
The pictures in the table (p. 5) are photographs, taken by myself; the pictures of M. V. Gunadasa and Bathiya&Santush are covers from audio-cassettes

¹⁷ An english version of the tale is published at the webpage:

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/buddhism/story/traders.html>

¹⁸ An audio-version of the three Jataka-examples, used in this article including links, you can find at the following web-page: <http://dr.martina.bei.t-online.de/jataka.html>; the translation and transcription of the sinhala lyrics refer to Ayanka Jayawardene, Attidiya and Indaka Wickramasinghe, Kurunegala.

¹⁹ This small harmonium is an indian instrument, where it is called shruti-box or surpeti. The same instrument in Sri Lanka is called shruti pettiya without keyboard and serpina with keys. It is mainly used in theatre music of the first decade of the 20th century, which has a lot of indian influences.

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M.V. Gunadhasa: „Serivavanije Jataka“, recording 2001

Kanthis, Madhavi, Piyasara Shilpadhipathi: Vessantara-Jataka songs, recording 2000

⁶ With this family, living in an artist village near Colombo, I got the chance to record a lot of songs, drum-patterns and dances belonging to the traditional cultural heritage of Sri Lanka. Piyasara comes from an ancient artist family of dancers and drummers, who worked in former times at the kandyan court. For further information you can visit the website:

<http://www.noisytoys.com/interviews/interview6.html>

⁷ <http://www.lacnet.org/island/i980607/feature.htm>

⁸ <http://www.is.lk/times/010114/plus6.html>

⁹ <http://lakdiva.com/codrington/chap02.html#0252>

¹⁰ de Silva describes in his analysis of the Bali-rituals the attempts of the scientific authors to explain the existing conglomeration of rites of different origin in a so called „Sinhala Buddhism“: „Gananath Obeysekere (1963, 1966) stresses the point that the Sinhala's popular everyday religion, or spirit religion, has a genuine place in Buddhism, and describes the total religious field as 'Sinhala Buddhism'“ (de Silva 2000: 18). Especially the belief in planets and astrology had to be embedded in the buddhist imaginations and de Silva shows the difficulty of the integration-process. Similar observations describes Schwörer-Kohl in Burma, where the animistic imaginations of spirits, called nats, had to be integrated in the theravada-buddhist context (Schwörer-Kohl, unpublished habilitation-document: 22-24).

¹¹ It is an interesting fact, that even in recent reviews in sri lankan newspapers sometimes the historical reality, as it would be defined in a western scientific context, is not clearly separated by the authors, but mixed up self-evidently with legendary or mythological elements. This shows the constructive, discursive and cultural bound character of reality. Every person or fact can become enriched with elements, which make them interesting or spectacular and this construction is reciprocally used by others for their self-construction. One example is the global phenomenon of the star-cult, where persons are glorified by the fans and constructed by the media with elements, which have nothing in common with the original person. Even although boy- and girl-groups are created and produced evidently in front of the eyes of the audience, the same effect of autopoiesis takes place.

¹² The spelling of names is used in a very free way throughout Sri Lanka, maybe due to the different sinhala script

¹³ Fact is, that Buddha Shakyamuni lived and reached the Nirvana before Siri Sangabodhi reigned in Sri Lanka. Here becomes the quality of the two imaginations of time again evident: The historical facts are incompatible at the linear axis of time; imagined in spirals, the fixation of a certain lifetime-period doesn't mean a lot for the moral or the essence of the narration - bodies, embodied virtues and ethical effects are exchangeable as a kind of prototypes or modules.

¹⁴ An example for the attention and presence of the „guardians of the heritage“ represented here in canonical texts, but also for the here developed theory of the countless repetition of a canonical accepted content in different shapes according to the audience and their cultural needs is the following article in a newspaper:

„**Bathiya and Santhush" dismiss criticism**

Sri Lanka's latest pop music stars who returned after winning the Silver Award at the Azia Danysy world Music Festival in Kazakhstan last week, dismissed a claim that they had presented their hit "Siri Sangabodhi....." as an original composition.

Reacting to a complaint by the John de Silva Foundation Centre Secretary Mahinda Makalanda, pop stars Bathiya and Santhush told the 'Sunday Observer' that they had never made such a claim.

They were responding to a letter of complaint addressed by the John de Silva Foundation secretary to the Russian Ambassador, whose country hosted the Azia Danysy Festival.

The letter points out that this avant garde music group had failed to acknowledge the original composer of the song, the early 20th century dramatist John de Silva, in their public pronouncements after winning the silver award and that they were tendering an official apology.

The Russian embassy has so far failed to comment despite repeated inquiries.

Bathiya and Santhush indicated that the criteria for entry to participate at the Festival required competitors to submit original works or remakes of folk songs from their respective countries. They also said that after they returned, they had met the John de Silva Foundation president, Cyril Makalanda who understood their objective in remaking the song and that there was no misunderstanding with him.

Bathiya and Santhush on their CD release have given credit to John de Silva for their hit song.“

(<http://www.sundayobserver.lk/2001/09/09/new15.html>)

¹⁵ Both examples you can listen to at the web-adress: <http://www.lacnet.org/jukebox/>

¹⁶ The Rabana is known as a drum-instrument used in an arabian cultural context, but in Sri Lanka it is also used by buddhist musicians, although there are more typical drum-instruments in the sinhala cultural context, like the gätabere, the tamätamä or the dahula, which are played at the services in the buddhist temples.

Conclusion

Three examples of performances of Jataka tales show the variety, which is used as a strategy of stabilization of a cultural network or system. These three examples exist in the Sri Lankan society in the moment at the same time side by side, although they were created in different decades. The different forms of expression offer a broad spectrum of patterns or modules for the self-construction process of different individuals, living either in different generations, or different ethnic or social backgrounds, but all under the roof of one society. Despite of the changing shape in musical or in visual forms, the strategy of keeping up a flexible cultural supply for the autopoietic process of self maintenance is ensured on the basis of preserving the philosophical background.

This process is not working without the body. The process of embodiment is also reciprocal: the mind is creating ideas, feelings and thoughts (constructs) and they are embodied through the senses, transformed with the help of media to cultural drafts, which offer an effect to others, actually through the body.

There is only a difference in the level of consciousness an individual has developed. An increase of the perceptive faculties of embodied habits ensures an increase of mental freedom - the freedom to choose the quality and quantity of the individual body-construction in a self responsible way and as much as possible on the other side of systemic boundaries. But Buddhist freedom is still more: it is not the relative, it is the absolute overcoming of all systems, biological, mental and cultural ones and in the moment of enlightenment this condition becomes attainable, even in the situation of still being embodied.

Notes

¹ The term autopoietic/autopoiesis is one of the basic terms of the constructivist philosophy; it means the process of reciprocal maintenance of systems, either biological, psychic or cultural ones or even combinations.

² The exact quotation is: „Als das bei weitem wirkungsvollste Mittel, einer ethnischen Identität Permanenz zu verleihen, hat sich jedoch die Religion erwiesen. Alle von A. Smith angeführten Fälle außergewöhnlichen Überdauerns, von den Samaritanern bis zu den Basken, zeigen dasselbe Bild einer Verschmelzung ethnischer Identität mit spezifischer religiöser Ausrichtung“ (Assmann, Jan 1992: 160).

³ http://theravada.net/general/dhamma/tipitaka_overview.html - Ven. Mahathera Narada gives an explanation of the division of the canonical texts:

„About 83 B.C., during the reign of the pious Simhala King Vatta Gamani Abhaya, a Council of Arahants was held, and the Tipitaka was, for the first time in the history of Buddhism, committed to writing at Aluvihara in Ceylon....

The word Tipitaka means three Baskets. They are the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Pitaka), the Basket of Discourses (Sutta Pitaka) and the Basket of Ultimate Doctrine (Abhidhamma Pitaka)...

Sutta Pitaka

The Sutta Pitaka consists chiefly of instructive discourses delivered by the Buddha to both the Sangha and the laity on various occasions. Most of the sermons were intended mainly for the benefit of Bhikkhus, and they deal with the Holy Life and with the exposition of the Doctrine. There are several other discourses which deal with both the material and the moral progress of His lay-followers....

The Sutta Pitaka consists of the following five Nikayas (Collections):

1. Digha Nikaya (Collection of Long Discourses) 2. Majjhima Nikaya (Collection of Middle-length Discourses) 3. Samyutta Nikaya (Collection of Kindred Sayings) 4. Anguttara Nikaya (Collection of Gradual Sayings) 5. Khuddaka Nikaya (Smaller Collection) This fifth is subdivided into fifteen books:... 10. Jataka (Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta)..."

⁴ On the Vesak festival three events of the life of Buddha Shakyamuni are celebrated: The birth, the enlightenment and the entrance into Nirvana

⁵ web-version of the story: <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Thai/literature/sridaoruang/matsii/matsii2.htm>

gins after 3 tones, which sound like played by a sitar. The first line is sung by the singer alone, only accompanied by a drumset and scat singing at the end of the phrase. Then an interruption line is following by the background choir with rhythmical scatting and then the text goes on and the back vocals are adding the harmonies and some interjections, like a laughter etc.. After finishing the 1st verse the 1st line is repeated again and then the style is changing to one line of a pop-arrangement, sung in English by the background-choir, accompanied by european orchestrasounds. After this part the rap is starting in the typical, a bit aggressive american style in a very fast spoken English. As a basis the serpin is playing the traditional melody and the backing vocals give short comments. This part is finished through a dialogue of the singer/rapper with an anonymous listener, who is asked for his opinion and who gives the statement, that he likes the groovy sound. Then the whole partition is repeated and only the end is again varying: in the manner of a „quodlibet“ all the parts are now played together not only one after the other one, but all on top of the others, which sounds a bit untidy. It is finishing very abruptly with an understandable spoken sentence.

The syncretistic mixture has a special affective radiation; for the listener used to habits of a western audience the jazz-, pop- and rap-pattern sound like estrangement effects of the traditional version. A grooving and funky way to play music has mostly the effect of a certain coolness, which is corresponding to the lifestyle attitude of most of the younger generation. The fact of being attracted from the cultural construction possibilities, which offers the hip hop-culture, is a global phenomenon and it seems, that this kind of presenting afro-american eloquence is compatible with every cultural background. Here it adds a portion of street-feeling, of ghetto-attitude into the general expression of the arrangement. This version of the Siri Sangabo Jataka is unifying forms of expression of the traditional culture as well as of the globalised pop- and even hip hop-culture, which is also distributed and developed assimilated to individual or collective needs all over the world. Bathiya&Santhush are opening the regional forms of expression for the world and vice versa. It is a transcultural process.

c) *The Sirisangabo-Jataka*

That there are problems to integrate the Bathiya&Santush-version of the Sirisangabo-Jataka in the canonical treasure of the sinhala culture shows the already mentioned article in a newspaper¹². But nevertheless it is an important attempt to recollect the traditional content and to present it musically in a mixture of cultural styles, which the young generation can accept for their own cultural construction and which is representing nearly all cultural influences existing in Sri Lanka nowadays. The lyrics are not telling the whole story, but show as an excerpt the most dramatical part of the tale, the reflections of the person, who tries to kill king Siri Sangabodi.

Siri Sangabodi maligawayde ma Daka pranay harnay wenta bata dem (2x) Alla bada rada bida undar kuda lame sindar Sanda kalle maligaway ennewa soyar (2x) Darmay sellay rathang rajar lamay dewinasar Darmay wannay passay hinda kimdor dosaya (2x) Kolahala sidda wanna kalayar oh sondar (2x) Tayje sara selawantha darma songa boderaja Bangar karalame narwar maligaway soya (2x)	Sirisangabodi in the palace I want to kill the king in his palace I also know the fighting techniques to kill you In the evening the king is always staying in the palace and killing will be easy The king is a very good buddhist, but I don't care about his dharma-power - I will kill him The time is good for a war in this country This king is very powerful and a very good buddhist I will look, where he is in the palace and then I will kill him...
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Micro-structure	Siri Sangabo Jataka
melody	the verse consists of 5 lines, which are also represented as various melody-lines, every melody-line is divided in 2 parts
rhythm, metre	each of the melody-line-parts consists of 2 measures with 4 beats per measure and a clear metrical accentuation on the 1 st beat; a whole melody-line has 4 bars
scale, key	we can find an a-minor-melodic-scale; the 4 th melody-line is modulating to the 5 th degree (e-minor) with the leading note dis; but the last line is again a-minor, ending on the tonic key-note a'
form	prelude-1 st verse-bridge-2 nd verse (estrangement effects)//repetition of all-end (all styles together/quodlibet)
instrumentation/arrangement	shruti-pettiya or serpina, drumset, keyboards, scat-background-vocals replace instrumental filling-arrangement; voice sometimes only accompanied by drums
voice-colour	according to the style: traditional-natural-plain voice for the narration, dirty Jazz-voice and rap-voice for the specific parts (english language)
tempo	rap-parts very fast and rather ununderstandable; Jataka-narration medium tempo/understandable as well as the english scat-syllables
volume	rap-parts loud and aggressive; groovy-swing-parts also loud and the traditional song part loud and clear

The song is starting with an extended prelude. First it sounds traditional, starting with the sound and an introducing melody-phrase of the serpina¹⁹. After a percussion-bridge the serpina is playing the song melody, stopped by a noise, which sounds like a broken tape; then the back-vocals are starting with scat-singing in a groovy style and this is the starting point for the lead-singer. Like a trial version he starts 2 times with the song melody on the basis of the background scating, but it really be-

a specific supply of musical pieces in the sense of a canonical treasure, a cultural heritage.

VEESANTHARA RAJA NIRIDUN VANKAGIRIYA THAPASEDIE //	The king Vessantara in Vankagiriya(LABYRINTH) hermitage //
KUMARUN BENDA BAMU NATA DAN DUNNE..	Tied the prince gives charity (alms) to Brahman.

Vessantara Jataka - 1st verse

Ves-san- ta-ra ra - ja ni - ri - dun van - ka - gi - riya tha-pe - se - diye

Ves-san- ta-ra ra - ja ni - ri - dun van - ka - gi - riya tha-pe - se - diye

Ku - ma - ru - un be - n - da ba - mu

Na - ta d - an dun ----- ne

Fig. 8: Transcription of the 1st verse

Micro-structure	Vessantara Jataka
melody	the melody consists of 4 parts with the sequence a-a'-b-b', in the narrow range of a fifth; distribution of the syllables changes the number of tones, but not the basic structure of the melody
rhythm, metre	the first note gives the impression of an upbeat, but there cannot be established a measure of 4 beats, because the metre is not clear, that's why the notation is missing bar-lines; the changing of accents depends on the lyrics and their syllables; the drum player is reacting according to the changing conditions
scale, key	corrupt aeolic, 5 th and 6 th degree missing, but because of the existing 7 th dorian mode is out of the question; ending on the key-note (c')
form	4 verses with 4 lines with the above mentioned melody form a-a'-b-b'
instrumentation	free improvised drum accompaniment, here played with a gätabere (on the photo there is the prototype of a new invented drum-instrument of Piyasara Shilpadhipathi, wich combines the advantages of gätabere and dahula and which is called gahula)
voice-colour	clear natural voice and spelling of the lyrics
tempo	slower tempo, according to a clear text declamation
volume	medium volume

Some of the analyzed musical parameters are concluded in the following table, which gives an overview over the micro-structural musical cosmos of this drum-narration of a story-teller.

Micro-structure	Serivavanije Jataka
melody	2 phrases (a, b) of 4 measures, 1 st ascendant, 2 nd descendant with syncopated end
rhythm, metre	3 beats per bar; clear accentuation of the 1 st ; syncopated 2 nd beat in the drum (role)
scale, key	modal dorian scale on f' (range: es'-c''); missing 6th degree (d''), ending on the tonic key-note (f')
form	11 musical parts, interrupted by spoken storytelling; changing number of lines (5, 7, 10, 11, 12) in the 10 verses; 11 th part is a drum-solo
instrumentation	Rabana, played with hand or stick
voice-colour	natural, a bit hoarse voice; clear performance of the lyrics, partly ornamental
tempo	fluent, medium tempo, supporting the flow of the words
volume	loud in the direction of declamation or even shouting

The sung version has a kind of dramatic quality in opposition to the spoken version, which is accentuating the epic expression. Even although there are no sources and proofs for the fact, it can be presumed, especially also because of the archaic musical shape, that this drum narration originally belonged to an old tradition of Jataka interpretation. Further research on the Vesak-Pandal tradition and the connected Jataka performances would be a broad field of interest.

b) Vessantara Jataka

The Vessantara Jataka is published as a text in a book in sinhala language, which the Shilpadhipathi family showed me before we recorded the 5 songs. This book is the basis for song interpretations as well as for scenic plays. As already mentioned above, authors like John de Silva have taken the plot for stage dramas too. Some of the text parts are songs, which can be used in a flexible way, because for a lot of occasions it is impossible to sing or perform the whole text version. The song, choosed as an example for this article, tells the story of the superhuman generosity of King Vessantara, who gives his own children to a poor man, who wants to use them as servants for his wife. The song is sung by two female singers, Kanthi and Madhavi Shilpadhipathi and accompanied by Piyasara Shilpadhipathi with drums¹⁷.

The song sounds also more like a declamation than like a song; because of the narrow range of the tones and repeating of melody-patterns it has an effect of steadiness. Each of the 5 songs, I had the chance to record, has a specific melody and some of the melodies are more elaborated and also more emotionally affected and affecting; there can be observed in the musical processing of this Jataka tale a kind of transition from declamated speech to melodious songs. The melodies seem to come down from an anonymous folksong tradition. Maybe especially cause of the modal scales they have also an archaic aura, but not as much as the storyteller version of the Serivavanije-Jataka. In the internet-song-presentation, called „Sinhala Jukebox“¹⁴ are similar songs, classified under the category „cultural songs“. The definition is unclear, but it can be presumed, that these songs are suitable to represent

Srivavaniye Jataka - 1st verse/1st line

voice

sa - tha - ra a - ga thi - yan wh - en we ni - tha - ra a - ma - r ra - sa bo na ha - te sa - sa - ra d u k ni - wa pa - nu thi - lo na - ma - ge

rabana

3/4

3/4

Fig. 7: Transcription of the 1st line

2. Micro-structure

As micro-structure I want to define, referring to the subject of musicology, the musical shape as the auditory part of the cultural embodied network, which is physically transferred to an audience with the need to become identified with the mental idea in an autopoietic exchange.

a) *Serivavanije Jataka*

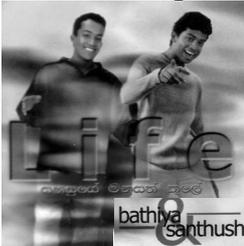
The Serivavanije Jataka is a mixture of spoken and sung parts. It starts with a spoken monologue of the singer and the same content is then repeated in a sung version. The 1st verse has 7 lines and is a kind of preparation or introduction to the following story. It is a kind of frame in a frame, where the story itself is situated in the context of buddhism. The complete lyrics of the introduction with the translation are:

Sathara agathiyen when we Nithara amar rasa bona hate Sasara duk niwa pannu Thilonamage...	Buddha says there are 4 ways to hell, but we try to avoid Buddha's teaching is like an energy drink for our body our life has bad experiences and sad moments, which we try to extinguish - we call you the one, who knows all in the world...
Epade bor sath kulawala Appamana dukkaradara wida Sapathama lankala sathahata Mahime pawadim...	Lord Buddha had several rebirths facing a lot of big problems during these birthtimes then Buddha gave advice to the people, how to live in a happy way - come, let us worship at his legs...
Asarana apa suwath patha kota Sasarata aedandak u Asadesa ma baduru gathay Wadime nirathuru...	We are like sick people and our medicine is Lord Buddha our path is like a river and the teaching of Buddha is like a bridge we cannot explain and match, who is Lord Buddha we worship Buddha at every time...
Buddun dasu arar dahama Niwan magath thor thannake Awan dahan bana padamata Sada suwayake...	Buddha teaches us in a good way that we can come to the heaven after death he is telling nice tales to improve the life of the people to make it more comfortable...
Mugalan sariuth arde Agasaw saha sagaparapura Maga pala dutu aiuru sada Martath saranway...	Like Mugalan and Sariuth Lord Buddha has more helpful guardians coming to the status of Nirvana by throwing out their emotional boundaries - I can also reach this status...
Tharuwan guna namada namada Widesun garga kimida kimida Dahamin hara palada palada Viridu pawasame... (2x)	We can worship the Triple Gem the teaching style of Buddha is like a river - we can go on to swim and to learn the teaching style is like an everlasting chain, which we want to wear I am telling you these verses in my style with this drum narration... (2x) ¹⁸

The transcription renders the structure of the melody of the 1st line; the following lines are built with the same supply of tones and change small patterns, due to the number or form of the text and its syllables. The musical lines are introduced and finished by 3 or 4 bars of the drum rhythm and the drum is also accentuating a short break between the lines and verses. The melodies of the other verses differ from the first one in the structure, but not in scale, range and style. The verses 2 until 5, 7 and 9 are similar, 1st, 12th, 6th, 8th and 10th differ. The number of the lines is different in the sequence 7, 11, 12, 12, 11, 12, 11, 10, 10, 5 - the narration is finished with a drum-solo.

corded music and text all over the area. Every city area of Colombo has its own Jataka-story painted at a Pandal, which is especially constructed for this purpose and which is built up for 10 days starting with the Vesak fullmoon. The plot of the Serivavaniye Jataka concerns the habit of two merchants, who discover a precious pot in a household of a poor family. Whilst one of them wants to cheat the owners, the other one is honest and pays the reasonable fair. The embodied virtue in the person of the second trader, who represents the later Buddha Shakyamuni, is this honesty¹⁷.

The following table shows a conclusion of the macro-structural aspects of the three Jataka examples, embodied and sensualised through artistic specialists and transferred through multi-media as modular offers for the self-construction processes of the receivers:

Macro-structure	Serivavaniye Jataka	Vessantara Jataka	Siri Sangabo Jataka
embodied characteristics	honesty/ dishonesty	generosity/ selfishness	selflessness/ greed
multimedial performance, medial transfer to the senses	Vesak-pandal  Fig. 1: Pandal in Dehiwala	temples, stage-performance, puppet-play  Fig. 2: The artist-family Shilpadhipathi at stage	video-clip/TV, audio-cassette-production
embodiment through visualisation (eyes)	sequence of paintings at the pandal	paintings at the walls of temples, actors on the stage  Fig. 3: Wall painting in the Sapugoda-temple	moving singers in the video-clip, hand-gestures according to the hip hop-style  Fig. 4: The singer duo Bathiya&Santush
embodiment through auditory realisation (ears)	live- or audio-cassette-performance of a male storyteller with rabana  Fig. 5: Storyteller M. V. Gunadasa	female singers with accompaniment of a drum instrument	studio-recording, 2 male singers, electronic arrangement  Fig. 6: Audio-cassette-cover of the successful duo

Siri Sangabodhi has been a legendary king in the 3rd or early 4th century A. D. A lot of stories are connected with his person:

„... three members of the Lambakanna Lemeni-, ('having ears with long Lobes') branch of the royal family conspired against the reigning King Vijaya, slew him, and set the eldest, Sangha Tissa, on the throne. He was succeeded by the second, **Siri Sanghabodhi** (Siri Sangabo, third or early fourth century A.D.), who has become a saintly figure in popular story. Of him it is related that in a severe drought he fasted himself on the ground before the Ruwanweli Dagoba, and resolved not to rise therefrom until rain should have fallen sufficient to lift him from the earth. Rain immediately fell, but, as the king who was not floating on the water still refused to rise, his household officers stopped up the drains and enabled him to fulfil his vow. Again, on the occasion of an epidemic, attributed to a red-eyed demon, the king compelled the monster to appear and offered himself in satisfaction of his hunger. This offer was politely refused, and instead 'bali' offerings were instituted throughout Lanka. The third Lambakanna, Gothakabhaya (Golu Aba), rebelled against him, and Siri Sanghabodhi, abhorring the idea of being the cause of death to others, fled southwards from the capital. **The usurper offered a reward for his head. A traveller happened to meet the king, whom he did not recognize, and pressed his own food and drink upon him. The king ate, and in order to reward the man proclaimed his identity, and bade him take his head. On his refusal Siri Sanghabodhi severed his own head, which was duly taken to Gothakabhaya. The story has grown in course of time, later versions telling how the usurper refused to believe that it was his rival's head, and how the head sprang up thrice by the power of the gods saying, 'I am King Siri Sangabo'. Gothakabhaya made amends by erecting a shrine...**⁹

The last part printed in bold is the content of the Jataka. The typical legends show not only the source for the construction of a Jataka tale, but also the origin of other buddhist rites or better the process of mixing pre-buddhist with buddhist cults, like 'bali'-offerings¹⁰ etc., is explained here in a frame of supernatural events. Of interest for the topic of this article is again the virtue, which is embodied in the semi-historical¹¹ person of Siri Sangabo¹² as a reincarnation of the later Buddha¹³. It is the complete selflessness of the king, who is even willing to offer his own head and in this respect his life to protect others. The multimedial and polysensory version I choosed here is the modern and very actual version of the male singer-duo Bathiya&Santush, who created a prize-winning¹⁴ transcultural song, presented on an audio-cassette and promoted visually through a video-clip in the TV. The same topic has been chosen by other singers and songwriters before. There is a version of Desmond de Silva, called *Raja Sangabo* and a Parani Gee (old song)- version of Nissanka Diddeniya with the typical indian-westernized-orchestra-sound, which has been in use in the 50ies in Sri Lanka¹⁵.

The most archaic musical version of a Jataka tale in my ears is the example of the Serivavaniye Jataka, here presented by a storyteller, who is accompanying himself with a Rabana¹⁶. The version has been performed at the Vesak festival 2001 in Dehiwala, a suburb of Colombo, in connection with a Pandal. These are wooden frame-constructions with a painted picture gallery of about 10 important stations of the plot and ornamented with chains of small colourful bulbs, which are rhythmically glimmering in the darkness of the tropical night. The committee, who is organising the Pandal and the performance is sitting beside the gigantic construction, operating a sound equipment with big speakers and a cassette recorder to spread the sound of the re-

1400) in England. The frame for the Jatakas is the mental development of one psychic system: the person, who in his last existence is known as Siddharta Gautama, also called Buddha Shakyamuni. That means, that the narrated linear time of these stories covers several eons, even although they all have been invented and collected in the same century. But because every of the 547 lifes needs a lifetime-period and there is also a period of different length between the rebirths, we can guess, how extended the whole time period for the process of development until the status of perfection has been imagined by the anonymous authors of the stories. This is also a strategy to give importance to the narratives and their message. Time is relieved of its finiteness. The timeline is going to transform into repetitive spirals. Getting the chance to stay for one year in Sri Lanka in this period the continuous appearance of Jataka performances has been very evident for my eyes and ears. Not only in religious contexts like the celebration of the Vesak⁴ festival on the first fullmoon in May, but also in very secular situations, for example listening to music in a taxi, everybody can come in contact with pop-songs, which are telling contents of Jataka tales.

The first contact I got with a sequence of paintings on the walls of a nice ancient temple in the touristic area of the westcoast. The Sapugoda temple shows the complete story of King Vessantara, who is said to be the last existence of Shakyamuni before becoming the Buddha. The virtue, which is embodied in this person and this story is the overwhelming generosity of a king, who is giving all his properties, including his own wife and children, to others, especially poor people⁵. Suitable to the pictures in the temple the artist family Shilpadhipathi⁶ introduced me to the background of the musical version of that Jataka and we recorded five songs of the very extended tale. I got the information, that these songs are still today performed at sad occasions, like funerals etc. It is also possible to perform a stage version, either with actors and singers or with puppets. Concerning puppet plays a newspaper review refers to „The Puppetry Panel of the Arts Council of Sri Lanka“ and the program of the „State Festival of Puppetry“ in 1997⁷, where the Vessantara Jataka has been performed by the player Sarasavi Rukada Sangamaya from Panadura, who used string puppets.

The same article confirms the performance of a Jataka, which I also selected as an example for this article, the Sirisangabo Jataka, at this festival presented by Nipuna Rukada Kalakavaya from Ambalangoda. Both Jatakas are also mentioned in another review from 14th of January 2001 concerning the pioneer dramatist John de Silva (1857-1922), after whom one of the big theatres in the capital Colombo is named:

„John de Silva was born in Kotte and educated at Christian College, one of the earliest English schools set up by Anglican missionaries. He first became a teacher and later took to law and passed out as a proctor. Then he tried his hand at writing plays and proved quite successful. He was inspired by the Nadagam tradition too.

His effort was to make the Nurti music more systematic applying the Sanskrit theory of ' rasa' or dramatic sentiment. With the help of Visvanathojee, a musician from Mumbai, he used the conventions of classical North Indian music. Starting with ' Parabhava Natakaya' , a satire on the Europeanised upper class, John de Silva picked episodes from our history to propagate national and religious sentiments among the people. He brought in the popular heroic characters in history as themes for his plays.

They included **Siri Sangabo**, Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, Devanampiyatissa, Vihara Maha Devi and Dutugemunu. These were the titles of his early plays. Later he wrote Ramayana, Sakuntala, **Vessantara**, Uttara Ramacharitaya, Ratnavali and Nagananda.“⁸

them an individual as well as a collective identity during a period of time. As they therefore want to keep it on, they have to create and to process strategies, activities, events of repetition. That is the cause of origin of cults and rituals in a religious and in non-religious contexts. The endless repetition of those events supports the imagination of the non-linear reversible time, which can be symbolised in the shape of spirals. That means, the participating individual has the feeling, that the time seems to standstill in the endless horizon of continuously repeated and repeating events. This conveys a feeling of identity and evident existence, a kind of being invulnerable and indestructible embedded in an objectivated reality. The only thing, which reminds the individual observer in the irreversible linear axis of time, is the biological existence, the body, which is, despite of the attempts to preserve it, deteriorating obviously. To avoid the bottomless fear of the complete dissolving and disappearance, the fiction of being embedded in an everlasting construct of reversible events in the non-linear time must be preserved as long and strong as possible at a secular as well as an ecclesiastical level. That is the basis of the creation of cultural systems. Jan Assmann, who has analysed and described the process of stabilizing cultural systems through strategies of memory and repetition, confirms the powerful role, which religious cults play in the stabilization-process of every fiction of collective identity, especially of ethnicity. He sees religion as the most effective medium to guarantee the permanence of ethnic identity. He refers to A. Smith, who has collected and presented a lot of examples of exceptional survival of ethnic/cultural systems, starting from the Samaritans and ending with the Basques. They all show the same type of mixing up ethnic identity with religious orientation².

One reason for the importance of religion in the collective maintenance process is obviously the combination of all possibilities of human sensory forms of expression, Spiritual ideas and philosophical thoughts are combined in cults, which refer to all senses, the eyes, the nose, the taste and the ears, and they can also include the feeling of the body in dances or ritual gestures, like mudras. Through the sensory embodiment of religion the immaterial background of the ideas and philosophy becomes objectivated. And in combination with this micro-structure of a network of body and mind and the macro-structure of permanent repetition of the same rituals in an authenticistic way throughout the centuries and eons, the objectivation of a consensory reality becomes so evident and convincing, that the individual loses the consciousness for the character of the fiction, which was created in a consensory discourse long ago, and the veil of self-evidence is drawn over the way the collective is seeing itself.

II. Exemplification: Jataka-tales as a strategy to preserve permanent reconstruction of religion and philosophy in a theravada-buddhist collective

1. Macro-structure

As macro-structure I want to define the permanent embodiment of the immaterial philosophical background in multi-medial and multi-sensory performances, which are used as effective network-modules of a cultural system.

The cycle of the 547 Jataka-stories³ is embedded in a framework, comparable to tale-cycles in other cultures like the arabian narrations of *1001 Night* told by Sheherazade (about 850 AD) or the *Decamerone* written by the italian author Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375) or like Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (about 1385-

Martina Claus-Bachmann

Jataka-Narrations as multimedial reconstructive Embodiments of the psychic System Buddha Shakyamuni's

Abstract

The 547 Jataka narrations are collected in the 10th book of the Khuddaka Nikaya, which is itself the 5th part of the Sutta Pitaka, one of the 3 baskets of the Tipitaka, also called 'baskets of scriptures', ~~buddhist~~ Buddhist canonical texts, which were at last codified under the lecturer Buddhagoshā in the 5th century after Christ. The stories provide an account of episodes concerning the various reincarnations of Buddha Shakyamuni in former existences before becoming the Buddha at last. They illustrate the step-by-step development to perfection by the psychic system, called Buddha Shakyamuni in the last existence.

The view of this article tries to unify constructivistic-systemic philosophy and buddhist imaginations of embodiment. Music is seen as a part of the constructive potential, which is creating and keeping up individual psychic systems or collective cultural ones. The embodiment of one psychic system in a sequence of reincarnations is constructed in the Jataka-*tales* in two specific ways: a) In the main actors of the stories, who are different persons, but at last one and the same and b) In the personification of one special quality, like generosity, selflessness or honesty etc., which the main actors embody in the specific story, illustrated in the plot.

As the continuity of a cultural system is always an act of memory and depends on the memory-related activities of the participants, the article shows, in which way multimedial performances of Jataka-*tales* are preserving a part of the network of the theravada-buddhist culture in Sri Lanka today. Music is seen as one important part of this multimedial network and one sensory component in the physical process of transferring the embodied content of the ancient story to a modern audience.

Exemplifying the rich tradition and showing the continuity despite of the change the musical shape of three very different ways of Jataka-*performances* is analysed and described:

- a) The archaic version of a story-teller, who is accompanying himself with his Rabana, declaiming the Serivavanije-Jataka as a part of the multimedial performance of this tale at a Vesak-Pandal (big wooden frame-construction with a painted picture gallery of the story and ornamented with a chain of small rhythmically glimmering bulbs);
- b) The verses of the Vessantara-Jataka, which are sung or performed as a scenic play at funerals or other sad occasions (here a stage performance with the artist family Shilpadhipathi) and
- c) The recent Pop/Rap-version of the Sirisanghābo-Jataka, very popular with the young generation, reinterpreted by the male duo Bathiya&Santhush and recorded in a studio.

Article

I. The philosophical background

The human mind is creating an idea or phantasy. The mind belongs to an embodied person. Every individual is a system closed in itself and generally unable to become aware of the reality of other systems. Exchanging the created idea in a consensory discourse with other individuals is the only way to construct the fiction of communication and understanding and it can happen, that the idea becomes popular among a group of persons. But an idea is nothing and can disappear as soon as it was created by one individual and as it was accepted by others - disappear in the darkness of oblivion. To establish an idea or phantasy in the continuity of the reversible circulating and irreversible linear time it needs specific strategies of recollection.

One of those strategies is the endless repetition. This process is very evident, when we observe the maintenance of religious ideas as one form of expression of cultural systems. Cultural systems are seen here as the result of the consensory discourse of a group of persons, who, with the moment of accepting the idea or fantasy, refer to it in an autopoietic¹ way. That means, they accept the idea, because it guarantees