



Michael Rye

Unterwegs

Neue Pfade in der Religionswissenschaft

Festschrift für Michael Pye zum 65. Geburtstag

New Paths in the Study of Religions

Festschrift in honour of Michael Pye on his 65th birthday

Herausgegeben von

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Vorwort

Michael Pye, dessen 65. Geburtstag der Anlaß für diese Festschrift ist, ist wissenschaftlich wie physisch viel „unterwegs“ gewesen. Nicht nur bestimmen Ortswechsel, Reisen, Pilgerfahrten und Forschungen in verschiedenen Kulturkreisen seine akademische Biographie; auch in seinem wissenschaftlichen Denken hat er immer wieder neue Pfade erkundet. Bereits die erste Etappe seiner beruflichen Wanderschaft umspannte die halbe Erdkugel: Nach dem Studium Moderner Sprachen (Französisch, Deutsch) und Evangelischer Theologie in Cambridge (1958-61) führte ihn sein Wanderstock nach Japan. Hier verdiente er seinen Lebensunterhalt mit Englischunterricht; während er sich die japanische Sprache aneignete und Theorie wie Praxis der Traditionen des japanischen Buddhismus studierte. Von diesem ersten Japanaufenthalt kehrte er mit einer Wandergefährtin zurück: 1963 hatten er und seine Ehefrau Christine in Tōkyō geheiratet. Nach seiner Rückkehr nach England lehrte er als Dozent für „Religious Studies“ an den Universitäten Lancaster und Leeds. Neben anderem beschäftigte ihn damals die Frage, wie man den Gegenstand religionswissenschaftlicher Forschung bestimmen und methodisch angemessen bearbeiten könne. Exemplarisch seien hier sein Buch *Comparative Religion. An Introduction through Source Materials* sowie die Aufsätze „Problems of method in the interpretation of religion“ und „Comparative hermeneutics in religion“ (siehe Bibliographie) genannt. Daneben widmete er sich unter anderem dem Studium des ostasiatischen Buddhismus. Die Früchte dieser Studien dokumentiert sein Buch *Skilful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism*, das zu den Standardwerken der wissenschaftlichen Literatur über den Mahāyāna-Buddhismus zählt und gerade neu aufgelegt wurde. Neben den methodologischen und philologischen Studien entdeckte er in diesen Jahren ein weiteres Feld empirischer Forschung: japanische Pilgerfahrten. Die Feldforschung gerade in diesem Gebiet stellte Michael Pye vor zahlreiche Herausforderungen, bescherte ihm aber auch ein Bündel voller Anekdoten, das in seinem Reisegepäck inzwischen einen festen Platz hat.

1982 brach Michael Pye erneut seine Zelte wieder ab und ergriff die Gelegenheit, sich in einer weiteren „östlichen“ Kultur zu tummeln, die ihm durch seine Ehefrau nicht unvertraut war: Er ging als Professor für Religionswissenschaft an die Universität Marburg in Deutschland. Noch heute kann man ihn hier antreffen – sofern er nicht auf einer seiner Forschungs- oder Tagungsreisen ist. Sowohl durch sein Engagement als Präsident der IAHR (International Association for the History of Religions) von 1995 bis 2000, als auch durch seine eigenen Projekte trug er dazu bei, den Austausch und die Zusammenarbeit von Religionswissenschaftlern auf internationaler Ebene zu fördern. Von dem hessischen Städtchen aus führten die Wanderungen des Michael Pye in den letzten 20 Jahren nach Mittel- und Nordamerika, nach Skandinavien und Osteuropa, nach Südafrika und natürlich immer wieder nach Asien. Diese Reiselust spiegelt sich auch in der thematischen Bandbreite seiner Publikationen. Sie reichen von Reflexionen über das chinesische Konzept der „drei Lehren“ über auf Japan bezo-

date, from studies of religion in Japan, important theoretical points about the nature of religion in general, has been especially critical of this western bias, for example by noting that 'most accounts of the history of theories of religion(s) are restricted to western intellectual history' (one should note here that, were it not for the work of Pye, the word 'most' would probably read 'all') and that there is thus an inherent 'westernism' in the field of Religious Studies.²³

It is thus both disturbing and ironic for those who have long argued for the importance of the Japanese case in developing theories and studies of religion, that in the contemporary context a Japanese example has so powerfully impacted on, and led to shifts in theoretical awareness and perspective in the field. The Aum Affair has provided such a clear case of internally generated violence that even those who previously rejected the notion that new religions can be inherently prone to conflict have had to rethink their positions. Because of Aum, scholars working on the study of religion in Japan have been able to contribute to the development of greater theoretical understandings surrounding the thorniest problems facing the field in the modern day. In formulating responses to such issues, in advocating the need for enhanced critical engagement with religions in such contexts, and in indicating that Aum is a religion and that it needs to be studied and analysed as such if one is to properly understand the processes and meanings of its violence, Pye has been central to that dynamic. In effect, too, he has been central in helping to answer the very question he posed in the title of his 1996 article: Religious Studies has, indeed, not just coped with Aum but has moved towards developing more sophisticated and critical analyses of religion in the ways that Pye advocated in 1996, and, as such, has been better able to respond to the challenges that recent events have posed it.

²³ Michael PYE, "Westernism Unmasked", in *Secular Theories of Religion: Current Perspectives*, ed. by Tim JENSEN and Mikael ROTHSTEIN (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2000), 211-229, 221-222.

Fangbian 方便, Countless Means and Various Meanings: A Footnote to Michael Pye's "Skilful Means"

Christoph KLEINE

1. Introduction

Among Michael Pye's numerous qualities as a *Religionswissenschaftler*, the great variety of approaches he takes and fields of research he explores is, no doubt, one of the most remarkable. In his works he has demonstrated in an exemplary way that meticulous philological work with textual source materials, systematic analysis of the history of religion and ideas, theory and methodology, fieldwork, "observing participation", attending and observing interreligious dialogues and so forth should not be regarded as mutually exclusive but as complementary in *Religionswissenschaft*. Some say that all these subject matters and approaches could be treated as well or perhaps better by more specialized representatives of academic disciplines such as Indology, Sinology, Japanology, History, Philosophy, Theology and the like. I would reply, however, that the strong point of *Religionswissenschaft* lies precisely in the wise combination of these various approaches from a specific *religionswissenschaftlichen* perspective; and this is, I think, a lesson that I have learned from my teacher.

In his by now 'classic' study *Skilful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism* (London: Duckworth, 1978; London; New York: Routledge, 2003), Michael Pye shows paradigmatically how in an ideal way thorough and meticulous philological research can be fruitfully applied to problems and questions that are specifically *religionswissenschaftlich*. A 'pure' philologist may have failed to fully grasp the significance and impact of the *upāya* concept in the history of Buddhism. Without a proper appreciation of the concept of the 'skilful means' employed by all Buddhas to lead sentient beings to emancipation in accordance with their respective capacities, Mahāyāna Buddhism would in fact appear to be a rather incoherent and inconsistent set of diverse and sometimes contradicting doctrines and practices. Even a quarter of a century after its publication, Pye's impressive work can still claim unreserved praise. My humbly contribution is therefore meant to be not much more than an additional footnote to chapter 7 on "Skilful Means in Pre-Mahāyāna Buddhism"; missed by no one but I hope a little interesting to some.

In connection with my research project¹ on the relationship between norm and practice in Indian monastic Buddhism based on Yijing's 義淨 (653-713) *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 [Records of the Inner Dharma Sent Home from the Southern Seas] which necessitated a thorough investigation of the extant books on monastic discipline or *vinayas*, I frequently came across the term 'fāngbiàn 方便' (Jap. *hōben*). As is well known, the term 'fangbian' is commonly regarded as the Chinese equivalent of the Sanskrit and Pāli word 'upāya', which Michael Pye has translated as 'skilful means'. The number of occurrences in the various versions of the *vinaya* can be seen in the chart below²:

School	Title	Taishō ³	Translator	Translated	occurrences of <i>fangbian</i> 方便
Sarvāstivāda	<i>Shisong lü</i> 十誦律 (* <i>Daśādhyāya-vinaya</i>)	1435	Kumārajīva, Puṇyatrāta, Dharmaruci	404-405	109
Dharmaguptaka	<i>Sifenlü</i> 四分律 (* <i>Caturvarga-vinaya</i>)	1428	Buddhayaśas, Zhu Fonian 竺佛念	408	748
Mahāsāṃghika / Lokottaravāda	<i>Mohesengqi lü</i> 摩訶僧祇律 (* <i>Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya</i>)	1425	Buddhabhadra, Faxian 法顯	416-418	201
Mahīśāsaka	<i>Mishasebu hexi wufen lü</i> 彌沙塞部和醯五分律 (* <i>Mahīśāsaka-pañcavarga-vinaya</i>)	1421	Buddhajīva, Zhu Daosheng 竺道生	423-424	66
Mūlasarvāstivāda	<i>Genbenshuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye</i> 根本說一切有部毘奈耶 (* <i>Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya</i>)	1442-1451	Yijing 義淨	around 700	404

- 1 This project, financed by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG), was initially designed by Prof. Max Deeg (Vienna) and is supervised by Prof. Hubert Seiwert at the Religionswissenschaftliches Institut of Leipzig University. I would like to thank Max Deeg, Oliver Freiberger and Karl-Heinz Golzio for their valuable suggestions.
- 2 Only the *Vinayavibhaṅga* and the *Skandhaka* portions of the respective *vinayas* have been taken into consideration here.
- 3 I.e. TAKAKUSU Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and WATANABE Kaikyoku 渡邊海旭 eds., *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 [The Buddhist Tripitaka Newly Compiled in the Taishō Era], 85 vols. (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1934). Note, however, that all my references to the 'Taishō Tripitaka' are based on the wonderful *Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Series, Test Version*, ed. Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (CBETA) 中華電子佛典協會 (Taipei: CBETA, 2001).

I realized, however, that, as far as I can see, nowhere in the *vinayas* is ‘fangbian’ used to denote a skilful means designed and employed by a Buddha or Bodhisattva in order to lead sentient beings to emancipation. This is, to be sure, not an overwhelmingly spectacular finding. As Michael Pye notes, the Chinese term ‘fangbian’ like the Sanskrit⁴ word ‘*upāya*’ “is an ordinary word meaning ‘method’, or ‘convenient’ etc.” and “had an independent existence apart from its use by the translators of Buddhist texts”⁵. Furthermore, even though ‘*upāya*’ as a *terminus technicus* of Mahāyāna Buddhism is virtually always translated as ‘fangbian’ into Chinese, that does not imply that ‘fangbian’ always means ‘*upāya*’.⁶ More importantly, the concept of ‘skilful means’ so skilfully analyzed and described by Michael Pye is, as the subtitle to his book clearly indicates, “a concept in Mahayana Buddhism”. As he has pointed out,

the term *upāya* by itself also occurs a few times in the Pāli Canon [of ‘Hīnayāna’ Buddhism], but hardly rises to the level of a regular technical concept. It is after all just an ordinary word for ‘method’, ‘means’ or ‘device’ [...]”⁷

Furthermore, the *vinaya* texts examined by me are in their substance undoubtedly pre-mahāyānist.

As I start from the Chinese word ‘fangbian’, not from ‘*upāya*’, it seems appropriate to consult non-Buddhist standard dictionaries first. R. H. Mathews’ *A Chinese English Dictionary* gives the following explanation: “方便 convenient, from 隨方因便 that which is not strictly according to rule, but which is convenient.”⁸ A somewhat critical overtone is contained in the Japanese proverb ‘*uso mo hōben* 嘘も方便’ (even an untruth is a means).⁹ The ambivalence of the non-Buddhist term ‘fangbian’ accords pretty much with the mahāyānist term ‘fangbian’, inasmuch as a skilful means employed by a Buddha or Bodhisattva may seem to be morally problematic from the outside: the ways of a Bodhisattva

4 Note that I will abstain from distinguishing classical Sanskrit from Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit in this article.

5 PYE, *Skilful Means*, 14.

6 Hirakawa lists no less than forty Sanskrit words – some being mere variations of one and the same word – that are rendered by ‘fangbian’ in Chinese translations of Buddhist texts. HIRAKAWA Akira, *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary* (Tokyo: The Reiyukai, 1997), 583b-584a.

7 PYE, *Skilful Means*, 120. The fact that ‘*upāya*’ had never gained the status of a regular technical concept in Theravāda Buddhism is well reflected in Nyanatiloka’s *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* in which the term constitutes no lemma. For more details on “Skilful Means in pre-Mahayana Buddhism” see PYE, *Skilful Means*, 118-137. There is one occurrence in the section on the questions of Upāli in the Chinese translation of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* which seems to hint to a more technical understanding of ‘fangbian’: 有八法。能證泥洹果。正見正志正語正業正命正方便正念正定 [There are eight dharmas which enable one to realize the fruit of *nirvāṇa*: (1) proper views, (2) proper will, (3) proper speech, (4) proper action, (5) proper living, (6) proper means, (7) proper attentiveness, (8) proper concentration]. *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 367c18-367c19. However, the text does not elaborate the concept any further.

8 R. H. MATHEWS, *A Chinese English Dictionary* (Shanghai: China Inland Mission and Presbyterian Mission Press, 1931), 260a.

9 For more on the modern Japanese use of the term see PYE, *Skilful Means*, 138-158.

are mysterious. The same ambivalence is, by the way, also found in the Sanskrit term ‘*upāya*’, as can be seen in Monier-Williams’ interpretation of ‘*upāya*’ as “a means of success against an enemy (four are usually enumerated, sowing dissension [sic!], negotiation, bribery, and open assault).”¹⁰ Thus, the implications of the terms ‘*upāya*’ and ‘*fangbian*’ are neither purely positive nor do they necessarily refer to a soteriological concept.

2. The use of ‘*fangbian*’ in Chinese *vinaya* translations

2.1 ‘*Fangbian*’ as ‘*paryāya*’

In the Chinese translation of the **Caturvarga-vinaya* of the Dharmaguptaka school we find the following phrase as often as 210 times in cases when monks have acted unbecomingly and the Buddha accordingly calls together the brethren in order to reproach the assembly or one particular monk and to establish a new rule against such misconduct: 以無數方便呵責.... which may provisionally be translated as “[The Buddha] reproached N.N. using countless *fangbian*”. As there is no Sanskrit version of the **Caturvarga-vinaya* extant we must resort to a collation with Sanskrit fragments of other *vinayas*, other Chinese translations and the Pāli *vinaya* in order to find out which Indic word has been rendered by ‘*fangbian*’ and what exactly it signified.

In the chapter on the prohibition of causing schisms in the order (*saṃghabheda*; i.e. the 10th of thirteen *saṃghāveśeṣa-dharmas*; P. *saṃghādise-sa-dhamma*) in the *vinayavibhaṅga* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādin* we can find the following passage:

爾時世尊以此因緣集苾芻僧伽 [...] 世尊如是種種呵責已。告諸苾芻曰¹¹ [At that time, the World Honoured One for that reason assembled the *bhikṣusaṃgha*. (...) After having reproached them in various ways, the World Honoured One addressed the *Bhikṣus* saying: ...].

The term ‘*fangbian*’ does not appear here, but it is evident that Yijing (like in some cases the translators of the *Mahīśāsaka-vinaya*) uses ‘*zhong zhong* 種種’ (= variously, in various ways) in the same way in which Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian use ‘*wushu fangbian* 無數方便’ in their translation of the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*. Moreover, we may suspect that the two terms do in fact render the same Sanskrit expression. The respective passage in the Chinese translation of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* reads: 佛以是事集比丘僧以種種因緣呵責 [...] 佛如是種種因緣呵已。語諸比丘。¹² I would suggest the following provisional translation:

Because of this affair the Buddha assembled the *bhikṣusaṃgha* and reproached them for various reasons [...] After the Buddha had thus reproached them for various reasons, he spoke to the *bhikṣus*...

10 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), 215b.

11 *Genbenshuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T23, no. 1442, p. 704a17-704a25.

12 *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 25b02-25b04.

Now we have three different Chinese phrases denoting (apparently) the same thing: (1) *wushu fangbian* 無數方便, (2) *zhong zhong* 種種, (3) *zhong zhong yinyuan* 種種因緣. Furthermore, in his translation of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinayavibhaṅga* Yijing uses ‘*zhong zhong fangbian* 種種方便’ instead of ‘*zhong zhong yinyuan* 種種因緣’ which indicates that ‘*fangbian*’ and ‘*yinyuan*’ could also be regarded as synonyms.¹³ Can it be that all these terms or phrases render one and the same Sanskrit term? What is the semantic connection between ‘ways’, ‘methods’ (*fangbian*) and ‘reasons’ (*yinyuan*)? Fortunately, a Sanskrit version of the passage from the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* quoted above is extant, although it differs slightly from the Chinese text.¹⁴ It reads:

Buddho bhagavān etasmin nidāna etasmin prakaraṇe saṃghaṃ saṃnipātayati saṃghaṃ saṃnipātyānekaparyāyeṇa buddho bhagavān vigarhati kathaṃ nāma [...] anekaparyāyeṇa vigarhya buddho bhagavān bhikṣūn āmantrayate. ...¹⁵

Valentina Rosen’s German translation reads:

Buddha der Erhabene ließ aus diesem Grunde [*nidāna*] und aus diesem Anlaß [*prakaraṇa*] die Mönchsgemeinde versammeln. Als er die Gemeinde hatte versammeln lassen, erhob Buddha der Erhabene aus mancherlei Anlaß Vorwürfe [...] Nachdem Buddha, der Erhabene, aus mancherlei Anlaß Tadel erhoben hatte, sprach er zu den Mönchen: ...¹⁶

Thus we may surmise that ‘*zhong zhong yinyuan* 種種因緣’ is used in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* as a translation of ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’, interpreted as ‘aus mancherlei Anlaß’.¹⁷ Now, the German word ‘Anlaß’ is as ambiguous as its Sanskrit equivalent ‘*paryāya*’, as it can either refer to the English ‘cause [of an action]’ or to ‘occasion’ (as in ‘bei feierlichen Anlässen’, ‘on festive occasions’). The Sanskrit ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ and its Pāli equivalent ‘*aneka-pariyāyeṇa*’ appear in the *vinayas* as stereotyped phrases in great frequency. Let me give another paradigmatic example from the *pārājika-dharma* 5 (*saṃsarga*) of the *Mahāsāṃghika-bhikṣuṇī-vinaya* in which the Buddha establishes a rule for nuns against “ob-

13 E.g.: 爾時世尊以種種方便呵責六眾苾芻。告諸苾芻廣說如前 [At that time the World Honoured One reproached the [notorious] group of six *bhikṣus* in various ways and addressed all the *bhikṣus* and instructed them in detail as above]. *Genbenshuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T23, no. 1442, p. 769c15-769c17. Note that according to Wogihara, ‘*yinyuan*’ is not only a synonym of ‘*fangbian*’ but may also refer to ‘*upāya*’. U. WOGIHARA, *Sanskrit-Chinese-Japanese Dictionary* (Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, revised and enlarged edition 1979), 277b.

14 The passage is abbreviated in the Chinese, which is a pity because it prevents us from knowing how the translators would have translated ‘*nidāne*’ and ‘*prakaraṇe*’.

15 Valentina ROSEN, *Der Vinayavibhaṅga zum Bhikṣu-Prātimokṣa der Sarvāstivādins. Sanskritfragmente nebst einer Analyse der chinesischen Übersetzung*, ed. Ernst WALDSCHMIDT, *Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden*; 2 (Berlin: Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Institut für Orientforschung, 1959), 68-69.

16 Ibid., 68-69.

17 Note that Rosen sometimes translates ‘*anekaparyāyeṇa*’ as ‘auf mancherlei Weise’ (in various ways). Ibid., 14.

taining pleasure by touching and rubbing against a man”. The Buddha speaks to the nun Rāṣṭrā:

Ch: 汝常不聞我無量方便呵責姪欲。欲爲迷醉。欲如大火燒人善根。欲爲大患。我常種種方便稱讚離欲斷欲度欲¹⁸

E: Have you never heard that I, in an infinite number of ways, have condemned sexual lust? ‘Lust is a drunken illusion. Lust burns up all one’s ability to do good like a big fire. Lust is like a great sickness.’ I have always taught, using a variety of means, that one should cut off all lust, and that one should transcend lust.¹⁹

Skt.: nanv Rāṣṭre aneka-paryāyena sarveṣāṃ kāmānāṃ kāma-nandināṃ kāmamūrccānāṃ kāma-pipāsānāṃ kāma-paridāhyānāṃ kāmādhyavasānānāṃ ana(anta)m vadāmi | prahāṇam vadāmi | samatikramaṇam vadāmisamatikrama²⁰

Although the Chinese translation differs slightly from the Sanskrit manuscript, it is clear that what Faxian and Buddhahadra translated as ‘*wuliang fangbian* 無量方便’ was again ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’, while ‘*zhong zhong* 種種方便’ has no counterpart in the Sanskrit text.

The adjective ‘*aneka*’ means “many; various; not one; much”, whereas the noun ‘*paryāya*’ means “way, manner, method of proceeding; opportunity, occasion; a regularly recurring series or formula”.²¹ According to Edgerton, ‘*paryāya*’ is virtually a synonym of ‘*upāya*’.²² Thus, ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ can either be translated as “in various ways” (Edgerton), “in many ways” (Childers²³) or as ‘on various occasions’, an interpretation which would be justifiable²⁴ although in most cases not supported by the context.²⁵ But how does the Chinese translation

18 *Mohesengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律, T22, no. 1425, p. 515b15-515b18.

19 Akira HIRAKAWA, *Monastic Discipline for the Buddhist Nuns* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Inst., 1982), 113-114.

20 Gustav ROTH, *Bhikṣuṇī-vinaya: Manual of Discipline for Buddhist Nuns* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Inst., 1970), 83.

21 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 42b; 605b.

22 Franklin EDGERTON, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, (reprint, orig. 1953), 2 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998), 335b

23 Robert Caesar CHILDERS, *Dictionary of Pāli*, 350.

24 As a matter of fact in Tōdō’s *Gakken kanwa daijiten* we find “機会。チャンス [opportunity; chance]” as one of three basic meanings of ‘*hōben/fangbian*’. TōDŌ Akiyasu, *Gakken kanwa daijiten* 学研漢和大字典 (Tokyo: Gakushū Kenkyūsha, 1995), 583a. Also, CHILDERS gives ‘occasion’ as one possible meaning of the Sanskrit term which is, as we will see below, another word rendered by ‘*fangbian*’ in the *vinayas* (as in the phrase ‘*payoge sati, when there is occasion*’). See also Charles DUROISELLE, *A Practical Grammar of the Pāli Language*, ³1997, 160 (Online: <http://www.tipitaka.net/pali/grammar/chpt14.htm>). There are in fact a few cases in the *vinayas* in which it is actually hard to decide whether ‘*fangbian*’ should be interpreted as ‘occasion’ or as ‘means’.

25 Of all texts Bodhiruci’s translation of the influential *Lankāvatāra-sūtra*, a Mahāyāna scripture extremely important for early Chinese Chan Buddhism, supports the interpretation of ‘*fangbian*’ as ‘circumstance’. In the 16th chapter in which the sūtra denounces and abrogates the permission in the *vinayas* to eat meat, we read: 一切時一切肉。亦無方便而可得食。 This may be translated as: “It is under no circumstances allowed to eat any kind of meat at any time.” In this case the English language helps us to make ends meet and relate ‘means’ to ‘circumstance’ or ‘occasion’, as we could likewise translate the sentence as: “It is by no

‘zhong zhong yinyuan 種種因緣’ or ‘for various reasons’ fit into that? Now, according to Rhys Davids and Stede ‘*pariyāya*’ can in fact also be interpreted as “reason, cause” (Chin. *yinyuan* 因緣).²⁶

By now it has become evident that ‘fangbian’ in the *vinayas* does not represent the Sanskrit word ‘*upāya*’, which occurs very rarely in this *piṭaka*,²⁷ but in most cases one of its equivalents, namely ‘*pariyāya*’, which, however, may be regarded as a synonym of ‘*upāya*’ in its non-technical use. Accordingly, ‘fangbian’ in the *vinayas* lacks the unambiguously positive or soteriological connotation that is implied in the respective Mahāyāna concept. In the *vinayas* it is also used to denote a ‘cheap trick’, i.e. ‘fangbian’ is simply a means to achieve a goal regardless of the moral quality of that goal. To illustrate that point I would like to refer to a story in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*²⁸ that was designed to explain the *pāyantika* rule no. 66 (‘horror’, *bhīṣaṇaṃ*).

One evening the Buddha was out walking when it started to rain. To protect the Buddha from the rain, the god Indra magically produced a sheltering cave made of lapislazuli that enclosed the Buddha and kept him dry while he continued his walk. His servant, the monk Nāgapāla (‘Elephant Keeper’; Xiangshou 象守), however, suffering from rain and wind, wanted to make the Buddha enter a house or hostel. He thought thus to himself:

當以何方便令佛入舍。我當得入²⁹ [By what means can I make the Buddha enter a hostel? I must get him to enter it].

The trick Nāgapāla devised was to scare the Buddha by telling him falsely that demons were approaching. Naturally, the Buddha saw through the plan and admonished the monks by saying it is not allowed for a *bhikṣu* to scare others, even in jest. This episode reminds us of the Japanese proverb, according to which, ‘even an untruth is a *hōben*’, although its message seems to be quite the opposite: Even though the goal may be good or at least understandable, the means to achieve it must not contravene the *vinaya* rules. This is a far cry from the central meaning of the Mahāyāna concept of skilful means and a major point of difference between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna Buddhism in general. Unfortunately, we cannot tell whether the Chinese term ‘fangbian’ in our episode renders ‘*upāya*’ or ‘*pariyāya*’ or yet another Sanskrit word, as no Sanskrit version of this account is extant.³⁰ The moral ambiguity of ‘fangbian’ is also clearly expressed in a verse found in the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya*:

means allowed to eat any kind of meat at any time.” Quite miraculously ‘circumstance’ and ‘means’ and all the notions in between have now become somehow related to ‘fangbian’.
Rulengjia jing 楞伽經, T16, no. 671, p. 563c26-563c27.

26 T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, Wilhelm STEDE, *The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary* (Chipstead: Pali Text Society, 1921-5), 433.

27 Cf. Y. OUSAKA, M. YAMAZAKI, and K. R. NORMAN, *Index to the Vinaya-Piṭaka* (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1996), 158b.

28 Note that there are considerable differences in the various recensions of the *vinaya*.

29 *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 113b28-113b29.

30 A similar account is contained in the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* (*payāntika-dharma* 55; *Sifen lü* 四分律, T22, no. 1428, p. 673b19-673c15), but the term ‘fangbian’ occurs only in

刹利百方便 婆羅門增倍 王有千種計 女人策無量³¹ [*kṣatriyas* have a hundred ways, *brahmins* have twice as many; kings have a thousand kinds of stratagems, women's means are immeasurable].

An employment of the term ‘fangbian’ which comes closest to the Mahāyāna concept of *upāya* is found in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* of the Dharmaguptakas where the prohibition to kill human beings – i.e. *pārājika* 3 – is explained. The setting is as follows: Once, the Buddha taught the assembly of monks to “contemplate impurity” (Ch. *bujinguan* 不淨觀; Skt. *aśubha-bhāvanā*). As a result of this contemplation, a large number of monks developed an extreme aversion to their bodies and longed to get rid of them. Some of them plunged into the depths, some swallowed poison, yet others used their knives. They even killed one another and asked the ‘sham recluse’ Migalaṇḍika to kill them. In the end, sixty monks had lost their lives. Thereupon Ānanda addressed the Buddha in the following way:

世尊先以無數方便廣為諸比丘說不淨行歎不淨行歎思惟不淨行 [...]。時諸比丘聞已厭患身命求人斷命是以少耳。唯願世尊。與諸比丘更作方便說法。使心開解永無疑惑。³² [The World Honoured One has in countless ways (*wushu fangbian*) broadly explained to all the *bhikṣus* the practice of the impure, praised the practice of the impure, praised the practice of contemplating the impure. After the *bhikṣus* had heard this [instruction] they hated their bodies and lives and searched for someone to kill them. Thereby their number decreased.³³ I only ask the World Honoured One to devise yet another method of instruction (*gengzuo fangbian shuofa* 更作方便說法) that opens their minds and removes their doubts forever.]

None of the other Chinese translations uses the term ‘fangbian’ here. The Pāli-*vinaya* renders the corresponding passage thus:

tathā hi pana bhante bhagavā bhikkhūnaṃ anekapariyāyena asubhakathaṃ katheti asubhāya vaṇṇaṃ bhāsati asubhabhāvanāya vaṇṇaṃ bhāsati ādissa ādissa asubhasamāpattiya vaṇṇaṃ bhāsati [...] sādhu bhante bhagavā aññaṃ pariyāyaṃ ācikkhatu, yathāyaṃ bhikkhusaṃgho aññāya saṅṭhaheyyā ‘ti.³⁴

The I. B. Horner’s English translation runs as follows:

It is because, lord, the lord talked to the monks in many ways on the subject of the impure: he spoke in praise of the impure, he spoke in praise of increasing (contemplation of) the impure, he spoke in praise of taking the impure as a stage in

the usual stereotyped form here, when the Buddha reproaches Nāgapāla “in numerous ways”.

31 *Mohesengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律, T22, no. 1425, p. 231a04-231a05.

32 *Sifen lü* 四分律 (T22, no. 1428, p. 576a27-576b02).

33 The Chinese text lacks the vivid description in the Pāli text, indicated by the square brackets below.

34 Hermann OLDENBERG, *Vinaya Piṭakaṃ, Vol. III: The Suttavibhaṅga, First Part (Pārājika, Saṃghādisesa, Aniyata, Nissaggiya)* (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1881), 69-70.

meditation. [...] It were good, lord, if the lord were to give another instruction, so that the company of monks might be established in profound knowledge.³⁵

The original phrase that Buddhayaśas renders by ‘*wushu fangbian* 無數方便’ is obviously again ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’, while ‘*gengzuo fangbian shuofa* 更作方便說法’ corresponds to ‘*aññaṃ pariyāyaṃ ācikkhatu*’, literally ‘another method of instruction’, in the Pāli version. Closest to the Pāli version is probably the Chinese translation of Kumārajīva, Puṇyatrāta and Dharmaruci in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* where we have “*shuo yu shandao* 說餘善道”,³⁶ literally ‘explain another good way’. At any rate, we may assume that in the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* ‘*fangbian*’ once more stands for ‘*pariyāya*’ (or perhaps more specifically ‘*dharma-pariyāyaṃ*’³⁷) rather than for ‘*upāya*’. The underlying concept of ‘*fangbian/pariyāya*’ in the account of the mass suicide, however, is essentially the same as the concept of ‘*upāya*’ in Mahāyāna. Both the *vinaya* concept of ‘*fangbian/pariyāya*’ and the Mahāyāna concept of ‘*upāya*’ refer to a specific way of communicating the Dharma in accordance with the circumstances and the hearers’ capacities, which is no surprise when we consider the fact that the terms ‘*upāya*’ and ‘*pariyāya*’ are etymologically closely related.

2.2 ‘Fangbian’ as ‘prayoga’

‘*Paryāya*’ is, to be sure, not the only Sankrit term rendered by ‘*fangbian*’ by the translators of the *vinayas*. Let us have a look at the extra-canonical *vinaya* text *Upālipariṣchā-sūtra* (Sūtra on the Questions of Upāli)³⁸ in which the term ‘*fangbian*’ occurs very frequently, 87 times to be precise, which is remarkable considering the text’s brevity. The good thing about this scripture is that numerous corresponding passages can be found in the Pāli *vinaya* which enables us to verify the original Indic words translated as ‘*fangbian*’, even more so since Valentina Stache-Rosen has collated the Chinese and Pāli texts and translated the Chinese into German.

35 I. B. HORNER, *The Book of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka), Vol. I. (Suttavibhaṅga)* (London: Luzac, 1949), 120.

36 唯願世尊。為諸比丘說餘善道。安樂住法無有厭惡。諸惡法生即能除滅。 *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 8a08-8a10.

37 This term appears, for instance, in the *Bhikṣuṇī-vibhaṅga* of the Mahāsāṃghikas. See ROTH, *Bhikṣuṇī-vinaya*, 133. Unfortunately, the respective passage is missing in the Chinese version by Faxian and Buddhahadra.

38 *Youpoli wenfo jing* 優波離問佛經 T24, no. 1466. According to Heinz Bechert, the Chinese text is in all likelihood the translation of a canonical text of the Abhayagirivihāranikāya or Dharmarucikanikāya, a subbranch of the Ceylonese Theravāda school, written in Pāli. See Valentina STACHE-ROSEN, *Upālipariṣchāsūtra: Ein Text zur buddhistischen Ordensdisziplin. Aus dem Chinesischen übersetzt und den Pāli-Parallelen gegenübergestellt*, ed. Heinz BECHERT, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen; Philologisch-Historische Klasse; Dritte Folge; Nr. 140* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 13. The Taishō version claims that Guṇavarman translated the text in the Yuanjia period (424-454) of the Liu Song Dynasty. Although the ascription seems to be doubtful, through a terminological analysis Hirakwa has come to the conclusion that the text was properly translated in the 5th century. *Ibid.*, 27.

The *Upālipariṣcchā-sūtra* is a text in which all prohibitions listed in the *Prātimokṣa* (the confession formular and core piece of the *vinaya*) are explained with regard to every imaginable mode of breaking the rules. One of the modes is labelled ‘fangbian’ in Buddhist casuistry. Let us take the controversial *saṃghāvaśeṣa* rule (P. *saṃghādisesa-dhamma*) concerning the emission of semen by monks as an example. The Chinese text reads:

弄失精。犯三事。故弄失。僧伽婆尸沙。故弄不失。土羅遮。方便突吉羅。不犯者。夢中。若不欲。狂。先作。³⁹

STACHE-ROSEN translates the passage as follows:

[Wenn ein Mönch] sich erregt und Samen ergießt, gibt es drei Vergehen. Wenn er sich erregt und Samen ergießt, ist es ein *saṃghādisesa*-Vergehen. Wenn er sich erregt und keinen Samen ergießt, ist es ein *thullaccaya*-Vergehen⁴⁰, der *Versuch* ist ein *dukkāṭa*-Vergehen⁴¹. Es ist kein Vergehen, wenn er es im Traum tut, wenn er es ungewollt tut, wenn er wahnsinnig ist, wenn er der erste Täter ist.⁴²

The parallel passages in the Pāli Canon read:

upakamitvā sucim mocento tisso āpattiyo āpajjati. ceteti upakkamati muccati, āpatti saṃghādisesassa. ceteti upakkamati na muccati, āpatti thullaccayassa. *payoge dukkaṭam*. Vin V, 34.

anāpatti supinantena, na mocanādhippāyassa, ummattakassa, khittacittassa, vedanaṭṭassa, ādhikammikassā ‘ti. Vin III, 116.⁴³

The text distinguishes three kinds of offences here: (1) *saṃghādisesa* (Skt. *saṃghāvaśeṣa*), if the monk stimulates himself and emits semen → intention + accomplished action; (2) *thullaccaya* (Skt. *sthūlātyaya*; ‘grave offence’), if the monk stimulates himself but does not emit semen → intention + unaccomplished action; (3) *dukkāṭa* (Skt. *duṣkṛta*; ‘evil action’), if the monk has the intention to masturbate, but does actually neither stimulate himself nor emits semen → intention. The unintended emission of semen during sleep is no offence at all. Now, the term ‘fangbian’ appears in the context of the *dukkāṭa* offence.⁴⁴

39 *Youpoli wenfo jing* 優波離問佛經, T24, no. 1466, p. 903c17-903c19.

40 Skt. *sthūlātyaya* or *sthūlārti*, from *sthūla* (gross, rough,) + *ārti* ‘offence’ → *sthūlātyaya/sthūlārti* = ‘grave offence’. In Chinese it is usually ‘*sthūlātyaya*’ not ‘*sthūlārti*’ that is transliterated: (1) e.g. in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*: 偷蘭遮 (Pinyin=toulanzhe; old pronunciation according to Tōdō’s *Gakken kanwa daijiten* = *t’əu-lan-tʃiǎ); (2) in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*: 罕吐羅底也 (*sutuluodiye*; *suət-t’o-la-tei-yiǎ). In fact, ‘*sthūlātyaya*’ is sometimes referred to as ‘fangbian zui 方便罪’. Cf. ROSEN, *Der Vinayavibhaṅga zum Bhikṣu-Prātimokṣa der Sarvāstivādins. Sanskritfragmente nebst einer Analyse der Chinesischen Übersetzung*, 16; Hubert DURT, “Chūranja 偷蘭遮”, *Hōbōgirin 法寶義林: Dictionnaire encyclopedique du bouddhisme d’après les sources chinoises et japonaises*, vol. 5, ed. by Paul DEMIÉVILLE (Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1979), 507-522.

41 Skt. *duṣkṛta* (evil action, sin).

42 STACHE-ROSEN, *Upālipariṣcchāsūtra*, 44-45.

43 *Ibid.*, 44-45.

44 Cf. *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*: 有二犯。不善犯無記犯。又二犯。身犯口犯。又二犯。方便犯非方便犯 [There are two [kinds of] offences: offences that are not good and offences that are

The respective Pāli term in question is ‘*payoga*’, Sanskrit ‘*prayoga*’.⁴⁵ *The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary* explains the term thus:

1. means, instrument [...] -- 2. preparation, undertaking, occupation, exercise, business, action, practice [...]. *payogan karoti* to exert oneself, to undertake, to try PvA 184 (=parakkamati) [...].⁴⁶

In Childer’s Dictionary we read: “Practise, use, usage; means, instrumentality; motive, occasion, object [...] Sabbappayogehi, by every means, in every way.”⁴⁷ Accordingly, the Sanskrit equivalent means: “Prayoga: a design, contrivance, device, plan [...] application, employment [...] a means (only ais, by use of means) [...] cause, motive [...].”⁴⁸ The phrase ‘*payogan karoti*’ can be regarded as a variant of ‘*kārāpeti payoge*’ which, according to *The Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary* means “to exert oneself, to undertake, to try”.

As we have seen, Stache-Rosen translates ‘*fangbian*’ in the above passage as ‘Versuch’, that is ‘attempt’, ‘try’, a translation which immediately suggests itself when we take into account the semantic context and which accords with one of the various meanings of ‘*payoga/prayoga*’. There are several other passages in the text which underpin her translation. In most cases, ‘*fangbian*’ is affixed to a verb:

Ch: 方便作突吉羅⁴⁹

E: [If a monk] intends/plans/tries to do [...], it is a *dukkata*

P: *kārāpeti payoge dukkaṭam* (Vin V, 34)⁵⁰

Ch: 方便取突吉羅⁵¹

E: [If a monk] intends/plans/tries to take, it is a *dukkata*

P: *gaṇhāti payoge dukkaṭam* (Vin V, 35)⁵²

Moreover, in his translation of the *Vinayavibhaṅga* of the Mūlasarvāstivādin, Yijing uses the term ‘*fangbian*’ to denote a ‘plan’. In the explanation of *pārājika-dharma 2* it says.

Again, there are three ways in which a *bhikṣu* who takes from someone else what is not given to him commits a *pārājika* offence. What are the three? It is [1] to establish a thieving thought, [2] to make a plan (興方便), [3] to remove [an item] from its original place. What does ‘to establish a thieving thought’ mean? It means to desire someone else’s property with a predatory intention. What does ‘to make a

neutral. There are two more (kinds): offences (committed) by the body and offences (committed) by the mouth. There are yet two more (kinds): planned offences and unplanned offences]. *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 369c10-369c11.

45 According to Wogihara, ‘*fangbian*’ was even used in translations of Mahāyāna scriptures as an equivalent of ‘*prayoga*’. WOGIHARA, *Sanskrit-Chinese-Japanese Dictionary*, 867.

46 RHYS DAVIDS; STEDE, *Pali-English Dictionary*, 418.

47 CHILDERS, *Dictionary of Pāli*, 377.

48 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 688b.

49 *Youpoli wenfo jing* 優波離問佛經, T24, no. 1466, p. 904a05-904a07.

50 STACHE-ROSEN, *Upāliparipṛchāsūtra*, 46.

51 *Youpoli wenfo jing* 優波離問佛經, T24, no. 1466, p. 904b08-904b11.

52 STACHE-ROSEN, *Upāliparipṛchāsūtra*, 50.

plan (興方便) mean? [It means] to pursue the goal to use hands and feet [to take what is not given].⁵³

Unfortunately, we do not know whether it is actually ‘*prayoga*’ which is translated as ‘興方便’ by Yijing. Also, in the section on the ‘*bodhisattva śīlas*’ of the apocryphal *Fanwang jing* 梵網經, the intention or attempt to commit an offence is called ‘*fangbian*’, and Fazang 法藏 (643-712) in his commentary to the apocryphon uses ‘*fangbian zui* 方便罪’ to denote an intended or attempted offence throughout the text.⁵⁴

2.3. ‘*Fangbian*’ as ‘*parā-√kram*’

In the section on the wrongdoing of causing a schism in the *saṃgha* the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* quotes the Buddha saying: 若比丘欲破和合僧。勤求方便受持破僧事。諸比丘應如是呵言。汝莫破和合僧。莫求方便受持破僧事。⁵⁵ In the following provisional translation I leave the term ‘*fangbian*’ untranslated:

If a *bhikṣu* desires to destroy the harmony of the *saṃgha*, eagerly searches for ‘*fangbian*’ and persists in matters⁵⁶ that destroy the *saṃgha*, the *bhikṣus* should admonish him by saying: “You shall not destroy the harmony of the *saṃgha*. You shall not search for ‘*fangbian*’ to and persist in [matters which] destroy the harmony of the *saṃgha*!”.

In this passage both the interpretation of ‘*fangbian*’ as ‘occasion, opportunity’ or as ‘means’ would make perfect sense. The *bhikṣu* may either search for ‘means’ or for an ‘occasion’ or ‘opportunity’ to destroy the harmony of the order. Let us therefore consult the corresponding Sanskrit text:

yaḥ punar bhikṣuḥ samagrasya saṃghasya bhedāya parākramed
bhedanasaṃvartaniyaṃ vādhikaraṇaṃ samādā ya viḡhya tiṣṭhet sa bhikṣur
bhikṣubhir evaṃ syād vacaniyo āyuṣman samagrasya saṃghasya bhedāya
parākramer bhedanasaṃvartaniyaṃ vādhikaraṇaṃ samādāya viḡhya tiṣṭheḥ⁵⁷

53 復有三緣。苾芻於他重物不與而取得波羅市迦。云何爲三。謂起盜心。興方便。離本處。云何起盜心。謂有賊心欲盜他物。云何興方便。若手若足而興進趣。 *Genbenshuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T23, no. 1442, p. 637c16-637e19.

54 E.g.: 生心受得方便罪 [(one who) develops the thought (to steal) is guilty of an intended offence]. *Fanwangjing pusa jieben su* 梵網經菩薩戒本疏; T40, no. 1813, p. 614b21-614b22.

55 *Shisong lü* 十誦律, T23, no. 1435, p. 25b05-25b08. For a similar usage of ‘*fangbian*’ see also *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya-varṣāvastu* (*Genbenshuoyiqieyoubu pinaiye anju shi* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶安居事, T23, no. 1445, p. 1044a27-1044b10).

56 This probably refers to positions with regard to monastic discipline which threaten the *saṃgha*’s unity like those maintained by the notorious Devadatta who, according to tradition proposed five ascetic rules and thereby caused a schism in early Buddhism. See *Cullavagga* VII, 2-3. For further information see also Max DEEG, “The Saṅgha of Devadatta: Fiction and History of a Heresy in the Buddhist Tradition”, *Kokusai Bukkyōgaku Daigakuin Daigaku kiyō / Journal of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies* 2 (1999), 183-218.

57 ROSEN, *Der Vinayavibhaṅga*, 69. The Pāli text reads: “yo pana bhikkhu samagassa saṃghassa bhedāya parakkameyya bhedasamvattanikaṃ vā adhikaraṇaṃ samādāya paggayha tiṭṭheyya, so bhikkhu bhikkhūhi evam assa vacaniyo: māyasmā samagassa

Here we have yet another Sanskrit word that is rendered by ‘fangbian’ – or rather the phrase ‘qinqiu fangbian 勤求方便’ – namely the verb ‘parā-√kram’ (Pāli *parā-√kam*). Before we grab the dictionaries we should take a look at Rosen’s German translation of the Sanskrit:

Wenn ein Mönch an der Spaltung der einigen Gemeinde arbeitet und auf einer Auseinandersetzung beharrt, die zur Spaltung führen kann, so sollen die Mönche diesen Mönch ermahnen: „Ehrwürdiger, arbeite nicht an einer Spaltung der einigen Gemeinde und beharre nicht auf einer Auseinandersetzung, die zur Spaltung führen kann.“⁵⁸

Rosen translates ‘parākramed’ (opt.s of *parā-√kram*) as ‘arbeiten an [etwas]’, literally ‘to work on [something]’. According to Monier-Williams, ‘parā-√kram’ means “to show courage or zeal, excel, distinguish one’s self”⁵⁹, and likewise, the Pāli equivalent is explained by Childers as, “With dat. saṅghassa bheddāya parakkameyya, should strive to cause divisions in the priesthood [...]. Ger. parakkamma (Dh. 69)”.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the well documented forms ‘parakkamati’ (exerts; shows courage) or Sanskrit ‘parākramati’ are regarded as synonymous with the phrases ‘payoga karoti’ and ‘kārāpeti payoge’. It is thus not surprising that ‘fangbian’ translates ‘payoga/prayoga’ as well as ‘parakkam-/parākram-’. Interestingly, Wogihara fails to notice that ‘fangbian’ was used to translate ‘parakram’.⁶¹

2.4 More possible equivalents of ‘fangbian’ in the vinayas

We can, however, find yet another usage of ‘fangbian’ in the *vinaya*. The *Karmavācanā* (collection of formulars for legal transactions of the *saṅgha*) of the *Mahīsāsaka-vinaya*⁶² uses the term ‘fangbian’ to denote a ‘procedure’ or ‘legal transaction’ or rather the specific ‘formular’ that is to be recited in order to make the transaction legally valid. The Sanskrit term for legal transactions is *karma*, which is usually transliterated into ‘jiemo, *kīat-mua 羯磨’. In the context of the

saṅghassa bhedāya parakkami bhedanasaṅgvattanikaṃ vā adhikaraṇaṃ samādāya paggayha aṭṭhāsi.” OLDENBERG, *Vinaya Piṭakaṃ*, 173. Interestingly the *Vinaya-vibhaṅga* for the nuns (*bhikṣuṇī*) of the *Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin* has virtually the same text: “yā puna bhikṣuṇī samagrasya saṅghasya bhedāya parākrameya bhedana-samvartaniyaṃ vā adhikaraṇaṃ samādāya pratigrhya tiṣṭheya | sā bhikṣuṇī bhikṣuṇībhir evam assya vacaniyā | mā ārya samagrasya saṅghasya bhedāya parākrameya | bhedana-samvartaniyaṃ vā adhikaraṇaṃ samādāya pratigrhya tiṣṭhāhi.” ROTH, *Bhikṣuṇī-vinaya*, 149.

58 ROSEN, *Der Vinayavibhaṅga*, 69. Cf. *Mahāvagga* (III, 11, 5): “In case, O Bhikkhus, a Bhikkhu wo has entered upon Vassa, hears: ‘A number of Bhikkhus are striving to cause divisions in the Saṅgha (*saṅghabhedāya parakkamanīti*).’ In that case, if that Bhikkhu thinks: [...]” T. W. RHYS DAVIDS, Hermann OLDENBERG, *Vinaya Texts; Part I: The Pātimokkha, the Mahāvagga I-IV (Sacred Books of the East; 13)* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1885), 316.

59 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 589c.

60 CHILDERS, *Dictionary of Pāli*, 333-334.

61 WOGIHARA, *Sanskrit-Chinese-Japanese Dictionary*, 741.

62 *Mishase jiemoben 彌沙塞羯磨本*; T#1424; translated by Aitong 愛同, 706-706.

jñāptidvītiya karmavācanā (白二羯磨; P. *ñattidutiyakamma*) necessary to lift up the boundary (*sīmā*) that encloses a sacred ground on which legal transactions may be carried out by the *saṃgha*, it says in the end that “the *fangbian* is as [described] before (方便如前)”.⁶³ There are two reasonable ways to translate ‘*fangbian*’ here: (1) the way or method [by which the transaction is carried out]; (2) the formular [to be recited on that occasion]. While the first interpretation fits perfectly in our understanding of the term ‘*fangbian*’, one may ask on what ground it could possibly be interpreted as ‘formular’. Unfortunately, we do not have the Sanskrit original of that text, but it is at least imaginable that Aitong chose ‘*fangbian*’ to translate ‘*prayoga*’ here. Besides meaning ‘means, device, plan’ etc. ‘*prayoga*’ can also be interpreted as “a formula to be recited, sacred text”⁶⁴ or as a “presentation” [of a dramatic performance].⁶⁵ Thus, ‘*fangbian*’ would in this peculiar case be a synonym of ‘*karmavācanā*’.⁶⁶ Yijing uses ‘*fangbian*’ in a slightly different but still related manner, in a running note to his translation of the **Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya-ekaśatakarman* and connects it with a more specific concept of ‘skilful means’. He explains the affirmative exclamation “*aupayika!*” (*aobaijia*/**au-buāi-kiā*⁶⁷ 奥筭迦; ‘excellent!’; also *aupāyika*) that is spoken by a preceptor to express his satisfaction with the procedure of a legal transaction conducted by the *saṃgha*, saying:

[*aupayika*] is to be translated as ‘excellent’, or ‘just like that’, and again as ‘*fangbian*’, the basic meaning of which is that this holy teaching [of the Buddha] employs skilful means [*shan fangbian* 善方便] which enable [the sentient beings] to hasten to *nirvāṇa* and to reach a place of peaceful nutrition [i.e. Amitābha’s Pure Land Sukhāvati; C.K.].⁶⁸

Thus, Yijing applies the Mahāyāna concept of ‘skilful means’ to the legal procedures of the *vinaya*. Yijing’s interpretation of ‘*aupayika*’ as referring to ‘*upāya*’ is supported by Monier-Williams who notes that ‘*aupayika*’ is to be regarded as a synonym or rather a derivative of ‘*upāya*’: “mf (ī)n. (fr. *upāya* [...]) answering a purpose, leading to an object, fit, proper, right [...] obtained through a means or expedient [...]; a means, expedient [...]”⁶⁹

63 T22, 215a; 215b.

64 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, 688b.

65 EDGERTON, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit*, 384a

66 The interpretation of ‘*fangbian*’ as the formal procedure of a legal transaction of the *saṃgha* is supported by the *Nijiemo* 尼羯磨 (*[Bhikṣu]ṇī karmavācana*), a compilation of formulars for transactions of the order of nuns according to the **Caturvarga-vinaya* by the Tang monk Huaisu 懷素, where the first and introducing section is titled ‘*Fangbian*’, which clearly denotes ‘procedure’ in this case. *Nijiemo* 尼羯磨 T40, no. 1810, p. 538b28.

67 Pronunciation reconstructed according to Tōdō’s *Gakken kanwa daijiten*.

68 奥筭迦(譯云好或云爾亦是方便義由此聖教為善方便能趣涅槃至安隱處). *Genbenshuoyiqiey-oubu baiyijiemo* 根本說一切有部百一羯磨, T24, no. 1453, p. 456a06-456a07.

69 MONIER-WILLIAMS, *Sanskrit Dictionary*, 238c.

2.5 Preliminary summary

We are now in the position to summarize our findings in the following chart:

Source	Chinese	Chin. equivalents	Pāli	Sanskrit	English
<i>Dharmaguptaka-vinaya</i> , <i>Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya</i>	<i>wushu</i> <i>fangbian</i> 無數方便	<i>zhong zhong yinyuan</i> 種種因緣, <i>zhong zhong</i> 種種	<i>aneka-pariyāyena</i>	<i>aneka paryāyeṇa</i>	in countless ways
All <i>vinayas</i> , <i>Upāliparipṛcchā</i>	<i>fangbian</i> 方便		<i>payoga</i>	<i>prayoga</i>	attempt, plan, intention
<i>Mahīśāsaka-vinaya</i>	<i>fangbian</i> 方便	<i>bai</i> 白 (?)		* <i>prayoga</i> , * <i>karmavācanā</i>	procedure, formular
<i>Sarvāstivāda-vinaya</i>	<i>qinqiu</i> <i>fangbian</i> 勤求方便		<i>parā-√kam</i>	<i>parā-√kram</i>	to strive for, to search for ways, to search for an occasion
<i>Mahīśāsaka-vinaya</i> , <i>Sarvāstivāda-vinaya</i>	<i>fangbian</i> 方便				trick, ploy, skilful means (unspecific)
<i>Dharmaguptaka-vinaya</i>	<i>fangbian</i> [<i>shuofa</i>] 方便[說法]	<i>shuo yu shandao</i> 說餘善道	<i>aññaṃ pariyāyaṃ</i> [<i>ācikkhatu</i>]	<i>anyaṃ paryāyaṃ</i>	another way [of preaching]

In sum we may conclude that the term ‘*fangbian*’ was indeed used in countless ways and on various occasions in the *vinayas*.

3. The relationship between ‘*fangbian*’ as used in the *vinaya* and the concept of ‘skilful means’ in Mahāyāna

By now (I hope not earlier) some readers who are not philologists may have lost their patience and asked themselves whether this has any relevance to Religious Studies in general or at least to Buddhist Studies beyond purely lexicographical subtleties. I would say, not surprisingly, that it is in fact relevant. First of all, it should have become evident that in the *vinaya* translations, ‘*fangbian*’ was not used to render the term ‘*upāya*’, even in a pre-technical sense, let alone in its more elaborate mahāyānistic sense.

It rather translates a number of Sanskrit words which do, however, have a lot in common with ‘*upāya*’ in a non-technical sense. What we learn from this is that ‘*fangbian*’ could hardly have been regarded as a technical term that exclusively refers to the Mahāyāna concept of ‘skilful means’ even by Buddhist authors up to the early 8th century, i.e. when the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* and the *Mahīśāsaka-karmavācanā* were translated. This is a surprise indeed when we

take into account that the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* was translated into Chinese as early as in 286 by Dharmarakṣa and again in 406 by Kumārajīva. As is well known, the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* is perhaps the most important sūtra for explaining and propagating the mahāyānistic concept of ‘skilful means’. If the concept of ‘*upāya/fangbian*’ as elaborated in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* had gained the status of an important technical term by the time the *vinayas* were translated, it is hardly imaginable that the translators would have used the same Chinese word ‘*fangbian*’ – that would then have inevitably been associated with ‘*upāya*’ – for rendering various other Sanskrit words. Technical religious terms tend to become isolated from their original unspecific linguistic context and are reserved for exclusive use in a specific religious context. The surprise is even bigger when we remind ourselves of the fact that it was none other than Kumārajīva who allegedly translated both the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* and, in cooperation with Dharmaruci and Puṇyatrāta, the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*. On the other hand it could be argued that since the translation of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* was finished approximately two years before that of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*, Kumārajīva was not overly concerned with the *upāya* concept while he was working on the translation of the *vinaya*. There is, however, reason to believe that Kumārajīva was quite aware of the terminological problem even when he translated the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*. First of all, the term ‘*fangbian*’ occurs less frequently in the translation of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* than in other versions.⁷⁰ Moreover, as far as I can see, ‘*fangbian*’ is used here only to denote ‘means, ways’ or ‘plan, intention’, albeit in a rather broad sense. For instance, where the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* has the stereotyped phrase ‘世尊以無數方便呵責’⁷¹ [the World Honoured one reproached (the monks) in countless ways], the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* has ‘佛以種種因緣呵責’⁷² [the Buddha reproached (the monks) for various reasons/on various occasions]. What is remarkable here is that the translators of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*, including Kumārajīva, seem to have deliberately abbreviated the original Sanskrit formula,

buddho bhagavān etasmin nidāna etasmin prakaraṇe saṃghaṃ saṃnipātyati saṃghamsaṃnipātyāneka-paryāyeṇa buddho bhagavān vigarhati [The venerable Buddha for this reason and on this occasion assembled the *saṃgha*, and after he had assembled the *saṃgha* the venerable Buddha reproached (the monks) for various reasons]

to “佛以是事集比丘僧以種種因緣呵責” by condensing “*etasmin nidāna etasmin prakaraṇe*” to “以是事 [for this matter]” thus saving up “種種因緣” for rendering “*aneka-paryāyeṇa*”. Was it perhaps the translators’ intention to avoid using ‘*fangbian*’?

70 109 occurrences in the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*, 201 in the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya* and 750 in the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*.

71 81 occurrences of the whole phrase; ‘無數方便’ occurs 385 times.

72 104 occurrences, ‘種種因緣’ occurs 916 times.

What is most remarkable is, that Kumārajīva in the ‘Chapter on Skilful Means’ (*fangbian pin* 方便品) in his translation of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* uses a phrase four times in close succession which looks extremely ‘*vinayanistic*’: 無數方便種種因緣.⁷³ As shown above, in the *vinayas* 無數方便 (*Dharmagupta-ka-vinaya*)⁷⁴ and 種種因緣 (*Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*)⁷⁵ were used alternatively to denote something like ‘in countless ways’, ‘on various occasions’, ‘for various reasons’ etc. The context was always the same with only slight variations: The Buddha reproaches the monks because something undesirable has happened in the *saṃgha*, and in order to prevent further misconduct the Buddha establishes and explains a certain rule. Now, what is the context in the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka*? The complete sentence is: 我以無數方便種種因緣譬喻言辭演說諸法.⁷⁶ If we used the language of the *vinaya*, the sentence could be translated as follows:

I [the Buddha] have expounded all the doctrines in countless ways [無數方便; **aneka-paryāyeṇa*] and for various reasons [種種因緣; **aneka-paryāyeṇa*]⁷⁷, [using] parables [譬喻; **aupamya*] and terminological explanations [言辭; **nirukti*].

At first sight this translation makes perfect sense, although it is a little confusing to have ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ twice in this sentence. Unfortunately, any terminological analysis of the sentence suffers from the regrettable fact that no Sanskrit text which belongs to the same group as the one translated by Kumārajīva is extant.⁷⁸ The authors of the *Index to the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*⁷⁹, however, have related the sentence to the following Sanskrit text:

Nānā-nirukti-nirdeśābhilāpa-nirdeśanair mayā Śāriputra vividhair upāya-kausalya-sata-sahasrair dharmāḥ saṃprakāśitaḥ.⁸⁰

73 我以無數方便種種因緣譬喻言辭演說諸法; *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, To9, no. 262, p. 7a18-7a19)

74 385 occurrences.

75 916 occurrences.

76 *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, To9, no. 262, p. 7a18-7a19.

77 It is very difficult to interpret ‘種種因緣’ here. According to HIRAKAWA it can only be interpreted as ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’, which makes not much sense, however, if we interpret ‘無數方便’ as ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ too. If ‘因緣’ refers to a technical Sanskrit term – comparable to ‘*aupamya*’, ‘*nirukti*’, ‘*nirdeśa*’ etc. -, it could be a translation of ‘*hetu*’ (“a logical reason or deduction or argument”) or ‘*kāraṇa*’ (“instrument, means [sic!]; that on which an opinion or judgment is founded”) rather than of ‘*nidāna*’. ZIMMERMANN has the same difficulty in interpreting ‘因緣’; see Michael ZIMMERMANN, *A Buddha Within: The Tathāgatagarbhasūtra: The Earliest Exposition of the Buddha-Nature Teaching in India* (Tokyo: Soka University, 2002), 156.

78 “It is, however, a fact that the Tibetan and Chinese versions are not, strictly speaking, based on the same original Sanskrit recension as is offered in Kern and Nanjio’s edition.” EJIMA Yasunori, ed., *Index to the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra – Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese* (Tokyo: Reiyukai, 1985), vi.

79 EJIMA Yasunori, ed., *Index to the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra – Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Fasc. 5* (Tokyo: Reiyukai, 1993), 214.

80 U. WOGIHARA; C. TSUCHIDA, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtram: Romanized and Revised Text of the Bibliotheca Buddhica Publication* (Tokyo: The Seigo-Kenkyūkai, 1934), 36-37.

Kern translates this Sanskrit sentence as:

[...] in elucidating the law [*dharmah samprakāśitaḥ*], Sāriputra, I use hundred thousands of various skilful means [*vividhair upāya-kauśalya-śata-sahasraiḥ*], such as different interpretations [*nānā-nirukti-*], indications [*nirdeśābhilāpa-*], explanations [*nirdeśanaiḥ*], illustrations [?].⁸¹

Accordingly, ‘無數方便’ in Kumārajīva’s text is treated by the authors of the *Index* not as a translation of ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ but as a synonym of ‘*vividhair upāya-kauśalya-śata-sahasraiḥ*’, that is “hundred thousands of various skilful means” in Kern’s translation. However, neither can the formular ‘無數方便’ be regarded as a literal translation of ‘*vividhair upāya-kauśalya-śata-sahasraiḥ*’, nor the Chinese sentence as a whole as a translation of the above quoted Sanskrit sentence. We simply cannot tell which expression was translated by Kumārajīva as ‘無數方便’. If we follow Hirakawa’s *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary*, the only Sanskrit phrase to which ‘無數方便’ verifiably refers is ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’.⁸²

When we compare our tentative ‘*vinayaistic*’ translation of the Chinese text with Katō’s translation, however, we find that it is slightly different:

I expound the laws [演說諸法; **dharmah samprakāśitaḥ*] by numberless tactful ways [無數方便; **vividhair upāya-kauśalyaiḥ*] and with various reasonings [種種因緣; **nānā-kāraṇena*] and parabolic expressions [譬喻言辭; **aupamyena*; **niruktyā*].⁸³

As Kumārajīva’s translation does not correspond with any existing Sanskrit original, we simply cannot tell which Sanskrit terms he translated. Be that as it may, the interesting point is that Kumārajīva directly connects the stereotyped phrase ‘無數方便’, which always refers to ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ in the *vinayas*, with the Mahāyāna concept of *upāya*. This was, in terms of semantics, by no means excessively daring. When we take a closer look at the account of the monks’ mass suicide in the *vinaya*, it becomes evident that ‘*paryāya*’ could in fact easily be interpreted as denoting a specific way of teaching,⁸⁴ skilfully adjusted to the circumstances and the hearers’ capacities by the Buddha, and this is precisely the essential meaning of the Mahāyāna concept of *upāya*. Kumārajīva

81 H. KERN, *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law (Sacred Books of the East; 21)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1884), 39.

82 HIRAKAWA Akira, *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary*, 785b.

83 KATŌ Bunnō, *Myōhō-rence-kyō: The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law* (Tokyo: Risshō Kōseikai, 1971), 43. See also KATŌ Bunnō, TAMURA Yoshirō, and MIYASAKA Kō-jirō, *The Threefold Lotus Sutra* (Tokyo: Weatherhill; Kosei, 1984), 59. Leon HURVITZ has: “By resort to numberless devices and to various means, parables, and phrases do I proclaim the dharmas.” Leon HURVITZ, *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1976), 29. Burton WATSON’s translation is: “Because we employ countless expedient means, discussing causes and conditions and using words of simile and parable to expound the teachings.” Burton WATSON, *The Lotus Sutra* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1983), 31.

84 The term ‘*paryāya*’ (or more correctly ‘*dharma-paryāya*’) is in fact sometimes rendered by ‘*famen* 法門’ (teaching method, school) in Chinese. See ZIMMERMANN, *A Buddha Within*, 152; 341.

simply subsumes all ways of teaching used by the Buddha – exemplified, for instance, by the twelve classical literary genres (*aṅga*; ‘limbs’) of Buddhism⁸⁵ – under the concept of *upāya* or skilful means. However, in the *vinaya* the Buddha is hardly portrayed as being perfect in the use of skilful means. Would he have been perfect with regard to the adoption of ‘skilful means’, sixty monks would not have killed themselves. The Buddha of the *vinayas* is fallible, quite contrary to the supra-mundane Buddha of the Mahāyāna scriptures.

Although Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* did not prevent the term ‘fangbian’ from being used in an unspecific way to render ‘*prayoga*’ and ‘*parākram*’ afterwards, it seems that later translators of *vinaya* texts were at least reluctant to use the phrase ‘無數方便’ for ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’. As we have seen Kumārajīva and his colleagues did not use it in their translation of the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya*. Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian, on the contrary, used it extensively in their translation of the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* which was completed only two years later. We may surmise that the influence of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* translation of 406 on Chinese Buddhist terminology was still limited at that time. The last *vinaya* translation to use ‘無數方便’ for ‘*aneka-paryāyeṇa*’ was that of the *Mahāsāṃghikas* by Faxian and Buddhahadra, completed between 416 and 418. In contrast, the translators of the *Mahīśāsaka-vinaya* (423) and the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (around 700) seem to use ‘fangbian’ only as a translation of ‘*prayoga*’, ‘*parākram*’, and the like. This may have been a result of Kumārajīva’s ‘mahāyānistic occupation’ of the phrase. Nevertheless, it is surprising that even in the Buddhist discourse of the early 8th century ‘fangbian’ did by no means refer exclusively to ‘*upāya*’ or ‘skilful means’, which becomes even more apparant when we take into account the fact that long before Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka* there were other Mahāyāna scriptures translated into Chinese which strongly emphasized the elaborate concept of *upāya*.⁸⁶ This finding, unspectacular as it is, may at least help prevent anachronistic interpretations of Chinese translations of lost Sanskrit texts.

85 See PYE, *Skilful Means*, 29-30.

86 The most important being perhaps the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra* – translated for the first time in 188 A.D. by the layman Zhi Qian 支謙 and again in 406 by Kumārajīva – in which the lay-bodhisattva himself says that “perfection of insight is the bodhisattva’s mother, and skilful means, we may say, is the father 智度菩薩母方便以為父”. PYE, *Skilful Means*, 90; *Weimojie suoshuo jing* 維摩詰所說經, T14, no. 475, p. 549c02. Note, however, that the frequency of the occurrence of the term ‘fangbian’ rises from 10 times in Zhi Qian’s to 39 times in Kumārajīva’s translation. Also of utmost importance for the development and propagation of the Mahāyāna *upāya* concept was the ‘Perfection of Insight Literature’. PYE, *Skilful Means*, 102-117. Furthermore, another version of the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* had been translated by Dharmarakṣa in 286 already (T no. 263). Here again, however, the earlier version of Dharmarakṣa uses the term ‘fangbian’ only 88 times, whereas that of Kumārajīva uses it 108 times. It is noteworthy, that Dharmarakṣa uses ‘fangbian’ to render ‘*paryāya*’ at least once. KARASHIMA Seishi, *A Glossary of Dharmarakṣa’s Translation of the Lotus Sūtra* (Tokyo: Sōka University, 1998), 133. *Zheng fahua jing* 正法華經, T09, no. 263, p. 122c26.



Yet another interpretation of *upāya*: In the tantric Buddhist art of Tibet and Nepal *upāya* or skilful means as the dynamic aspect of compassion (*karuṇā*) is often symbolically depicted as a male deity or Buddha (Tib. *yab* or "father"; probably Buddha Akṣobhya in this case) in sexual embrace with his consort (Tib. *yum* or "mother") who represents wisdom or insight (*prajñā*).

(private; reproduced from Tachikawa Musashi 立川 武蔵, ed., *Mandara: Chibetto, Nepāru no hotoketachi* マンダラ: チベット・ネパールの仏たち [Mandala: Deities of Tibetan and Nepalese Buddhism], Ōsaka: Kokuritsu Minzokugaku Hakubutsukan 国立民俗学博物館, 2003, p. 21)