abhyupagantavyā* | (Yamashita 1998: 60) “It is also established that for proper names, the class property such as ‘Devadatta’, etc. is to be understood, since from birth to death, even despite the different stages of life such as babyhood, boyhood, and youth, etc., we have a knowledge of non-difference expressed as ‘he is the same man’.” Note, however, that a parallel passage in Bhartṛhari’s commentary on *Mahābhāṣya* reads *sthāvira* instead of *avasthā*. Bronkhorst (1987: 15,_{20–22}): *evam ḍiṭthe ’pi yad utpattiṣṭhāy ā vināśāt eva tad bhavaty ayaṃ ḍiṭho ’yam ḍiṭtha iti | bālyakauṃṛayauvanasthāvireṣv abhinnaḥ sa evāyam iti sampratyayaḥ sā ākṛtiḥ śabdavācyā* (trans. Bronkhorst 1987: p. 65) “In the same way also in Ḍiṭtha there is [something] which [lasts] from birth to death [so that one says:] “This [was] Ḍiṭtha, this [is] Ḍiṭtha”. The cognition that he is the same undivided [person] in infancy, adolescence, youth and age, is the form (*ākṛti*) expressed by the word [Ḍiṭtha]”. A comprehensive search of grammatical texts would probably yield other pertinent occurrences of the term *avasthā*.

young and old (trans. Dasgupta 1991: 164; MBh (on A 1.1.6) I.42, 2–4: *tat yathā | devadattaḥ muṇḍī api jaṭī api śikhī api svām ākhyām na jahāti | tathā bālaḥ yuvā vṛddhaḥ vatsaḥ damyaḥ balivardhaḥ iti* [emphasis added]).

Despite his changing hairstyle, the individual Devadatta remains the same, like a bull remains the same, despite its different life-stages.

The influence of Sanskrit grammatical sources on the names used in models 2 and 3 is less clear. The name *kittima-nāma* may be reminiscent of grammar, whereas *sāmañña* and *opapātika* are derived from the Pali canon.

The name *kittima-nāma*, which designates proper names that are artificially made by a namer, may be partly reminiscent of Sanskrit *kṛtrima*, which is used in grammar to designate grammatical technical terms (Abhyankar 1986: 127; see Candotti's (2005: 72–80) detailed discussion).

While its genesis and derivation are complex, *sāmañña* is, in my view, best explained in relation to the Pali canonical occurrences of the term *samaññā* “name, designation”. Particularly relevant are a few occurrences in Sn and MN, where *samaññā* (of which *sāmañña* is a derivative) signifies conventional designation.²⁵ The meaning that the word has in these canonical occurrences would seem to fit well with the sense that *sāmañña* has in Buddhaghosa's model 2, namely, “[nouns] given by general consent”.

The word *opapātika* is used in the canon to designate spontaneous birth, one of the four modes of birth (the other three modes being birth from the womb, eggs, and moisture (MN I 73,_{3–15})). This mode of birth pertains to “gods and denizens of hell and certain human beings and some beings in the lower worlds” (trans. Bodhi 1995: 169; MN I 73,_{13–15}: *devā nerayikā ekacce ca manussā ekacce ca vinipātikā*). The non-returners, too, are said to be spontaneously reborn in the Brahma-world, whence they never return and where they attain *parinibbāna*.²⁶ This canonical sense of *opapātika* readily lends itself to signify

25 The *Vāseṭṭhasutta* (Sn 3.9 = MN 98) uses *samaññā* twice to designate the conventional nature of human language (Sn 611; 648). I quote below Sn 648 with Bodhi's translation. Note that this verse explains that *samaññā* originates by convention (*samuccā*). This explanation is closely reminiscent of the one given in Sadd (*samaññāya janasammutiya pavattaṃ nāman*, see §3): indeed, *samuccā* and *°sammutiya* are the same word, with different phonetic developments. Sn 648: *Samaññā h' esā lokasmim nāmagottaṃ pakappitaṃ | samucca samudāgataṃ tatha tattha pakappitaṃ* “For the name and clan ascribed to one are a designation in the world. Having originated by convention, they are ascribed here and there” (Bodhi 2017: 268).

Two MN passages, too, are relevant here. In MN 39, *samaññā* (MN I 271,₁₆) refers to the conventional designation “monks” (*bhikkhu*) which people used to call (MN I 271,₁₁: *sañjānāti*) the Buddha's disciples. The Buddha urges the monks to live up to this conventional designation. In MN 139, *samaññā* (MN III 234,₃₀) refers to the common, standard language used by a speaking community in a certain area. The monk that happens to be in that community should adopt its speech habits – that is, if people call (MN I 234,₃₄: *sañjānāti*) pot “vessel”, the monk too should call it “vessel”; he should not stick to “pot”, the word used in his native vernacular. On this much-discussed passage, see Jayatilleke (2008 [1963]: 313–15) and Collins (1998: 48); cf. also Norman (1991 [1980]: 129).

26 See, inter alia, DN I 156,_{20–21} (≈ MN I 34,_{9–10}) *opapātiko hoti tathaparinibbāyi anāvatti-dhammo tasmā lokā*. The commentaries (DN-a 313,₁₄; MN-a 164,₈) explain

nouns which are spontaneously originated without the intervention of a name-giver.²⁷

To conclude, an examination of the names designating the noun categories suggests that the authors of the model combined Pali and Sanskrit grammatical influences. Three names seem to have been borrowed directly from the Pali canon: *adhiccasamuppanna*, *sāmañña*, and *opapātika*. There is a clear semantic continuity between the canonical usage of these terms and their meaning in the models. Noteworthy similarities are also found with Sanskrit grammatical texts, especially the *Mahābhāṣya*. Although such similarities cannot be random, it is not possible to identify a direct Sanskrit grammatical source. The only possible exception seems to be the name *yadicchaka*, which is likely to have been modelled on the Sanskrit noun category *yadṛcchā-śabda*.

§7. Conclusion

The above investigation has tried to show that:

- a) The three fourfold models for classing nouns found in the texts ascribed to Buddhaghosa have a distinctive distribution.
- b) Studying the relation between each model's original occurrence and its respective context reveals that each original occurrence serves a specific purpose.
- c) Buddhaghosa did not invent these models but repurposed pre-existing models to tackle specific exegetical needs.
- d) Buddhaghosa's reuse of the inherited models is consistent with his view expressed elsewhere that Pali is a sacred, perfect language.
- e) Studying the terms designating the models' name categories suggests that the unknown authors of the models combined influences from the Pali canon and Sanskrit grammatical sources.

(a) The occurrences of the three models have a distinctive distribution. Model 1 occurs within a passage that describes the Buddha's epithet *bhagavan*. Model 2 occurs in association with the term *nāma*. And model 3 occurs in association with the term *nāma* as part of the dyad *nāma-rūpa* "name and form", one of the five aggregates.

(b) For each model it is possible to identify the original occurrence from which the others were derived. The relation that each model's original occurrence entertains with its context allows us to determine that each original occurrence serves a specific contextual purpose.

that the world here referred to is the Brahma-world (*brahmaloka*). According to Bodhi (1995: 1178 n 81 [on MN I 34,9–10]) non-returners are in "a special region of the Brahma-world called the Pure Abodes".

27 Several commentators (Collins 1998: 49 note 61; Pind 2012: 66; Levman 2017: 44; see also CPD entry) have suggested that the term *opapātika* is indebted to Sanskrit *autpattika* "original, inherent", a Mīmāṃsā term that designates the inherent and unchanging relationship between Sanskrit words and their meaning. While an influence from Mīmāṃsā cannot be ruled out, I think this should not be overemphasized. For neither the term *opapātika* nor the idea it conveys fully correspond with Sanskrit *autpattika*.

The original occurrence of model 1 in *Vism* emphasizes the special status of the Buddha's epithet *bhagavan*. Unlike the other kinds of nouns, *bhagavan* has a direct connection with its referent, for it expresses the Buddha's unique qualities. Model 1 describes *bhagavan* as a noun expressive of a (quality)cause (*[guṇa]nemit-tika*). In doing so, model 1 co-ordinates with the *Vism* section in which it occurs, a section that details the practice of recollecting the Buddha through meditating on the Buddha's qualities (*guṇa*) that are encoded in his main epithets.

The original occurrence of model 2 in *Dhs-a* emphasizes that the term *nāma*, found in the associated *Dhs* root-text, refers to the totality of nouns. In co-ordination with both the *Dhs* root-text and a contiguous passage in *Dhs-a*, model 2 reinforces the idea that names are a universal and pervasive phenomenon.

The original occurrence of model 3 in *Dhs-a* shows that the names of certain dhammas mentioned in the associated *Dh-s* root-text enjoy a special status: the names of the four formless aggregates (*vedanā* "feeling"; *saññā* "perception"; *saṅkhāra* "formation"; and *viññāṇa* "consciousness") and the name *nibbāna* differ from the other kinds of nouns in that they arise independently of any name-giver.

(c) Buddhaghosa did not invent the models, but repurposed pre-existing models to fit specific exegetical needs. This is especially clear for models 1 and 3.

With respect to model 1, Buddhaghosa added the word *guṇa* to the inherited *nemittika* noun category. He then allocated the Buddha's epithet *bhagavan* to the newly obtained *guṇa-nemittika* noun category. By tweaking the inherited model in this way, Buddhaghosa adapted it to the overarching purpose of the *Vism* section, namely, to describe the practice of recollecting the Buddha's qualities (*guṇa*) as encoded in his nine main epithets.

With respect to model 3, Buddhaghosa modified the pre-existing model to emphasize the unique status of the names of certain dhammas mentioned in the associated *Dhs* root-text. The names of these dhammas arose spontaneously, independent of any name-giver (*opapātika*).

(d) The way that Buddhaghosa readapts the inherited models 1 and 3 is consistent with his view that Pali is a perfect language. Both models 1 and 3 are united by the need to show that two kinds of nouns have a direct and real connection to their referents. In model 1, the epithet *bhagavan* differs from the other kinds of nouns in that it is intrinsically connected to the Buddha's qualities it describes. Similarly, in model 3, the names of certain dhammas are unique in that they are autonomously generated by the phenomena they come to designate. The special status ascribed to both kinds of nouns is consistent with Buddhaghosa's belief that Pali is a "naturally-given" language, that is, Pali is "the root language of all beings" (*mūlabhāsa*), a natural or perfect language which has an intrinsic connection to reality (Collins 1998: 49).

(e) The terms designating the models' noun categories seem to have been inherited from both the Pali canon and Sanskrit grammatical sources. Specifically, *adhiccasamuppanna* in model 1 and *sāmañña* and *opapātika* in models 2 and 3 occur in the Pali canon with a meaning that is consistent with the one they have in the models. The name *yadicchaka* in model 1 is likely to have been modelled on the Sanskrit noun category *yadrcchā-śabda*. Further, some of the noun examples given in the models are reminiscent of passages in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*.

In conclusion we may ask: does the above investigation shed new light on the early history of Pali grammatical and linguistic speculations?

Ole Pind (2012: 61–2; 65–6) notes that the terms designating the models' noun categories belong to a group of grammatical technical terms found in texts ascribed to Buddhaghosa which have no parallel in Sanskrit grammar. Pind observes that these models may represent the attempt to establish a distinct Pali canonical exegesis. In light of the above investigation, Pind's observations can be refined in two respects.

First, it is worth stressing that Buddhaghosa did not invent the models but inherited them from previous sources. In the context of model 1, the term *porāṇas* "the ancients" is mentioned (see below Appendix 1.1 §54). Pind (1989: 36) notes that *porāṇas* sometimes refers to the authors of the lost *aṭṭhakathās*, the ancient Sinhala commentaries. It remains unclear, however, whether such *porāṇas* can be identified as the authors of model 1 or not. At any rate, no mention of *porāṇas* is given in the context of models 2 and 3. An exploration of the names designating the noun categories indicates that the unknown authors of the models borrowed terms and ideas both from the Pali canon and, it seems, from Sanskrit grammatical sources.

Second, Buddhaghosa not only inherited pre-existing models, but adapted them to fit contextual exegetical needs. Such an adaptation seems to be consistent with his view, expressed elsewhere, that Pali is a sacred language.

The general point exemplified by the study of the models is this: studying Buddhaghosa's technical terms and grammatical ideas requires being fully cognizant of the complexity and multilayered nature of the evidence. Not only did Buddhaghosa inherit earlier interpretive classificatory models, but such models themselves combined inputs from different traditions, namely, Pali canon and Sanskrit grammar. Moreover, Buddhaghosa adapted such inherited grammatical technical terms and ideas to meet exegetical needs as well as to reflect his attitude towards the Pali language.

Appendix 1

This contains the text and translation of the original occurrence of each of the three models.

Appendix 1.1. Model 1: *Vism* (209,₂₄–212,₁₅/HOS 173–75 [§§ 53–64])²⁸

§53. *Bhagavā* ti idam pan'assa
guṇaviṣiṭṭhasabbasattuttama-
garugāravādhipvacanaṃ. Ten' āhu
Porāṇā:

“*Bhagavā* ti vacanaṃ seṭṭham,
Bhagavā ti vacanam uttamaṃ,
garugāravayutto so *Bhagavā* tena
vuccatī ti”

§53. *bhagavan*: this, further, is his (i.e. Buddha's) designation [expressive of] the esteem of the teacher, the best of all beings [due to] the distinction of [his] qualities. Thus, the ancients said:

bhagavan is the best expression; *bhagavan* is the superior expression. He is provided with the esteem of the teacher; hence he is called *bhagavan*.

28 I give the text of the HOS edition, since the PTS text presents a few faulty readings.

§54. Catubbidham vā²⁹ nāmaṃ:
 āvatthikaṃ, liṅgikaṃ, nemittikaṃ,
 adhiccasaṃmuppannaṃ ti.
Adhiccasaṃmuppannaṃ nāma
 lokiyavohārena³⁰ yadicchakaṃ ti
 vuttaṃ hoti. Tattha vaccho, dammo,
 balivaddo ti evamādi *āvatthikaṃ*.
 Daṇḍī, chattī, sikhī, karī ti evamādi
liṅgikaṃ. Tevijjo, chaḷabhiñño ti
 evamādi *nemittikaṃ*. Sirivaḍḍhako,
 Dhanavaḍḍhako ti evamādi
 vacanattaṃ anapekkhitvā pavattaṃ
adhiccasaṃmuppannaṃ.

§55. Idam pana Bhagavā ti nāmaṃ
 (guṇa)nemittikaṃ;³¹ na Mahā-
 Māyāya, na Suddhodana-mahārājena,
 na asītiyā ñātisahasseehi kataṃ, na
 Sakka-Santusitādīhi devatāviseesehi.
 Vuttam pi c' etaṃ Dhammasenāpatinā:
 “Bhagavā ti n' etaṃ nāmaṃ mātārā
 kataṃ, na pitarā kataṃ, na bhātārā
 kataṃ, na bhaginiyā kataṃ, na
 mittāmacchehi kataṃ, na ñātisālohitehi
 kataṃ, na samaṇabrāhmaṇehi kataṃ,
 na devatāhi kataṃ; vimokkhantikaṃ
 etaṃ Buddhānaṃ Bhagavantānaṃ
 bodhiyā mūle saha
 sabbaññutaññāssa paṭilābhā sacchikā
 paññatti yadidaṃ Bhagavā” ti. (Nidd-1
 143 [on Sn 815]).

§54. Or nouns are fourfold: expressive of a
 stage [of life], of a characteristic [exterior]
 mark, of a cause, and fortuitously arisen.
 “Fortuitously arisen” is called in common
 parlance “in accordance with [the user/
 namer’s] wish”. Among these, [nouns]
 expressive of a stage [of life] are those such as
 “calf”, “young bull”, “full grown bull”.
 [Nouns] expressive of a characteristic
 [exterior] mark are those such as “staff-
 bearer”, “umbrella-bearer”, “topknot-
 wearer”, “hand-possessor, i.e. elephant”.
 [Nouns] expressive of a cause are those such
 as “possessed of the three knowledges”,
 “possessed of the six direct-knowledges”.
 [Nouns] fortuitously arisen, such as
 “Splendour/Glory-increaser”, “Wealth-
 increaser”, are used without taking into
 consideration the [noun’s] etymological
 meaning.

§55. Here, then, *bhagavan* is a noun
 expressive of a (quality)cause. It is not made
 by Mahā-Māyā (i.e. the Buddha’s mother),
 King Suddhodana (i.e. his father), [his]
 eighty-thousand family members, or by
 distinguished deities like Sakka, Santusita,
 and others. And this is said by the General of
 the Dhamma (i.e. Sāriputta): “*bhagavan* this
 is not a name made by mother, father, brother,
 sister, friends and companions, family
 members and other relatives, ascetics and
 brahmins, or deities. This [noun] *bhagavan*
 pertains to the end of emancipation, [it is] a
 realization-based (*sacchikā*) designation of
 the Buddhas, the Bhagavans, immediately
 after their obtainment of omniscient
 knowledge at the root of the [tree of]
 enlightenment”.³²

29 Vism and Nidd-1-a read *vā*; Vin-a and Khp-a read *hi*. This variant reading may not be negligible. *vā* might suggest that model 1 provides an alternative explanation to that given by the “the ancients” (*porāṇā*). Instead, *hi* might suggest that model 1 provides an explanation that corroborates that of the ancients.

30 Vism, Vin-a, and Nidd-1-a read *lokīyavohārena*; this word is absent in Khp-a.

31 Vin-a and Nidd-1-a read *nemittikaṃ*; Khp-a reads *guṇanemittakaṃ*.

32 This sentence presents two difficulties, *saha* and *sacchikā*. I take the former to govern the ablative *paṭilābhā* and to mean “immediately after”; see Oberlies (2019: 696 note 2). I take *sacchikā* as a nominative qualifying *paññatti*, and assume that it corresponds to Sanskrit *sākṣika*, rather than to derive from *satya* + *-ka/-ika*.

Appendix 1.2. Model 2: Dhs-a (390,27–391,15)

Nāman ti catubbidham nāmaṃ:
Sāmaññanāmaṃ guṇanāmaṃ
kittimanāmaṃ opapāṭikanāman ti.
Tattha paṭhamakappiyesu [v.r. °
kappikesu] kesu mahājanena
sammannitvā ṭhapitattā
Mahāsammato ti rañño nāmaṃ
sāmaññanāmaṃ nāma. Yaṃ
sandhāya vuttaṃ:
Mahājanasammato ti kho Vāsetṭha
Mahāsammato t’eva paṭhamam
akkharam upanibattan ti [DN III
93,11–12].

Dhammakathiko paṃsukūliko
vinayadharo teṭṭako saddho
pasanno³⁷ ti evarūpaṃ guṇato
āgatanāmaṃ guṇanāmaṃ nāma.
Bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho
ti ādīni pi Tathāgataṃ anekāni
nāmasatāni guṇanāmān’ eva. Tena
vuttaṃ:

“**noun**” [Dhs 226,28 (§1306)]: nouns are fourfold: given by general consent; expressive of a quality; artificial; and spontaneously arisen. Among these, nouns “given by general consent” (*sāmañña-nāma*) are on account of having been assented to (*sammannitvā*), i.e. established, by many people among those living in the first ages, [such as] the name of the [first] king “Great Assent” (*Mahāsammato*). With respect to this [name] it is said [in the *Aggaññasutta*]: “assented by many people, O Vāsetṭha, [is what] ‘Great Assent’ [means]; this was the first term [for the kṣatriya class] which appeared”.

“A noun expressive of a quality” is a noun coming (i.e. arising) from a quality, such as “preacher”, “rag-wearer”, “vinaya-holder”, “one who knows the three baskets by heart”, “faithful”, and “confident”. Several hundred names of the Lord, such as “bhagavan”, “arahant”, “perfectly enlightened one”, etc., are precisely nouns expressive of a quality. Therefore, it has been said:

made to the fivefold etymology, which consists in sound insertion, etc. As for grammar, reference is made to the class of irregular words beginning with *pisodara* (Skt *prṣodara*) “having a spotted belly”, which are mentioned in relation to A 6.3.109. Such words are irregular and are therefore explained by means of ad hoc derivations, e.g. *prṣodara* is derived from *prṣad* “spotted” + *udara* “belly”, with the irregular deletion of the final *-d* in *prṣad*. Both explanatory methods likewise explain the seemingly irregular word *bhagavān* by positing a regular underlying form, *bhāgyavān* “possessor of fortune, fortunate” (*bhāgya* + *vān*), and then by implicitly assuming a number of phonetic modifications through which this underlying transparent form is changed into the surface opaque form *bhagavān* (here, shortening of “*ā*” and deletion of “*y*”). The same explanatory methods apply also to the other five words (specifically, three words and two phrases) that are mentioned in the verse in §57, and which are explained in §§59–64.

37 I here follow the CTS4 text. The PTS edition reads *Vinayadharo teṭṭako saddho satṭho* and records *pasanno* as a variant reading of *satṭho*. There seems to be no reason to capitalize *vinayadharo*, and *teṭṭako* seems better than *teṭṭako*. *satṭho* is somewhat unclear. The meaning “dismissed” (PED) does not fit the context, which requires a word denoting a positive religious quality. *sattha* “instructed” may work better. It might also be possible that *satṭha* is a variant manuscript spelling of *saddha*. Voiced dental sounds are often represented as unvoiced cerebral in Burmese manuscripts (Aleix Ruiz-Falqués; pers. com.).

Asañkhyeyyāni nāmāni, sakuṇeṇa³⁸ mahesino | Guṇeṇa nāmam uddheyyaṃ api nāma sahasato³⁹ ti.

The names of the Great Seer (=Buddha) that are due to his qualities are innumerable. It is on account of his qualities that [his] name should also be proclaimed in its thousands.⁴⁰

Yaṃ pana jātassa kumārakassa nāmaggaṇadivase⁴¹ dakkhiṇeyyānaṃ sakkāraṃ katvā samīpe ʒhitā nātakā kappetvā “ayaṃ asuko nāmā” ti nāmaṃ karonti idaṃ kittimanāma nāma.

Further, “artificial” nouns are those which, on the new-born child’s name-giving day, after having paid respect to those worthy of reward (i.e. the ritual performers of the name-giving ceremony), the near-standing relatives concoct and assign [to the child, declaring] – “this one has such and such a name”.

Yā pana purimapaññatti aparapaññattiyam patati purimavohāro pacchimavohāre patati seyyathīdaṃ purimakappe pi cando⁴² etarahi pi cando yeva, atīte sūriyo samuddo pathavī pabbato etarahi pi pabbato yevā ti idaṃ opapāṭikanāmaṃ nāma.

Further, a former (i.e. of a previous aeon) designation that drops (*patati*) into a latter (i.e. of a following aeon) designation, a former usage that drops into a later usage – that is, in the former aeon moon [was called “moon”], now too it is moon, in the past [aeon] the sun ... the sea ... the earth ... the mountain [was called “mountain” etc.], now too it is mountain [etc.] – these are “spontaneously arisen nouns” (*opapāṭika-nāma*).

Appendix 1.3. Model 3: Dhs-a (392,2–27)

... Yathā hi mahājanasammatattā Mahāsammataṃ Mahāsammato ti nāmaṃ ahoṣi, yathā mātāpitaro “ayaṃ Tisso nāma hotu, Phusso nāma hotū” ti evaṃ puttassa kittimanāmaṃ karonti, yathā vā dhammakathiko vinayadhāro ti guṇato nāmaṃ āgacchati na evaṃ vedanādīnaṃ. Vedanādayo hi mahāpathavīdayo viya attano nāmaṃ karontā va uppajanti, tesu uppannesu tesam nāmaṃ uppannam eva hoti. Na hi vedanaṃ uppannaṃ “tvam vedanā nāma hohī”⁴³ ti koci bhaṇati na ca tassā nāmaggaṇakiccaṃ atthi. Yathā pathaviyā uppannāya “tvam pathavī

... Like the name “Great Assent” was [given to] king Great Assent on account of many people’s assent; [or] like parents make an artificial name for their son thus: “this shall be named Tisso; [this] shall be named Phusso”; or like nouns such as “preacher”, “discipline-bearer” come from a quality – it is not so for feelings, etc. (i.e. the four formless aggregates: *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṃkhārās*, and *viññānaṃ*). For feelings, etc., make their own names as they arise, like the great earth, etc. When they (i.e. the phenomena) arise, their name simply arises. For it is not that one says to feeling, once it

38 I follow CTS4. PTS reads *sa kuṇeṇa*.

39 I follow CTS4. PTS reads *nāma sahasato*.

40 The point is this: the Buddha’s names that express his qualities are infinite, because the qualities that characterize the Buddha are infinite.

41 I follow CTS4. PTS reads *nāmaggaṇādivasena*, which is an error.

42 CTS4 inserts here *cando yeva nāma*.

43 PTS wrongly places the beginning of the quote marks before the word *vedanaṃ*.

nāma hohī” ti nāmaggaṇakiccaṃ natthi. Cakkavāḷa-Sinerumhi candimasuriyanakkhattesu uppannesu “tvam cakkavāḷam nāma tvam nakkhattam nāma hohī” ti nāmaggaṇakiccaṃ natthi. Nāmaṃ uppannam eva hoti, opapātikapaññatti nipatati. Evaṃ vedanāya uppannāya “tvam vedanā nāma hohī” ti nāmaggaṇakiccaṃ natthi. Tāya uppannāya vedanā ti nāmaṃ uppannam eva hoti. 805. Saññādīsu pi es’ eva nayo. Atīte pi hi vedanā vedanā yeva saññā . . . saṅkhārā . . . viññāṇam viññāṇameva.⁴⁴ Anāgate pi paccuppanne pi. Nibbānaṃ pana sadā pi nibbānam evā ti . . .

has arisen, “you shall be called ‘feeling’”. Nor is there name-giving for feeling. Like, when it arises, there is no name-giving for earth – “you shall be called earth”. When they arise, there is no name-giving for the world-encircling mountain range, for the mount Sineru, the moon, the sun, the stars – “you shall be called world-encircling mountain range, you, stars, etc.” The noun simply arises, a spontaneously-arisen designation (*opapātika*^o) drops in (*nipatati*). Similarly, when feeling arises there is no name-giving – “you shall be called feeling”; [but] once it arises, the name “feeling” simply arises for it. [805] The very same way is for perception, etc. In the past [aeon] feeling [was called] precisely “feeling”, perception [“perception”], formation [“formation”], consciousness “consciousness”. In the future [aeon] too, in the present [aeon] too. Further, nibbana has always been [called] nothing else than “nibbana” . . .

Appendix 2

Table 2 presents all the noun examples supplied in the three models. In addition to the texts listed in note 2 above, I also give the noun examples for model 1 given in *Vism-ṭ*. (The order of the two intermediate categories of model 3 is swapped, to better show their relation to the corresponding categories in model 2.)

Table 2.

Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>āvatthika</i> : “nouns expressive of a stage [of life]” <i>Vism</i> , <i>Vin-a</i> , <i>Khp-a</i> , <i>Nidd-1-a</i> , <i>Sadd</i> : <i>vaccha</i> “calf”; <i>damma</i> “young bull”; <i>balivadda</i> “full grown” (<i>Vism-ṭ</i> : <i>bala</i> “boy”; <i>yuvan</i> “youngster”; <i>vuḍḍha</i> “old person”)	<i>sāmañña</i> : “nouns given by general consent” <i>Dhs-a</i> , <i>Paṭis-a</i> , <i>Moh</i> , <i>Sadd</i> : <i>Mahāsammata</i> “Great Consent”	<i>sāmañña</i> : <i>Dhs-a</i> , <i>DN-a</i> : <i>Mahāsammata</i>

Continued

44 I here follow CTS4, which I find clearer. PTS reads thus: Saññādīsu pi es’ eva nayo. Atīte pi hi vedanā yeva saññā saṅkhārā viññāṇam. Viññāṇam eva . . .

Table 2. Continued

Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>liṅgika</i> : “nouns expressive of a characteristic [exterior] mark”	<i>kittima</i> : “artificial nouns”	<i>kittima</i> :
<u>Vism, Vin-a, Khp-a, Nidd-1-a</u> : <i>daṇḍin</i> “staff-bearer”; <i>chattin</i> “umbrella-bearer”; <i>sikhin</i> “topknot-wearer”; <i>karin</i> “hand-possessor, i.e. elephant” <u>Sadd</u> : <i>daṇḍin chattin</i> (<u>Vism-t</u> : <i>muṇḍin</i> “shaven-head-possessor”; <i>jaṭin</i> “matted-hair-possessor”)	<u>Dhs-a, Paṭis-a, Moh</u> : <i>ayaṃ asuko nāmā ti</i> “This one [person] is named so and so”	<u>Dhs-a, DN-a</u> : <i>Tissa; Phussa</i>
(<i>guṇa</i>) <i>nemittika</i> : “nouns expressive of a (quality) cause”	<i>guṇa</i> : “nouns expressive of a quality”	<i>guṇa</i> :
<u>Vism, Vin-a, Khp-a, Nidd-1-a</u> : <i>tevija</i> “possessed of the three knowledges”; <i>chalaḥhiṇṇā</i> “possessed of the six direct-knowledges”; <i>bhagavan</i> <u>Sadd</u> : <i>sīlavā</i> “virtuous”; <i>pañṇavā</i> “possessed of insight” (<u>Vism-t</u> : <i>bahussuta</i> “possessed of much learning”; <i>dharmakathika</i> “preacher”; <i>jhāyin</i> “meditation practitioner”)	<u>Dhs-a</u> : <i>dharmakathika</i> “preacher”; <i>paṃsukūlika</i> “rag-wearer”; <i>vinayadhara</i> “Discipline-holder” <i>tepiṭaka</i> “one possessed of the Three Baskets”; <i>saddha</i> “faithful”; <i>pasanna</i> “confident”; <i>bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho tiādīni pi tathāgatassa anekāni nāmasatāni</i> “several hundred names of the Lord, such as ‘bhagavan’, ‘arahan’, ‘perfectly enlightened one’ etc.” <u>Paṭis-a</u> : <i>dharmakathiko</i> ; <i>paṃsukūlika</i> ; <i>vinayadharo</i> ; <i>tepiṭakadhara</i> ; <i>saddho</i> ; <i>sato</i> “mindful”; <i>bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho tiādīni pi tathāgatassa anekāni nāmasatāni</i> <u>Moh</u> : <i>dharmakathika</i> ; <i>paṃsukūlika</i> ; <i>kāḷa</i> “dark”; <i>rassa</i> “short”; <i>bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho tiādīni pi tathāgatassa anekāni nāmasatāni</i> <u>Sadd</u> : <i>dharmakathika</i> ; <i>paṃsukūlika</i> ; <i>vinayadharo</i> ; <i>tepiṭako</i> ; <i>saddhā</i> “faith”; <i>saddha</i>	<u>Dhs-a, DN-a</u> : <i>dharmakathika</i> ; <i>vinayadhara</i>
<i>adhiccasamuppanna</i> “fortuitously arisen nouns”/ <i>yadicchaka</i> : “in accordance with [the user/namer’s] wish”.	<i>opapātika</i> : “spontaneously arisen nouns”	<i>opapātika</i> :

Continued

Table 2. Continued

Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<p>Vism, Vin-a, Khp-a, Nidd- I-a: <i>Sirivaḍḍhaka</i> “Splendour/Glory- increaser”; <i>Dhanavaḍḍhaka</i> “Wealth- increaser” Sadd: [no noun example is given, but the following explanation is supplied:] <i>yādicchakaṃ nāma</i> <i>yadicchāya katasamketaṃ</i> <i>nāmaṃ</i> “‘yādicchaka’ are nouns [which are] a label made according to [the user/namer’s] wish’ (Vism-ṭ: <i>aghamarisana</i> “sin-removing [i.e. apotropaic, auspicious]” [?])</p>	<p>Dhs-a, Paṭis-a, Sadd: <i>canda</i> “moon”; <i>sū(u)riya</i> “sun”; <i>samudda</i> “ocean”; <i>pathavī</i> “earth”; <i>pabbata</i> “mountain” Moh: <i>canda</i>; <i>sūriya</i>; <i>samudda</i>; <i>paṭhavī</i>; <i>rūpa</i> “form”; <i>vedanā</i> “feeling”; <i>saññā</i> “perception”; <i>saṅkhāra</i> “formation”; <i>viññāṇa</i> “consciousness”; <i>nibbāna</i> “nibbana”⁴⁵</p>	<p>Dhs-a, DN-a: <i>vedanā</i>; <i>saññā</i>; <i>saṅkhāra</i>; <i>viññāṇa</i>; <i>nibbāna</i>; <i>mahāpathavī</i> “great earth”; <i>cakkavāḷa</i> “world- encircling mountain range”; <i>sineru</i> “[the mount] Sineru”; <i>candīma</i> “moon”; <i>sūriya</i>; <i>nakkhatta</i> “stars”</p>

Abbreviations

CPD	= Critical Pali Dictionary, available online at https://cpd.uni-koeln.de/ .
CTS4	= <i>Chatṭha Saṅgātana Tipiṭaka</i> , https://www.tipitaka.org/chattha .
Dhs-a	= Dhammasaṅganī-aṭṭhakathā = Atthasālinī (As).
DN-a	= Dīghanikaya-aṭṭhakathā = Sumaṅgalavilāsini (Sv).
DOP	= Cone, M. <i>A Dictionary of Pali. Part I a–kh (2001); Part II g–n (2010); Part III p–bh (2020)</i> . Bristol: The Pali Text Society.
HOS	= <i>Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosācārya</i> , edited by H.C. Warren, revised by D. Kosambi (Harvard Oriental Series vol. 41.). London: Harvard University Press.
Khp-a	= Khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā = Paramatthajotikā I (Pj I).
MBh	= Kielhorn (ed.) (1880–85). <i>The Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣya of Patañjali</i> , 3 vols. Bombay [cited with reference to volume, page, and line. I did not have access to the third edition revised and furnished with additional readings, references and select critical notes by K.V. Abhyankar. Volumes I, II, III. Pune: Bhandarkar Institute Press, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1962–72].
Moh	= Mohavicchedanī.
PED	= The Pali Text Society’s <i>Pali–English Dictionary</i> https://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/

PW	= Böhrling and Roth, Grosses Petersburger Wörterbuch, https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/PWGScan/2020/web/index.php
Nidd-1	= Mahāniddesa.
Nidd-1-a	= Mahāniddesa-aṭṭhakathā = Saddhammapajjotikā.
Paṭis	= Paṭisambhidāmagga
Paṭis-a	= Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā = Saddhammapakāsinī.
Sadd	= Saddanīti
<i>Sarvadarśana-saṃgraha</i>	= <i>Śrīmatsāyaṇamādhavācāryapraṇītaḥ Sarvadarśanasamgrahaḥ mahāmahopādhyāya-abhyaṅkaropāhvavāsudevaśāstriviracitayā darśanāṅkurābhidhaya vyākhyayā sametaḥ</i> . (924). Mumbai: Nirṇayasāgara.
SN-a	= Saṃyuttanikāya-aṭṭhakathā = Sāratthappakāsinī (Spk).
Vin-a	= Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā = Samantapāsādikā (Sp).
Vism	= Visuddhimagga.
Vism-ṭ	= Visuddhimagga-ṭikā.

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