

The Buddhist salvation of Ajātaśatru and the Jaina non-salvation of Kūṇika*

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Abstract

This article examines Buddhist and Jaina attitudes towards the salvation of the Magadhan king Ajātaśatru (alias Kūṇika), a narrative character found in both Buddhist and Jaina traditions. A number of Buddhist texts prophesy that Ajātaśatru, despite his next birth in hell, will attain liberation in his final birth. Jaina sources also speak of Kūṇika's descent into hell, but give no prophecy of his ultimate liberation. While the Buddhists offered various solutions to Ajātaśatru's sinful condition, the Jainas proposed no remedy to mitigate the consequences of Kūṇika's sins. The Buddhist prophecies of Ajātaśatru's eventual liberation indicate that some Buddhists in ancient India were particularly concerned with the salvation of an archetypal villain such as Ajātaśatru. The Jaina silence on Kūṇika's destiny suggests that the Jainas in general had little interest in bringing this violent figure to liberation, and deemed him incapable of overcoming his "false view of reality" (*mithyātva*) due to his strong passions.

Keywords: Ajātaśatru, Kūṇika, Patricide, Soteriology, Indian Buddhism, Jainism

King Ajātaśatru of Magadha, known to Jainas as Kūṇika, is one of the royal characters who appears in both Buddhist and Jaina traditions.¹ Both Buddhists and Jainas portrayed him as a supporter of their own religions. Both shared the common narrative that, in pursuit of the throne, Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika imprisoned his father, King Bimbisāra/Śreṇika, and consequently caused the latter's death.² Although Buddhists spoke of Ajātaśatru's patricide and Jainas spoke of Śreṇika's suicide, "both traditions agree that Kūṇiya usurped the

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1 For a study of stories of some shared royal personages in Indian Buddhism and Jainism, see Wu 2017.

2 For previous studies of this story see, for instance, Jacobi 1879: 2, 5; Tawney 1895: xx–xxi, 175–8; Deleu 1969: 87–8 = 1996: 28; Silk 1997; Flügel 2012: 442–3.

throne of Magadha, whereby he at least toyed with the thought of murdering his father, and that Seniya perished in prison” (Deleu 1969: 87–8 = 1996: 28).³ The parallelism between Buddhist and Jaina accounts of Ajātaśatru’s/ Kūṇika’s conflict with his father has received much attention from modern scholars. Rather less known and less explored, however, is the fact that Buddhists and Jainas held significantly different opinions on the salvation of Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika, if we construe the term “salvation” in its ultimate sense, referring to liberation (*mokṣa*) from the cycle of rebirths (*samsāra*). On the Jaina side, neither Śvetāmbaras nor Digambaras give any definite prophecy of Kūṇika’s future liberation. Only several texts from the Śvetāmbara tradition inform us that Kūṇika was killed by a cave deity and fell into hell. On the Buddhist side, while the extant versions of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* (“Scripture on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life”) do not disclose whether Ajātaśatru will attain ultimate liberation,⁴ a number of texts from both Mahāyāna and non-Mahāyāna traditions show that although Ajātaśatru will go to hell in his next life because of his patricide, he will subsequently be released from hell and eventually attain *parinirvāṇa* after becoming a *pratyekabuddha* or a *buddha*.

This article takes a closer look at how differently Buddhist and Jaina storytellers in ancient India dealt with the sin (or perhaps more appropriately, the karmic obstruction) and salvation of Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika, and reflects on what we can learn about Buddhist and Jaina storytellers from such differences, especially regarding their karmic views and soteriological emphases. I will first give an outline of the Indian Buddhist narrative cycle of the salvation of Ajātaśatru. Then I will turn to Jaina sources, discussing episodes of Kūṇika’s remorse over causing the death of his father, and episodes of his death and descent into hell. Finally, through comparing Buddhist and Jaina story traditions of Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika, I will comment on the different functions this character serves in Buddhist and Jaina soteriological discourses.

The Indian Buddhist narrative cycle of the salvation of Ajātaśatru: an outline

The image of Ajātaśatru that emerges from Indian Buddhist literature is a paradigmatic embodiment of both violence and virtue. He is both infamous as a committer of patricide – one of the five most serious crimes according to Indian Buddhist ethics, namely, the “crimes of immediate karmic retribution [of descent into hell in the next life]” (*ānantaryakarma*) – and famous as a

3 Kūṇiya and Seniya are Prakrit forms of the Sanskrit names Kūṇika and Śreṇika. Deleu agrees with Jacobi (1879: 5) that the Jaina episode of Śreṇika’s suicide may well have been intended to exonerate Kūṇika. Flügel (2012: 442) rightly notes that the Jaina episode follows the pattern of “Distanzierung der Jaina von Gewalt und von dem gewaltsamen Aspekt der Königsrolle”.

4 For the extant versions of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* in various languages (Pali, Sanskrit, Gandhari, Chinese, and Tibetan), see Table 1 and n. 30 below.

model of Buddhist faith (more precisely, the so-called “rootless faith”).⁵ As Phyllis Granoff (2012: 203–4) aptly puts it, Ajātaśatru is “both vilified, as the ultimate sinner who killed his father and conspired against the Buddha, and glorified as the greatest devotee of the Buddha, whose faith in the Buddha was so extraordinary that his ministers had to prevent him from dying with grief on hearing the news of the Buddha’s death.”⁶

There is a very rich body of Buddhist literature – including both narrative and non-narrative sources – that deals, at various levels of detail, with Ajātaśatru’s repentance, conversion, future rebirths, and/or final liberation.⁷ As far as narrative sources are concerned, the Indian Buddhist narrative cycle of the salvation of Ajātaśatru basically comprises five subcycles: (1) stories of his repentance for the patricide and conversion by the Buddha (i.e. the frame story of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* and its adaptations); (2) stories of his repentance for the patricide and conversion by someone other than the Buddha; (3) stories of his conversion unrelated to his repentance for the patricide; (4) prophecies of his future rebirths and pratyekabuddhahood; and (5) prophecies of his future rebirths and buddhahood. Table 1 gives an overview of the five subcycles and their corresponding textual sources.

It is impossible to discuss in detail all five subcycles in an article of this length. It may suffice here to outline Subcycles I, IV, and V, since they are the most relevant to our purpose of comparison with the Jaina episodes of Kūṇika’s remorse over causing the death of his father and his subsequent descent into hell. Subcycle I gives insights into Buddhist authors’ views on the inescapability of karmic effects, whereas Subcycles IV and V provide prophecies of Ajātaśatru’s ultimate liberation, showing the temporary nature of karmic obstacles.

Regarding Subcycle I, the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* is perhaps the best-known canonical Buddhist text dealing with the salvation of Ajātaśatru, in which the story of his visit to the Buddha serves as a narrative frame enclosing a sermon on the benefits of being an ascetic. The latter half of the story, which follows the Buddha’s sermon, narrates Ajātaśatru’s confession of the patricide and his

- 5 For a detailed study of the five *ānantarya* crimes, see Silk 2007. For a survey of Indian Buddhist sources characterizing Ajātaśatru as a model of “rootless faith”, see Wu 2016: 105–11.
- 6 Ajātaśatru’s extreme grief over the Buddha’s death is told, for instance, in Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Mahāparinibbānasutta* (Sv 605,32–607,5; tr. An 2005: 209–12) and in the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* (see the Chinese version at T. 1451 [xxiv] 399b15–c23 [juan 28]; the Tibetan version at D 6, ’dul ba, da 290a5–291a7; S 6, ’dul ba, tha 427a6–429a1; paraphrased in Rockhill 1884: 142; Waldschmidt 1944–48: 253–4).
- 7 The non-narrative sources refer to those Buddhist texts that present Ajātaśatru’s destiny (particularly his fall into and release from hell) not as part of a story, but as part of doctrinal exegesis or scholastic argumentation. See the *Karmavibhaṅga* (Lévi 1932: 49.14–50.2, §29 [text], 122–3 [tr.]; Kudō 2004: 84–7; the Chinese parallels at T. 80 [i] 893c6–13; T. 81 [i] 898a20–27), Xuanzang’s translation of the **Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* (T. 1545 [xxvii] 536b23–25 [juan 103]; tr. Wu 2016: 122–3), the Chinese version of the **Sarvāstivāda vinayavibhāṣā* (T. 1440 [xxiii] 505b9–16 [juan 1], reproduced verbatim in T. 156 [iii] 156b19–27 [juan 6]), and the sixth-century Bhāvivēka’s *Tarkajvālā*, preserved in Tibetan translation (Eckel 2008: 184–5 [tr.], 363 [text]).

Table 1. The narrative cycle of the salvation of Ajātaśatru in Indian Buddhism

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| Subcycle I | Ajātaśatru's repentance for the patricide and conversion by the Buddha: five versions (1–5) and three adaptations (6–8) of the frame story of the <i>Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra</i> |
| 1 | <i>Sāmaññaphalasutta</i> in the Pali <i>Dīghanikāya</i> (DN 2) |
| 2 | Part of the <i>Samghabhedavastu</i> (“Section on schism”) of the Mūlasarvāstivāda <i>Vinaya</i> in Sanskrit and Tibetan versions ⁸ |
| 3 | <i>Shamenguo jing</i> 沙門果經 (“Scripture on the fruits of Śramaṇa-hood”) in the Chinese version of the <i>Dīrghāgama</i> (DĀc 27) ⁹ |
| 4 | Untitled <i>sūtra</i> in the Chinese version of the <i>Ekottarikāgama</i> (EĀc 43.7) ¹⁰ |
| 5 | <i>Jizhiguo jing</i> 寂志果經 (“Scripture on the fruits of being a *Samaṇa/Śamaṇa”, T. 22) ¹¹ |
| 6 | <i>Paccuppannavatthu</i> (“Story of the present”) of the <i>Sañjīvajātaka</i> (Ja I 508,9–510,11) |
| 7 | <i>Paccuppannavatthu</i> of the <i>Samkicchajātaka</i> (Ja V 261,32–263,2) |
| 8 | Part of the <i>Fanxing pin</i> 梵行品 (“Chapter on pure practice”) of the Mahāyāna <i>Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra</i> (Chinese versions [T. 374, T. 375], Tibetan version [D 119, P 787, S 333] translated from T. 374) ¹² |
| Subcycle II | Ajātaśatru's repentance for the patricide and conversion by someone other than the Buddha |
| 1 | By an anonymous Buddhist monk: *Ajātaśatrvavadāna ascribed to Gopadatta (c. 400–800) ¹³ |
| 2 | By a Buddhist layman: <i>Xiangxiang pin</i> 降象品 (“Chapter on subjugating an elephant”) of the <i>Fo benxing jing</i> 佛本行經 (“Scripture on the Buddha's former deeds”, T. 193) ¹⁴ |

Continued

- 8 For the Sanskrit text, see SBhV II 251.19–254.4 (tr. MacQueen 1988: 100–3; Wu 2012: 82–5); for the corresponding Tibetan, see D 1, 'dul ba, nga 284b2–286a6; S 1, 'dul ba, nga 392a5–394b7. The Chinese version of the *Samghabhedavastu* (T. 1450) translated by Yijing 義淨 (635–713) ends abruptly before the Buddha preaches a sermon to Ajātaśatru. It is unclear how the Indic original used by Yijing described Ajātaśatru's reaction to the Buddha's sermon.
- 9 See T. 1 (i) 109b12–c21 (*juan* 17); tr. Meisig 1987: 360–76; MacQueen 1988: 47–50. DĀc 27 denotes the twenty-seventh *sūtra* in the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (T. 1).
- 10 See T. 125 (ii) 764a13–b11 (*juan* 39); tr. Meisig 1987: 358–71; MacQueen 1988: 87–89. EĀc 43.7 denotes the seventh *sūtra* in the forty-third chapter of the Chinese *Ekottarikāgama* (T. 125).
- 11 See T. 22 (i) 275c28–276b6; tr. Meisig 1987: 361–79; MacQueen 1988: 68–71. The Chinese *jizhi* 寂志 (“one whose mind is tranquilized”) was most likely translated from a Prakrit form, either *samaṇa* or *śamaṇa* (Karashima 2016: 108–10).
- 12 See T. 374 (xii) 474a26–485b11 (*juan* 19, 20) = T. 375 (xii) 717a14–728c3 (*juan* 17, 18). The story told in T. 374 is translated into Japanese and discussed in Sadakata 1986: 13–100, 185–227. For previous studies, see Mochizuki 1988: 137–54; Radich 2011: 34–39; Granoff 2012: 203–10. The southern recension T. 375 is a revision of the northern recension T. 374; the Tibetan translation (D 119, P 787, S 333) was also derived from T. 374. Thus neither represents an independent witness.
- 13 On this *avadāna*, see Hahn 1981. On the date of Gopadatta, see Hahn 1992: 28.
- 14 T. 193 (iv) 93a9–95c13 (*juan* 5).

- 3 By the elder Maudgalyāyana:
Tiaoda ru diyu pin 調達入地獄品 (“Chapter on Devadatta’s entering into hell”) of the *Fo benxing jing* (T. 193)¹⁵
- 4 By an anonymous Buddhist monk:
Kalpādrumāvādānamālā no. 20 *Śrīmatyavadāna* (“Story of Śrīmati”)¹⁶
- 5 By the bodhisattva Lokeśvara:
Kalpādrumāvādānamālā no. 28 *Ajātaśatruparidāpitāvādāna* (“Story of the converted Ajātaśatru”) or
Ajātaśatruparibodhitāvādāna (“Story of the exhorted Ajātaśatru”)¹⁷
- Subcycle III Ajātaśatru’s conversion unrelated to his repentance for the patricide
- 1 Related to Indra’s worship of the Buddha:
Avadānaśataka no. 16 *Pañcavārṣikāvādāna* (“Story of the quinquennial festival”)¹⁸
- 2 Related to Indra’s worship of the Buddha:
Kalpādrumāvādānamālā no. 24 *Dharmabuddhinṛpāvādāna* (“Story of king Dharmabuddhi”), parallel to the *Pañcavārṣikāvādāna*¹⁹
- 3 Related to the Buddha’s subjugation of a drunken elephant:
Shoucai zuixiang tiaofu pin 守財醉象調伏品 (“Chapter on subjugating the drunken elephant Dhanapāla”) of the *Fo suoxing zan* 佛所行讚 (Chinese translation of the *Buddhacarita*, T. 192), and its parallel in the Tibetan translation (D 4156, P 5656)²⁰
- 4 Related to the Buddha’s subjugation of 500 drunken elephants:
Fenu pin 忿怒品 (“Chapter on anger”) of the *Faju piyu jing* 法句譬喻經 (T. 211), partially parallel to the story above in T. 192²¹
- 5 Related to the Buddha’s curing of a plague in Magadha:
Part of the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* (“Section on medicine”) of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* in Chinese and Tibetan versions²²

15 T. 193 (iv) 98b29–103a7 (*juan* 6).

16 See summary in Mitra 1882: 300. The *Kalpādrumāvādānamālā* (“Garland of Tales of the Wish-Fulfilling Tree”) was likely composed in medieval Nepal (see de Jong 1969: 58–9; Tuladhar-Douglas 2006: 42–56).

17 See summary in Mitra 1882: 303. According to Feer (1879: 304; 1979 [1891]: xxvi) and Filliozat (1941: 14, nos. 26–7), this story is titled *Ajātaśatruparidāpitāvādāna*. However, the manuscript of the *Kalpādrumāvādānamālā* at Cambridge University Library (MS Add. 1590; Bendall 1883: 131) gives its title as *Ajātaśatruparibodhitāvādāna* (see folio 269a7–8 at <http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01590/541> [accessed 22 October 2017]).

18 See Speyer 1902–09: I. 88–92; tr. Feer 1979 (1891): 72–76.

19 The story is summarized in Feer 1979 (1891): 75–6; Mitra 1882: 301. On the correspondence between the *Dharmabuddhinṛpāvādāna* and the *Pañcavārṣikāvādāna*, see Feer 1879: 304; Speyer 1902–09: II. XXII.

20 T. 192 (iv) 40c19–41b3 (*juan* 4); tr. Willemen 2009: 153–55. The Chinese version agrees closely with the Tibetan (D 4156, *skyes rabs*, ge 76a7–78a1; P 5656, *mdo ’grel*, ne 92a8–94a5; tr. Johnston 1984 [1936]: III. 60–63, verses 37–65), which was translated independently from Sanskrit.

21 T. 211 (iv) 596a5–b2 (*juan* 3); tr. Wu 2012: 310–11.

22 See the Chinese version at T. 1448 (xxiv) 19c2–20c20 (*juan* 5); the Tibetan version at D 1, *’dul ba*, *kha* 13a6–17a6; S 1, *’dul ba*, *ka* 454a4–*kha* 7a2 (tr. Wu 2012: 184–86; see also a summary in Panglung 1981: 20–21). No Sanskrit version of this part of the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* has been found so far.

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| Subcycle IV | Prophecies of Ajātaśatru's future rebirths and eventual Pratyekabuddhahood |
| 1 | Part of Buddhaghosa's commentary on the <i>Sāmaññaphalasutta</i> ²³ |
| 2 | Part of an untitled <i>sūtra</i> in the Chinese version of the <i>Ēkottarikāgama</i> (EĀc 38.11) ²⁴ |
| 3 | <i>Asheshiwang wen wuni jing</i> 阿闍世王問五逆經 (“Scripture on king Ajātaśatru's inquiry into the five most heinous crimes”, T. 508), containing a prophecy parallel to that found in EĀc 38.11 ²⁵ |
| 4 | Pallava 45 <i>Ajātaśatrupitrdrohāvadāna</i> (“Story of Ajātaśatru's malice toward his father”) of the <i>Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā</i> (“Wish-fulfilling garland of tales of the Bodhisattva”) composed by Kṣemendra (eleventh century) ²⁶ |
| Subcycle V | Prophecies of Ajātaśatru's future rebirths and eventual buddhahood |
| 1 | Chapter 11 of the <i>Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā</i> (“Dispelling of Ajātaśatru's remorse”) preserved in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan versions ²⁷ |
| 2 | <i>Asheshiwang shoujue jing</i> 阿闍世王授決經 (“Scripture on the prediction [of future buddhahood] of King Ajātaśatru”, T. 509) ²⁸ |
| 3 | <i>Asheshiwang shouji pin</i> 阿闍世王受記品 (“Chapter on king Ajātaśatru's receiving of a prophecy [of his future buddhahood]”) of the <i>Shouhu guojiezhū tuoluoni jing</i> 守護國界主陀羅尼經 (“Scripture on the Dhāraṇī that protects state rulers”, T. 997) ²⁹ |

23 Sv 237,23–238,13; tr. Bodhi 2004 (1989): 176–77; Wu 2012: 147–48.

24 T. 125 (ii) 726a6–16, 726a29–b8 (*juan* 32); tr. Wu 2012: 178–79. In EĀc 38.11 and T. 508 listed below, prophecies of Ajātaśatru are placed within the Vaiśālī plague legend. Yet another Chinese text, T. 155, also predicts Ajātaśatru's future rebirths and places the prediction within the Vaiśālī plague legend, though it does not mention his pratyekabuddhahood (T. 155 [iii] 116a9–117b20 [*juan zhong*]; partly translated in Wu 2012: 182).

25 The prophecy appears at T. 508 (xiv) 776a4–c17. See a Japanese summary by Sadakata (1986: 146–7) and an English translation by Wu (2012: 158–61).

26 See Das and Vidyābhūṣaṇa (1888–1918: I. 1070–87), based on a bilingual blockprint containing both the Sanskrit text (in Tibetan script) and the Tibetan translation; see also text-critical remarks made by de Jong (1979: 27–35) based on the Das-Vidyābhūṣaṇa edition, two Cambridge manuscripts (Add. 1306, Add. 913), and the Tibetan translation in Peking Kanjur. The *Ajātaśatrupitrdrohāvadāna* stands as Pallava 45 in the two Cambridge manuscripts used by de Jong (1979: 27), but is erroneously numbered as Pallava 44 in the Das-Vidyābhūṣaṇa edition. In this *avadāna* the Buddha says to Ajātaśatru (Das and Vidyābhūṣaṇa 1888–1918: I. 1083.5–6, verse 46): *pratyekabuddhas tvam rājan kālena kṣīnakilviṣaḥ | bhaviṣyasi vivekena kṛtālokaḥ śanaīḥ śanaīḥ* || “O King, you will become a pratyekabuddha. Your guilt will be extinguished in due time. Through discriminative discernment, gradually, gradually, you will gain [intellectual] illumination.”

27 For the Chinese versions, see T. 626 (xv) 404a14–c10 (*juan xia*) [tr. Sadakata 1989: 158–64; Wu 2012: 215–22]; T. 627 (xv) 425b28–426a24 (*juan xia*). For the Sanskrit version (in fragmentary form) and a translation of the Tibetan counterpart (D 216, *tsha* 260b5–262b4; S 223, *za* 338b1–341b3; P 882, *tsu* 272b3–274b6), see Harrison and Hartmann 2000: 204–12. The chapter divisions are taken from Dharmarakṣa's Chinese version (T. 627), and not found in any other version of the text.

28 For translations of T. 509, see Sadakata 1986: 151–5; Wu 2012: 242–4.

29 The prophecy about Ajātaśatru appears at T. 997 (xix) 574c15–c20 (*juan* 10); tr. Wu 2012: 164.

declaration of taking refuge in the Three Jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma, and the *Samgha*). The *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* has come down to us in multiple versions.³⁰ Almost all of the versions that give accounts of Ajātaśatru's confession and conversion – except a Chinese version (T. 22) – agree that although he is brought to faith by the Buddha through a sermon, his patricide hinders him from making substantial spiritual progress during the sermon.³¹

There are three chief adaptations of the frame story of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra*. The “story of the present” (*paccuppannavatthu*) of the *Sañjīvajātaka* (no. 150) and that of the *Samkiccejātaka* (no. 530) in the Pali *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* are undoubtedly adapted from the narrative frame of the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*.³² Each adaptation serves as a background for the Buddha's recalling of a “story of the past” (*atītavatthu*). The *Sañjīvajātaka* focuses on Ajātasattu's loss of the “fruit of stream-entry” (*soṭāpattiphala*) as a consequence of his association with Devadatta, whereas the *Samkiccejātaka* centres on his recovery of mental peace through direct contact with the Buddha. The elaborate story of Ajātaśatru in the *fanxing pin* 梵行品 (“Chapter on Pure Practice”) of Dharmakṣema's Chinese version of the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (T. 374) is also adapted, though rather loosely, from the narrative frame of a certain version of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra*. This story ends by telling us that as a result of visiting the Buddha, “all of King Ajātaśatru's weighty sins were immediately made light. The king, his wives, and his concubines in the inner palace all conceived

30 This *sūtra* is preserved not only in the six complete versions listed in Table 1 (namely DN 2, DĀc 27, EĀc 43.7, T. 22, and the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the SBhV), but also in five fragmentary Sanskrit or Gandhari versions:

- I. SHT V 1290, fragment a, v1–r12 in the Berlin Turfan Collection (Sander 1985: 145, 151–3; Wille 2014a: 201), corresponding to SBhV II 218.4–220.15f.
- II. SHT VI 1525 r3ff. in the Berlin Turfan Collection (cf. SHT IX, p. 439; Wille 2014a: 201), corresponding to SBhV II 216.11f.
- III. Sanskrit fragment Or.15003/30 in the British Library's Hoernle Collection (Wille 2006: 74; 2014b: 234), corresponding to SBhV II 217.12–218.18.
- IV. A *sūtra* covering folios (435)r5–441 and 446–447v2 of a Sanskrit manuscript of the *Dirghāgama* of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins (Hartmann 2004: 128; Hartmann and Wille 2014: 141–42). The *sūtra* is named *Rājā* (*Rājan*) in the *uddāna* or “list of contents” (454v2 [Hartmann 2004: 124]). This *Rājasūtra* has not been published so far. As I learned from Professor Jens-Uwe Hartmann, “The text is practically identical with the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* as preserved in the SBhV ... Therefore it contains the same information on Ajātaśatru” (email, 26 May 2017).
- V. A Gandhari version in scroll 2 of the Senior Collection of Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts, which “covers only the introductory portion of the *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*, concluding at the point at which King Ajātaśatru encounters the Buddha” (Salomon 2003: 79), and which “on the level of structure of the narrative (i.e. course of events) ... is closest to the Chin. DĀ version” (Salomon 2006: 362; for a summary of this Gandhari version, see Allon 2007: 8).

31 T. 22 claims that Ajātaśatru achieves a series of spiritual attainments during his visit to the Buddha (cf. 276a13–16). It is hard to say to what extent T. 22 accurately reflects the content of its Indic original.

32 For a comparison of the two *paccuppannavatthus* with the frame story of the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, see Wu 2012: 68–80.

the aspiration for supreme perfect awakening (**anuttarasamyaksambodhicitta*”), though nothing is said about the king’s future spiritual attainment.³³

Within Subcycle IV, concerning prophecies of Ajātaśatru’s future rebirths and pratyekabuddhahood, Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* relates that because of visiting the Buddha and hearing his sermon, Ajātasattu will be released after staying in hell for sixty thousand years, and will finally attain *parinibbāna* as a *paccekabuddha*. While the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* says that Ajātasattu is hindered by his patricide from attaining the Dhamma-eye during the visit (DN I 86, 3–5), Buddhaghosa shows that this hindrance is only temporary, and that the visit itself has long-reaching benefits. By doing so, he shifts the emphasis from the obstacle caused by Ajātasattu’s bad *kamma* to the salvific power of the Buddha and of his teaching. Moreover, both a *sūtra* collected in the Chinese *Ekottarikāgama* (EĀc 38.11) and the *Asheshiwang wen wuni jing* 阿闍世王問五逆經 (“Scripture on King Ajātaśatru’s Inquiry into the Five Most Heinous Crimes”, T. 508) predict the king’s short stay in hell, subsequent release from hell, continuous rebirths in heaven, and final pratyekabuddhahood. In both texts his future heavenly rebirths and awakening are said to be the karmic rewards for his faith in the Buddha and in the Buddhist Dharma in this life. Yet another source, the *Ajātaśatrupitṛdrohāvādāna* of Kṣemendra’s *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*, shows that after torturing Bimbisāra to death in prison, Ajātaśatru feels remorseful and seeks aid from the Buddha, who then preaches to him a sermon on *karma*. The Buddha prophesies that if Ajātaśatru abandons evil and associates himself with the virtuous, his sins will be extinguished in due time, and that he will finally become a *pratyekabuddha*.³⁴

Within Subcycle V, concerning prophecies of Ajātaśatru’s future rebirths and buddhahood, the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā* centres on how the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, through expounding the ultimate emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of all phenomena, successfully dispels Ajātaśatru’s remorse (*kaukṛtya*) over his patricide. As Harrison and Hartmann (2000: 169) aptly put it, in this text “the notion of ‘emptiness’ (*śūnyatā*) is applied unflinchingly to the problems of moral responsibility and personal continuity, in short, to the central Buddhist doctrine of karma, illustrated, as it were, with the ‘worst case scenario’ represented by the parricide Ajātaśatru”. The text shows that after hearing Mañjuśrī’s exposition of emptiness, Ajātaśatru is almost totally absolved of the bad karmic consequences of his patricide. It predicts that he will stay in hell only for a short while, without feeling any pain there, and that after emerging from hell he will be reborn first in heaven, then as a bodhisattva, and finally as a buddha. Mañjuśrī’s thorough salvation of the worst sinner Ajātaśatru serves to demonstrate his extraordinary religious insight, capabilities, and ultimately the worthiness of the bodhisattva path exemplified by him. The *Asheshiwang shoujue jing* 阿闍世王授決經 (“Scripture on the prediction [of future buddhahood] of King Ajātaśatru”, T. 509) gives a briefer prophecy of his buddhahood, which shows both parallels

33 T. 374 (xii) 484c21–23 (*juan* 20): 阿闍世王所有重罪即得微薄。王及夫人後宮婁女悉皆同發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心。The story of Ajātaśatru in T. 374 bears striking resemblances to the story of Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Sāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* (see Granoff 2012).

34 See above, n. 26.

with and differences from the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā*'s prophecy.³⁵ In the *Shouhu guojie zhu tuoluoni jing* 守護國界主陀羅尼經 (“Scripture on the Dhāraṇī that protects state rulers”, T. 997) the Buddha assures Ajātaśatru that due to his confession and repentance he will quickly get out of hell after falling into it, and will then be reborn in the Tuṣita heaven, where he will receive from Maitreya a prophecy of buddhahood.

The description above outlines the three most important subcycles of stories of the salvation of Ajātaśatru in Indian Buddhism. In Subcycle I, most versions and adaptations of the *Śrāmaṇyaphalasūtra* (except T. 22 and the story of Ajātaśatru in the “Chapter on pure practice” of the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*) present an overall balanced picture: on the one hand, Ajātaśatru's confession and taking refuge demonstrate the Buddha's personal charisma and the great impact of his teaching; on the other hand, Ajātaśatru's failure to make substantial spiritual progress during his visit to the Buddha as a result of his patricide indicates the inescapability of karmic effects. The situation is rather different in Subcycles IV and V, which respectively comprise prophecies of his pratyekabuddhahood and prophecies of his buddhahood. Through granting ultimate awakening and liberation to this archetypal sinner, Buddhist authors of these prophecies illustrated the temporary nature of karmic obstacles to spiritual growth, the salvific power of the Buddha (or a bodhisattva such as Mañjuśrī), the efficacy of the Buddhist Dharma, and the overwhelmingly positive nature of Buddhist soteriology. In contrast to those Buddhists claiming Ajātaśatru's future liberation, the Jainas showed little interest in granting liberation to Kūṇika. Now let us look at how the Jainas dealt with Kūṇika's sin of causing the death of his father, and what they said about Kūṇika's next rebirth.

Jaina silence on the salvation of Kūṇika

In recounting Kūṇika's grief and remorse over the death of his father Śreṇika, Jaina storytellers made no attempt to have his sense of guilt resolved through religious measures. They simply told us that Kūṇika gradually relieves himself of mental anguish through performing worldly funeral rites for, or offering oblations to, his dead father, and through relocating his own residence from Rājagṛha to Campā, without mentioning the involvement of any religious figure. For instance, the *Nirayāvaliyāo* (Skt. *Nirayāvalikā*, “Sequence of hells”), the eighth *upāṅga* of the Śvetāmbara canon, a text dating in its current form perhaps from sometime between 350 and 500 CE,³⁶ depicts Kūṇika's reaction to Śreṇika's death in prison as follows:

tae ṇaṃ se Kūṇie kumāre jeṇ' eva cāraga-sālā teṇ' eva uvāgae 2³⁷ *Seṇiyam rāyam nippāṇam nicceṭṭham jīva-vippajadham oiṇṇam pāsai 2 mahayā pii-soeṇam apphuṇṇe samāṇe parasu-niyatte viva campaga-vara-pādave*

35 For a comparison between the prophecy in T. 509 and the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā*'s prophecy, see Wu 2012: 247–51.

36 On the date of the *Nirayāvaliyāo*, see Ohira 1994: 2; Wiles 2000: xiv.

37 The number “2” functions as *2ttā*, which means that the earlier verb has to be repeated in gerund form.

*dhasatti dharaṇī-yalaṃsi savv'aṅgehiṃ saṃnivaḍḍie.*³⁸ *tae ṇaṃ se Kūṇie kumāre muhuti' antareṇaṃ āsatthe samāṇe royamāṇe kandamāṇe soyamāṇe vilavamāṇe evaṃ vayāsī: «aho ṇaṃ mae adhanneṇaṃ apuṇṇeṇaṃ akaya-puṇṇeṇaṃ duṭṭhu kayaṃ Seṇiyaṃ rāyaṃ piyaṃ devayaṃ guru-jaṇagaṃ accanta-nehāṇurāga-rattaṃ niyala-bandhaṇaṃ karanteṇaṃ mama mūlāgaṃ c' eva ṇaṃ Seṇie rāyā kāla-gae» tti kaṭṭu īsara-talavara-jāva-sandhivāla-saddhiṃ saṃparivude royamāṇe*³⁹ *mahayā iddhi-sakkāra-samudaṇeṇaṃ Seṇiyassa ranno nīharaṇaṃ karei bahūiṃ loiyāiṃ maya-kiccāiṃ karei.*

tae ṇaṃ se Kūṇie kumāre eeṇaṃ mahayā maṇo-māṇasieṇaṃ dukkheṇaṃ abhibhūe samāṇe annayā kayāi anteura-pariyāla-saṃparivude sa-bhaṇḍa-mattovagaraṇaṃ āyāe Rāyagihāo paḍinikkhamai jeṇ' eva Campā nayaṛi teṇ' eva uvāgacchai 2 tattha vi ṇaṃ viula-bhoga-samii-samannāgae kāleṇaṃ appa-soe jāe yāvi hotthā. (Deleu 1969: 105.39–106.15, §14 = 1996: 46.10–22)⁴⁰

Then Prince Kūṇika came to the prison. He saw King Śreṇika fallen [on the ground], breathless, motionless, devoid of life. Overwhelmed by great sorrow for his father, he fell flat on the ground with a crash, like an excellent *campaka* tree hewn by an axe. Then in a short while Prince Kūṇika recovered. Crying, lamenting, grieving, and wailing, he said, “Alas! I am wretched, devoid of merit, and have made no merit. By me an evil deed was done, putting in chains King Śreṇika who is dear, god-like, a respectable father, attached [to me] with boundless love and affection. King Śreṇika died in my very presence.”⁴¹ Surrounded by overlords, administrators of cities, and so on up to diplomatic officers,⁴² crying, [lamenting, grieving, and wailing], with great pomp, reverence, and assembly [of citizens], he removed the corpse of King Śreṇika. He performed many worldly funeral rites.

38 On the formula *dhasatti dharaṇiyalaṃsi savvaṃgehiṃ saṃnivaḍḍie* (“he fell flat on the ground with a crash”), see Schwarzschild 1961: 41.

39 Here “3” means that three words (*kandamāṇe soyamāṇe vilavamāṇe*) are needed to fill out this phrase.

40 I have filled in the abbreviated stock expressions with reference to the preceding portions of the text. My translation is indebted to that of Wiles (2000: 105–7), but differs in places. For convenience I have Sanskritized all the Prakrit names. My Sanskrit renderings follow those given in Mehta and Chandra 1970–72. For a synopsis of this episode, see Deleu 1969: 106–7 = 1996: 47. Earlier parts of the *Nirayāvaliyāo* narrate Kūṇika’s birth and his imprisoning of Śreṇika (see Deleu 1969: 99.20–105.39, §§7–14; tr. Wiles 2000: 67–105; Silk 1997: 205–6).

41 According to Deleu (1969: 106), “*mama mūlāgaṃ* = *mama mūlakam*, Pischel 70”. Wiles (2000: 105) suggests that *mama mūlāgaṃ* could also mean “because of me” in the present context.

42 For a fuller form of this stock phrase, see *Uvavāyia* §15 (Leumann 1966 [1883]: 28.4–6): *... rāsara-talavara-māḍambiya-koḍumbiya-manti-mahāmanti-gaṇaya-dovāriya-amacca-ḍeḍa-piḍhamādda-nagaranigamaseṭṭhi-seṇāvai-satthavāha-dūya-sandhivāla-saddhiṃ saṃparivude* (“Surrounded by ... overlords, administrators of cities, managers of towns, heads of families, counsellors, chief counsellors, court accountants, doorkeepers, ministers, servants, companions, guild-leaders in cities and market towns, generals of the army, caravan leaders, messengers, and treaty-keepers [or rather, diplomatic officers]”).

Afterwards Prince Kūṇika was overcome by great mental suffering. At one time, surrounded by his harem and entourage, with his vessels, utensils, and other household paraphernalia, he left Rājagṛha and went to the city of Campā. There, provided with an extensive range of enjoyments, he seemed to feel less sorrow.

A briefer and somewhat different account of Kūṇika's grief over the death of Śreṇika is found in the *Āvassayacuṇṇi* (Skt. *Āvaśyakacūrṇi*; henceforth *ĀvC*), attributed to Jinadāsa (seventh century). This work is a Prakrit prose commentary on the versified *Āvassayanijjuttī* (*Āvaśyakaniryukti*), which itself is a commentary on the *Āvassayasutta* (*Āvaśyakasūtra*, "Scripture on six obligatory rites"), one of the four *mūlasuttas* (*mūlasūtras*, "fundamental scriptures") of the Śvetāmbara canon. The *Āvassayacuṇṇi* reads:⁴³

daṭṭhūṇa suṭṭhutarame addhiti jāta. tāhe dahitūṇa gharam āgato. rajjadhuramukkatattī tam ceva ciṇṭeṃto acchati. kumārāmaccehiṃ ciṃtitaṃ. natṭho rāyā hoti tti tambe sāsaṇe lihittā juṇṇaṃ kātūṇa uvaṇṭitaṃ. evaṃ pituṇo kīrati piṃḍadāṇaṃ nitthārijjati tti. tappabhitim pitipimḍanivedaṇā pavattā. evaṃ kāleṇaṃ visogo jāto. puṇar avi tam pitusaṃtikaṃ atthāṇiyaṃ āsaṇasayaṇaparibhogeṇa daṭṭhūṇa addhiti tti tato niggato campama rāyahāṇiṃ kareti || (ĀvC II 172.6–9)

Seeing [Śreṇika dead in the prison], [Kūṇika] became even more distressed. Then, having cremated [Śreṇika], he went home. Having given up concerns for the burden of kingship, he sat thinking about him [= Śreṇika] only. His ministers thought, "The king is lost". Having engraved an edict on a copper plate and made it look old, they presented it [to the king], saying, "Thus should it be done for a father: he is to be saved through the offering of rice balls". From that time on, [the rite of] offering rice balls to one's father was established. Thus in the course of time [Kūṇika] became free from sorrow. But again, when he saw an assembly hall belonging to his father with seats, couches, and objects of enjoyment, he felt distressed. Hence he left [Rājagṛha] and made Campā the place of his royal residence.

The *Āvaśyakaṭīkā* (*ĀvH*) of Haribhadra (eighth century), a mixed Prakrit-Sanskrit prose commentary on the *Āvassayanijjuttī*, gives basically the same account, with only minor differences in wording.⁴⁴ In his *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita* ("The lives of sixty-three illustrious persons"), Hemacandra (1089–1172) likewise speaks of Kūṇika's offering of rice balls to Śreṇika, his sadness upon seeing the couches and seats used by Śreṇika, and his consequent relocation from Rājagṛha to Campā, though, unlike Jinadāsa and Haribhadra, Hemacandra includes an extra

43 I thank Professors Nalini Balbir and Phyllis Granoff for their illuminating comments on this passage (personal communication). Earlier parts of the *ĀvC* narrate Kūṇika's previous life leading to his birth (II 166.2–167.3; tr. Wu 2014a: 30–32) and his imprisonment of Śreṇika (II 171.11–172.8, tr. Silk 1997: 207–8).

44 Cf. *ĀvH* 683b2–6.

episode explaining why Campā was so named and why Kūṇika considered it a suitable place to dwell.⁴⁵

In the *Ākhyānakamaṇikośavṛtti* of Āmradeva (twelfth century), a Prakrit verse commentary on the *Ākhyānakamaṇikośa* (“Treasury of jewels of short stories”), written by Nemicandra between 1073 and 1083 CE, we find yet another account of Kūṇika’s reaction to his father’s death, which forms part of the *Koṇikākhyānakam* (“Short story of Kūṇika”).⁴⁶ There, Kūṇika is depicted as initially blaming himself for the death of Śreṇika and later gradually giving up his grief. The *Ākhyānakamaṇikośavṛtti* reads:

pacchāyāvaparigao tayavattham pecchium kuṇai rāyā |
vivihapalāve piimaraṇasoyasamtattamaṇabhavaṇo || 98
hā tāya sucāya mahāpasāya saṃpattaparamajasavāya |
hā tāya vivāyavisitṭhanāya hā rāyagiharāya || 99
hā tāya jñesaravīrabhatta hā tāya vasaṇaparicatta |
hā tāya payamaḍapayāvavijiyaduvvārariuvīsara || 100
hā khāigasahasammattarayaṇanimmahiyabhāvadogacca |
hā bhuvanabhavaṇabhūsaṇabhārahasambhaviyatitṭhayaṇa || 101
hā tāya tayaṇavacchala hā nimmalakulapasūya vararūya |
hā tāya kulamaḅgārayasueṇa saṃpattaduhamaraṇa || 102
evaṃ koṇiyarāyā dussahapiusogakaliyasavvaṃgo |
acayaṃto vasiuṃ tattha caṃpanayariṃ nivesei || 103
kāleṇa vigayasogo sāhiyatikkhamḅdasayalamahivālo |
pālai asogacaṃdo rajjaṃ cauraṃgabalakalio || 104
 (Punyavijayaji 2005 [1962]: 334.19–25)

King [Kūṇika], stricken with remorse, saw this situation [i.e. Śreṇika’s suicide in prison]. His mind was tormented with grief over the death of his father. He lamented in various ways: [98]

“Alas, O father, who was well behaved, of great graciousness, and has gained the highest reputation! Alas, O father, who was known for his excellent debates! Alas, O King of Rājagṛha!” [99]

Alas, O father, who was devoted to the Jina Lord Vīra! Alas, O father, who has abandoned the [seven] evil addictions!⁴⁷ Alas, O father, who has conquered, with his formidable power, a multitude of irresistible enemies! [100] Alas, [O father,] who has crushed the misery of the states [of a soul] with the jewel of the auspicious destructive right view!⁴⁸ Alas, [O father,] who was to become a *tīrthamkara* (ford-maker) of the land of Bharata, like the ornament

45 See Śāha 1977: 361–3, verses 168–89; tr. Johnson 1962: 316–8.

46 The *Koṇikākhyānakam* is summarized in Bafana 2011: 200–1.

47 On the seven *vasaṇas* (Skt. *vyasanas*) including gambling and so on, see Williams 1963: 247–51.

48 According to Jaina belief, there are five states (*bhāvas*) of a soul. In the first three states a soul remains unliberated from *karma* (Glasenapp 1915: 52–5). The present sentence may refer to Śreṇika’s attainment of *kṣāyikasamyaktva* or °*samyagdarśana* (“destructive right view”), which has the power of destroying all *darśanamohanīya* (“insight-deluding”) *karmas* (see Jaini 1979: 146).

of the palatial universe!⁴⁹ [101]

Alas, O father, who was affectionate towards his children, alas, [he] who was born of an impeccable family and had the best physical form! Alas, O father, who suffered pain and death caused by his son who is the firebrand of the family!" [102]

Thus King Kūṇika, whose whole body was overwhelmed with unbearable grief over his father, was unable to stay there [in Rājagṛha]. He founded the city of Campā. [103]

Gradually relieved from grief, he became ruler of the earth, [the one] who conquered the entire tripartite world.⁵⁰ Equipping himself with a fourfold army, Aśokacandra [= Kūṇika] protected his kingdom. [104]

Besides the Jaina sources introduced above, the *Kathākośa* ("Treasury of stories"), of unknown authorship and dating perhaps from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries,⁵¹ also shows that although Kūṇika is initially overwhelmed with sorrow over his father's death, insofar as he refuses to bathe and to take food, he eventually frees himself from sorrow by relocating to Campā. The text reads:⁵²

itaś ca koṇikaḥ pitur viyogena duḥkhī babhūva. imāṃ gāthāṃ paṭhati:

*ārāma-giha-paesā hasiya vve jimiya jaṃ pi uddesā |
dīsanti te paesā ti cciya purisā na dīsanti ||*

pradhānaiḥ pratibodhito 'pi na karoti snāna-bhojana-kriyām. tataś ca koṇikena pitur duḥkhaṃ asahamānena rājagṛhaṃ parityajya navyā campā-purī niveśitā. tatra koṇiko 'pi rājyaṃ karoti. (Hoffmann 1974: 431.18–22, 433.1–3)

Then Kūṇika became distressed because of the loss of his father. He recited the following stanza:

"The gardens, houses and places look as if they were laughing, enjoying themselves, even though they are just localities. While the places are seen, the people are not seen."

Though advised by chief officials, he would not bathe or take food. Then Kūṇika, unable to bear the sorrow over his father, left Rājagṛha and founded the new city of Campā. There Kūṇika exercised kingship.

49 I take *bhuvanabhavanabhūṣaṇa-* as referring to the *tīrthaṃkara*, though it could also refer to the land of Bharata. I thank Dr Paul Dundas for his valuable comments on this Prakrit compound (email 7 October 2016). On Śreṇika's future attainment of *tīrthaṃkara*-hood, see below n. 70.

50 Here *tikkhaṃḍa* (cf. PW III 427, s.v. *trikhaṃḍa* "die dreitheilige Erde") refers to the world of humans (*manuṣyaloka*), which consists of two-and-a-half continents, namely, Jambūdvīpa, Dhātakīkhaṃḍa, and half of Puṣkaradvīpa (see Weber 1858: 19, 48; Caillat and Kumar 1981: 27–8).

51 On the probable date of this *Kathākośa*, see Alsdorf 1928: 4 n.1 (cited in Hoffmann 1974: xvii).

52 The text is written in Sanskrit prose with Apabhraṃśa verses; see also earlier translations by Tawney (1895: 178) and Hoffmann (1974: 432, 434).

The fact that Jaina storytellers did not pursue further the theme of Kūṇika's grief and remorse but opted to have such emotions resolved through non-religious means makes them radically different from Buddhist storytellers who, as I have outlined above, made sustained efforts to explore Ajātaśatru's repentance after sinning and proposed various Buddhist solutions to his sinful condition. The Jainas were, of course, aware of the soteriological value of repentance. For instance, the *Uttarajjhayaṇa* (Skt. *Uttarādhyayana*, "Later chapters"), one of the four *mūlasuttas* of the Śvetāmbara canon, speaks of repentance as being conducive to reducing karmic bondage.⁵³ Some medieval Jaina story collections, such as Uddyotana's *Kuvalayamālā* (dated 779 CE) and Āmradeva's *Ākhyānakamaṇikośavṛtti*, contain various narrative illustrations of the efficacy of remorse and confession in cleansing sin.⁵⁴ Strikingly, the soteriological value of repentance is not addressed in the Jaina stories of Kūṇika. While the Jainas did show Kūṇika's remorse over causing the death of his father, they did not feature this theme prominently, nor did they go a step further to explore the possibility of having Kūṇika's sin (or karmic bondage) reduced through remorse, or through any other means. The Jainas did not provide any remedy for his sin, probably because they believed that there was no way to mitigate the bad *karma* he had accrued by imprisoning his father with patricidal intent. In other words, Kūṇika must live out the consequences of his own misdeed.

According to the Jaina narrative tradition, Kūṇika was killed by a cave deity and fell into the sixth hell.⁵⁵ There seems to be no mention of when he will be released from hell, or whether he will attain ultimate liberation. Accounts of his death and descent into hell are found at least in five post-canonical Śvetāmbara texts. Among the five, two are prose commentaries on the *Dasaveyāliyasutta* (Skt. *Daśavaikālikasūtra*, "Scripture of ten evening lectures"), namely the *Dasaveyāliyacunṇi* (DasC_A) written by Agastyasiṃha (fifth century?) and the *Dasaveyāliyacunṇi* (DasC_J) ascribed to Jinadāsa.⁵⁶ The other three are Jinadāsa's *Āvassayacunṇi*, Haribhadra's *Āvaśyakaṭikā*, and Hemacandra's

53 Utt 29 (Puṇyavijayaji and Bhojak 1977: 245.13–15): *niṃdaṇayāe ṇaṃ bhaṃte jīve kiṃ jaṇayai* <|> *niṃdaṇayāe ṇaṃ pacchāṇutāvam jaṇayai | pacchāṇutāveṇaṃ virajjamāṇe karanaguṇasedhīm paḍivajjai | karanaguṇasedhīpaḍivanne ya anagāre mohaṇijjam kammaṃ ugghāei* | My translation: "O Sir, what does a soul obtain by reproaching [one-self]? By reproaching [oneself], a soul obtains repentance. Being detached [from passions] through repentance, one reaches a ladder of virtues in the [unprecedented] procedure. A homeless ascetic who has reached a ladder of virtues in the [unprecedented] procedure destroys deluding *karma*". On Pkt. *guṇasedhi* / Skt. *guṇaśreṇi* ("ladder of virtues") referring to one of the processes in the unprecedented procedure (*apūrvakaraṇa*, i. e. the eighth *guṇasthāna* ["stage of purification of the soul"]), see Schubring 1935: 203, §183.

54 See Granoff 2012: 187–8.

55 According to Jaina cosmology, there are seven hells (*narakas*) in the lower world (*adhoka*), one below the other (see Caillat and Kumar 1981: 20–2).

56 The *Dasaveyāliya* is one of the four *mūlasuttas* of the Śvetāmbara canon. Its oldest commentary is the *Dasaveyāliyanijjuttī* in Prakrit verse (Bollée 1995: 32–73). The DasC_A and the DasC_J are commentaries that expound two different versions of the *Dasaveyāliyanijjuttī* (Bollée 1995: 31). Caillat (1982: 82 n. 5) dated Agastyasiṃha to "mi-8ème s.?", whereas Dundas (1996: 150) suggests that Agastyasiṃha "most likely flourished in the fifth century".

Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita. In all three texts the death of Kūṇika occurs immediately after his war against King Ceṭaka of Vaiśālī, and the war breaks out not long after Kūṇika throws his father Śreṇika into prison, where Śreṇika dies by suicide.⁵⁷ Given this sequence, Kūṇika’s rebirth in hell may be seen as karmic retribution both for his military violence and for his patricidal intention. According to Jaina doctrine, wherever an intention to hurt or kill arises under the influence of passions (*kaṣāyas*) – such as lust (*rāga*) and hatred (*dveṣa*) – there is “violence in disposition” (*bhāvahiṃsā*) leading to the binding of bad *karma*.⁵⁸ Jaina narrative literature repeatedly shows that thoughts of violence, even without being manifested in bodily action, still incur severe karmic consequences.⁵⁹ In the case of Kūṇika, although the Jainas spoke of Śreṇika’s suicide instead of Kūṇika’s patricide, they did show that Kūṇika “at least toyed with the thought of murdering his father” (Deleu 1969: 87–8 = 1996: 28). Thus even with the thought of patricide, Kūṇika bound much bad *karma* and had to undergo the punishment of hell.

Jinadāsa’s *Āvassayacuṇṇi* and Haribhadra’s *Āvaśyakaṭikā* give basically the same accounts of Kūṇika’s death and descent into hell. Since the narrative material in the *Āvassayacuṇṇi* is usually considered to be older, I translate its account here:

tāhe kūṇiko campam āgato. tattha sāmī samosaḍho. tāhe kūṇiko ciṃteti: bahugā mama hatthī assā vi. to jāmi sāmim pucchāmi ahaṃ cakkavaṭṭī homi na homi tti. niggato savvabalasamudaenaṃ. vaṃdittā bhaṇati: kevaīyā cakkavaṭṭī essā. sāmī sāhati: savve atītā. puṇo bhaṇati: kaḥim ovajjissāmi. chaṭṭhīe puḍhavīe. taha vi asaddahaṃto savvāni egimdiyāni lohamayāni rayaṇāni karettā tāhe savvabalena timisaguhaṃ gato. aṭṭhame bhatte kate bhaṇati katamālo: atītā cakkavaṭṭiṇo jāhi tti. ṇecchati. hatthim vilaggo. maṇim hatthimatthae kātūṇa patthito. katamālaena āhato mato. chaṭṭhīe puḍhavīe gato | (ĀvC II 176.11–177.2 [corresponding to ĀvH 687b1–6])

At that time Kūṇika returned to Campā. There the Svāmin stopped at a holy assembly. Then Kūṇika thought, “I have many elephants and horses. Now I go and ask the Svāmin, ‘Am I a *cakravartin* [“wheel-turning king”] or not?” He set off with all pomp. Having venerated [the Svāmin], he said, “How many *cakravartins* are to come?” The Svāmin said, “They all passed away.” [Kūṇika] further asked, “Where

57 In ĀvC and ĀvH, all of these events are parts of a larger account that serves to explain the catchword *sikkhā* (*sikṣā*, “apprenticeship”) in stanza 1274 of the *Āvassayanijjuttī* (see Leumann 1934: 24b; Balbir 1993: 181–2).

58 On the notion of *bhāvahiṃsā*, see Williams 1963: 69.

59 For instance, Saṅghadāsa’s *Vasudevahiṇḍī* (c. fifth century) tells a story in which King Prasannacandra wages a war in his mind against his ministers, and Mahāvira says that Prasannacandra would have been fit to be reborn in hell had he died at the moment of imagining the war (see Jain 1977: 570–72; Balbir 1993: 149, VIII,161,3). The *Dramakākhyānakam* (no. 22) in Āmradeva’s *Akhyānakamaṇikośavṛtti* narrates the beggar Dramaka’s abortive attempt at murder and his rebirth in hell as a result of harbouring evil intentions (Punyavijayaji 2005: 81.9–19; summarized in Bafana 2011: 59).

will I be reborn?" [The Svāmin said,] "In the sixth hell." Even so, unbelieving, having had all the single-sensed jewels made in copper,⁶⁰ [Kūṇika] then went to the Timisa cave with all pomp.⁶¹ After having taken the eighth meal,⁶² [the cave deity] Kṛtamālaka said, "The *cakravartins* were all gone. Go away!" [Kūṇika] did not want [to leave]. He fastened [his riding-]elephant. Having put the jewel [i.e. his crown jewel] on the elephant's head, he went forth.⁶³ He was killed by Kṛtamālaka and died, going to the sixth hell.

The *Āvassayacunṇi* goes on to describe the ascension of Kūṇika's son Udāyin to the throne, without saying anything more about Kūṇika. In his *Dasaveyāliyacunṇi*, Agastyasimha gives a slightly different version of this episode:

kūṇieṇa sāmī pucchito cakkavaṭṭiṇo aparicattakāmabhogā kālaṃ kiccā kaḥiṃ gacchaṃti. sāmī bhaṇati sattamīe puḍhaviē. so bhaṇati ahaṃ kaḥiṃ uvavajjīhāmi. sāmīnā bhaṇiyam chaṭṭhapuḍhaviē. so bhaṇati ahaṃ sattamīe kiṃ na uvavajjāmi. sāmī bhaṇati sattamiṃ cakkavaṭṭi gacchati. bhaṇati ahaṃ kiṃ na cakkavaṭṭi. mama vi caurāsītiṃ daṃṭisayasahassā. sāmī bhaṇati tava kiṃ rayanā atthi. so kittimāṇi rayanāṇi kāravettā oyaveum āraddho. timisaguhaṃ pavisium āraddho kayamālaeṇa vārito. volīnā cakkavaṭṭi vārasa vi.⁶⁴ tumam viṇassihisi. ṇa thāti. kayamālaeṇa hato chaṭṭhiṃ gato || (DasC_A 26.1–6 [corresponding to DasC_J 51.4–9])

Kūṇika asked the Svāmin, "Where do the *cakravartins* who have not abandoned the enjoyment of sensual pleasures go after finishing their lives?" The Svāmin said, "[They are reborn] in the seventh hell". [Kūṇika] said, "Where will I be reborn?" The Svāmin said, "In the sixth hell". He said, "Why am I not to be reborn in the seventh?" The Svāmin said, "A *cakravartin* goes to the seventh". He said, "Am I not a *cakravartin*? I also have eighty-four hundred thousand elephants". The Svāmin said, "Do you have

60 In Jainism, copper is classified as a single-sensed (*ekendriya*) elemental being (Schubring 1935: 134, §105). Each *cakravartin* has seven single-sensed jewels and seven five-sensed (*pañcendriya*) jewels (cf. Ṭhāṇa 7.598 [Jambūvijaya 2002–03: iii. 682.22–683.2]). The present text means that Kūṇika ordered all seven single-sensed jewels belonging to a *cakravartin* to be made for him in copper.

61 Timisaguhā (Skt. Tamisraguhā?) was a cave in Mount Vaitāḍhya. Alsdorf (1938: 488) suggests a possible etymological link between *timisa* and *tisīsa* (Skt. *triśīṣa*, "three-headed" [epithet of Śiva]).

62 On *aṭṭhama-bhattiya* (< **aṣṭama-bhaktika*) referring to one who refuses to take food until the eighth meal (i.e. one who spends three-and-a-half days fasting), see Schubring 1935: 174, §156.

63 Cp. ĀvH 687b6: *daṃḍeṇa duvāraṃ āhaṇai* ("He struck the door [of Kṛtamālaka] with a staff").

64 The singular *cakkavaṭṭi* may be emended into the plural *cakkavaṭṭiṇo*. The counterpart at DasCJ 51.8–9 reads correctly: *volīnā cakkavaṭṭiṇo vārasa vi*.

the jewels [of a *cakravartin*]?” Having had unauthentic [i.e. feigned] jewels made, [Kūṇika] undertook to show what one can accomplish.⁶⁵ He set out to enter the Timisa cave. Kṛtamālaka stopped him, [saying,] “The twelve *cakravartins* all passed away. You are going to vanish!” He did not stay [?].⁶⁶ He was killed by Kṛtamālaka and went to the sixth hell.

In both versions, Kūṇika is portrayed in a negative light. Overwhelmed by egotism, he disbelieves Mahāvīra’s words and considers himself a *cakravartin*. Eventually he is killed by Kṛtamālaka and goes to the sixth hell as Mahāvīra predicts. According to Jaina universal history, there were twelve *cakravartins* in all: three renounced the world and became *tīrthaṅkaras*; seven abandoned their thrones and became Jaina monks, among whom some attained liberation and the others were reborn in heaven; the remaining two (Subhauṃa and Brahmadaṭṭa), due to their unrighteousness, went to the seventh (and worst) hell, and there is no mention of their ultimate liberation (Jaini 1993: 209–10). In the present episode, by comparing Kūṇika with the two bad *cakravartins*, not with the ten good ones, Agastyasiṃha clearly classifies him as a villainous tyrant who will end in ruination, rather than a virtuous hero who is to attain liberation. In his *Triṣaṣṭīśalākāpurūṣacarita*, Hemacandra retells this episode in more detail, and like his predecessors (Jinādaśa and Agastyasiṃha), he also keeps silent on what happens to Kūṇika after his descent into hell.⁶⁷

It should not surprise us that none of these Śvetāmbara Jaina authors made any attempt to reduce Kūṇika’s lifespan in hell. Kristi Wiley (2003: 352) notes that there seems to be no story in Śvetāmbara literature “that would indicate some adjustment in the *sthiti* [‘duration’] of *āyus* [‘lifespan’] for the next life between the time it [i.e. *āyus karma*] was bound and the time it comes to fruition at the first moment of the next life.”⁶⁸ The fact that the Jainas (particularly the Śvetāmbaras) did not believe that the duration of lifespan in one’s next birth could be easily adjusted after the binding of *āyus karma* puts them in stark contrast with the Buddhists who, as we saw earlier, made various attempts to reduce considerably Ajātaśatru’s lifespan in hell.

In the Digambara tradition, Guṇabhadra’s *Uttarapurāṇa* (ninth century) briefly speaks of Kūṇika’s adoption of Jaina lay practices, but without giving any prophecy of his future liberation. The text reads:

65 Both DasC_A 26.5 and DasC_J 51.8 read *oyaveum āradḍho*. The verb *oyava* is a *deśī* word, synonymous with Skt. $\sqrt{sād}$ h, “to accomplish” (Ratnachandrajī 1923–32: II. 349, s.v. *oyava*). Here it might refer to Kūṇika’s attempt at further military conquest after defeating Ceṭaka. Professor Seishi Karashima (email 11 April 2017) kindly suggested an alternative translation: “Having had unauthentic (hastily made and not genuine, feigned) jewels made, he undertook to accomplish them (i.e. to make them authentic as being the jewels of a *cakravartin*).”

66 The reading *na thāti* appears problematic in the present context. The counterpart at DasC_J 51.9 reads correctly: *vārijaṃto na thāi ya* (“He was not being held back and stayed”).

67 See Śāha 1977: 379–80, verses 403–25; tr. Johnson 1962: 331–3.

68 Words in brackets are added by the present author. *Āyus karma* is a type of *karma* that “determines the maximum life span of the body and the state of existence into which a soul is born” (Wiley 2004: 119, s.v. *karma*). The case of adjusting the *sthiti* of *āyus* between the time when *āyus karma* was bound and the moment of death, however, is found in some Digambara accounts of Śreṇika (cf. Wiley 2003: 350–1).

*tadaivāham api prāpya bodhaṃ kevalasaññakam |
 sudharmākhyagaṇeṣena sārdaṃ saṃsāravahninā || 39
 kariṣyann atitaptānāṃ hlādaṃ dharmāmṛtāmbunā |
 idam eva puraṃ bhūyaḥ samprāpyātraiva bhūdhare || 40
 sthāsyāmy etat samākarmaṇya kuṇikaś celinīsutaḥ |
 tatpurādhipatiḥ sarvaparivārapariṣkṛtaḥ || 41
 āgatyaḥbhyarcya vanditvā śrutvā dharmam grahīṣyati |
 dānaśīlopavāsādi sādhanam svargamokṣayoḥ || 42
 (Uttarapurāṇa 76.39–42)⁶⁹*

Also, exactly at that time [i.e. immediately after Mahāvīra's *nirvāṇa*], having attained the knowledge that has the name of omniscience, together with a group leader called Sudharma, I [= Indrabhūti Gautama] will delight those who are excessively tormented by the fire of *saṃsāra* with the water that contains the nectar of the Dharma. Having once again reached that very city [of Pāvā, where Mahāvīra attained *nirvāṇa*], I will stay right here at the [Vipulācala] mountain. After hearing this, Kuṇika, son of Celinī and ruler of his city [i.e. Rājagṛha], surrounded by his entire entourage, will come, honour and venerate [me]. Having heard the Dharma, he will adopt giving, precepts, fasting, and so on, which are the efficient means of attaining heavenly rebirths or liberation.

To date, I have not found any Jaina account of Kūṇika's future destiny after his next birth in hell. While this does not necessarily mean that such an account has never been composed, it does seem that the Jainas in general were little concerned with whether Kūṇika can finally attain liberation. By contrast, in both Śvetāmbara and Digambara traditions, there are multiple accounts of Śreṇika's attainment of "right view [of reality]" (*samyaktva* or *samyagdarśana*) in this life, his next birth in hell, and his following birth as a *jina* or "victor", the first of the 24 *jinas* of the next cycle of time.⁷⁰ According to Jaina doctrine, in order to attain *samyaktva*, a soul must have an innate quality called *bhavyatva*, "capability of attaining liberation".⁷¹ Not all souls have such a quality, and not all the souls who have such a quality will realize their potential. Regarding a *bhavya* ("capable") soul who has the potential to attain liberation, Padmanabh Jaini (1979: 140) says:

The *bhavyatva* can be aroused, thus initiating an irreversible turning of the soul towards mokṣa, only when that soul encounters a particular set of outside conditions while being itself sufficiently "ready" to respond to them; such a confluence of external and internal factors may or may not ever take place.

69 For the Sanskrit text and a Hindi translation, see Pannalal Jain 1954: 531.

70 For accounts of Śreṇika's future jinahood, see Balbir 1991: 42–3, 64 n. 54; Wiley 2003: 350–4; Wu 2014b: 164–71. According to both Śvetāmbaras and Digambaras, despite having attained *samyaktva*, Śreṇika cannot avoid the fate of hell, since he had already bound *nāraka-āyu karma* (i.e., *karma* leading to a lifespan in hell) while in a state of *mithyātva* ("false view") before his attainment of *samyaktva*.

71 On the concept of *bhavyatva*, see Jaini 1977; Balcerowicz 2016: 153–61.

Jaini goes on to clarify that “outside conditions” include, *inter alia*, encountering a *jina* (or his image) and hearing Jaina teachings, whereas being internally “ready” means that “the soul is *relatively* less bound and more oriented towards its own well-being” (Jaini 1979: 140, italics original). Thus, in order for its *bhavyatva* to be activated, a soul must minimize passions, striving for freedom from karmic bondage, and meanwhile must meet the necessary external conditions. If a soul is *abhavya* (“eternally incapable of attaining liberation”), or if a soul is *bhavya* but its dormant *bhavyatva* never happens to be activated due to the lack of co-ordination of external and internal conditions, in either case the soul always remains in a state of *mithyātva* (“false view [of reality]”) and never attains *samyaktva*. In the case of Kūṇika, while the *Uvavāiyasutta* (Skt. *Aupapātika-sūtra*, “Scripture on rebirths [in heavenly abodes]”), the first *upāṅga* of the Śvetāmbara canon, narrates his pious journey to Mahāvīra’s *samavasaraṇa* (“holy assembly”) and his receiving of Mahāvīra’s teachings there, no Jaina text ever speaks of his attainment of *samyaktva* (or any other significant spiritual status) as a result of meeting Mahāvīra or hearing his teachings.⁷² The Jainas seem to have generally assumed Kūṇika to be one who is never able to overcome his *mithyātva*. It is unclear whether they considered him a *bhavya* soul or an *abhavya* soul.⁷³ If they considered him a *bhavya* soul, the reason for the failure of activation of his *bhavyatva* must lie in his strong passions – as can be seen from his hostility towards his father, his desire for the *cakravartin* status, and his military ambition – which make him simply unready, or inadequate, to respond even under the optimal external conditions of direct contact with Mahāvīra and hearing his teachings.

Concluding remarks

While both the Buddhists and the Jainas told about how Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika imprisoned his father and consequently caused his death, only the Buddhists provided religious solutions to Ajātaśatru’s sinful condition. The Jainas, as seen from extant textual sources, made no attempt to tackle Kūṇika’s sin or bad *karma* through religious means, and did not pursue the theme of his remorse over the death of his father in much detail. From the discussion above, we may conclude that the Buddhists and the Jainas ascribed very different roles to Ajātaśatru/Kūṇika in their soteriological discourses:

In Buddhist traditions, as one guilty of the *ānantarya* crime of patricide, Ajātaśatru represents one of the worst-case scenarios in Indian Buddhist ethics. Some Buddhists, namely the authors or redactors of most versions of the *Śrāmanyaphalasūtra*, focused on the karmic obstacle to his spiritual cultivation caused by his patricide. Some other Buddhists, namely those who told or retold prophecies of his future buddhahood or pratyekabuddhahood, saw such an obstacle as being only temporary. They moreover used Ajātaśatru’s extremely miserable moral (and thus karmic) status as a device to demonstrate the salvific

72 On the story of Kūṇika’s visit to Mahāvīra in the *Uvavāiya*, see Leumann 1966 (1883): 26–65, §§11–60.

73 Jaini (1977: 96) notes, “the system does not provide any clear signs by which a soul might be identified as a *bhavya* or an *abhavya*”.

power of the Buddha (or Mañjuśrī), as well as the efficacy of the Buddhist Dharma. In these prophecies Ajātaśatru attains liberation not because of his own virtue, but because of the divine intervention of the Buddha (or Mañjuśrī) and of the Buddhist Dharma. In his recent article on some medieval Mahāyāna texts that promise salvation to birds, bugs, and really bad sinners, Gregory Schopen (2012: 291) convincingly argues that when some Buddhist authors insisted on a strict version of the doctrine of *karma*, and when this doctrine gradually took root in the world of ordinary people, “it was almost inevitable that other Buddhist authors would over time have to devise some means and provide mechanisms for those ordinary people to, in effect, get around it”. From a similar perspective, prophecies of Ajātaśatru’s future awakening may be seen as responses to the earlier story tradition that stresses the karmic obstacle caused by his criminality. The ultimate purpose of the Buddhist authors producing such prophecies was not to save Ajātaśatru alone, but to use him as an example to teach ordinary people how to get around the constraints of karmic law, and thereby to make Buddhist soteriology more appealing to its mass audience.

In Jaina traditions, Kūṇika does not appear as a paradigmatic sinner as Ajātaśatru does in Buddhism. Jaina sources show that he commits sins chiefly through imprisoning his father with patricidal intent and through performing military violence. The Jainas did not propose any remedy for (or any religious solution to) his sins, which suggests that in their view the bad *karma* he had accrued must work itself out and cannot be altered by anyone through any means. There seems to be no mention of Kūṇika’s attainment of any spiritual status in canonical or post-canonical Jaina literature, and there is little (if any) information on what happens to him after his next birth in hell. The Jainas portrayed Kūṇika essentially as a mundane and spiritually inert character, who is unable to overcome his *mithyātva* even under the optimal conditions of meeting Mahāvīra and hearing Jaina teachings. Unlike those Buddhists stressing the intervention of external factors (such as the Buddha, Mañjuśrī, and the Dharma), the Jainas placed primary emphasis on the soul’s inherent qualities (such as *bhavyatva* or *abhavyatva* and to what degree the soul is contaminated with passions). Thus the contrast between the Buddhist choice of having Ajātaśatru saved and the Jaina choice of having Kūṇika not saved is by no means accidental, but reflects some of the key distinctions between Buddhist and Jaina understandings of necessary conditions for spiritual liberation.

Abbreviations

All references to Pali texts are to the Pali Text Society editions, using the standard abbreviation system set up in Helmer Smith’s “Epilegomena” of CPD, vol. I, 5*–15*.

ĀvC *Āvassayacuṇṇi (Āvaśyakacūrṇi)*. In *Śrīmaj-Jinadāsagaṇi-mahattara-kṛtayā sūtracūrṇyā sametaṃ śrīmad-Āvaśyakasūtram*. 2 vols. Ratlam: Śrīṛṣabhadevaṃjī Keśarīmalajī Śvetāmbara saṃsthā, 1928–29.

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