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Abstract

Patience and Forgiveness: The Meaning of *Kṣānti* (Pali: *Khanti*) in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali Canon

Mansi Agrawal

2021

This dissertation explores the meaning of the Sanskrit term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali term *khanti* in the Pali Canon. There is considerable debate and confusion within the scholarly community as to what these terms mean, and scholars have chosen to translate the verbal root from which they derive using a wide range of terms: “be patient,” “forgive,” “tolerate,” “endure,” “suffer,” “pardon,” “forbear,” “wait,” “allow,” “indulge,” and so on. Through a thorough and close examination of the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali Canon, this dissertation unveils the precise meanings of these terms in these texts. This dissertation will demonstrate that *kṣānti* had two distinct meanings in the *Mahābhārata* which were differentiated based on several factors - *varṇa* or caste, duration of practice, relationship with anger, classification as virtuous or *dharma*, and perception as a strength or weakness. On the other hand, *khanti* in the Pali canon, referred to a specific two-step psychological process – the negation of anger, followed by the cultivation of a positive feeling towards others, *mettā*. The dissertation then engages in a comparative analysis of the differing treatments of *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and Pali Canon, respectively, noting major differences, elements of intertextuality and hypothesizing their process of development. Through these findings,

the dissertation will provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the ideas of patience and forgiveness in these early Indian narrative texts.

Patience and Forgiveness:
The Meaning of *Kṣānti* (Pali: *Khanti*)
in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali Canon

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
Of
Yale University
In Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Mansi Sunil Agrawal

Dissertation Director: Prof. Phyllis Granoff

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the meaning of the Sanskrit term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali term *khanti* in the Pali Canon.¹ *Khanti* is an important virtue in the Pali canon, espoused in a broad range of texts. Its importance is made evident by the fact that it is one of the perfections (*pāramitās*) to be cultivated by a *bodhisatta*. Likewise, *kṣānti* (and its related terms) is a prominent term in the *Mahābhārata*. Hildebrandt (2011b, p. 568) calls *kṣamā* “one of the high *Mahābhārata* virtues”.

Despite its being a frequently recurring and important term, the meaning of *kṣānti* has confounded scholars². They opt for different terms to translate *kṣānti* such as “patience,” “forgiveness,” “tolerance,” “endurance,” “suffering,” “pardoning,” “forbearance,” “waiting,” “allowing,” “indulging,” and so on, and at present, there is no scholarly consensus on the exact meaning of this term. Despite these pressing issues,

¹ Since the Pali canon uses the Middle Indic word *khanti*, in the rest of the dissertation I will use this term when discussing Pali sources and *kṣānti* when discussing Sanskrit sources. When speaking for both, I will use *kṣānti*.

² Several scholars have noted the particular difficulty of translating this term (*kṣānti*) in Buddhist texts, given its broad and ambiguous semantic range (Boucher, 2008, p. 220 n. 283; Lamotte, 1998, p. 143 n. 119; Nattier, 2003, p. 244; Schopen, 1989, pp. 139, n. 120).

the meaning and development of this term have received little and brief scholarly attention.

At present the only notable studies dealing with this topic as it relates to the *Mahābhārata* or the Pali canon are Hunter (2007) and Vasudha Narayanan et al. (2001). Both studies are preliminary and brief.³ The meaning of *kṣānti* has received more attention in Mahayana Buddhism⁴ but unfortunately, these studies have neglected or dismissed the study of *kṣānti* in the Pali canon.⁵

At present, the term *kṣānti* is most commonly translated as “patience” or “forgiveness.” From this it can be inferred that in general, *kṣānti* is commonly assumed to denote the ideas of “patience” and “forgiveness.” In this dissertation, I investigate this premise thoroughly by asking what *kṣānti* means specifically. I do this by answering the following three questions in my dissertation: (1) Does *kṣānti* invariably mean patience,

³ I will discuss these in further detail below.

⁴ For instance, Lele (2007) has studied the meaning of *kṣānti* in Śāntideva’s *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.

⁵ For instance, Pagel (1995) in his study of the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*, briefly discusses the role of *kṣānti* in the Pali canon and mistakenly claims that *khanti* did not play a prominent role in it. He says, in the Pali canon, *kṣānti* “rarely receives independent treatment, but is generally explained in conjunction with other practices such as benevolence (to which it becomes an important prerequisite) or is cited as a concomitant to morality and discriminative understanding” [182-3]

forgiveness, or something else? (2) Does it have one or multiple meanings? (3) Does it mean the same thing across different texts and traditions?

I will focus my dissertation on two primary sources, both extensive. The first is the widely read Brahmanical epic the *Mahābhārata*, and the second is the *Suttapiṭaka* of the Pali Buddhist canon, the *Tipiṭaka's* most widely read portion. More specifically, the sources for this dissertation are located across all eighteen books of the *Mahābhārata* and the *suttas* and commentaries of the *Dīghanikāya*, *Majjhimanikāya*, *Samyuttanikāya*, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *Nidānakathā*, *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*, *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, *Suttanipāta*, and *Khuddakapāṭha*. In the Pali Canon, most sources are stories revolving around the theme of *khanti*. In the *Mahābhārata*, the sources are a mix of narrative episodes, philosophical debates, and didactic lists.

Each of these texts represents a different perspective on the idea of *kṣānti*. These texts belong to and represent different religious and philosophical traditions; the *Mahābhārata* represents the Brahmanical tradition, while the Pali Canon represents the Theravāda Buddhist tradition. Both texts, or perhaps we might say groups of texts, were composed by different groups of authors and at different moments in early Indian religious history. By studying both these sets of texts in contrast, I excavate different meanings and treatments of the term *kṣānti*.

This in turn will lead to a better understanding of the ideas of patience and forgiveness in these texts and more broadly, the traditions they represent. Forgiveness has received

a lot of scholarly attention in Christianity⁶ and Judaism⁷. More recently, the ideas of forgiveness and patience have also attracted attention from scholars in other disciplines such as psychologists⁸, scientists,⁹ and philosophers.¹⁰ Despite this multi-disciplinary burgeoning interest in forgiveness and patience, scholarly studies on the meaning and development of these ideas in Asian religions have been scant (as noted above) and several scholars have noted the need for such scholarship, and the various ways in which it would further enhance their own studies in their respective fields.¹¹ My

⁶ Bash (2007); Bock (2019); Voiss (2015)

⁷ Dorff (1998, 2000); Newman (1987)

⁸ Akhtar and Barlow (2018); Davis, Worthington Jr, Hook, and Hill (2013); Wade, Hoyt, Kidwell, and Worthington Jr (2014)

⁹ Scientists such as Farrow and Woodruff (2007); Harris and Thoresen (2005); Lee and Enright (2019); Tsuang, Eaves, Nir, Jerskey, and Lyons (2005) have been engaged in some fascinating studies on forgiveness such as investigating how genetics play a role in forgiving, neuroimaging forgivability, and researching the effect of forgiveness on health and disease.

¹⁰ Bommarito (2014); Griswold (2007); Moody-Adams (2015)

¹¹ Other scholars have also noted the need for further research on this topic in Asian religions. For example, Hunter and Rigby (2009, p. 422) note, “forgiveness has emerged from Christian traditions in the West to become an important topic in psychology, philosophy, and even politics. Despite this new interest in the West, relatively little

dissertation, by virtue of being the first comprehensive investigation on the ideas of forgiveness and patience (*kṣānti*) across the texts of two early Indian traditions, will help fill this gap. It will not only contribute to the fields of Buddhism, Hinduism, and the broader field of Asian Religions, but also to the growing multi-disciplinary field of the study of forgiveness.

Methodologically, my dissertation will draw inspiration from the works of Bowles (2007); Brockington (2004); Fitzgerald (2004a); Gethin (2004); Hildebeitel (2011a); Olivelle (2004b, 2009) and other authors. These works have all focused exclusively on the meaning of a single term – ‘*dharma*’ – and attempted to unravel its meaning across

analysis of forgiveness in other faiths has appeared”. Derrett (1997, p. 60) while studying forgiveness and confessions in early Buddhism, notes, “this aspect of Buddhist ethics should be more widely understood.” Yet, as social scientists McCullough and Worthington Jr (1999, p. 1143) note, the religious understanding of forgiveness and tolerance has largely been overlooked: “most of the empirical treatments of forgiveness that have appeared in the literature in the past decade have tended to overlook the deep religious roots of the concept of forgiveness. We think that this oversight is unfortunate, because basic research on forgiveness could probably be enriched considerably by examining the ways that religious traditions, beliefs, and rituals... influence their interpersonal thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and personality processes... Thus, we think there is a boon to be gained for basic research on forgiveness by revisiting the religious roots of forgiveness...”

a broad range of traditions and texts. A volume of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* (Volume 32:4), under the editorship of Phyllis Granoff, was also devoted entirely to this subject. In this dissertation I will be engaging in a similar project, with '*kṣānti*' as the focus.

Justifying the need for such extensive inquiries into the meaning of *dharma*, Olivelle (2004a, p. 421) has said that many scholars “note the broad semantic compass of the term, often commenting that the term is ‘untranslatable.’ One is also left with the impression that... this term has not been subject to evolution and change as it was appropriated, challenged, and sometimes even rejected by different groups and traditions.” These observations certainly also hold true for *kṣānti* – a term also deemed untranslatable and one that has been subject to evolution and appropriation in different texts.

This dissertation consists of three chapters. In chapter one, I explore the meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. I demonstrate that *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* was a polysemic term that represented two different meanings. Through a close reading of several passages, I will further demonstrate that these two meanings differed based on caste or *varṇa*, on the duration of their practice, on their relationships with anger, whether they were considered virtue or vice, *dharma* or *adharmā*, and whether they were perceived as a strength or weakness.

The second chapter shifts the focus to the Pali canon. Here, through a detailed examination of several *suttas* and commentaries, I prove that *khanti* was understood to

be a two-step process in the Pali canon, where the first step involved the negation of anger, and the second, the cultivation of the positive emotion of *mettā*. Next, I will examine literary conventions of plot, character, and motifs within the corpus of *khanti* texts discussed above and argue that this body of literature has consistent characteristics and follows set conventions. Lastly, I will discuss the implications of these findings in the broader context of the Pali canon, Buddhist narrative literature, the Buddhist ideas of anger and *mettā*, and Pali Buddhist ethics.

In the third chapter I will engage in a comparative analysis of the meanings of *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon, respectively. I will start by discussing broad differences between their meaning and then tackle the relationship and interaction between the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon as it relates to their treatment of *kṣānti* and *khanti*. Lastly, I will discuss the development of these terms based on their intertextuality.

Among various findings of this dissertation, the most striking is that the two sets of texts have remarkably different understandings of *kṣānti*. The *Mahābhārata* has two different meanings of *kṣānti*, while the Pali canon had a singular, well defined meaning. One of the two meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* closely resembles the contemporary western idea of “forgiveness”, while the second resembles “patience”. In the case of the Pali Canon, however, the meaning and practice of *khanti* does not resonate closely with any contemporary western idea. *Khanti* in the Pali canon was understood to denote a systematic, two-step psychological process that lacks any parallel in the modern world. A comparative analysis of the texts studied here will also suggest that the Buddhist idea

of *khanti* was developed in response to and against the Brahmanical idea of *kṣānti* explored in the *Mahābhārata*. In summation, this thesis will demonstrate, through a close study of a wide range of texts, that in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon the ideas of *kṣānti* and hence, patience and forgiveness, were complex and varied.

1 THE MEANING OF *KṢĀNTI* IN THE *MAHĀBHĀRATA*

In this chapter, I explore the meaning of the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. I do so by undertaking a critical examination of every single instance of its use in the epic and examining the meaning of *kṣānti* in each case against the background of the *Mahābhārata* as a whole. My investigation has led me to an important didactic passage in the *Mahābhārata* which functions as a key that unlocks the meaning of this term as it was used and understood in the *Mahābhārata*. Using this key passage as a starting point, I will argue that the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* contained two distinct meanings. Through an extensive analysis of numerous examples, I will create a typology for the two meanings of *kṣānti*, elucidate their differences, and highlight their chief characteristics. This analysis will greatly advance the current scholarly understanding of the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Prevalence of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*

Kṣānti is a significant virtue in the *Mahābhārata*, deserving scholarly attention¹². *Kṣam* and its various forms are spread across the 18 books and are used over 400 times in the

¹² For example, Hildebeitel calls *kṣamā* “one of the high *Mahābhārata* virtues” (2011b, p. 568).

text¹³. *Kṣānti* plays a prominent role in philosophical debates and is mentioned in discussions on political strategy. It is also a popular adjective used to describe the quality of a person and occurs in dozens of lists describing brahmans, kings, ministers, and others. Since *kṣānti* is a technical term that occurs at critical junctures in the *Mahābhārata*, it is important to have an accurate understanding of its meaning in order to correctly understand the text. Yet, despite the significance and widespread prevalence of this term in the epic, its meaning has remained elusive.

1.1.2 Current scholarly understanding of the meaning of *kṣānti*

1.1.2.1 Scholarly journal articles

Little attention has been paid to the meaning of the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* by modern scholars. In 2001, stimulated by the growing interest in the study of forgiveness in psychology, as noted above, Beck and Narayana (2001) made a few broad remarks on *kṣamā* as the Sanskrit word for forgiveness in Hindu texts.¹⁴ Their observations were

¹³ The methodology I used in order to arrive at this number is as follows: I performed a meticulous computer search for the terms “kṣan” and “kṣam.” I then read through all the verses containing these strings of letters and identified the ones that talk about “kṣānti” and its various forms.

¹⁴ Their comments were published in a psychology handbook that contained a paper on religious views on forgiveness where representative scholars of the five world religions answered five broad questions about forgiveness very briefly.

cursory and non-specific.¹⁵ Later, Alan Hunter (2007) published a paper that attempted to discuss the meaning of *kṣamā* in mainstream modern Hindu views. Surprisingly, he claimed that there are “relatively few references” [37] to *kṣamā* in the epics and suggests that instead one look at four other topics to get a better understanding of *kṣamā*: *śreyas*, *titikṣā*, *ahiṃsā*, *pāpa*. The choice of these alternative terms is not explained. Based on his mistaken claim about the scarcity of the word *kṣamā* in the *Mahābhārata*, combined with his unsubstantiated methodology, his paper attempts to deconstruct the meaning of *kṣamā* through *śreyas*, *titikṣā*, *ahiṃsā*, *pāpa*, ignoring the hundreds of references to *kṣam* and its verbal forms, resulting in unreliable conclusions. Apart from these cursory articles, scholarly writings dedicated to understanding the meaning of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* are virtually non-existent.

1.1.2.2 Dictionaries

A little more information about the scholarly understanding of the meaning of the term *kṣānti* can be gleaned from dictionary entries for this term. For this purpose, I will examine two sources: modern Sanskrit to English dictionaries, and an ancient Sanskrit thesaurus, the *Nāmaṅgānuśāsanam*, an authoritative lexicon written by the Sanskrit scholar Amarasimha c. 400 CE (Mukherjee, 1998, p. 249). The choice of these sources is deliberate and meant to be representative of a broad range of understandings of *kṣānti* across cultures and time periods. My primary goal here is twofold - to understand what

¹⁵ The handful of comments made on forgiveness in the *Mahābhārata* is discussed in relevant sections below.

these two sources conceived the meaning of *kṣānti* to be and to identify gaps in their understanding.

A survey of five authoritative Sanskrit-English dictionaries¹⁶ reveals that the term *kṣānti* has been defined by modern scholars in similar ways. Monier-Williams (2008) defines it as “patience, forbearance, endurance, indulgence.” Wilson (1979, p. 216), Macdonell (1893, p. 78), Apte (1890, p. 435), and Benfey (1866, p. 236) all provide subsets of these same words to describe it. A richer set of definitions is revealed when we look at the verbal root of the word *kṣānti* – *kṣam*. Table 1 shows the definition of *kṣam* cited in five Sanskrit-English dictionaries:

¹⁶ The choice of sources in this section is deliberate and based on several reasons. As mentioned above, one of the goals of conducting this survey is to get a sense of what modern scholars today understand “*kṣam*” to mean. I have chosen Sanskrit-English dictionaries as these dictionaries are the most widely consulted by modern scholars and the most representative. Moreover, one of the secondary aims of this dissertation is to provide insights into the translation of the term “*kṣam*” in English (as will be seen towards the end of this chapter). Sanskrit-English dictionaries provide the best context for this discussion. I have deliberately chosen not to add more than five dictionaries to my list, as the most common words used to translate “*kṣam*” are already covered by this list. Adding more data, particularly from Sanskrit to non-English dictionaries would only complicate this list and be redundant, as they would not add any additional value to my discussion here.

Table 1: The definition of *kṣam* in Sanskrit-English dictionaries

Dictionary	Meaning
Monier-Williams (2008, p. 326)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be patient or composed, suppress anger, keep quiet • to bear patiently, endure, put up with (acc.), suffer • to pardon, forgive anything • to bear anyone, be indulgent to • to ask anyone (acc.) pardon for anything (acc.)
Macdonell (1893, p. 77)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have patience; submit to (d.); • endure, put up with; • pardon (g. or d. of person, ac. of thing); • grant anything (ac.) to (g.), allow to (pot.); • show indulgence to (ac.); • patient; ask any one's (ac.) pardon or indulgence for (ac.).
Cappeller (1891, pp. 139-140)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patient or quiet, endure, suffer, bear, pardon, forgive • ask pardon for (2 acc.); • put up with (acc.).
(Apte, Gode, Karve, & Abhyankar, 1977, p. 622)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To permit, allow, suffer; • To pardon, forgive (as an offense); • To be patient or quiet, wait; • To endure, put up with, suffer; • To oppose, resist; • To be competent or able (to do anything); • -Caus. To beg pardon, forgive;
Benfey (1866, p. 234)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To endure, To have patience, To pardon, To permit, To be able to • To beg one's pardon for something (with two acc., literally, to cause somebody to endure something)

What is most noteworthy about this survey is that a wide range of words is used to define *kṣam*. The same breadth is also observable in modern translations of the

Mahābhārata, where most of these terms are used to translate *kṣam* and its forms.¹⁷

This suggests that the meaning of *kṣam* was understood to be broad, encompassing several different actions and emotions. In order to understand the contours of this polysemic term, i.e. to decipher what modern scholars understood the scope of the term *kṣānti* to be, we will need to determine what the differences between these words are. This can be done by an examination of the meanings of the five most commonly used terms. Table 2 summarizes the five terms most frequently used to translate *kṣānti* by modern scholars, their definitions according to the Oxford University English Dictionary, and a brief comment on their relevance to my discussion.

Word	OUE definition	Comment
Forgive	“Stop feeling angry or resentful towards	This is the most commonly used term to translate <i>kṣānti</i> . Its definition implies that it is

¹⁷ In extant translations of the *Mahābhārata*, forms of the verb *kṣam* are translated loosely and inconsistently with an extremely broad range of terms: forgive, tolerant, patient, quiet, endure, suffer, pardon, forbear, wait, bear, grant, allow, indulge, permit, condone and so on. The choice of terms in most cases is without apparent reason or justification. Terms are changed very frequently and occasionally we also see the use of two terms to translate a single instance of the use of *kṣānti*. The only word that is commonly used to translate *kṣānti* but does not appear in any of these definitions is tolerance. However, the English-Sanskrit dictionaries (Borooah, 1971, p. 715; Monier-Williams, 2001, p. 715) cite *kṣamā* as the Sanskrit equivalent of tolerance, and so we may add that to our list of words used by modern scholars to define *kṣānti*.

	(someone) for an offense, flaw, or mistake.” ¹⁸	a mental or emotional action. Since the act of forgiveness involves “stopping” the feeling of anger, it presupposes a state of anger in the agent. I.e., forgiveness implies the past existence of anger.
Tolerate	“Allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of (something that one dislikes or disagrees with) without interference.” ¹⁹	Contains an element of giving permission (denoted by the use of the word “allow”) and passivity through lack of “interference”.
Patient	“The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.” ²⁰	Has a temporal quality suggested by the keyword “delay”.
Forbear	“Politely or patiently restrain an impulse to do something; refrain.” ²¹	Since it involves restraining an impulse to do something it implies the pre-existence of an impulse to do something.
Pardon	“A cancellation of the legal consequences of an offense or conviction.” ²²	A legal term with legislative and political connotations.

¹⁸ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/forgive>

¹⁹ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/tolerate>

²⁰ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/patience>

²¹ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/forbear>

²² <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/pardon>

It must be noted that all of these English terms themselves are complex and their definitions are highly debated among scholars²³. I present these definitions only for the practical purpose of illustrating the wide range of meanings denoted by these terms, and hence implicit within the understanding of *kṣānti* modern scholars who are working in English.

The big question that arises is if *kṣānti* can mean all of these things, and these things have subtle differences, how do we determine the precise meaning of *kṣānti* in any particular context? Consider this example from the *Mahābhārata*, where Sahadeva tells an enraged Pārṣata who is trying to kill Drupada, “You *kṣama* Pārṣata and let Pārṣata *kṣamatām* you. We will also *kṣamayitāraś*.”²⁴ How does a reader determine what *kṣam* means in each of these cases? Are the characters forgiving, pardoning, tolerating, forbearing, or being patient with one other? Does *kṣam* here refer to an emotional

²³ “Forgiveness” is a particularly debated term among philosophers, psychologists and religious studies scholars, (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2001, p. 7). One prominent scholar of forgiveness states, “no consensual definition of forgiveness exists” (Worthington, 1998). For a comprehensive list of sources debating the meaning of forgiveness refer Bash (2013).

²⁴ Droṇaparvan, Chapter 169, Verse 53:

pārṣatasya kṣama tvaṃ vai kṣamatām tava pārṣataḥ

vayaṃ kṣamayitāraś ca kim anyatra śamād bhavet

practice, a physical action, or a legislative decision? The meaning of the passage would change considerably depending on the interpretation of the translator and his choice of word(s) to translate *kṣam*. Consequently, the reader's understanding of the text would change and so would the perception of the character and the expectation of future events. Furthermore, the reader is at risk of reading back into the text the modern connotations associated with this term.²⁵ This is an unresolved issue in the modern scholarly understanding of *kṣānti* and constitutes a serious problem in current translations of the *Mahābhārata*. Translators have not given adequate reasons to justify their word choice for *kṣam*, translating the term variously and inconsistently.

I now turn to the traditional Sanskrit understanding of *kṣānti* based on the ancient Sanskrit lexicon *Nāmaliṅgānuśāsanam [Amarakośa]*. This represents an understanding of *kṣānti* closer in culture and time to its use in the *Mahābhārata*, written by a Sanskrit grammarian and poet. There are two entries for *kṣānti* in this text:

(1.7.456) kṣāntistitikṣā

(3.1.64) sahiṣṇuḥ sahanaḥ kṣantā titikṣuḥ kṣamitā kṣamī

²⁵ For example, if a translator chooses to translate *kṣānti* as “forgive” in a particular instance, the reader may assume that the action here is congruent with our modern practice of forgiveness which, in several cases, is preceded by an apology or admission of guilt.

These entries indicate that there were two synonyms of *kṣam*: the verbal root *sah* and the verbal root *tij*. Both of these verbal roots are defined in Monier-Williams using the same terms that were used for *kṣam*. The primary question here is what the relationship between *kṣānti* and its synonyms is, particularly *titikṣā*, since that is listed in both lists and is the synonym most closely associated with *kṣānti*. Do *titikṣā* and *kṣānti* mean the same thing, or are there discernable differences between them? This question is important to answer since it could greatly enhance our understanding of the meaning of *kṣānti*.

The *Mahābhārata* gives us reason to hypothesize that there are differences between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* in the way that they are used in this text. This can be inferred based on their occurrence together in a list of virtues: “Forgiveness [*kṣamā*], forbearance [*titikṣā*], uprightness, control, avowedness to truth, great learning and zeal, compassion as well as authority— Yudhiṣṭhira has all the virtues of kings.”²⁶ (Van Buitenen, 1983, p. 460) Assuming the author of this list is not being redundant, we can assume some difference between the two terms. This difference between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* constitutes the second gap in our current understanding of *kṣānti* that I aim to rectify.

Thus far I have established that in order to have a clear understanding of the meaning of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*, two major gaps need to be filled. First, a process must be

²⁶ Udyogaparvan, Chapter 147, Verse 33:

kṣamā titikṣā dama ārjavaṃ ca; satyavratatvaṃ śrutam apramādaḥ

bhūtānukampā hy anuśānaṃ ca; yudhiṣṭhire rājaguṇāḥ samastāḥ

followed to determine the precise meaning of *kṣānti* in any given context from within its broad repertoire of meanings, and second, an understanding of the relationship between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā*, its closest related word, must be achieved.

1.1.3 Critical Edition and Translations

Both these questions will be answered through a close examination of the primary source, the *Mahābhārata*, itself. Before I begin my examination of the epic, I want to note a few things about the apparatus at hand – the various editions and translations of the *Mahābhārata*.

Throughout this paper, I will use the critical edition [CE] of the *Mahābhārata*²⁷. With regards to the problem of layers and interpolations in the text, I will take the “synchronic approach”²⁸ favored by most modern scholars and championed by

²⁷ There is a long history of debate on the Critical Edition. While on the one hand it has been accepted as a standard edition by prominent scholars such as Granoff (2012), Hildebeitel (2011a) and translation series such as University of Chicago series, there are still several scholars who disfavour the Critical Edition such as Doniger (2009) and Biardeau (1968, 1970), Dumezil and D. D. Shulman (2001) and Adluri (2011). I believe that some of their objections have successfully been dismissed by scholars such as Hildebeitel (2011a) and Sutherland (1992), yet I use the Critical Edition only with an acknowledgement of some of the valid objections raised by the latter group of scholars.

²⁸ Defined as “accepting an individual text as it now exists and treating it as a unified whole” (Black & Geen, 2010, p. 10).

Hiltebeitel (2011a, p. 5). At present, there are four sets of translations for the *Mahābhārata*: two complete and two in progress. The two complete translations are by Ganguli (1883-1896) [12 vols] and Debroy (2015) [10 vols]²⁹. The two incomplete translations are by the University of Chicago series (1973-78) which includes 3 volumes by van Buitenen³⁰ and one by James Fitzgerald,³¹ and the Clay Sanskrit Library Translations which contain partial and complete translations of several books by various translators³². Of these partial translations, only the translations by the University of Chicago series (1973-78) are based on the Critical Edition. Wherever available I have taken passages from the van Buitenen translations as I find those to be fairly accurate

²⁹ Debroy's translation series is relatively new and has not received much scholarly attention. This translation has some obvious merit such as its fidelity to the CE, and its strict literal adherence to the Sanskrit text. Moreover, for parvas such as 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 it is the only available modern translation and the only translation based on the CE. Yet, it falls short on several accounts: the Hindi translation of Sanskrit words peppered throughout the text, its lack of sophistication in translating technical and philosophical terms, one of them being *kṣānti*, and most importantly, the frequent mistranslations based on incorrect parsings of Sanskrit terms.

³⁰ J. A. B. van Buitenen (1981); Van Buitenen (1983, 2011)

³¹ Fitzgerald (2004b)

³² Bowles (2006, 2008); Cherniak (2017); Crosby (2017); Garbutt (2006, 2008)); Johnson (2005); Meiland (2005, 2007); Pilikian (2006, 2017); Wilmot (2006); (2009)

and reliable (other than his translation of the term *kṣānti*, which I will discuss later) and his translations of the *Mahābhārata* are widely regarded as “authoritative”³³ (Salomon, 2007). Where van Buitenen’s translations are not available I have consulted all alternative translations and decided which one to use, if any, based on their accuracy. Wherever necessary, I have also provided my own translations or modified existing translations. If a translation is not cited, it is to be presumed that it is my own. In some instances, I have intentionally chosen to use existing translations to demonstrate how the current understanding of *kṣānti* has been influenced by translation choices.

1.2 THE TWO MEANINGS OF KṢĀNTI

1.2.1 Differences between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā*

There are two keys to uncovering the precise meaning of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. These key passages can be found in the *Śāntiparvan*, one in Chapter 103 and one in Chapter 156. The passage in chapter 103 is part of Bhīṣma’s instruction to Yudhiṣṭhira on signs that an army will be victorious and goes as follows:

“Forgiveness [*kṣamā*] is the magical illusion employed by good men [*sādhu*]; really, good men are never unforgiving.

³³ Although authoritative, they are not completely free of errors, as will be discussed later.

Learn to use forgiveness and nonforgiveness, son of Pṛthā. The glory of a king who forgives after he conquers grows greater, for even those enemies who have committed grievous offenses trust him.”³⁴ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, pp. 425-426)

Several points are important to note here. In the first statement, *kṣamā* is described as something that is employed only by good men [*sādhu*], thus suggesting that it is not something that is or should be employed by all men. The second half of that statement, we are also told that “good men are never unforgiving.” This clearly means that good men are *always* forgiving, i.e. employing *kṣamā*. The second statement, immediately following this states that “Learn to use forgiveness and nonforgiveness, son of Pṛthā.” At first glance, the two statements may seem contradictory, for we were just told that “good men are never unforgiving” and here Yudhiṣṭhira is being told to be unforgiving. The next line aids our understanding by saying that, “The glory of a king who forgives after he conquers grows greater...” Here, the subject has changed from “good men” [*sādhu*] to kings [*rājño*]. One way to make sense of these seemingly contradictory statements is to infer that the practice of *kṣamā* is differentiated based on the agent –

³⁴ Śānti parvan, Chapter 103, Verses 29-340:

kṣamā vai sādhumāyā hi na hi sādhvakṣamā sadā
kṣamāyāścākṣamāyāśca viddhi pārtha prayojanam
vijitya kṣamamāṇasya yaśo rājño 'bhivardhate
mahāparādhā hyapyasmin viśvasanti hi śatrava

sadhus are always forgiving, while kings are both forgiving and unforgiving. This would imply there is no singular, universal prescription for the practice of *kṣamā*. The second passage discussed below illuminates this issue further.

The second key passage, found in chapter 156 of the Śānti parvan, is a didactic passage which explains the definitions of thirteen technical terms, two of them being *kṣamā* and *titikṣā*³⁵. This key passage helps us overcome the two main issues in the current scholarly understanding of *kṣānti* identified above (to devise a process to determine what the precise meaning of *kṣānti* in any given context from within its broad repertoire of meanings is and to understand the relationship between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā*).

The passage begins by listing features that are common to all thirteen terms and then describes each of their technical aspects sequentially. This exegesis is invaluable in helping us understand what the authors of the *Mahābhārata* understood *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* to mean and what differences they viewed between these two terms.

³⁵ Śānti parvan, Chapter 156, Verses 7-9:

prāpyate hi yathā satyaṃ tac ca śrotuṃ tvam arhasi

satyaṃ trayodaśavidhaṃ sarvalokeṣu bhārata

satyaṃ ca samatā caiva damaś caiva na saṃśayaḥ

amātsaryaṃ kṣamā caiva hrīś titikṣānasūyatā

tyāgo dhyānam athāryatvaṃ dhṛtiś ca satataṃ sthirā

ahiṃsā caiva rājendra satyākārās trayodaśa

The passage starts by describing all thirteen terms as immutable [*nityam*], constant [*avikāri*], not opposing any *dharma* [*sarvadharmāviruddham*], obtainable through yoga [*yogenaitad avāpyate*]³⁶ and most importantly, distinct from one another [*prthak*].³⁷ The distinctness of all terms is important for the purposes of this investigation because it clearly states that *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* are two separate terms and hence have some difference between them.

After describing all thirteen terms in this way, the passage goes on to define each term.

It defines *kṣamā* as follows: “With respect to *kṣamā* or a lack of *kṣamā*, a good man

³⁶ Śānti parvan, Chapter 156, Verse 10:

satyaṃ nāmāvyayaṃ nityam avikāri tathaiva ca
sarvadharmāviruddham ca yogenaitad avāpyate

³⁷ Śānti parvan, Chapter 156, Verse 22:

ete trayodaśākārāḥ prthak satyaikalakṣaṇāḥ
bhajante satyam eveha bṛṃhayanti ca bhārata

The verse also mentions that these thirteen terms are “*satyaikalakṣaṇāḥ*” meaning that they have the same defining characteristic [*lakṣaṇa*], namely truth [*satya*]. The verse also says these terms are “*ākāra*” meaning forms of *satya*. Taken in its entirety, I interpret this verse as meaning that there is one truth [*satya*], of which there are thirteen distinct forms – two of which are *kṣānti* and *titikṣā*.

kṣamate³⁸ the pleasant and the unpleasant in all manner.”³⁹ Simply put, this definition of *kṣam* states that a good person tolerates the good and the bad in all situations. This definition informs us that there are two primary characteristics that define it - who practices it and toward what it is practiced. The passage states that *kṣam* is practiced by a *sādhu*, a virtuous person. This delimits *kṣam* to a specific type of agent and eliminates the possibility that every person does or should practice it. Second, the definition emphasizes that the *sādhu* tolerates both the good and the bad [*priyāṇīhāpriyāṇī*], in every type of situation.

Next, the passage gives a definition of *titikṣā*. It says, “When a person practices patience [*kṣam*] for the purpose of *dharma* and *artha*, such patience [*kṣam*] is known as ***titikṣā***. It is obtained through steadfastness [*dhairyeṇa*], and its purpose is to keep people together [*lokasaṃgrahaṇa*].”⁴⁰

³⁸ I have consciously chosen to leave “*kṣamate*” untranslated at this point, so as not to colour the understanding of this term with the connotations associated with any English word. Later in the thesis, I will discuss translational strategies at length.

³⁹ Śānti parvan, Chapter 156, Verse 14:

akṣamāyāḥ kṣamāyāś ca priyāṇīhāpriyāṇi ca
kṣamate sarvataḥ sādhuḥ sādhu āpnoti ca satyavān

⁴⁰ Śānti parvan, Chapter 156, Verse 16:

dharmārthahetoḥ kṣamate titikṣā kṣāntir ucyate
lokasaṃgrahaṇārthaṃ tu sā tu dhairyeṇa labhyate

This definition of *titikṣā* is highly informative and clearly defines the relationship between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā*. It states that *titikṣā* is a type of *kṣānti* [*dharmārthahetoḥ kṣamate titikṣā kṣāntir ucyate*]. This implies that *kṣānti* is a broader concept, of which one subset is *titikṣā*.

This is the most significant revelation of this definition – the explicit mention of the existence of two meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. The first meaning is the one presented in the first definition above and the second is a special type of *kṣānti*, *titikṣā-kṣānti*, defined in the second definition.

Additionally, the definition of *titikṣā* states that what differentiates *titikṣā* from other types of *kṣānti* is the motivation or purpose for its practice. According to this definition, *titikṣā* is practiced for the purpose of *dharma*, *artha*, and *lokasaṃgrahaṇa*. In order to understand this motivation clearly, I will briefly unpack these terms keeping in mind the larger context of the *Mahābhārata*.

As is well known, *dharma* is a broad term and encompasses an extraordinarily large range of meanings⁴¹. Fitzgerald (2004a, p. 674) has examined the meaning of *dharma* in

⁴¹ *Dharma* is one of the most complex and diverse terms in early Indian religious literature. Its meaning, usage, and translation in Brahmanical and Buddhist texts have attracted substantial scholarly attention. Several scholarly publications provide an excellent, detailed analysis of this term (Bowles, 2007; Brockington, 2004; Fitzgerald, 2004a; Halbfass, 1988; Hildebeitel, 2011a; Hudson, 2006; Olivelle, 2004b, 2009). Since

the *Mahābhārata* and categorizes it into three broad senses based on its usage in the *Mahābhārata*:

- 1) “Normative action that is beneficial to its agent after death” or a “good action appropriate to specific kinds of people” [he translates these as “Law or Merit”]
- 2) “Abstract quality of correctness, rightness, goodness, or justice” [“Right or Just”]
- 3) “Universally good character attributes, habits, dispositions” [“Virtue or Piety”].

Each of these categories, in turn, is also broad and ambiguous. Overall, he defines *dharma* as that which is “transcendently good or right to do or be.”

Artha, is another polysemic term that has a wide range of meanings depending on the context. Since it is used alongside *dharma* here, I will discuss its meaning in the context of *dharma* and within the larger context of the *Mahābhārata*. In the same paper Fitzgerald (2004a) analyzes the use of *artha* alongside *dharma*, and implies that in such contexts *artha* means “this-worldly self-interest” (p. 672). Monier-Williams (2008, p. 90) also reaches the same conclusion and notes that when *artha* occurs alongside *dharma*, it usually means “advantage, use, utility”.

the meaning of the term is nuanced and has subtle difference across traditions and texts, here I have focused on discussing the meaning of *dharma* within the context of the *Mahābhārata*, and hence refer to Fitzgerald (2004a) who has studied the meaning of *dharma* within the context of the *Mahābhārata* comprehensively.

Lastly, we have the term *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* which I will briefly discuss within the context of the *Mahābhārata*. This term appears twice in the *Bhagavad Gīta*⁴², the most widely read and studied portion of the *Mahābhārata*, and seven times in the rest of the *Mahābhārata*. In chapter 122 of the Śānti parvan we can find an informative albeit brief discussion on *lokasaṃgrahaṇa*. The chapter explores the origin story of punishment [*daṇḍa*] and equates *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* with *daṇḍa*⁴³. Vasuhoma says, “Learn, king, how the rod of force [*daṇḍa*] arose as the protection of the world [*lokasaṃgraha*], for the sake of guarding and disciplining creatures [*prajāvinayarakṣārtha*]*—it is the everlasting*

⁴² Bhīṣmaparvan, Chapter 25, Verse 20, 25:

karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ
lokasaṃgraham evāpi saṃpaśyan kartum arhasi
saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṃso yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṃs tathāsaktaś cikīrṣur lokasaṃgraham

⁴³ Vasuhoma is asked by a king, “I wish to learn from you how the rod of force originated. Also, how did it first awaken? And why is it said to be supreme? How did the rod of force come to reside among kṣatriyas and get so firmly entrenched?” (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 477)

Śānti parvan, Chapter 122, Verses 12-13:

tad ahaṃ śrotum icchāmi daṇḍa utpadyate katham
kiṃ vāpi pūrvaṃ jāgarti kiṃ vā paramam ucyate
katham kṣatriyasaṃsthaśca daṇḍaḥ saṃpratyavasthitaḥ

essence of Law [*dharma*].”⁴⁴ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 477) Vasuhoma goes on to describe why *daṇḍa* is important and what once occurred in the absence of *daṇḍa*:

“After the rod of force disappeared, people became mixed up—people did not know what they should do and what not, what they should eat and what not, what they should drink and what not, nor did they know how to assure the realization of their efforts. They did not know whom they could go with and whom not, and one’s own property and another’s were the same. Lawlessness prevailed, and they harmed one another: They tore at each other like dogs fighting over a piece of meat, the strong killing the weak....⁴⁵” (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 477)

⁴⁴ Śānti parvan, Chapter 122, Verse 14:

śṛṇu rājan yathā daṇḍaḥ sambhūto lokasaṃgrahaḥ
prajāvinayarakṣārthaṃ dharmasyātmā sanātanaḥ

⁴⁵ Śānti parvan, Chapter 122, Verse 18-21:

tasmin pravṛtte satre tu brahmaṇaḥ pāṛthivarṣabha
hṛṣṭarūpapracāratvād daṇḍaḥ so 'ntarhito 'bhavat
tasmin antarhite cātha prajānāṃ saṃkaro 'bhavat
naiva kāryaṃ na cākāryaṃ bhojyābhojyaṃ na vidyate
peyāpeyaṃ kutaḥ siddhir hiṃsanti ca parasparam
gamyāgamyāṃ tadā nāsīt parasvaṃ svaṃ ca vai samam
parasparaṃ vilumpante sārameyā ivāmiṣam

Similar descriptions are also given by Bhīṣma for what happens in the absence of *daṇḍa*:

If the rod of force did not exist in this world, beings would be nasty and brutish to each other. Because they fear punishment, beings do not kill each other, Yudhiṣṭhira. As they are preserved by the rod of force day after day, king, his subjects make the king grow greater; therefore the rod of force is what is most important. It puts this world into a stable order quickly, king...⁴⁶ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 474)

We are also told repeatedly that *daṇḍa* is important to keep the world functioning: “the rod of punishment is the one thing in this world upon which everything depends...⁴⁷ It was sent forth by Brahmā for the protection of the world and for the establishing of

abalaṃ balino jaghnur nirmayādam avartata

⁴⁶ Śānti parvan, Chapter 121, Verse 33-35:

na syād yadīha daṇḍo vai pramatheyuḥ parasparam
bhayād daṇḍasya cānyonyaṃ ghnanti naiva yudhiṣṭhira
daṇḍena rakṣyamāṇā hi rājann aharahaḥ prajāḥ
rājānaṃ vardhayantīha tasmād daṇḍaḥ parāyaṇam
vyavasthāpayati kṣipram imaṃ lokaṃ nareśvara

⁴⁷ Śānti parvan, Chapter 121, Verse 8:

śṛṇu kauravya yo daṇḍo vyavahāryo yathā ca saḥ
yasmin hi sarvam āyattaṃ sa daṇḍa iha kevalaḥ

people’s proper duties.⁴⁸” (Fitzgerald, 2004b, pp. 472, 475) Lastly, these verses specify that it is the duty of the *kṣatriya* to enforce *daṇḍa* – “Punishment, the essence of which is the same for all, was given by the Lord to the careful keeping of *kṣatriya*....”⁴⁹ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 475)

Simply put, we are told that *daṇḍa* is essential to keep the world in order. Without *daṇḍa*, people of different castes would not know their proper duties [*svadharma*], and the world would descend into chaos. People would not make a distinction between what they are allowed to do and what is forbidden. Maintaining social order is thus essential for *lokasaṃgrahaṇa*, the welfare of the world. The meaning of this term in the context of the *Mahābhārata* has also been studied by Gelblum (1992) and Malinar (2007b, p. 88). Gelblum has argued that it means the “preservation and promotion of social-moral-cosmic mutual co-operation” (p. 121). He argues, “the term *sangraha*, literally ‘the holding together’, here may be best rendered by the German *Zusammenhang*, i.e. inter-connectedness, cohesion, mutual dependence, consolidation of the parts participating in a harmonious whole.” (p. 121) However, based on the analysis above, I would argue that *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* has a closer meaning to keeping the

⁴⁸ Śānti parvan, Chapter 121, Verse 48:

brahmaṇā lokarakṣārthaṃ svadharmasthāpanāya ca

⁴⁹ Śānti parvan, Chapter 121, Verse 46:

rājyasya daṇḍa evāṅgaṃ daṇḍaḥ prabhava eva ca

īśvareṇa prayatnena dhāraṇe kṣatriyasya hi

world together, which is in fact done by keeping people apart and separate in their caste divisions, rather than bringing people together in a sense similar to the new-age idea of harmonious co-existence. Malinar has also studied this term in the context of the *Mahābhārata* and notes that this term is connected specifically to *kṣatriyas*⁵⁰ since it is the duty of *kṣatriyas* to protect the world and maintain the kingdom's prosperity⁵¹. The connection between *kṣatriyas* and the concept of *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* comes across clearly in the verses discussed above. In the next section I will discuss how this connection with *kṣatriyas* is also a defining characteristic of *titikṣā*.

Taking the three terms together, *dharma*, *artha*, and *lokasaṃgrahaṇa*, helps us to gain a much better understanding of *titikṣā*. The presence of these terms as the motivation for *titikṣā* suggests that that the motivation of *titikṣā* is worldly, as opposed to otherworldly. Since *dharma*, *artha*, and *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* taken together have worldly implications, there is a contrast being made between practical, this worldly goals such as (maintaining law and order, keeping people of different castes separate, gaining

⁵⁰ To further support her thesis Malinar cites parallel passages from the *Manusmṛiti* and also notes that Dhadphale (1978) has noted a similar usage of the term *lokasaṃgrahaṇa* in Pali texts.

⁵¹ For example, in the *Bhagavad Gīta* (06,025.020) Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that he should follow the ideal of other kings such as Janaka and act with the goal of keeping the world together [*lokasaṃgrahaṇa*]. Other passages include *MBh* 12.58.19; 12.122.14; 12.150.16; 12.251.25; 14.46.37; 12.88.1; 12.88.2.

advantage etc.) and otherworldly goals. Lokasamgrahaṇa, in particular with its association with punishment, also suggests that it is kings who practice this type of kṣānti. The definition of *titikṣā* may now be understood as follows: the type of *kṣānti* that is practiced primarily for the purpose of achieving this worldly goals and is obtained through steadfastness [*dhairya*].

The existence of these technical definitions of *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* suggests that the authors of the *Mahābhārata* understood these two terms to have a different, specific, precise meanings and considered it important to convey their definitions to the audience of this literature. In order to differentiate between the two terms, 1) *kṣānti* and 2) *titikṣā* (which we have been told is a subtype of *kṣānti*), I will refer to them as K₁ and K₂ respectively, throughout the rest of this dissertation. The defining features of *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* based on these definitions are classified in Table 3 below:

Table 1: The differences between kṣānti [K1] and titikṣā [K2] (1)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K ₁]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K ₂]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sadhus</i>, <i>brāhmaṇas</i>, mendicants, <i>brahmacārins</i>, <i>vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma</i>, <i>artha</i>, and <i>lokasamgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i>

1.2.2 Differentiation by *varṇa*

The definitions of K₁ and K₂ also allude to another distinguishing characteristic of these terms. The definition of K₁ specifies that it is practiced by a *sādhu*, while the definition of K₂ specifies that it is practiced for the purpose of *lokasamgrahaṇa*, which is ascribed

primarily to *kṣatriyas* (as discussed above). This distinction suggests that there may be a difference between the *varṇa* of those who practice K_1 and K_2 . In this section, I will demonstrate that congruent with the definition of K_1 , which specifies that it is practiced by a *sādhu*, in descriptive passages across the *Mahābhārata* K_1 is advocated for *brāhmaṇas*, *vanacarins*, and *brahmacārins*. Simultaneously, in line with its purpose of *lokasaṃgrahaṇa*, K_2 is advocated for *kṣatriyas* – kings, ministers, and advisers.

I will begin with passages that describe K_1 as a virtue for *brāhmaṇas*. In a passage in the *Bhagavadgīta kṣānti* is presented as a natural action of *brāhmaṇas* and not included in the parallel list for *kṣatriyas* or the other *varṇas*:

The acts of brahmins [*brāhmaṇas*], barons [*kṣatriyas*], commoners [*vaiśyas*], and serfs [*śudras*], enemy-burner, divide [*pravibhaktāni*] themselves according to the *guṇas* that spring from nature. Tranquility, self-control, austerity, purity, patience [*kṣānti*], honesty, insight, knowledge, and true faith are the brahmin's task, which derives from his nature. Gallantry, energy, fortitude, capability, unretreating steadfastness in war, liberality, and the exercise of power are the baron's task, which springs from his nature. Husbandry, cattle herding, and trade are the commoner's task, which derives from his nature; while the natural task of the serf's to serve.⁵² (J. A. Van Buitenen, 1981)

⁵² Bhīṣmaparvan, Chapter 40, Verses 41-44:

In this list, *kṣānti* is listed as a task of a *brāhmaṇa* but is not included in the list of three other *varṇas*. It is noteworthy that *kṣānti* and all other items in the *brāhmaṇa* list are described as tasks or duties [*karma*], rather than virtues or qualities. Furthermore, these *brāhmaṇa karmas* are equated with the trade or professions [*vāṅijyam*] of the *vaiśyas* and *sūdra*. This puts the *karma* of *kṣānti* on par with a trade or profession [*vijñānam*], implying that *kṣānti* is more than just a duty of the *brāhmaṇa* – it is the *brāhmaṇa's* profession.

The same pattern can be observed in several lists describing *brāhmaṇas*. For example, in another list, a *brāhmaṇa* is described as one who is “self-restrained, is a *soma* sacrificer, has a noble character, is compassionate, tolerates everything [*sarvasaho*], has no desires, is simple, gentle, kind and endowed with *kṣamā* [*kṣamāvān*].”⁵³ In yet another,

brāhmaṇakṣatriyaviśāṃ sūdrāṇāṃ ca paramtapa
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāvaprabhavair guṇaiḥ
śamo damas tapaḥ śaucaṃ kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca
jñānaṃ vijñānam āstikyaṃ brahmakarma svabhāvajam
śauryaṃ tejo dhṛtir dākṣyaṃ yuddhe cāpy apalāyanam
dānam īśvarabhāvaś ca kṣatrakarma svabhāvajam
kṛṣigorakṣyavāṅijyaṃ vaiśyakarma svabhāvajam
paricaryātmakaṃ karma sūdrasyāpi svabhāvajam

⁵³ Śānti parvan, Chapter 63, Verse 8:

yaḥ syād dāntaḥ somapa āryaśīlaḥ; sānukrośaḥ sarvasaho nirāśīḥ

Bhrigu describes a *brāhmaṇa* as one who, among other things, has the qualities of “truthfulness, charity, self-control, lack of treachery, kindness, *kṣamā*, aversion, and austerities.”⁵⁴

In other passages, *kṣānti* is attributed as a quality of those who practice *bhaukṣya*⁵⁵, *vanacārins*, and *brahmacārins*, groups that are closely related to *brāhmaṇas*. In one passage Bhīma censures Yudhiṣṭhira by saying that *kṣamā* is not a quality for *kṣatriyas*, but for mendicants: “Forbearance [*kṣamā*], sympathy, compassion, kindness – no member going on the *kṣatra* way possesses these except you! Had we learned that your mind was disposed this way, we would not have taken up weapons, we would not have killed anyone. We would have lived on handouts [*bhaukṣyam*] until we left our bodies behind...”⁵⁶ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 187) This passage is explicitly stating that *kṣamā* is not

r̥jur m̥rdur an̥śaṃsaḥ kṣamāvān; sa vai vipro netaraḥ pāpakarmā

⁵⁴ Śānti parvan, Chapter 182, Verse 4:

satyaṃ dānaṃ damo 'droha ān̥śaṃsyaṃ kṣamā ghr̥ṇā

tapaś ca d̥śyate yatra sa brāhmaṇa iti sm̥ṛtaḥ

⁵⁵ Monier-Williams (2008, p. 766) defines *bhaukṣya* as the practice of “living on alms, subsisting by charity.”

⁵⁶ Śānti parvan, Chapter 10, Verses 3-5:

kṣamānukampā kāruṇyam ān̥śaṃsyaṃ na vidyate

kṣātram ācarato mār̥gam api bandhos tvadantare

yadīmāṃ bhavato buddhiṃ vidyāma vayam īd̥śīm

a quality possessed by those who are *kṣatriyas*. Further, it implies that *kṣamā* is to be practiced by those who live on alms [*bhāikṣya*]. Similar statements can be observed across several passages in the epic.

In another episode, after Yudhiṣṭhira learns that Karṇa was his brother, he blames the conduct of *kṣatriyas*, and in particular their anger. He says:

Damn the *kṣatra* way! Damn the power of the mighty chest! Damn the unforgiving stubbornness that brought us to this disaster! Good are the tolerance [*kṣamā*], self-control, sincerity, harmonious disposition, unselfishness, harmlessness, and truthful speech that are the constant traits of those who dwell in the forest [*vanacāriṇām*].⁵⁷ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 180)

In another discourse, Bhīṣma lists *kṣamā* as the quality of those established in the *brahmacarya āśrama* in response to Yudhiṣṭhira's question asking about the four

śastraṃ naiva grahīṣyāmo na vadhiṣyāma kaṃ cana

bhāikṣyam evācariṣyāma śarīrasyā vimokṣaṇāt

⁵⁷ Śānti parvan, Chapter 7, Verses 5-7:

dhig astu kṣātram ācāraṃ dhig astu balam aurasam

dhig astv amarṣaṃ yenemām āpadaṃ gamitā vayam

sādhu kṣamā damaḥ śaucam avairodhyam amatsaraḥ

ahiṃsā satyavacanaṃ nityāni vanacāriṇām

āśramas: “Regular study of the *Vedas*, patience [*kṣamā*], honoring one’s teacher, and obedience to one’s teacher would constitute the Life-Pattern of the brahman [*brahmacarya*].”⁵⁸ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 330) In the verses following this, *kṣānti* does not appear in the list of qualities for any of the three other *āśramas*. This suggests that the practice of *kṣānti* was not only differentiated by *varṇa* but also by *āśrama*.

Furthermore, in lists that describe the qualities of kings, ministers, and advisors [*kṣatriyas*], the text uses the word *titikṣā*. For example, when describing the qualities of a king’s advisor Bhīṣma says that such a person must be “forbearing [*titikṣur*] and free of resentment [*anasūyakaḥ*]...”⁵⁹ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 373) A few verses later he tells Yudhiṣṭhira what kind of men he should appoint as advisers and once again these men are described as “forbearing [*titikṣur*] and not resentful.”⁶⁰ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 373)

⁵⁸ Śānti parvan, Chapter 66, Verse 10:

vedādhyayananityatvaṃ kṣamāthācāryapūjanam
tathopādhyāyaśuśrūṣā brahmāśramapadaṃ bhavet

⁵⁹ Śānti parvan, Chapter 81, Verse 21:

rūpavarṇasvaropetas titikṣur anasūyakaḥ
kulīnaḥ śīlasaṃpannaḥ sa te syāt pratyanantaraḥ

⁶⁰ Śānti parvan, Chapter 81, Verses 28-29:

śūraś cāryaś ca vidvāṃś ca pratipattiviśāradaḥ
kulīnaḥ śīlasaṃpannas titikṣur anasūyakaḥ
ete hy amātyāḥ kartavyāḥ sarvakarmasv avasthitāḥ

Later, Bhīṣma says that the best minister of the assembly “should be from a good family, be truly accomplished, patient [*titikṣur*], industrious, self-possessed, assertive, knowledgeable, and truthful.”⁶¹ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 381)

In some cases, the term *kṣānti* is also used in connection with *kṣatriyas*. However, this does not invalidate the thesis presented above. The definition of *titikṣā* states clearly that *titikṣā* is a type of *kṣānti* – a subcategory. Hence, the term *kṣānti* can also be used in place of *titikṣā*. In such cases, the reader needs to use the criteria gleaned from the normative definitions of K₁ and K₂ to judge which of the two is meant.

Consider the following example where Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna kills Droṇa unjustly when the latter has laid his weapon down. Arjuna thinks that this was *adharma* and condemns the act saying all the Pāṇḍavas deserve to die for it. Hearing this Bhīma gets angry and defends the act as *dharmic*. He says, “O Pārtha! You speak words that are endowed with *dharma*, like a sage who has retired to the forest, or like a *brāhmaṇa* who has laid down the rod and is adhering to a vow. Protecting [others] from fights, living by fighting, being *kṣānta* towards women and the virtuous⁶², a *kṣatriya* quickly obtains the world, *dharma*,

⁶¹ Śānti parvan, Chapter 84, Verse 14:

kulīnaḥ satyasampannas titikṣur dakṣa ātmavān

sūraḥ kṛtajñāḥ satyaś ca śreyasaḥ pārtha lakṣaṇam

⁶² Here I have chosen to translate *sādhuṣu* as the “virtuous” but it may be noted that as with most technical Sanskrit terms, the term could also have other meanings and could refer to religious practitioners. I have chosen to translate the term more broadly, as in

fame, and success. O one who is going to extend the lineage! You are endowed with all the qualities of *kṣatriyas*. It is not right for you to now speak words like the ignorant.”⁶³ Here *kṣānti* is listed as a virtue for *kṣatriyas*. The reader is left with the task of deciphering whether K_1 or K_2 is being referenced here. A close examination of the passage will reveal that it gives a clear marker that in this instance *kṣānti* means K_2 [*titikṣā*]. The passage states that a *kṣatriya* must practice *kṣānti* only towards women and the virtuous. It is not extended towards all beings, a key characteristic marker of K_1 . This indicates that the *kṣānti* in this case is K_2 [*titikṣā-kṣānti*]⁶⁴.

my experience with verses discussing *kṣānti* I found this to be the more commonly intended meaning rather than the specific meaning of a religious practitioner. Additionally, this also fits the normative definition of *titikṣā* noted above.

⁶³ Droṇaparvan, Chapter 168, Verses 3-5:

munir yathāraṇyagato bhāṣase dharmasaṃhitam
nyastadaṇḍo yathā pārtha brāhmaṇaḥ saṃśitavrataḥ
kṣatāt trātā kṣatāj jīvan kṣānta striṣv api sādhuṣu
kṣatriyaḥ kṣitim āpnoti kṣipraṃ dharmam yaśaḥ śriyam
sa bhavān kṣatriyaguṇair yuktaḥ sarvaiḥ kulodvahaḥ
avipaścid yathā vākyaṃ vyāharan nādyā śobhase

⁶⁴ Here, I would argue that although there is a distinction between situations and people, and in this example, people including women and *sādhus* are the objects of *kṣānti*, the characteristics of the definition of *kṣānti* still apply if one includes situations

The same process can also be followed with other passages where *kṣānti* is used in connection with *kṣatriyas*. As another example, in one episode, Draupadī censures Yudhiṣṭhira saying:

Most excellent of kings, friendliness towards all creatures, generous giving, study, asceticism – all this may be Law for a brahmin, but is not for a king. Restraining the wicked and protecting the pious, and not fleeing in war – this is the highest Law of kings. The man who has both patience [*kṣamā*] and anger, both fear and fearlessness, who both gives and takes, who both withholds and confers benefits, that man is regarded as one who knows Law [*dharma*].⁶⁵ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 194)

Here we see Draupadī describing the *dharma* for a king using the polysemic term *kṣānti*. Using the normative definitions of K₁ and K₂ *kṣānti*, it can be inferred that the *kṣānti*, in

involving particular people within the broader and widely defined group of agreeable and disagreeable situations.

⁶⁵ Śānti parvan, Chapter 14, Verses 15-17:

mitratā sarvabhūteṣu dānam adhyayanaṃ tapaḥ
brāhmaṇasyaiṣa dharmāḥ syān na rājño rājasattama
asatāṃ pratiṣedhaś ca satāṃ ca paripālanam
eṣa rājñāṃ paro dharmāḥ samare cāpalāyanam
yasmin kṣamā ca krodhaś ca dānādāne bhayābhaye
nigrahānugrahau cobhau sa vai dharmavid ucyate

this case, is K_2 *kṣānti*. Draupadī says that the king must be discriminatory in his action – for instance, he must be both patient and angry. This violates the definition of K_1 which is a non-discriminatory practice by virtue of being prescribed in all situations. This relationship between *kṣānti* and anger will be discussed in detail in a later section.

The examples above constitute only a small representative sample of cases where we see this distinction occur. Several more examples will be seen through the rest of the thesis which will further support these claims. These findings help make the distinction between the two types of *kṣānti* clearer. Based on the examples above it can be seen that K_1 is, in most cases, practiced by *sādhus* which includes *brāhmaṇas*, mendicants, *brahmacārins*, and *vancārins*, while K_2 *kṣānti* is practiced by *kṣatriyas*. There are exceptions, of course, as is to be expected from a text as large and heterogeneous as the *Mahābhārata*. But these exceptions are a minority. In an overwhelming majority of cases, this systematic differentiation between the two types of *kṣānti* is maintained.

This differentiation is important to note for it not only enhances our current scholarly understanding of the difference between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* in terms of how they are used in the *Mahābhārata* but also demonstrates that the difference between *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* described in a technical passage noted above was, in fact, more than just an abstraction; the usage of these terms throughout the epic reflects closely the definitions given there. Based on the findings of this section, the characteristics of K_1 and K_2 can now be updated:

Table 2: The differences between *kṣānti* [K1] and *titikṣā* [K2] (2)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K ₁]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K ₂]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sadhus</i>, <i>brāhmaṇas</i>, mendicants, <i>brahmacārins</i>, <i>vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma</i>, <i>artha</i>, and <i>lokasaṃgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i> • Practiced by <i>kṣatriyas</i>

1.2.3 Difference in duration

Armed with this powerful rubric to differentiate between K₁ and K₂, upon closely examining all instances of the use of the terms *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* in the *Mahābhārata*, four additional differences between them became clear. These differences are significant and further enhance our understanding of these two terms. In this section, I will discuss the first of these – the differing relationship of K₁ and K₂ with time - and delve into the rest of the differences in subsequent sections.

A significant difference between K₁ and K₂ is the duration of the act: K₁ is a permanent relinquishment of negative feelings while K₂ is the temporary control of one's anger while waiting for the right moment to strike back. Consider the following list of substantive examples that illustrate how this polarity is reflected in the *Mahābhārata*. I begin with examples of K₂ where the temporariness of the act is clear and prominent. Once this has been established, I will present examples of K₁ which suggest that it is a permanent act.

Consider the example where after the Pāṇdavas leave for the forest, Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks Vidura for his advice on what he should do. Vidura counsels him that he should return

the kingdom to the Pāṇdavas and condemn the deceit that took place in the dice game. Dhṛtarāṣṭra accuses Vidura of siding with the Pāṇdavas and dismisses him from the court. Vidura comes to the Pāṇdavas and informs them of his conversation with Dhṛtarāṣṭra. He then counsels the Pāṇdavas saying:

“The man who, sorely oppressed by his rivals,
Exerts his *kṣamāṃ*⁶⁶ and bides his time [*kālam upāsate*],
Slowly feeding his means as he feeds a fire,
That self-possessed man rules the earth by himself!”⁶⁷ (J. A. B. van
Buitenen, 1981, p. 233)

Here *kṣamā* occurs in conjunction with the words *kālam upāsate* (to bide one’s time). The implication here is that the practice of *kṣamā* is a temporary practice that the Pāṇdavas need to engage in while they bide their time, waiting for their period of forest exile to be completed. Furthermore, the passage gives us two clear indications of this case of *kṣamā* being K₂. First, the reason for practicing *kṣamā* is laid out clearly – to rule the earth. This reason falls within the category of *artha* and fits the definition of K₂. Second, based on the characteristics of K₂, we know that it is K₂ that is most commonly

⁶⁶ The term used by van Buitenen to translate *kṣam* has been omitted purposefully for the aforementioned reasons.

⁶⁷ Vanaparvan, Chapter 6, Verse 19

kleśais tīvrair yujyamānaḥ sapatnaiḥ; kṣamāṃ kurvan kālam upāsate yaḥ
saṃ vardhayan stokam ivāgnim ātmavān; sa vai bhūṅkte pṛthivīm eka eva

being referred to in the context of *kṣatriyas*. In this passage, since *kṣamā* is being prescribed by one *kṣatriya* to another, the thesis of this case of *kṣamā* being K_2 is further supported. The same two qualifications apply to all subsequent examples of K_2 in this section and will not be repeated in each case.

In another episode, Yudhiṣṭhira asks Bhīṣma how a king should behave towards his enemies. Bhīṣma replies, among other things, “After putting up with him for a long time [*dīrghakālam api kṣāntvā*], he may attack the enemy’s forces; while he waits for the right time, he should keep tight control over his own forces, so that his enemies might relax.”⁶⁸ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 428) Here, *kṣānti* occurs in conjunction with time [*kāla*] again and it is undoubtedly being prescribed only temporarily. Based on Bhīṣma’s words, it can be inferred that *kṣam* here has the meaning of temporarily ignoring an enemy. Clearly, in this case, K_2 is not a permanent act, but a temporary one. This instance of the use of *kṣamā* is also a case of K_2 based on the same criteria used in the previous example.

Similarly, in a scene paralleling the climax of the dice match in the *Sabhāparvan*, Draupadī is once again dragged to court in the middle of a dice match and assaulted. Again, her husbands look on and she urges them to do something. This incident occurs during the thirteenth year of the Pāṇḍava’s exile, which they spend incognito. Upon

⁶⁸ Śānti parvan, Chapter 104, Verse 17:

dīrghakālam api kṣāntvā vihanyād eva śātravān
kālākāṅkṣī yāmayec ca yathā visrambham āpnuyuḥ

seeing Draupadī's pain, Bhīma says, "Don't grieve, *kṣama*⁶⁹ this short time [*kālam*] that is left, just a month and a half. When the thirteenth year is full you shall be a king's queen!"⁷⁰ (Van Buitenen, 1983, p. 56) Once again there is no ambiguity here that Bhīma is urging Draupadī to practice *kṣamā* for a short time [*adīrgham kālam*], the remaining period of their exile.

Lastly consider the episode where Bhīṣma tries to mitigate a quarrel between Droṇa, Aśvatthāman, Karṇa, and Kṛpa saying: "let the Teacher's son be patient towards [*kṣamatām*] it, for a great task is at hand. You, the Teacher, and Kṛpa must be patient towards [*kṣantavyam*] everything, for this is no time [*nāyam kālo*] for strife when the Kaunteya is at hand!⁷¹... Let the Teacher's son be patient [*kṣamatām*]; this is not the

⁶⁹ The term used by van Buitenen to translate this word has been omitted.

⁷⁰ Virāṭa parvan, Chapter 20, Verses 13

mādīrgham kṣama kālam tvam māsam adhyardhasammitam

pūrṇe trayodaśe varṣe rājño rājñī bhaviṣyasi

⁷¹ Virāṭa parvan, Chapter 46, Verses 5-6 (Translation from Van Buitenen (1983, p. 96)

with modifications):

ācāryaputraḥ kṣamatām mahat kāryam upasthitam

nāyam kālo virodhasya kaunteye samupasthite

kṣantavyam bhavatā sarvam ācāryeṇa kṛpeṇa ca

time [*nāyaṃ kālaḥ*] for us to break up...”⁷² Over the course of his speech, twice Bhīṣma says that the reason why *kṣam* should be practiced at this point is that *this* is not the time for strife. We can infer from this that he is not asking his interlocutors to practice *kṣam* forever, but only temporarily, until the time for strife arises. Applying the criteria above, we can infer that this is a case of K_2 *kṣānti*. Such examples illustrate the repeated association of *kṣānti* with waiting and demonstrate that K_2 *kṣānti* is a temporary act.

In contrast, K_1 *kṣānti* can be inferred to be a permanent act or emotion. For example, consider the episode where Virāṭa and Yudhiṣṭhira argue during the Pāṇḍava’s time in disguise. Uttara, the son of Virāṭa has defeated Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Aśvatthāman, Kṛpa, Duryodhana, Karṇa due to Arjuna being his charioteer. King Virāṭa, still unaware of the Pāṇḍava’s true identity, praises his son for this victory. Yudhiṣṭhira, dicing with the king, continually praises Uttara’s charioteer (Arjuna in disguise). Virāṭa warns Yudhiṣṭhira to stop doing it, but Yudhiṣṭhira keeps doing it. Virāṭa strikes Yudhiṣṭhira in the face with his dice and threatens him to not do it again. Yudhiṣṭhira’s nose bleeds but he catches the blood in his hands so that it does not fall to the ground. After Virāṭa learns of the true identities of the Pāṇḍavas he says: “O lord of men, whatever has been said by us out of ignorance, it is appropriate for you to *kṣantum* all that, for this *Pāṇḍava* is a sage

⁷² Virāṭa parvan, Chapter 46, Verse 10 (Translation from Van Buitenen (1983, p. 96) with modifications):

ācāryaputraḥ kṣamatāṃ nāyaṃ kālaḥ svabhedane

[*dharmātmā*].”⁷³ Here we have a clear marker of this case of the use of *kṣānti* being K_1 despite the context being an interlocution between *kṣatriyas*. Virāṭa is explicitly overriding Yudhiṣṭhira’s status as a *kṣatriya* by calling him a *dharmātmā* – a righteous person - thereby categorizing him in the group of *sādhus*, the group that practices K_1 . Virāṭa says that by virtue of Yudhiṣṭhira being a *dharmātmā*, it is appropriate for Yudhiṣṭhira to *kṣantum* whatever wrong has been said. Based on this we can qualify this case of *kṣānti* as a case of K_1 *kṣānti*. Contrast this implied meaning of *kṣānti* here with all the examples of K_2 we have seen above where the practice of *kṣānti* was essentially temporary and a prelude to violence; in this case, we see no such indication. Instead, based on the context it seems like Virāṭa is requesting Yudhiṣṭhira to practice *kṣānti* towards him in perpetuity, not just temporarily.⁷⁴

Another example of a king asking someone else to practice K_1 can be seen when Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks his subjects to practice *kṣānti* towards him. He says, “O fortunate ones! O sinless ones! I have served you carefully. Whether those services have been good or bad, you must forgive [*kṣantavyam*] me.”⁷⁵ Here Dhṛtarāṣṭra asks his subjects to forgive

⁷³ Virāṭa parvan, Chapter 66, Verses 20

yad asmābhir ajānadbhiḥ kiṃ cid ukto narādhipaḥ
kṣantum arhati tat sarvaṃ dharmātmā hy eṣa pāṇḍavaḥ

⁷⁴ It is perhaps noteworthy that throughout the epic Yudhiṣṭhira is associated with K_1 and admonished not to embrace it.

⁷⁵ Āśramavāsikaparvan, Chapter 14, Verse 3

him [*kṣantavyam*]. In his plea for *kṣānti*, Dhṛtarāṣṭra repeatedly calls his subjects “sinless” [*anaghāḥ*] and “immensely fortunate ones” [*mahābhāgās*]. These adjectives place the subjects closer to the normative category of the practitioners of K_1 - *sādhus* – than to *kṣatriyas* and helps us interpret the use of *kṣānti* in this passage as K_1 . Having established that, we can now consider the question of whether K_1 in this case is a permanent or temporary action. Similar to the example above, we see no indication in this case that Dhṛtarāṣṭra is asking his subjects to forgive him temporarily; the context allows us to interpret the meaning of *kṣānti* here as a permanent and lasting act. Several more examples of the duration of K_1 and K_2 will be seen in subsequent sections, further strengthening this observation.

The examples seen in this section demonstrate that the duration of the practice of K_1 and K_2 *kṣānti* is a critical point of difference between them. While K_1 is a permanent act involving the end of negative feelings, K_2 is a temporary act with an element of waiting or biding time. These characteristics not only significantly advance our understanding of *kṣānti* but also inform us of the expansive range of acts included in this Sanskrit term.

Based on this point of difference we can update the list of differences between K_1 and K_2 *kṣānti* as follows:

Table 3: The differences between kṣānti [K1] and titikṣā [K2] (3)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K_1]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K_2]
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mayā ca bhavatāṃ samyak chuśrūṣā yā kṛtānaghāḥ

asamyag vā mahābhāgās tat kṣantavyam atandritaiḥ

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sadhus, brāhmaṇas, mendicants, brahmacārins, vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable • A permanent act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma, artha, and lokasaṃgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i> • Practiced by <i>kṣatriyas</i> • A temporary act characterized by waiting or biding time
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1.2.4 Different relationships with anger

Another notable difference between the two types of *kṣānti* is their differing relationship with anger. Anger was conceived to be the opposite of K_1 *kṣānti* and K_1 *kṣānti* and anger are frequently represented as mutually exclusive. Anger, however, has a more complex relationship, with K_2 . In K_2 , anger is suspended temporarily, lying dormant in wait. They are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist. In fact, as the examples below will illustrate, K_2 carries a fit of dormant anger along with it, and when one practices K_2 one incurs a debt towards that anger that eventually needs to be paid. I begin with a representative example of K_1 and its mutually exclusive relationship with anger. This episode tells the story of Gautamī, a virtuous lady, whose son is bitten by a serpent and dies. An angry Fowler named Arjunaka catches the serpent and asks the lady how it is to be punished. Gautamī replies, “There is no anger [*kopo*], in brāhmaṇas because anger leads to pain. O good man [*sādho*]! Forgive [*kṣamyatām*] and release this serpent out of compassion.⁷⁶ In this case, *kṣānti* clearly refers to K_1 since Gautamī’s

⁷⁶ Anuśāsanaparvan, Chapter 1, verse 20

clear reason for practicing *kṣānti* towards the serpent is that this is what virtuous people do [*brāhmaṇānām, sādho*]. Additionally, this statement establishes a clear relationship between K_1 and anger. Gautamī tells the fowler to practice *kṣamā* towards the snake and simultaneously says that there is no anger [*kopa*] among virtuous people who practice *kṣamā*. This suggests a mutually exclusive relationship between anger and K_1 . Moreover, note the permanency implied in the practice of *kṣānti* here, by the mention that the serpent should be released [*mucyatām*].

Contrary to this, the relationship between K_2 and anger is complex. Consider the following verse that was spoken by Yayāti when Indra questioned him about Puru: "When abused, do not abuse. The wrath [*manyur*] of a forbearing [*titikṣataḥ*] man burns the abuser and reaps all his good deeds."⁷⁷ (van Buitenen, 2011, p. 197) The use of the term *titikṣā* makes it clear that this is K_2 . The phrase "wrath [*manyur*] of a forbearing [*titikṣataḥ*] man" suggests that a forbearing man, or one who practices K_2 , also possesses anger. This suggests a co-existence between anger and K_2 .

na brāhmaṇānām kopo 'sti kutaḥ kopāc ca yātanā

mārdavāt kṣamyatām sādho mucyatām eṣa pannagaḥ

⁷⁷ Ādiparvan, Chapter 82, verse 7

ākruśyamāno nākrośen manyur eva titikṣataḥ

ākroṣṭāraṃ nirdahati sukṛtaṃ cāsya vindati

Take another example of K_2 , where Arjuna describes himself as follows: “Is there anyone who is like me in *kṣamā*? There is no one who is my equal in anger [*krodha*].”⁷⁸ Once again, this shows that anger and K_2 are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist.

Moreover, in this case, both anger and K_2 *kṣānti* are presented as virtues.

Another passage sheds further light on their relationship and further makes clear that anger that is controlled will in the end claim its due. Before killing Karṇa, Arjuna says: “O Kṛṣṇa! Today, I will be rid of the debt [*anṛṇaḥ*] I owe to all my bowmen, to my anger [*krodhasya*], to the *Kurus*, to my spears, and to *Gāṇḍīva*. Today, I will be free from the sorrow I have borne for thirteen years...”⁷⁹ We have already examples above of how the Pāṇḍavas practiced K_2 *kṣānti* temporarily while waiting in the forest for thirteen years. In this passage, we learn that while doing so, Arjuna believes he accrued a debt towards his anger which was finally repaid at this moment.

Yudhiṣṭhira holds the same belief, for after he learns that Bhīma killed Duryodhana, he tells Bhīma, “King Suyodhana has ceased his hostility and has been slain! We have conquered the earth by following Krishna’s advice! How marvelous that you have paid

⁷⁸ Karṇaparvan, Chapter 52, Verse 30:

ko vāpy anyo matsamo 'sti kṣamāyām; tathā krodhe sadṛśo 'nyo na me 'sti

⁷⁹ Karṇaparvan, Chapter 52, Verse 23-24:

adyāham anṛṇaḥ kṛṣṇa bhaviṣyāmi dhanurbhṛtām

krodhasya ca kurūṇām ca śarāṇām gāṇḍīvasya ca

adya duḥkham ahaṃ mokṣye trayodaśasamārjitam

off your debt [*ānṛṇyam*], to both your mother and your anger [*kopasya*]!”⁸⁰ (Meiland, 2007, p. 341) Here, once again we see the idea that one accrues a debt towards one’s suppressed anger. Hence, we get a sense that K₂ carries anger along with it, and when one practices K₂, one must in the end give that anger its due.

Lastly, consider another example where the same phenomenon occurs when

Vaiśampāyana narrates a summary of the *Mahābhārata* at Vyāsa’s order:

“The sons of Pṛ̥tha dwelled there for many years and brought other kings under their sway by the might of their swords. And thus they lived, always bent solely upon the Law, faithful in their promises, arising with alertness, forbearing [*kṣāntāḥ*], and punishing [*pratapanto*] their ill-wishers.”⁸¹ (van Buitenen, 2011, p. 128)

⁸⁰ Śalya parvan, Chapter 59, verse 43-44:

gataṃ vairasya nidhanaṃ hato rājā suyodhanaḥ
kṛṣṇasya matam āsthāya vijiteyaṃ vasuṃdharā
diṣṭyā gatas tvam **ānṛṇyam** mātuh **kopasya** cobhayoh

⁸¹ Ādiparvan, Chapter 55, Verse 26-27

tatra te nyavasan rājan saṃvatsaragaṇān bahūn
vaśe śastrapratāpena kurvanto 'nyān mahīkṣitaḥ
evaṃ dharmapradhānās te satyavrataparāyaṇāḥ
apramattothitāḥ kṣāntāḥ pratapanto 'hitāṃs tadā

Once again, it can be seen that the Pāṇḍavas, all of whom are *kṣatriyas*, being described as both - *kṣāntāḥ* and *pratapanto*. This implies that *kṣānti* and *pratapana* are both expressing virtues for a *kṣatriya* and co-exist. Additional examples of this dyadic relationship between the two types of *kṣānti* and anger will be seen later.

These findings are not only consistent with the typology of K_1 and K_2 we have seen so far but lend further support to it. The relationship between K_1 and anger complements its characteristic of involving the permanent annihilation of negative emotions seen in the previous section. The relationship between K_2 and anger complements K_2 's characteristic of being a temporary act with an element of waiting or biding time. Based on these additional findings, the updated list of characteristics of K_1 and K_2 is as follows:

Table 4: The differences between kṣānti [K1] and titikṣā [K2] (4)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K_1]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K_2]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sadhus</i>, <i>brāhmaṇas</i>, mendicants, <i>brahmacārins</i>, <i>vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable • A permanent act • Mutually exclusive with anger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma</i>, <i>artha</i>, and <i>lokasaṃgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i> • Practiced by <i>kṣatriyas</i> • A temporary act characterized by waiting or biding time • Not mutually exclusive with anger, violence, and punishment

1.2.5 Different relationships with *dharma*

Furthermore, in the *Mahābhārata*, there are two different types of relationships between *kṣānti* and *dharma*. The practice of K_1 *kṣānti* is always considered *dharmic*,

while the practice of K₂ *kṣānti* is not always *dharmic*, sometimes it is *adharmic*. I will illustrate this dichotomy through the use of a few examples.

The relationship between K₁ *kṣānti* and *dharma* can be seen clearly in Yudhiṣṭhira's speech during the forest debate⁸². In the following examples, notice the emphasis on the word "always":

Thus both the strong and the weak, they say, should always [*nityadā*]
forgive [*kṣantavyaṃ*], even in distress, when they have this knowledge.
For the good [*sādhavaḥ*] praise in this world the suppression of anger,
Kṛṣṇā! Victory belongs to the good man [*sādhor*] who possesses *ksamā*.
This is the opinion of the virtuous⁸³... a man when insulted, beaten and
angered by a stronger man forbears [*kṣamate*] it, and always [*nityaṃ*]
keeps his anger under control, he is a sage and a superior person [*vidvān*

⁸² This is a widely discussed debate that occurs between Draupadī, Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīmasena in the *Aranyakaparvan* [Mbh 3.28 – 3.37] where *kṣānti* is a recurring and prominent theme. The entire debate will be analysed in detail in a later section.

⁸³ 03,030.013a Vanaparvan, chapter 30, verses 13-14

tasmād balavatā caiva durbalena ca nityadā
kṣantavyaṃ puruṣeṇāhur āpatsv api vijānatā
manyor hi vijayaṃ kṛṣṇe praśamsantīha sādavaḥ
kṣamāvato jayo nityaṃ sādhor iha satāṃ matam

uttamapūruṣaḥ]...⁸⁴ A man of wisdom [*vijānatā*] should always [*sarvaṃ*] forgive [*kṣantavyam*]: for when he bears everything, he becomes Brahman...⁸⁵ This is the way of those who have mastered themselves [*ātmavatām*], this their eternal [*sanātanaḥ*] Law, to be patient [*kṣamā*] and gentle, and thus I shall act!⁸⁶ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, pp. 278-279)

Throughout this speech, it is clear that Yudhiṣṭhira is referring to K₁ *kṣānti* since he is proclaiming this in the context of sages, as can be inferred by his usage of words like *sādhavaḥ*, *sādhora*, *vijānatā*, *vidvān*, *uttamapūruṣaḥ*, *ātmavatām* and so on. These examples illustrate that the practice of K₁ was advocated in every case, at all times, and towards all people. It is always *dharmic* to practice K₁. There is no instance in which the practice of K₁ becomes *adharmic*.

⁸⁴ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 33

ākruṣṭas tāḍitaḥ kruddhaḥ kṣamate yo balīyasā
yaś ca nityaṃ jitakrodho vidvān uttamapūruṣaḥ

⁸⁵ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 41

kṣantavyam eva satataṃ puruṣeṇa vijānatā
yadā hi kṣamate sarvaṃ brahma saṃpadyate tadā

⁸⁶ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 50

etad ātmavatām vṛttam eṣa dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
kṣamā caivānṛśaṃsyaṃ ca tat kartāsmi aham añjasā

This is not the case, however, with K₂. We have already seen plenty of examples of K₂ being time-sensitive and temporary. Consider the following cases where *kṣānti* is explicitly called *adharmic*. In one dialogue Bhiṣma tells Yudhishtira,

Not taking what has not been given, making gifts, the recitation of texts, asceticism, not injuring others, truthfulness, having no anger, forbearance [*kṣamā*], worshiping the Gods with sacrifices—this is a specification of Law. But what is Lawful [*dharma*] and Meritorious may be Unlawful [*adharmā*] when it is applied at the wrong time or in the wrong place; and tradition teaches that stealing, lying, and doing injury [*hiṃsā*] to others are Lawful [*dharma*] in some specific circumstances...⁸⁷

(Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 250)

In another instance Bhiṣma reiterates the same line of thinking, saying:

But you must not be indulgent [*kṣāntena*] all the time, most excellent of men. A gentle king [*mṛdū*] is not a Lawful king; he is like an elephant that is gentle [*kṣamāvān*]... A lowly person might humiliate a king who is

⁸⁷ Śānti parvan, Chapter 36, Verses 7-8:

adattasyānupādānaṃ dānam adhyayanaṃ tapaḥ

ahiṃsā satyam **akrodhaḥ kṣamejyā** dharmalakṣaṇam

ya eva dharmah so 'dharmo 'deṣe 'kāle pratiṣṭhitaḥ

ādānam anṛtaṃ **hiṃsā** dharmo vyāvasthikaḥ smṛtaḥ

always indulgent [*kṣamamāṇam*], like the elephant driver who will mount his elephant by climbing right up on its head.⁸⁸ (Fitzgerald, 2004b, p. 298)

Here the implication is that a king who is always practicing *kṣamā* would be unlawful or *adharmic*. Bhiṣma clearly espouses that at certain times and certain occasions, it is actually *adharmic* for a king to practice K_1 *kṣānti*. Instead he should only practice K_2 *kṣānti*, which is necessarily a temporary act and leaves room for violence and anger (as seen above).

Several more examples of the dichotomous relationship between the two meanings of *kṣānti* and *dharma* will be discussed in subsequent sections.

Based on these findings the list of characteristics of K_1 and K_2 *kṣānti* can be updated as follows:

⁸⁸ Śānti parvan, Chapter 56, Verses 37-40:

na ca kṣāntena te bhāvyaṃ nityaṃ puruṣasattama
adharmyo hi mṛdū rājā kṣamāvān iva kuñjaraḥ
bārhaspatye ca śāstre vai ślokā viniyatāḥ purā
asminn arthe mahārāja tan me nigadataḥ śṛṇu
kṣamamāṇaṃ nṛpaṃ nityaṃ nīcaḥ paribhavej janaḥ
hastiyantā gajasyeva śira evārurukṣati
tasmān naiva mṛdur nityaṃ tīkṣṇo vāpi bhaven nṛpaḥ
vasante 'rka iva śrīmān na śīto na ca gharmadaḥ

Table 5: The differences between *kṣānti* [K1] and *titikṣā* [K2] (5)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K ₁]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K ₂]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sadhus</i>, <i>brāhmaṇas</i>, mendicants, <i>brahmacārins</i>, <i>vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable • A permanent act • Mutually exclusive with anger • Always considered Lawful [<i>dharmic</i>] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma</i>, <i>artha</i>, and <i>lokasaṃgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i> • Practiced by <i>kṣatriyas</i> • A temporary act characterized by waiting or biding time • Not mutually exclusive with anger, violence, and punishment • Can be lawful [<i>dharmic</i>] or unlawful [<i>undharmic</i>] based on the circumstances

1.2.6 Different perceptions of *kṣānti* as a strength or weakness

Lastly, there is also a difference between the perceptions of K₁ and K₂ *kṣānti* as a strength or weakness. While the practice of K₁ *kṣānti* is always considered a strength, the practice of K₂ *kṣānti* can sometimes be considered a weakness depending on the specific circumstances.

Examples of statements where *kṣamā* is cited as a strength are numerous. Consider the story in which *Kauśika* (a *brahman*) preaches, “Kindliness is the highest Law, forbearance the greatest strength [*kṣamā ca paramaṃ balam*], self-knowledge the highest knowledge, the vow of truthfulness the highest vow.”⁸⁹ (J. A. B. van Buitenen,

⁸⁹ Vana parvan, chapter 203, verse 41

ānṛśaṃsyaṃ paro dharmāḥ kṣamā ca paramaṃ balam

1981, p. 632) In another instance Vidura preaches, “Of the evil, harm is the strength; of kings authority; of women obedience; of the virtuous forgiveness [*kṣamā guṇavatām balam*]”⁹⁰ (van Buitenen, 2011, p. 264). A third example can be found in the well-known episode of Vasiṣṭha, Nandinī and Viśvāmitra, where Viśvāmitra, the prince of Kanyakubja, is out hunting when he comes across Vasiṣṭha’s hermitage and sees his cow Nandinī. He offers to buy the cow but Vasiṣṭha refuses to sell her even in exchange for the whole kingdom. Vasiṣṭha, the brahmin, describes himself as “a forgiving [*kṣamāvān*] brahmin”⁹¹ and says, “a baron's strength is his energy, a brahmin's strength his forbearance [*kṣamā*]. Forbearance [*kṣamā*] possesses [*bhajate*] me; therefore, go if you wish”⁹² (van Buitenen, 2011, p. 332). All the above examples are in the context of

ātmaññānaṃ paraṃ jñānaṃ paraṃ satyavrataṃ vratam

⁹⁰ Udyoga parvan, chapter 34, verse 72

hiṃsā balam asādhūnāṃ rājñāṃ daṇḍavidhir balam

śuśrūṣā tu balaṃ strīṇāṃ kṣamā guṇavatām balam

⁹¹ Ādi parva, chapter 165, verse 24

balād dhriyasi me nandi kṣamāvān brāhmaṇo hy aham

⁹² Ādi parva, chapter 165, verse 26-28

pāṣāṇadaṇḍābhihatām krandantīm mām anāthavat

viśvāmitrabalair ghorair bhagavan kim upekṣase

gandharva uvāca

evaṃ tasyām tadā partha dharṣitāyām mahāmuniḥ

brahmans, hence implying that they referring to K₁ *kṣānti*, and in all these examples, *kṣamā* is cited as a strength.

In the case of *kṣatriyas*, we see the notion that *kṣānti* is perceived as a weakness. For example, Vidura's says to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, "The forgiving [*kṣamāvatām*] have one flaw, none other is found: people think that the forgiving man is incompetent [*aśaktaṃ*]"⁹³ (Van Buitenen, 1983, p. 124).

While in this case the perception of *kṣānti* being a weakness is stated directly, in some cases the assumption of its being a weakness is implied indirectly. For example, when Śalya tells Karṇa he will be killed if he battles Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, Karṇa says, "I can kill a hundred people like you, but I forgive [*kṣamāmi*] you due to these circumstances [*kālayogāt*]." ⁹⁴ Here we see Karṇa making it clear before forgiving Śalya that he is

na cukṣubhe na dhairyāc ca vicacāla dhṛtavrataḥ

vasiṣṭha uvāca

kṣatriyāṇām balaṃ tejo brāhmaṇānām kṣamā balam

kṣamā māṃ bhajate tasmād gamyatām yadi rocate

⁹³ Udyoga parva, chapter 33, verse 47

ekaḥ kṣamāvatām doṣo dvitīyo nopalabhyate

yad enaṃ kṣamayā yuktam aśaktaṃ manyate janaḥ

⁹⁴ Karṇaparvan, Chapter 29, Verse 20:

hanyām ahaṃ tādṛśānām śatāni; kṣamāmi tvām kṣamayā kālayogāt

stronger and can easily kill him. This suggests that there is an implicit assumption of forgiveness being linked with weakness, which Karṇa feels the need to deny.

Based on these findings, the characteristics of K₁ and K₂ *kṣānti* can be updated, resulting in a detailed and nuanced understanding of the differences between the two meanings:

Table 6: The differences between *kṣānti* [K1] and *titikṣā* [K2] (6)

<i>Kṣānti</i> [K ₁]	<i>Titikṣā</i> [K ₂]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practiced by <i>sādhus</i>, <i>brāhmaṇas</i>, mendicants, <i>brahmacārins</i>, <i>vanacārins</i> • Practiced in every situation – with respect to what is agreeable and disagreeable • A permanent act • Mutually exclusive with anger • Always considered Lawful [<i>dharmic</i>] • Considered a strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A type of <i>kṣānti</i> • Practiced for the purpose of <i>dharma</i>, <i>artha</i>, and <i>lokasaṃgrahaṇa</i> • Obtained through <i>dhairya</i> • Practiced by <i>kṣatriyas</i> • A temporary act characterized by waiting or biding time • Not mutually exclusive with anger, violence, and punishment • Can be lawful [<i>dharmic</i>] or unlawful [<i>undharmic</i>] based on the circumstances • Perceived as a weakness

1.2.7 Summary

It is remarkable that across a work as textured and layered as the *Mahābhārata*, the dual meanings of *kṣānti* are so consistently discernable. It is furthermore remarkable that the various characteristics of the two types of *kṣānti* unraveled here complement each other. Based on the extensive analysis in the section, K₁ *kṣānti* can be summarized as a permanent, *dharmic* act which is practiced by *sādhus* in every situation, is mutually exclusive with anger, and is a strength. On the other hand, K₂ *kṣānti*, is a type of *kṣānti* practiced by *kṣatriyas* which involves waiting for the right time; it is not mutually

exclusive with anger or violence, can be *dharmic* or *undharmic* based on the circumstances and is often perceived as a weakness.

Having elucidated the meanings of K_1 and K_2 *kṣānti* comprehensively, I will now discuss issues that arise when scholars attempt to translate the term *kṣānti* in several English translations of the *Mahābhārata* and share my perspective on how best to navigate such issues in future translations.

1.2.8 Translating *kṣānti*

The analysis above hopefully makes it clear that when *kṣānti* is used in the *Mahābhārata* it could be referring to one of two different things. Hence, to understand the text correctly, the reader needs to know which of the two meanings of *kṣānti* is being intended in the given context. In extant translations of the *Mahābhārata*, this difference does not come across clearly as a large number of terms are being used to translate *kṣānti* and there is no consistency or logic behind the erratic and frequent change of terms used to translate *kṣānti*. This is regrettable since the meaning of the passage changes greatly based on the choice of English word used to translate it. To overcome these challenges persistent across all extant translations of the *Mahābhārata*, I propose a logical and simple method for choosing and applying an English word to translate *kṣānti* based on the context where it appears. The suggestions made in this

section are based on the principles of translation theory⁹⁵ and draw primarily from my study of the term *kṣānti* and *titikṣā* across the *Mahābhārata*.

There are several approaches a translator could take for translating the technical term '*kṣānti*' in the *Mahābhārata*. I classify these broadly into four categories: (1) leaving *kṣānti* untranslated, (2) using a single English word to translate *kṣānti* across the epic, (3) using a few (two-three) different words to translate *kṣānti*, (4) or using several (more than four) words to translate it across the epic.

I begin by discussing the option of leaving *kṣānti* untranslated and argue that this approach is sub-optimal and impractical. This approach has been adopted occasionally by scholars such as Barbara Nelson (2011) who chose to leave '*kṣānti*' untranslated in her translation of the *kṣāntipāramitā* of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. She justified her decision saying that "[a]s one aim of the thesis was to determine the scope of *kṣānti*, it seemed premature to burden it with an English equivalent that would not encompass the range of meanings that *kṣānti* has in Mahayana Buddhism." [88] Theoretically, if one were to capture the precise meaning of the word *kṣānti* in English, one would have to do what Nelson did, for it is nearly impossible for any word in a foreign language to capture the exact meaning of a technical term in another language. But in practice, translation is more subjective and when translating texts like the *Mahābhārata* it would be impractical to leave every technical term such as *kṣānti* untranslated. Since the analysis

⁹⁵ For an overview of translation theory and its application to a Sanskrit text, see Nelson (2011).

above on the two meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* has revealed important insights, I disfavor the use of this approach by translators of the *Mahābhārata* and instead favor an approach where the term is translated and the English word used to do so effectively communicates as close as is possible the precise meaning of this term.

The optimal solution, in my opinion, is to consistently use two different terms to translate *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* – one word to translate K₁ and a second to translate K₂. Using two different terms to translate each of the two meanings of *kṣānti* would make it easier for readers to differentiate between the two meanings of *kṣānti* and avoid the considerable confusion that has stemmed from them being translated with the same English word in several translations. At the same time, limiting the range of words used to translate *kṣānti* would make the use of this term across the *Mahābhārata* easier to track, and make arguments involving *kṣānti* easier to follow⁹⁶. Having examined a wide range of English words to fit the two meanings of *kṣānti*, I propose that “forgiveness” be used to translate K₁ and “patience” be used to translate K₂.

Forgiveness is generally defined by dictionaries as to “stop feeling angry or resentful towards (someone) for an offense, flaw, or mistake.”⁹⁷ There are two keywords in this definition, each of which captures one unique characteristic of K₁ *kṣānti*. The first is

⁹⁶ This is particularly true for lengthy and complex arguments involving the term *kṣānti* such as the “*kṣānti*” debate which will be analysed in detail in the next section.

⁹⁷ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/forgive>

“stop” and it implies that forgiveness entails the permanent end of negative feelings. In the previous section, we have discussed how one of the defining characteristics of K_1 is that it is “a permanent act involving the relinquishment of negative feelings.” This permanency inherent in K_1 is captured well by this aspect of forgiveness. The second keyword in the definition of forgiveness is “anger.” Forgiveness is defined as the cessation of “anger” and this reflects the key characteristic of K_1 – the exclusion of anger. These two factors make “forgiveness” the perfect choice for the translation of K_1 .

“Forgiveness,” however, would not be a suitable candidate to translate K_2 for two reasons. First, the permanent abolishment of negative feelings contradicts K_2 ’s temporal aspect. Since K_2 clearly means waiting for the right time or biding time, forgiveness would convey a wholly different meaning to the act. Second, by definition, since forgiveness involves the abolishment of anger and retaliation, it would be inaccurate in all instances where we see K_2 occurring alongside anger, violence, punishment, and war. Despite these inaccuracies, I have observed that “forgiveness” is one of the most popular words used to translate K_2 in all extant translations of the *Mahābhārata*. Such cases of translation are problematic and imprecise, for they distort the meaning of the text grossly.

When it comes to translating K_2 , I propose two different options – “tolerance” and “patience” - each of which has its own merits. “Tolerance” means to “allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of (something that one dislikes or disagrees with)

without interference.”⁹⁸ This definition states that tolerance has two essential characteristics: first, that the thing being tolerated is considered disagreeable, and second that its objectionableness is countered by some acceptance (denoted by the words “allow” and “without interference”), which does not nullify the negative judgment towards the thing considered objectionable, but simply trumps the negative reasons in the present context. This implies that the meaning of tolerance is very different from the meaning of forgiveness I discussed above which involves nullifying the negative attitudes towards the thing considered wrong or bad. Since in the case of “tolerance” the agent finds the deed disagreeable and still “allows” it without “interfering,” the act of tolerance implies the existence of a reason for the passive acceptance of the objectionable deed. This reason for acceptance which trumps the objectionableness of the wrong deed parallels the first characteristic of K_2 – that it is practiced for a particular purpose.

The second alternative for translating K_2 is “patience.” “Patience” is semantically similar to tolerance, as it also contains a component of acceptance that warrants a temporary suspension of negative judgment towards the thing being considered objectionable.

Patience is commonly defined as “the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.”⁹⁹ Inherent in the meaning of “patience” is the element of time denoted by the word “delay”, which forms the most

⁹⁸ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/tolerate>

⁹⁹ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/patience>

essential component of its definition. This makes “patience” another viable candidate for the translation of K_2 , particularly potent in capturing the temporal aspect of K_2 . It may be further noted that forgiveness, on the other hand, is bound by permanency. Hence, on a scale of temporality, forgiveness and patience are on opposing ends of the spectra. I recommend the translator make a choice between “tolerance” and “patience” based on which aspect of K_2 is being highlighted in the given context. If the agent’s act of restraining himself is most prominent in the given context, I recommend the use of “tolerance,” while if the temporariness of the act of K_2 is the main element of the context, “patience” would be a more suitable choice.

Yet one needs to be careful in using these terms to translate *kṣānti*. There are some important differences that need to be noted in order to prevent a cultural appropriation of the western understanding of these terms into the *Mahābhārata* which can lead to misunderstandings. For example, the western understanding of “forgiveness” is usually conditional, i.e. it is usually given by the agent after an apology or show of remorse by the wrongdoer. Forgiveness in the *Mahābhārata*, however, seems to be unconditional – there are no conditions placed on the wrongdoer prior to the practice of *kṣānti*. Yet, in western philosophy “unconditional forgiveness” is a relatively new concept and it was not until recently that Garrard and McNaughton (2003) coined the term “unconditional forgiveness” to refer to “morally positive forgiveness that doesn’t depend on the actions or attitudes of the wrongdoer.” If a reader were to assume that the conditionality often implicit within the western notion of forgiveness can also be applied to the *Mahābhārata*, it would likely lead to a misunderstanding of the text. Take, for example,

Narayana's (2001) analysis of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*, where she says "in the epic *Mahābhārata*, when the Kaurava princes dishonor the queen Draupadī in a royal court and exult about it, she does not forgive them. Nor is there expectancy that she would forgive them when there is no repentance on their side." Her assumption of Draupadī not forgiving the Kaurvas due to a lack of repentance on their part is baseless since this reason is not given anywhere in the practice of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. More importantly, "tolerance" and not "forgiveness" would be a more accurate term to describe the Pāṇḍava's practice of *kṣānti* towards the Kauravas, since the practice is temporary.

In the rest of my thesis, I will use the translation rubric set forth above and translate all instances of K_1 *kṣānti* as "forgiveness" and instances of K_2 *kṣānti* as "patience" or "tolerance" depending on the context.

1.3 REVALUATING THE "KṢĀNTI DEBATE"

Having examined the two meanings of *kṣānti* as it is used in the *Mahābhārata*, in this section I will demonstrate the immense usefulness of these findings by re-evaluating a long and important debate that occurs between Draupadī, Yudhiṣṭhira and Bhīmasena in the *Āraṇyakaparvan* where *kṣānti* is a recurring and prominent theme. This debate has received a lot of scholarly attention (Bailey, 1985, pp. 150-157; Biardeau, 2002, pp. 423–426, 437–444; Hill, 2001, pp. 168-178; Hildebeitel, 2001, 2011a; Malinar, 2007) with scholars focusing on different elements of the debate. A common challenge faced by scholars is the translation of the term *kṣānti* in this debate. For example, indicating the

difficulty in translating *kṣamā* in this debate, in one instance Biardeau translates *kṣamā* as “patience” but says it could mean “forgiveness” as well.¹⁰⁰ Following this, throughout her translation she straddles between forgiveness and patience, not following any apparent pattern. In one odd instance, she also uses both terms together to translate *kṣamā* [426]. Van Buitenen similarly uses a wide range of words to translate *kṣānti*, without consistency or apparent patterns. Using the findings above, I will translate *kṣānti* more accurately in each instance of its occurrence in this debate and subsequently re-evaluate the current scholarly understanding of this debate.

1.3.1 Draupadī’s plea [Mbh3.28 and 3.29]

The “*kṣānti* debate” starts in chapter 28 of the third book of the *Mahābhārata* and goes on in the subsequent nine chapters, all the way through chapter 37. The debate takes place in the forest while the Pāṇḍavas are in exile, planning their next move. Draupadī starts this debate by debating with Yudhiṣṭhira, and eventually, Bhīmasena joins the debate too, taking Draupadī’s side. Despite receiving ample scholarly attention, the crux of the debate itself is highly misunderstood by scholars.

The debate starts with Draupadī narrating all the hardships faced by the *Pāṇḍavas* in the forest and asking Yudhiṣṭhira why he does not get angry:

¹⁰⁰ She says “une sorte d'hymne à la patience – *kṣama* -, qui peut être aussi le pardon....” (Biardeau, 2002, p. 423).

“Surely there is no anger [*manyur*] left in you, you the best of the Bharatas, if you can look at your brothers and at me, and your heart feels no qualms! But there is no baron [*kṣatriyo*] known in the world without anger [*nirmanyuh*], without challenge; in you, a baron [*kṣatriye*], I now see the opposite. A baron [*kṣatriyaḥ*] who does not show his authority [*tejaḥ*] when the moment comes [*kāla āgate*] all creatures will despise forever after, Pārtha! Don't show patience [*kṣamā*] to your enemies under any conditions, for with authority alone you can cut them down, no doubt of that! Even so, the baron [*kṣatriyo*] who does not give in when it is time for forgiveness [*kṣamākāle*] is hated by all creatures and perishes here and hereafter.”¹⁰¹ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 275)

¹⁰¹ Vana parvan, chapter 28, verses 33-37

nūnaṃ ca tava naivāsti manyur bharatasattama
yat te bhrātṛiṃś ca māṃ caiva dṛṣṭvā na vyathate manaḥ
na nirmanyuhḥ kṣatriyo 'sti loke nirvacanaṃ smṛtam
tad adya tvayi paśyāmi kṣatriye viparītavat
yo na darśayate tejaḥ kṣatriyaḥ kāla āgate
sarvabhūtāni taṃ pārtha sadā paribhavanty uta
tat tvayā na kṣamā kāryā śatrūn prati kathaṃ cana
tejasaiva hi te śakyā nihantuṃ nātra saṃśayaḥ

Here, it can be inferred that Draupadī is describing K₂ based on three strong indications. First, the context is that of *kṣatriyas*, and more importantly, Draupadī's main emphasis is on the fact that Yudhiṣṭhira is a *kṣatriya*. In this small passage itself, she mentions Yudhiṣṭhira's *varṇa* four times. Her argument here is that Yudhiṣṭhira must not practice *kṣānti* because he is a *kṣatriya*. Second, the temporal aspect of K₂ *kṣānti* is explicitly emphasized by her. She says that there is a time for *kṣamā* [*kṣamākāle*] and vice versa. Third, this passage records anger as a virtue, for Draupadī taunts Yudhiṣṭhira saying "Surely there is no anger [*manyur*] left in you."¹⁰² Therefore, a good translation of *kṣānti* in this verse would be "tolerance", not "forgiveness", which is what van Buitenen has chosen. Re-reading Draupadī's argument by substituting "forgiveness" with "tolerance" will make the passage more coherent and clearer:

Surely there is no anger left in you, you the best of the Bharatas, if you can look at your brothers and at me, and your heart feels no qualms! But there is no *kṣatriya* known in the world without anger, without challenge; in you, a *kṣatriya*, I now see the opposite. A *kṣatriya* who does not show his fierceness when the moment comes all creatures will despise forever after, Pārtha! Don't show even a trace of tolerance to your enemies, for

tathaiva yaḥ kṣamākāle kṣatriyo nopaśāmyati

apriyaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ so 'mutreha ca naśyati

¹⁰² Malinar (2007, p. 81) also observes that for Draupadī "*manyu*" is positive in this context.

with authority alone you can cut them down, no doubt of that! Likewise, the *kṣatriya* who does not give in when it is time for tolerance is hated by all creatures and perishes here and hereafter. (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 275)

Further evidence to support the reading of *kṣānti* here as K_2 comes from Malinar's analysis of the use of the word *manyu* in this passage. Citing Malamoud (2016) she says that "*manyu* is not just another word for *krodha* or *kopa*, that is, anger as a passion or transient emotion. Rather, *manyu* is regarded as an essential quality and capacity of (royal) gods like Indra or Varuna, which allows them to maintain their status and enact their power... in this sense it can also be applied to warriors." If Malinar and Malamoud's arguments are correct, and in this case, I think they are, *manyu* here is an essential *kṣatriya* quality. Malinar also rightly observes that the point of emphasis in this passage is the *kṣatriya* varṇa of Yudhiṣṭhira to which he is not adhering.¹⁰³

However, unaware of the two different meanings of *kṣānti*, Malinar is left confused by certain statements made by Draupadī and incorrectly analyses them. For instance, she calls the last sentence ("Even so, the baron [*kṣatriyo*] who does not give in when it is time for forgiveness [*kṣamākāle*] is hated by all creatures and perishes here and

¹⁰³ She says, "at the very end of the paper, in the last *śloka* (3.28.37), Draupadī's complaint is suspended by the authors, or later redactors, by her statement that sometimes forgiveness (*kṣamā*) is called for." [83]

hereafter.”) uttered by Draupadī “unexpected” [81] and mistakenly assumes that it contradicts the rest of Draupadī’s speech.¹⁰⁴ Her confusion is a result of taking the statement out of context. This statement needs to be read along with the previous line. The use of the connecting word *tathaiva* supports the interpretation of reading the two lines together. Since *tathaiva* means “likewise” (as I have translated it) or “in a similar way,” the two sentences clearly complement each other, as I have interpreted them, rather than contradict each other, as Malinar assumes. In fact, the two lines put together constitute the conventional meaning of K₂ for they state that at certain times *kṣatriyas* should practice *kṣānti*, and at certain times they should not. Similar descriptions of the situational use of *kṣānti* have been seen above.

The same misunderstanding also leads Malinar to misinterpret 3.29 which contains the story of Prahlāda and Bali Vairocana. In 3.29 Bali asks his father, “What is better, father, to tolerate¹⁰⁵ [*kṣamā*] or to be fierce?”¹⁰⁶ (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p.

¹⁰⁴ Vana parvan, chapter 28, verse 37

tathaiva yaḥ kṣamākāle kṣatriyo nopāśāmyati
apriyaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ so 'mutreha ca naśyati

¹⁰⁵ In this verse van Buitenen translates *kṣama* as “forgiveness.” But it amply clear that the two warriors are discussing K₂ based on the context. Hence I have left van Buitenen’s incorrect translation out and replaced it with “tolerance.”

¹⁰⁶ Vana parvan, chapter 29, verse 3

275) The father says, “Revenge is not always better, but neither is tolerance [*kṣamā*]; learn to know them both, son, so that there be no problem.”¹⁰⁷ (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 276) Malinar interprets this as a “diplomatic answer” [81] given by Prahlāda. However, as is well established at this point, this presentation of *kṣānti* is the normative understanding of K₂ and completely consistent with its characteristics. K₂ is a characteristically temporary act. Since it involves biding time or waiting for the right moment to strike one’s enemies, there is no contradiction, confusion, ambiguity, or diplomacy in what Prahlāda is saying. He is simply telling his son that he needs to learn tolerance and revenge, as there is a right time for both.

Most concerning of all is the conclusion drawn by her about the historicity of this section, based on this misunderstanding of *kṣānti*. She says

“From a text-historical perspective 3.29 could be regarded as an interpolation because the last verse of the previous section (3.28.37)¹⁰⁸ is

kṣamā svic chreyasī tāta utāho teja ity uta
etan me saṃśayaṃ tāta yathāvad brūhi pṛcchate

¹⁰⁷ Vana parvan, chapter 29, verse 6

na śreyaḥ satataṃ tejo na nityaṃ śreyasī kṣamā
iti tāta vijānīhi dvayam etad asaṃśayam

¹⁰⁸ Vana parvan, chapter 28, verse 37

tathaiva yaḥ kṣamākāle kṣatriyo nopasāmyati
apriyaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ so 'mutreha ca naśyati

anti-climactic: it contradicts Draupadī's emphasis in the previous verse, in which *kṣamā* is definitely ruled out. A change in terminology also points in this direction since throughout chapter 3.29 *tejas*, not *manyu*, is regarded as the opposite of *kṣamā*." [94]

I find Malinar's objections problematic. Firstly, Draupadī is quoting someone and secondly it is common for synonyms to be used across sections. The use of a synonym does not in and of itself constitute valid grounds for an interpolation. Moreover, in this section, the antonym of *kṣānti* is not anger but *tejas*. The Monier-Williams (2008) dictionary has a special entry for the meaning of *tejas* in this particular passage: "(opposed to *kṣamā*) impatience, fierceness, energetic opposition"¹⁰⁹ Based on my examination of the meaning of *kṣānti* above, a better interpretation of 3.29 is that it gives us a detailed list of times to be patient [*kṣamākālāṃs*], and times when one should not.¹¹⁰ This also supports my reading of the meaning of *kṣānti* as "patience" or "tolerance" in this section, as opposed to "forgiveness".

"Even so, the baron [*kṣatriyo*] who does not give in when it is time for forgiveness [*kṣamākāle*] is hated by all creatures and perishes here and hereafter."

¹⁰⁹ The dyadic occurrence of *kṣānti* and *tejas* has also been discussed by Paolo Magnone (2009).

¹¹⁰ Vana parvan, chapter 29, verse 24

kṣamākālāṃs tu vakṣyāmi śṛṇu me vistareṇa tān
ye te nityam asaṃtyājyā yathā prāhur manīṣiṇaḥ

Draupadī ends this section by saying, “There is no more time to ply the Kurus with tolerance [*kṣamākālo*]; and when the time for authority has come, the authority must be employed. The meek are despised, but people shrink from the severe: he is a king [*mahīpatiḥ*] who knows both when their time has come.”¹¹¹ (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 277)¹¹² These words add further weight to the reading of the last two verses in 3.28 together, as opposed to viewing the last verse in isolation, specifically the word *dvayaṃ* meaning “both.” Moreover, in this section it can once again be seen that Draupadī is citing Yudhiṣṭhira’s *varṇa* and position as a king as the reason for his practice of *K₂*, providing yet another clue about the correct interpretation and translation of *kṣānti* as *K₂* in these two sections.

Based on the re-evaluation of sections 3.28 and 3.29, Draupadī’s argument can be understood more clearly – she is simply asking Yudhiṣṭhira to exact revenge based on his

¹¹¹ Vana parvan, chapter 29, verse 34-35

na hi kaś cit kṣamākālo vidyate 'dya kurūn prati
tejasaś cāgate kāle teja utsraṣṭum arhasi
mṛdur bhavaty avajñātas tīkṣṇād udvijate janaḥ
kāle prāpte dvayaṃ hy etad yo veda sa mahīpatiḥ

¹¹² Once again van Buitenen has incorrectly translated *kṣam* as “forgiveness.” Based on the same reasons discussed above, since it means “tolerance” in this case, I have made that substitution.

varṇa as a *kṣatriya*, by stating that for a *kṣatriya* there is a right and a wrong time to practice *K₂ kṣānti* and hence he cannot practice tolerance forever.

1.3.2 Yudhiṣṭhira's response [Mbh3.30 – 3.32]

The next section discusses Yudhiṣṭhira's response to Draupadī. He says:

Why should a man like me indulge an anger that the wise [*dhīraiḥ*] avoid¹¹³... Likewise the powerful man who does not anger, if he is wise [*vidvāms*], under harassment will destroy his oppressor and rejoice in the next world. Thus both the strong and the weak, they say, should always [*nityadā*] forgive [*kṣantavyam*], even in distress, when they have this knowledge. For the good [*sādhavaḥ*] praise in this world the suppression of anger, Kṛṣṇa, for to the forgiving [*kṣamāvato*] and good [*sādhor*] is victory, thus hold the strict.¹¹⁴ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, pp. 277-278)

¹¹³ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 8

taṃ krodhaṃ varjitaṃ dhīraiḥ katham asmadvidhaś caret

¹¹⁴ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 12-14

vidvāms tathaiva yaḥ śaktaḥ kliśyamāno na kupyati

sa nāśayitvā kleṣṭāraṃ paraloke ca nandati

tasmād balavatā caiva durbalena ca nityadā

kṣantavyaṃ puruṣeṇāhur āpatsv api vijānatā

Here Yudhiṣṭhira refutes Draupadī's argument by saying that one must always [*nityadā*] forgive. Most importantly, Yudhiṣṭhira's reasons for preaching this are that this is what the wise [*dhīraih, vidvāms, sādhaveḥ, sādhor*] do. In this short selection itself, he can be seen emphasizing this point four times. Based on this it can be inferred that he has changed the referential point in the argument from *kṣatriyas* to the *sādhus*, thereby shifting the discourse from K₂ to K₁.

Furthermore, he says: "This much is certain that it is better that a man forsake his own Law [*svadharma*] than that he fall prey to anger."¹¹⁵ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 278)

This suggests that he recognizes that he is forsaking his *svadharma* - the *kṣatriyadharmā* - when he denounces K₂ *kṣānti*. This is *extremely* important to note for it means that he agrees with Draupadī's point that the *kṣatriyadharmā* entails being selectively tolerant [K₂], but wants to follow the *dharma* of *sādhus* [K₁] regardless. This statement is the key to understanding this complex and nuanced debate for it implies that his argument is not about *what* the prescribed *dharma* for kings is. Instead, it is that he does not want to follow the *dharma* of kings, the *kṣatriyadharmā*, but that of

manyor hi vijayaṃ kṛṣṇe praśaṃsantīha sādhaveḥ

kṣamāvato jayo nityaṃ sādhor iha satāṃ matam

¹¹⁵ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 23

śreyān svadharmānapago na kruddha iti niścitam

sādhus instead. Hence, there is no debate on the nature of *kṣānti*; they instead debate which *dharma* is applicable to him.

Following this, he sings the hymn of those who are possessed with *kṣamā* that was sung by Kāśyapa:

Kṣamā is Law and rite, Vedas and learning,

He who knows *kṣamā* thus can *kṣantum* anything.

Kṣamā is brahman, the truth, the past, and the future,

Austerity and purity: *Kṣamā* upholds the world.

Beyond the worlds of the brahman-wise [*brahmavidāṃ*] and ascetic

[*tapasvinām*],

Beyond those of the knowers of rites [*yajñavidāṃ*], go the practitioners

of *kṣamā* to theirs.

The might [*tejah*] of the mighty is *kṣamā*, the brahman of hermits

[*tapasvinām*],

The truth of the truthful is *kṣamā*, the gift and the glory.¹¹⁶ (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 279)¹¹⁷

Once again, note the repeated references made to the world of ascetics and brahmins [*yajñah, vedāḥ, śrutam, brahmavidāṃ, tapasvinām, yajñavidāṃ*]. In this hymn on *kṣānti*, Yudhiṣṭhira does not talk about kingship, war, or *kṣatriyas*¹¹⁸. *Kṣam* in this hymn would

¹¹⁶ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 36-39

kṣamā dharmah kṣamā yajñah kṣamā vedāḥ kṣamā śrutam
yas tām evaṃ vijānāti sa sarvaṃ kṣantum arhati
kṣamā brahma kṣamā satyaṃ kṣamā bhūtaṃ ca bhāvi ca
kṣamā tapaḥ kṣamā śaucaṃ kṣamayā coddhṛtaṃ jagat
ati brahmavidāṃ lokān ati cāpi tapasvinām
ati yajñavidāṃ caiva kṣamiṇah prāpnuvanti tām
kṣamā tejasvinām tejaḥ kṣamā brahma tapasvinām
kṣamā satyaṃ satyavatām kṣamā dānaṃ kṣamā yaśah

¹¹⁷ I have left *kṣamā* untranslated in this hymn as van Buitenen translates it as “patience” which I will demonstrate below is incorrect.

¹¹⁸ The comment, “The might [*tejaḥ*] of the mighty [*tejasvinām*] is patience” is also not necessarily a reference to the power of *ksatriyas*. *Tejasvin* is defined as “brilliant , splendid , bright , powerful , energetic” in the Monier-Williams Dictionary which could refer to any person with these qualities [p 454].

therefore be best translated as “forgiveness”, and not “patience,” as van Buitenen has chosen to do in this case.

Yudhiṣṭhira ends by saying, “This is the way of those who have mastered themselves [ātmavatām], this their eternal [sanātanaḥ] Law, to be forgiving and gentle, and thus I shall act!”¹¹⁹ (modification of J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 279)¹²⁰ Once again, the reference to wise people helps us correctly interpret his point as being advocacy for K₁. Malinar also observes the shift in the referential framework¹²¹ but misses the main point of the shift of *varṇa*. Moreover, her assumption of Yudhiṣṭhira’s reasons for changing the referential framework is incorrect. She says that Yudhiṣṭhira does so because “to accept Draupadī’s point of view Yudhiṣṭhira would need to take a look at himself, but

¹¹⁹ Vana parvan, chapter 30, verse 50

etad ātmavatām vṛttam eṣa dharmāḥ sanātanaḥ
kṣamā caivānṛśaṃsyaṃ ca tat kartāsmi aham añjasā

¹²⁰ I have replaced van Buitenen’s incorrect translation of *kṣam* as “patience” with “forgiveness” based on the reasons described above.

¹²¹ “Thus, Yudhiṣṭhira’s line of argument changes not only the vocabulary, but also the referential framework. Although concrete situations were adduced in the discourse of Prahāda in order to explain the different contexts that demand from the king a display of either anger or endurance, Yudhiṣṭhira interprets both as matters of principle, and assesses their metaphysical or even ontological value without applying it to any of those concrete situations.” [84]

this is not desirable when the gaze of the queen, which serves to define him according to the norms of their social position, is unfavorable. He, in turn, does not deal directly with her line of thought. Instead, he re-frames her whole argument.” [86] According to Malinar’s interpretation, Yudhiṣṭhira is deflecting the argument on purpose and not answering her question directly. However, in my view, this interpretation is incorrect. After Draupadī argued that Yudhiṣṭhira should practice K_2 because of his *varṇa* as a *kṣatriya*, here Yudhiṣṭhira replies that he does not want to follow the *kṣatriya dharma*, but wants to do what the *sādhus* prescribe – which is K_1 *kṣānti*. This is a direct response to Draupadī, in line with what Draupadī has said before. Yudhiṣṭhira does not go off on a tangent, as Malinar hypothesizes, but instead responds directly to Draupadī’s argument by saying that the *sādhu dharma*, and not the *kṣatriya dharma* applies to him.

Furthermore, Malinar calls Yudhiṣṭhira’s argument “abstract” [86]. Yet based on the characteristics of K_1 , his argument is a concrete and consistent description of the normative understanding of K_1 . Further support for this interpretation over Malinar’s comes from the next section, 3.31, where Draupadī says, “While you should carry on in the way of your father and grandfather, your mind has gone another way!”¹²² (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, pp. 279-280) Here Draupadī notes that Yudhiṣṭhira is not following the *dharma* of his ancestors – the *kṣatriya dharma*, and is looking to follow another *dharma*.

¹²² Vana parvan, chapter 31, verse 1

In 3.32 Yudhiṣṭhira goes back to the ascetics once again: “Kṛṣṇā, do not cast doubt on the Law that is observed by the learned [śiṣṭair], the ancient Law proclaimed by the all-knowing, all-seeing seers [ṛṣibhiḥ].”¹²³ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 282) Once again Yudhiṣṭhira calls out to the *dharma* of sages and proclaims those as superior.

Throughout this argument, the issue is clear - Draupadī is trying to convince Yudhiṣṭhira to follow the *kṣatriya dharma*, according to which he would have to follow *K₂ kṣānti* which is time-dependent, while he wants to practice *K₁ kṣānti* which is practiced by *sādhus*.

1.3.3 Bhīmasena’s argument [Mbh3.34]

Next, Bhīmasena joins the debate and echoes Draupadī’s arguments saying, “Travel the lawlike roadway of kingship [*rājyasya*], which is used by the strict!¹²⁴” (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 286) Further he lays out their agenda, “If we are to observe our own Law [*svadharmam*], if we wish to win plentiful fame, if we are to counter enmity, it is in war that our task clearly lies.”¹²⁵ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 287) He urges

¹²³ Vana parvan, chapter 32, verse 21

śiṣṭair ācaritaṃ dharmam kṛṣṇe mā smātisaṅkithāḥ
purāṇam ṛṣibhiḥ proktaṃ sarvajñaiḥ sarvadarśibhiḥ

¹²⁴ Vana parvan, chapter 34, verse 2

rājyasya padavīm dharmyām vraja satpuruṣocitām

¹²⁵ Vana parvan, chapter 34, verse 19

Yudhiṣṭhira to be more *kṣatriya*-like saying, “Make your heart a baron's [*kṣātram*] heart, shed the weakness [*śithilam*] of your mind, show bravery, Kaunteya, and carry the yoke like a beast of burden. No king [*rājan*] has ever conquered earth by being solely lawminded, nor have they thus won prosperity and fortune.”¹²⁶ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 289) These statements show how Bhīmasena was clearly echoing Draupadī's argument. He is urging Yudhiṣṭhira to observe his *svadharmā*, the *kṣatriya dharmā*, and hence implying that he should practice K2 – the prescribed form of *kṣānti* for a *kṣatriya*. Further, Bhīmasena says, “Whether renunciation or success is a greater good for those who want happiness, scion of Kuru, is a question on which you should decide with every means, and then at once carry out the former, or proceed to success, king, for life is a sick man's misery for the one who vacillates between the two.”¹²⁷ (J. A. B. van Buitenen,

sarvathā kāryam etan naḥ svadharmam anuṣṭhatām

kāṅkṣatām vipulām kīrtiṃ vairam praticikīrṣatām

¹²⁶ Vana parvan, chapter 34, verse 55-56

sa kṣātram hṛdayam kṛtvā tyaktvedam śithilam manaḥ

vīryam āsthāya kaunteya dhuram udvaha dhuryavat

na hi kevaladharmātmā pṛthivīm jātu kaś cana

pārthivo vyajayad rājan na bhūtiṃ na punaḥ śriyam

¹²⁷ Vana parvan, chapter 34, verse 42-43

mokṣo vā paramam śreya eṣa rājan sukhārthinām

prāptir vā buddhim āsthāya sopāyam kurunandana

1981, p. 288) The two options Bhīma gives Yudhiṣṭhira – *mokṣa* and *prāpti* – indicate that Draupadī and Yudhiṣṭhira’s argument preceding this was indeed vacillating between these two ends, as I had interpreted it. Draupadī’s argument was goading Yudhiṣṭhira towards *prāpti*, while he was advocating for a form of *kṣānti* that leads to *mokṣa*. Since both use the dual-meaning term *kṣānti* in their argument, the distinction can be difficult to unravel, unless one is well acquainted with the two meanings of *kṣānti* and engages in a close reading of the text to correctly interpret which meaning of *kṣānti* is being intended in each case. In fact, Bhīmasena’s distillation of the argument is further evidence for the existence of two different meanings of *kṣānti*.

1.3.4 Yudhiṣṭhira’s rebuttal [Mbh3.35]

Next, Yudhiṣṭhira agrees with what Bhīma has said, saying:

They are doubtless true, O Bharata,
 Your biting words that hurt and destroy me.
 I do not blame you for your bitterness,
 For my wrong course brought this misery on you....¹²⁸
 I do not demur at your words, Bhīmasena,

tad vāśu kriyatāṃ rājan prāptir vāpy adhiḡamyatām

jīvitam hy āturyeva duḡkham antaravartinaḡ

¹²⁸ Vana parvan, chapter 35, verse 1

asaṃśayaṃ bhārata satyam etad; yan mā tudan vākyaśalyaiḡ kṣiṇoṣi

na tvā vigarhe pratikūlam etan; mamānayād dhi vyasanaṃ va āḡāt

But I think that it thus was fated to be.¹²⁹ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, pp. 290-291)

Here Yudhiṣṭhira can be seen conceding to Bhīmasena's argument by saying that Bhīmasena's words are "doubtless true." Furthermore, Yudhiṣṭhira says:

Having sworn to the treaty before honest men,
Who would want to break it, for the prize of a kingdom?
For a noble I think it is graver than death
To transgress the Law and hold sway over earth.¹³⁰ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 291)

This implies that Yudhiṣṭhira agrees with Bhīma's argument that he should follow the *kṣatriyadharmā*, for he does not argue with his point that they should wage war, but gives a reason for why he cannot wage war at this time. He says he had made a promise to honor the pact and he cannot back down from his word. In fact, he asks Bhīma why he did not say this at the time of the dice match:

Why did you not earlier, when we contracted,
Speak out like this, displaying your manhood?

¹²⁹ Vana parvan, chapter 35, verse 5

na te vācaṃ bhīmasenābhyasūye; manye tathā tad bhavitavyam āsīt

¹³⁰ Vana parvan, chapter 35, verse 14

taṃ saṃdhim āsthāya satāṃ sakāśe; ko nāma jahyād iha rājyahetoḥ
āryasya manye maraṇād garīyo; yad dharmam utkrāmya mahīṃ praśiṣyāt

Now you've found your time, but far too late,
You berate me now, and beyond your time!¹³¹ (J. A. B. van Buitenen,
1981, p. 292)

This confirms that Yudhiṣṭhira agrees with the argument that Bhīma has made.

Yudhiṣṭhira ends with:

We can do nothing at present [*adya*], hero;
We must wait for the time [*kālaṃ pratīkṣasva*] that our luck reappears,
After filling the pledge we made to the Kurus,
As the sower waits for his crop to ripen.
When a man, brought down before by deceit
And aware that the feud shoots blossoms and fruit.
Bears many times more with the strength of his manhood.
He lives like a hero in the world of the living!¹³² (J. A. B. van Buitenen,
1981, p. 292)

¹³¹ Vana parvan, chapter 35, verse 16

prāḡ eva caivaṃ samayakriyāyāḥ; kiṃ nābravīḥ pauraṣam āvidānaḥ
prāptaṃ tu kālaṃ tv abhipadya paścāt; kiṃ mām idānīm ativelam āttha

¹³² Vana parvan, chapter 35, verse 18-19

na tv adya śakyaṃ bharatpravāra; kṛtvā yad uktaṃ kuruvīramadhye
kālaṃ pratīkṣasva sukhodayasya; pakṣiṃ phalānām iva bījavāpaḥ

This further confirms that Yudhiṣṭhira agrees with Bhīma’s argument which is for him to follow the *kṣatriya dharma*, but disagrees on the fact that this is the right time for them to wage war.

This section clearly answers the question about why Yudhiṣṭhira changes his mind and decides that he will act like a king. It is not the case that he was unaware of the protocol for king. In fact, we are told that he agrees with Bhīma that Bhīma’s argument was correct all along (he says, “They are doubtless true, O Bharata, Your biting words that hurt and destroy me.”) The key reason that Yudhiṣṭhira changes his mind and decided to act like a king is that he says that he cannot break a contract that he has made (he says, “Having sworn to the treaty before honest men, who would want to break it, for the prize of a kingdom?).

In addition, the themes of waiting and biding time denoted by the phrase *kālaṃ pratīkṣasva* are also very prominent here. Yudhiṣṭhira suggests they wait for the right time to attack and exercise tolerance, thus implying that he is now talking about *K₂ kṣānti* - the very type of *kṣānti* a *kṣatriya* should practice. Note, there is no disagreement here that they will retaliate. All Yudhiṣṭhira is saying is that they must be patient and wait for the right time to act.

yadā hi pūrvam nikṛto nikṛtyā; vairam sapuṣpaṃ saphalam viditvā

mahāguṇam harati hi pauruṣeṇa; tadā vīro jīvati jīvaloke

1.3.5 Conclusion of the debate [Mbh 3.37]

Bhīma then argues that they would not be able to win the incognito challenge, so they might as well wage war now. Yudhishtira once again agrees saying, “It is as you say”¹³³ but “I do not think they can be defeated, even by the Gods led by Indra”¹³⁴ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 294). Here there is a clear shift in the attitude of Yudhiṣṭhira. From citing moral reasons for not retaliating, he cites practical and strategic political reasons. He explicitly agrees with Bhīma’s reasons that it is best not to wage war now since they will not win. This confirms his agreement with Bhīmasena and Draupadī beyond a doubt that he must adopt the *kṣatriya dharma* and seek revenge but thinks they should wait for the right time when they have the upper hand and can win. Bhīmasena agrees with him because the narrator says, in no unclear words, “Bhīmasena, indignant though he was, understood the truth of what he was saying and became upset and alarmed; and he had no reply to make.”¹³⁵ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 294)

¹³³ Vana parvan, chapter 37, verse 3

evam etan mahābāho yathā vadasi bhārata

¹³⁴ Vana parvan, chapter 37, verse 15

ajeyāś ceti me buddhir api devaiḥ savāsavaiḥ

¹³⁵ Vana parvan, chapter 37, verse 19

etad vacanam ājñāya bhīmaseno 'tyamarṣaṇaḥ

babhūva vimanās trasto na caivovāca kiṃ cana

At this point, it is helpful to contrast my new interpretation of the debate with existing scholarly interpretations of this debate, such as Malinar’s. To Malinar, “The dialogue between Bhīma and Yudhiṣṭhira gets stuck in 3.37... A remarkable feature of this sequence of arguments is that there is no clear solution to the conflict addressed in the debate between king and queen” (Malinar, 2007, p. 81). This is not true, for the characters in the debate have clearly reached a conclusion - they have decided not to act at present because they would lose; they have decided to wait for the right time. Therefore, one could say that they agreed to practice K_2 *kṣānti* for the time being by being patient and waiting for the right moment to act.

Next, Vyāsa enters the scene. “Thereupon Pārāśara's son took Yudhiṣṭhira aside, and, a master of words, he spoke to him this word full of import: "The time shall come of your fortune, best of the Bharatas, when Dhanamjaya the Pārtha overpowers the enemies in battle.””¹³⁶ (J. A. B. van Buitenen, 1981, p. 295) Vyāsa prophesizes that the Pāṇḍava’s practice of K_2 *kṣānti* will be temporary; eventually, the time will come when they will be able to defeat their enemies. Malinar draws a completely different conclusion from Vyāsa’s words. She says “if one takes Vyāsa’s word as final, both of their positions are

¹³⁶ Vana parvan, chapter 37, verse 25-26

tata ekāntam unnīya pārāśaryo yudhiṣṭhiram
abravīd upapannārtham idaṃ vākyaviśāradah
śreyasas te paraḥ kālah prāpto bharatasattama
yenābhibhavitā śatrūn raṇe pārtho dhanamjayah

partially accepted: one should put up with the situation, but meanwhile get ready to fight” (Malinar, 2007, p. 81). Firstly, I would argue that Vyāsa does not add anything to the conflict resolution, as it has already been resolved before he arrives. He is in agreement with their conclusion and simply prophesizes that their plan will work. Secondly, Vyāsa could not have resolved the debate since he spoke to Yudhiṣṭhira privately, away from the others. All other characters are unaware of what he says. Vyāsa’s primary goal was to give Yudhiṣṭhira a *mantra*, which he does after saying the above words.

Hence, based on my re-evaluation of the debate, which is facilitated by an understanding of the dual meanings of *kṣānti*, it seems that the debate is not about the meaning of the word *kṣānti*¹³⁷, but rather which type of *dharma* Yudhiṣṭhira should follow – the *dharma* of *kṣatriya* [his *svadharma*] - inherent to which is a practice of K₂, or the *dharma* of *brahmins*, inherent to which is the practice of K₁. It seems that the two meanings of *kṣānti* and their spheres of applicability are known to all interlocutors and accepted by all. This can be gleaned from the fact that there is no debate about whether *sādhus* preach the *dharma* of always practicing *kṣānti* [i.e., whether *sādhus* advocate K₁]. Similarly, no one questions the fact that *kṣatriya dharma* requires one to practice *kṣānti* only temporarily. Instead, the debate is about which *dharma* is most suited to Yudhiṣṭhira – the *kṣatriya dharma* which corresponds to the *varṇa* he is born in

¹³⁷ For example, Corduan describes this debate as “a lengthy debate on the topic of forgiveness in the *Mahābhārata*” [113].

or the *sādhu dharma*, which appeals to his philosophical ideals and is such an important aspect of his personality. At the beginning of this chapter, I had presented a list of qualities describing Yudhiṣṭhira where both terms, *kṣānti*, and *titikṣā*, were used¹³⁸. I would argue that Yudhiṣṭhira has a unique personality - he is a *kṣatriya* with certain qualities of a *sādhu*. This internal conflict seems to be the basis of the debate, not the meaning of the term *kṣānti*. Armed with a nuanced understanding of the two meanings of *kṣānti*, this critical point can be gleaned through a close reading of the text, making the crux of the debate abundantly clear.

This conclusion significantly enhances the current scholarly understanding of this complex debate. Modern scholars who have studied this debate have not been able to reach the same conclusion, owing to the lack of understanding of the meanings of *kṣānti*.¹³⁹ Additionally, the striking consistency with which the two meanings of *kṣānti*

¹³⁸ “Forgiveness [*kṣamā*], forbearance [*titikṣā*], uprightness, control, avowedness to truth, great learning and zeal, compassion as well as authority— Yudhiṣṭhira has all the virtues of kings.” (Van Buitenen, 1983, p. 460)

¹³⁹ In addition to Malinar (2007) and J. A. B. van Buitenen (1981), whose works were critically reviewed throughout this chapter, Hill (2001), Carpenter (1979), and Corduan (2019) have also incorrectly interpreted this debate. Unaware of the dual meanings of *kṣānti*, they have translated *kṣānti* with a single word across the debate. Hill uses “patience” throughout, while Carpenter and Corduan use “forgiveness”, which has led them to incorrectly interpret the debate as a debate on *kṣānti*. For example, Corduan

are used throughout this complex and lengthy debate is certainly noteworthy and lends further credence to my conclusions about the dual meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. At no point throughout the debate is a meticulous reader left confused about which meaning of *kṣānti* the interlocutors are referring to. There is complete fidelity in the text to the normative definitions of each type of *kṣānti*. This analysis hence also serves as an indisputable case in point about the importance and effectiveness of knowing and applying the knowledge of the dual meanings of *kṣānti* to gain a nuanced understanding of the subtle arguments made within the text.

1.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have examined the meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. Through a careful analysis of every instance of the occurrence of the word *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*, I have demonstrated how this term had two distinct meanings. First, I found a key passage in the *Śāntiparvan*, which presented a normative definition of *kṣamā* and *titikṣā* and explained that *titikṣā* was one of the types of *kṣānti*. For the sake of clarity and convenience, I decided to refer to the two types of *kṣānti* as K_1 and K_2 throughout the rest of the dissertation. Then, using the knowledge gained from the normative definitions of the two types of *kṣānti* I was able to uncover additional differences between them. First, they differed based on *varṇa*; K_1 was prescribed for

says, “The point of disagreement is whether one must always forgive or whether there are occasions when forgiveness is not appropriate.” [128]

brahmins while K_2 was prescribed for *kṣatriyas*. Second, they differed based on the duration of their practice; K_1 was prescribed to be practiced forever while K_2 was an essentially temporary act, practiced while one waited for the right time to take revenge. Third, K_1 and K_2 had different relationships with anger. K_1 was mutually exclusive with anger, while K_2 co-existed with it. Fourth, K_1 was considered the perennial *dharma* of *brahmins* while K_2 was at times considered *dharma* and at other times considered *adharma*. Lastly, K_1 was perceived as a strength for *brahmins* while K_2 was seen at times as a weakness for *kṣatriyas*.

This analysis, backed by a large body of examples, helped significantly enrich our current understanding of the meaning of the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. Rather than being a vaguely defined idea that was loosely translated using a wide range of interchangeable terms, *kṣānti* can now be understood to be a technical term in the *Mahābhārata* that contained two precise definitions, each of which had clearly discernable characteristics. Based on this, I then provided my perspective on how best to translate and interpret *kṣānti* in all future translations and readings of the *Mahābhārata*. I suggested that K_1 be translated as “forgiveness” while K_2 be translated as “patience” or “tolerance.”

I ended the chapter by re-evaluating the so-called “*kṣānti* debate.” This close analysis of a long and complex debate in the *Mahābhārata* containing several discussions surrounding *kṣānti* served three purposes. First, the analysis of the “*kṣānti* debate” served as a model example of how a scholar could use the findings presented above to critically analyze and translate any instance of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*. Second, my

analysis demonstrated the pervasiveness and rigidity with which the normative definitions of the two types of *kṣānti* were known and used throughout the text. Throughout this lengthy debate it was seen that the interlocutors were aware of the dual meanings of *kṣānti* and all references to K₁ and K₂ were consistent with their normative definitions. Third, my analysis of the debate demonstrated the value of the findings presented above; by applying the findings of the preceding sections to this debate, the meaning of the debate was made clear and its interpretation made easier.

Having examined the meaning of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*, I will now turn to examining the meaning of the Pali term *khanti* in the Pali Canon. As will be seen, the meaning and treatment of *khanti* in the Pali Canon differed considerably from that of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*.

2 THE MEANING OF *KHANTI* IN THE PALI CANON

This chapter will systematically investigate the meaning of the term *khanti* in the Pali canon. Undoubtedly, the first basic problem that needs to be addressed in order to do this is to decide what sources need to be considered from within the Pali canon and to define a corpus of texts which clearly and comprehensively illustrate *khanti*¹⁴⁰. I will start by methodically selecting my sources, giving reasons, and defining clear criteria for their selection. Once the sources for studying *khanti* have been defined, I will delve into a close reading of these sources to reveal the precise, technical meaning of *khanti*. Here, through a thorough examination of a plethora of *khanti* sources, I will argue that *khanti* is a systematic, two-step process of ‘purification’ of negative emotions, specifically anger, followed by ‘cultivation’ of complementary Buddhist virtues, specifically goodwill (*mettā*).

Next, I will examine conventions of plot, character, and motifs within the *khanti* texts. I will illustrate that this body of literature has consistent characteristics and conventions in its narrative arcs, characters, motifs, and even the use of formulaic expressions. I will divide these *khanti* texts into two groups according to their plotlines and characters, and each group can be seen to serve its own distinct purpose. This analysis, it is hoped, will greatly enhance our understanding of the early Buddhist treatment of *khanti*.

¹⁴⁰ This corpus of texts will collectively be referred to as “*khanti* texts” for the rest of this thesis.

Lastly, I will discuss the implications of these findings in the broader context of the Pali canon, Buddhist narrative literature, the Buddhist ideas of anger and *mettā*, and Pali Buddhist ethics.

2.1 SOURCES FOR *KHANTI*¹⁴¹

To determine the sources for this study, I adopt the methodology used by Gethin (2004) in his exposition of the meaning of *dhamma* in the Pali Canon. Gethin turns to the Pali commentaries to see what their understanding of the term *dhamma* is. His rationale is that although these commentaries offer a more developed understanding of *dhamma* than that found in the Nikāyas and early Abhidhamma, “their understanding represents a tradition of interpretation that is still relatively close to the earlier texts and provides us with important points of references for plotting the development of the usage of the term in early Buddhist thought.” (521) Gethin further notes how this methodology has also been used by T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede in the Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary, as well as other scholars such as Carter (1976, 1978). I agree with the logic of using this methodology and find the commentarial passages very helpful in guiding us toward illustrative sections of the Pali canon that best describe its understanding of *khanti*. For this reason, I now turn to the Pali commentaries and see

¹⁴¹ Translations of Pali texts included in the rest of this thesis are mine, unless noted otherwise.

how the commentators Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla explain the meaning of *khanti* and what suttas they reference in their explanation of *khanti*¹⁴².

2.1.1 Commentarial and exegetical literature

I have identified four passages from the Pali commentaries and exegetical works that provide expositions on the meaning of *khanti* by first listing its synonyms and then proceeding to cite illustrative passages from the Nikāya. These passages occur in the (1) *Sarīradhātuvibhajanavaṇṇanā* in the *Mahāparinibbānasuttavaṇṇanā* by Buddhaghosa¹⁴³, (2) *Uddānagāthāvaṇṇanā* of the *Cariyāpiṭakaṭṭhakathā* by

¹⁴² For an introduction to the Pali commentaries and their authors, see Hinüber (2014).

¹⁴³ Ahu khantivādoti buddhabhūmiṃ appatvāpi pāramiyo pūrento khantivāditāpasakāle dhammapālakumārakāle chaddantahatthikāle bhūridattanāgarājakāle campeyyanāgarājakāle saṅkhapālanāgarājakāle mahākapikāle aññesu ca bahūsu jātakesu paresu kopaṃ akatvā khantimeva akāsi.

[Dīgha Nikāya, mahāvaggaṭṭhakathā, 3. mahāparinibbānasuttavaṇṇanā, sarīradhātuvibhajanavaṇṇanā para. 7]

Translation: He spoke about *khanti*: Even before he attained the ground of Buddhahood, he, while fulfilling the perfections he practiced khanti without getting angry, at the time when he was the ascetic Khantivādi, at the time when he was the prince Dhammapāla, at the time when he was the elephant Chaddanta, at the time when he was the Nāga king Bhūridatta, at the time when he was the Nāga king Campeyya, at the time when he

Dhammapāla¹⁴⁴ (3) *Maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā* by Buddhaghosa¹⁴⁵ and (4) the authoritative non-canonical text, *Visuddhimagga* authored by Buddhaghosa.¹⁴⁶ I summarize their references below:

was the Nāga king Saṅkhapāla, at the time when he was Mahākapi and in many other births.

¹⁴⁴ Here Dhammapala explains the perfection of *khanti* by citing the Mahākapi Jātaka [JA516], Mahiṃsarāja Jātaka [JA278], Rurumigarāja Jātaka [JA482], Dhammadevaputta Jātaka [JA457] and the Khantivādi Jātaka [JA313].

[Khuddaka Nikāya, cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā, uddānagāthāvaṇṇanā, para. 23]

¹⁴⁵ This passage can be found in the Khuddaka Nikāya, khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā, 5. maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā, khantīcātigāthāvaṇṇanā. In this long exposition Buddhaghosa glosses the term *khanti* by comparing the practitioner of *khanti* to the protagonists of several Buddhist narratives and quoting from them: *Khantivādi Jātaka* [JA313], *Puṇṇovādasuttaṃ Jātaka* [MN3.267], *Sarabhanga Jātaka* [JA522], *Vepacitti Sutta* [SN 11.4], *Akkosakabharadvaja Vatthu* [Dhp 399] and *Akkosasuttaṃ* [SN 7.2].

¹⁴⁶ This treatise authored by Buddhaghosa contains a section called “Getting Rid of Resentment” in which Buddhaghosa presents a structured program for alleviating anger and cultivating patience. Buddhaghosa presents many ways of doing so – practising *mettā*, *karuṇā*, reviewing the disadvantages of anger, reflecting on the ownership of *kamma*, and then says: “But if it still does not subside in him when he reviews ownership of deeds in this way, then he should review the special qualities of the

Table 7: References to khanti suttas in the commentaries¹⁴⁷

Narratives	Mahā- parinibbāna- sutta-vaṇṇanā	Cariyā- piṭak- aṭṭhakathā	Visuddhi -magga	Maṅgala- sutta- vaṇṇanā
Khantivādi Jātaka [JA313]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chaddantahatthi Jātaka [JA514]	Yes		Yes	
Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka [JA543]	Yes		Yes	
Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka [JA506]	Yes		Yes	
Saṅkhapālanāgarāja Jātaka [JA524]	Yes		Yes	
Mahākapi Jātaka [JA516]	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mahiṃsarāja Jātaka [JA278]		Yes		
Rurumigarāja Jātaka [JA482]		Yes		

Master's former conduct" (Ñāṇamoli, 2011, p. 297) and lists the following Jātakas:

Silavant Birth Story, Khantivādin Birth Story, Cula-Dhammapāla Birth Story, Chaddanta, Great Monkey, Bhūridatta, Campeyya, Sankhapāla, Mātuposaka Birth Story.

Buddhaghosa also interprets the Buddha's actions in each of these Jātakas. For a succinct summary of this section in the *Visuddhimagga* see Heim, Gereboff, Green, and Cates (2009).

¹⁴⁷ A brief note regarding the use of diacritical marks in the Pali words - I will be using the old romanizations in the old Pali translations in this thesis.

Dhammadevaputta Jātaka [JA457]		Yes		
Culladhammapāla Jātaka [JA358]	Yes		Yes	
Mātuposaka Jātaka [JA455]			Yes	
Puṇṇovādasuttaṃ Jātaka [MN3.267]				Yes
Sarabhangā Jātaka [JA522]				Yes
Vepacitti Sutta [SN 11.4]				Yes
Akkosakabharadvaja Vatthu [Dhp 399]				Yes
Akkosāsuttaṃ [SN 7.2]				Yes

It is important to note that all these lists are explicitly open-ended. They end with “*ādi*”¹⁴⁸ thus clearly stating that they do not provide an exhaustive list of sources on *khanti*. Since most sources cited in these commentaries are from the *Jātaka* collection, I first examine the *Jātaka* collections more closely for additional sources.

The *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*¹⁴⁹ contains the following additional stories that shed further light on the meaning of *khanti*: *Khanti-Vaṇṇana-Jātaka* (JA225), *Cūla-Nandiya-Jātaka*

¹⁴⁸ For example, the Mahāparinibbānasuttavaṇṇanā list ends with “aññesu ca bahūsu jātakesu paresu kopaṃ akatvā khantimeva akāsi” and the Cariyāpiṭakaṭṭhakathā list ends with “evamādīsu.”

¹⁴⁹ For an excellent introduction to this text, see Appleton (2010).

(JA222), *Daddara Jātaka* (JA304), *Kassapamandiya Jātaka* (JA312), *Mahāsīlava Jātaka* (JA51), *Ekarāja Jātaka* (JA303), *Rajovada Jātaka* (JA151), *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka* (JA506), *Sarabha-Miga-Jātaka* (JA483), *Mahisa-Jātaka* (JA278). The relevance and reason for inclusion of each of these are discussed in Appendix I.

2.1.2 Additional sources

I have also identified an extensive list of additional *suttas* related to the concept of *khanti* in the Pali canon. These stories can be found in the *Majjhimanikāya*, *Samyuttanikāya*, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *Nidānakathā*, *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*¹⁵⁰, *Suttanipāta*, and *Khuddakapāṭha*. The relevance and reason for the inclusion of each are also discussed in Appendix I.

The *Majjhimanikāya* contains three important references to *khanti*: the *Mahahatthipadopama Sutta* (MN 28), *Vāseṭṭhasuttaṃ Sutta* (MN 98), and *Kakacūpama Sutta* (MN 21). Several *suttas* from the *Samyuttanikāya* will also be added to my corpus of relevant *khanti* texts. These include the *Akkosa Sutta* (SN 7.2), *Vepacitti Sutta* (SN 11.4), *Subhāsitaṃ Sutta* (SN 11.5) and *Maha-mangala Sutta* (SN 2.4). From the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* the following are relevant verses and stories which I will

¹⁵⁰ Although this text is a rich resource of over 400 narratives and is the companion text to the *Dhammapada*, one of the most popular Buddhist texts, it has received surprisingly little scholarly attention. For a brief introduction, refer Appleton (2012).

include in my dissertation: Dhpa 222 and Dhpa 223. Lastly, I will also examine the *Karaṇīyamettā sutta* (Khp 9) from the *Khuddakapāṭha*.

2.2 MEANING OF *KHANTI*

The Sanskrit and Pali dictionaries present a broad and imprecise meaning of the term *khanti*. The Pali-English Dictionary by T. W. R. Davids and Stede (1993, p. 261) defines it as: “patience, forbearance, forgiveness” and the Sanskrit-English Dictionary by Monier-Williams (2008, p. 326) defines it as: “patient waiting for anything”, “patience, forbearance, endurance, indulgence” and “the state of saintly abstraction.” The more recent Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism which draws on sources from all the major canons (Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean) echoes this definition: *khanti* is ““patience,” “steadfastness,” or “endurance”; alt. “forbearance,” “acceptance,” or “receptivity.”” (Buswell Jr, 2013, p. 1109) In the previous chapter I discussed how these words can mean different things and have subtle differences between them. One can imagine that the meaning of the passage would change considerably depending on the interpretation of the translator and her choice of word(s) to translate *khanti*. Consequently, the reader’s understanding of the text would also change and so would her perception of the agent and the expectation of future events. This is an unresolved issue in our modern scholarly understanding of *khanti* and constitutes a serious problem

in current translations of the Pali *suttas*. Translators have not given adequate reasons to justify their word choice for *khanti*, translating the term variously and inconsistently¹⁵¹.

The meaning of *khanti* has received more attention in Mahayana Buddhism.¹⁵²

However, unfortunately, even studies on Mahayana Buddhism have neglected or

¹⁵¹ For example, in their modern translation of the *Mahānipāta* of the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, Shaw and Appleton (2015) do not discuss the ambiguity surrounding the translation of the term *khanti*. Their glossary simply lists “*khanti*” as “Forbearance or patience; one of the ten perfections” [642]. This is no doubt a result of the format of a glossary, which requires a simple meaning even for a complex term.

¹⁵² Several scholars who have attempted to translate this term in Mahayana texts have noted that there is great difficulty in translating *kṣānti* and understanding what is meant by this term. For instance, Boucher (2008, p. 220 n. 283) says, “*Kṣānti* is notoriously difficult to translate” and he opts for translating it as “tolerance.” Similarly, Lamotte (1998, p. 143 n. 119) says, “The problem of *kṣānti*, sometimes 'patience' and sometimes 'certainty', is one of the most complicated ones for scholasticism.” Nattier (2003, p. 244) in her translation of the *Ugrapariprcchā* translates *kṣānti* as “endurance” and includes a footnote to this stating: “The third perfection (Skt. *kṣānti*) is most commonly translated into English as "patience," but in my view this is far too mild a word to convey the sense of the term in Sanskrit Buddhist sources...” In his translation of the *Vajracchedika*, Schopen (1989, pp. 139, n. 120) translates *kṣānti* as “composure” and notes: “*Kṣānti* is normally translated as "patience." ... It is, however, possible that "patience" is not

mistakenly dismissed the study of *khanti* in the Pali Canon. For instance, as noted in my introduction, Pagel (1995) in his study of the *Bodhisattvapitaka*, briefly discusses the role of *khanti* in the Pali canon, and mistakenly claims that *khanti* did not play a prominent role in it¹⁵³. He gives no evidence for this claim and completely dismisses the

always the best translation for *kṣānti*, especially if "patience" is used with the implication of "to endure." As I understand the term, it more commonly means not "to endure" or "to accept" but to remain "unaffected by." In their translation of the *kṣāntipāramitā* chapter of the *Śāntideva's Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton note "It appears that, despite the traditional association of the term *kṣānti* with the verbal root *kṣam*, 'to be patient, to endure, etc.' from which *kṣānti* itself is derived, the term *kṣānti* probably results from an incorrect 'back-formation' of a Prakrit term, *khanti*, into Sanskrit. This not uncommon phenomenon meant that the connotations of the root *kṣam* were thereby mingled with those of the true root of *khanti*, *kham*, meaning 'to be pleased, to be willing to', with the result that one frequently finds *kṣānti* employed in contexts where connotations of willingness seem more appropriate than those of forbearance. The term *kṣamā*, however, remains firmly unambiguous..." (Crosby, Skilton, & Williams, 2003, p. 49)

¹⁵³ He says, "It rarely receives independent treatment, but is generally explained in conjunction with other practices such as benevolence (to which it becomes an important prerequisite) or is cited as a concomitant to morality and discriminative understanding" [182-3].

khanti Jātakas as a valuable resource for the understanding of *khanti* in early Buddhism based on this unsubstantiated claim. As seen in the previous section, the *Jātakas* are the primary source for understanding *khanti* in Pali canon and even the Pali commentaries and exegetical literature cite them in their treatment of *khanti*.

In what follows I examine the corpus of *khanti* texts in the Pali canon defined above to unearth more precise meanings of this term. I start by examining the commentarial tradition and look for cases where commentators have provided a gloss of the term. I then undertake a close and detailed examination of the *khanti* texts and demonstrate how these texts consistently portray *khanti* as a highly developed and systematic process that involves two steps.

2.2.1 Commentaries

The commentaries are helpful in providing us with synonyms of *khanti* but do not describe its process. In the commentaries attributed to Buddhaghosa *khanti* is described through its two synonyms – *adhivasana* and *titikkhā*. The *Mahāpadānasuttavaṇṇanā* states that *adhivasana* and *titikkhā* are both synonyms of *khanti*¹⁵⁴ and the

¹⁵⁴ Dīgha Nikāya, mahāvaggaṭṭhakathā, 1. mahāpadānasuttavaṇṇanā, cārikāanujānanaṇṇanā, para. 10. Here, the commentator defines “khanti” as “adhivāsanakhanti.” By using the compound “adhivāsanakhanti” the commentator is indicating that there are other types of “khanti,” but the khanti meant here is *adhivāsana*.

Maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā of the *Khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā* makes a similar equivalence between *adhivāsana* and *khanti*¹⁵⁵. Dhammapala, in the *Uddānagāthāvaṇṇanā* of the *Cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā* also glosses *khanti* with *adhivāsana*.¹⁵⁶ The glosses in these commentaries are not very helpful in understanding the specific meaning and process involved in the practice of *khanti*. *Adhivāsana*¹⁵⁷ and *titikkhati*¹⁵⁸ like *khanti*, are also

¹⁵⁵ Khuddaka Nikāya, khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā, 5. maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā, khantīcātigāthāvaṇṇanā, para. 2

¹⁵⁶ Khuddaka Nikāya, cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā, uddānagāthāvaṇṇanā, para. 23

¹⁵⁷ This is a complex term that could have originated from multiple different Sanskrit roots. Rhys Davids (1993) says that it originates from the Sanskrit root *vas* and gives two meanings for the term – “assent” and “forbearance, endurance”. It is clearly used in the sense of the second meaning here. However, I am grateful to Prof. Aleksandar Uskokov for pointing out to me that it could also have come from the 10th class root *vās*, to perfume [from where we get *vāsanā* - impression/scent in the mind]. Cone (2001) has also noted this connection. Prof. Uskokov further notes that *adhivāsana* is generally a ritual involving immersion of deities and hence, *adhivasana* can also be from 2nd class *vas* (meaning to put on clothes; *adhiv/vas* meaning to put over). Lastly, he also notes that *adhivāsana* could be related to *adhyavasāna*, which means, among other things, perseverance.

¹⁵⁸ *Titikkhati* [Sk. *titikṣ* is the desiderative stem] comes from the root *tij* which means to bear or endure. Rhys Davids (1993, p. 339) defines the word as “endurance, forgiveness,

defined with a broad range of terms in Pali-English Dictionaries, reflecting the fact that they too have different connotations in different contexts.

Hence, in order to unravel the meaning of *khanti*, and the process entailed in its practice, one must undertake a close examination of the corpus of *khanti* narratives. In the narratives *khanti* refers to a very specific, two-step process involving a series of mental actions that have to be undertaken by its practitioner. These steps can be broadly divided into two stages: ‘purification’ and ‘cultivation’. Purification involves ensuring that the mind (*citta*) is free of negative emotions (*dosa*), specifically anger, and cultivation involves the practice of the positive emotions, specifically *metta*. In some *suttas* we see these two stages presented systematically and sequentially, while in others, just one attribute in one of the two stages is emphasized. Nevertheless, across the *khanti* texts the description of the mental process involved in practicing *khanti* is fairly consistent.

2.2.2 Purification

The first step in practicing *khanti* involves ensuring that the mind is free of any impurities. There are a few different interpretations of this process in various texts,

long-suffering.” It is interesting that in the Pali commentaries *titikkhati* is cited as a synonym of *khanti*. This is similar to the *Mahābhārata* where one of the two meanings of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* was also *titikṣā*, as seen in the previous chapter.

nonetheless they agree in the end goal which is to keep the mind pure and not let any impurities enter.

2.2.2.1 *Kakacūpamasutta*

The *Kakacūpamasutta* gives us the clearest and most emphatic description of the two steps in the process of *khanti*. In this *sutta* the Buddha reprimands a monk who is known to have frequent disagreements with nuns. He then also narrates the story of an ill-tempered woman who gained a bad reputation because of her temperament.

Throughout this lengthy *sutta*, the Buddha gives us a formulaic description of the mental process that a monk should follow when verbally or physically assaulted. This formula is repeated eight times in this *sutta*, in the context of different types of offenses¹⁵⁹. After describing various types of attacks, the Buddha says, "Herein, monks, you should train yourselves thus: "Neither will our minds [*cittaṃ*] become perverted [*vipariṇataṃ*] nor will we utter an evil speech, but kindly and compassionate [*hitānukampī ca viharissāma*] will we dwell with a mind of friendliness [*mettacittā*] void of hatred [*dosantarā*]; and we will dwell having suffused that person with a mind of friendliness [*mettāsahagatena cetasā*]; and, beginning with him, we will dwell having suffused the whole world with a

¹⁵⁹ The first four instances are abbreviated versions of the last four. The abbreviated version is: *tatrāpi te, phagguṇa, evaṃ sikkhitabbaṃ 'na ceva me cittaṃ vipariṇataṃ bhavissati, na ca pāpikaṃ vācaṃ nicchāressāmi, hitānukampī ca viharissāmi mettacitto, na dosantaro'ti. evañhi te, phagguṇa, sikkhitabbaṃ*. The unabbreviated version is in the next footnote.

mind of friendliness [*mettāsahagatena cittena*] that is far-reaching, widespread, immeasurable, without enmity, without malevolence.” This is how you must train yourselves, monks.”¹⁶⁰ (Horner, 1954, p. 164)

Several aspects of this rich description are noteworthy. First, it clearly suggests a sequence: first one’s mind must be unaffected and then one must cultivate *metta* towards the offender and the whole world. Second, the commentary to the *sutta* strongly emphasizes the first step, ensuring that the mind is free of impurities. Here the commentator, Buddhaghosa, glosses the word *vipariṇata* and says, “As for *viparinatam*, a mind filled with passion is *viparinata*; or one filled with hatred, or one deluded. In the

¹⁶⁰ tatrāpi vo, bhikkhave, evaṃ sikkhitabbaṃ — ‘na ceva no cittaṃ vipariṇataṃ bhavissati, na ca pāpikaṃ vācaṃ nicchāressāma, hitānukampī ca viharissāma mettacittā, na dosantarā. tañca puggalaṃ mettāsahagatena cetasā pharivā viharissāma, tadārammaṇaṅca sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ mettāsahagatena cittena vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyābajjhena (abyāpajjhena (sī. syā. pī.), abyāpajjena (ka.) aṅguttaratikanipātaṭṭikā oloketabbā) pharivā viharissāmā’ti. evañhi vo, bhikkhave, sikkhitabbaṃ. [Majjhima Nikāya, mūlapaṇṇāsapāḷi, opammavaggo, kakacūpamasuttaṃ (MN 21), paragraph 227]

present case, the mind is filled with passion because of the flaw of desire; and filled with hatred because of anger.”¹⁶¹

Third, this is a highly prescriptive order dictated to monks in a normative *sutta*: monks are told what they must do [*sikkhitabbam*]. As such, it is a good representative of the normative and systematic process of *khanti* to be followed by monks. Fourth, the repetition of this formulaic process eight times in the *sutta* emphasizes its importance. Fifth, each time, the context for reciting this verse differs slightly – verbal abuse, physical abuse, etc. Since this prescription is applicable as the appropriate response in each situation¹⁶², it highlights the universal applicability of this process.

Additionally, it is very curious that although the process described here is clearly that of *khanti* and is very similar to what is seen in all other *khanti* texts, the word *khanti* is not used explicitly in this *sutta*, but only in the commentary. The ideal monk in this *sutta* is described as *sorata*, another term that like *khanti* lacks a single precise English

¹⁶¹ vipariṇatanti rattampi cittaṃ vipariṇataṃ. duṭṭhampi, mūḷhampi cittaṃ vipariṇataṃ. idha pana taṇhāchandasena rattampi vaṭṭati, paṭighachandasena duṭṭhampi vaṭṭati. [Majjhima Nikāya, mūlapaṇṇāsa-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), opammavaggo, kakacūpamasuttavaṇṇanā, paragraph 224]

¹⁶² The situations include being insulted, being hit with a hand, stone, knife or rod.

Further, it includes being addressed by someone at the wrong time, with false words, in a harsh way, in an unbeneficial way or with inner hatred.

equivalent easily available from the dictionary. The PTS dictionary defines it as “gentle, kind, humble, self-restrained”, and remarks that it is often combined with *khanti*. While glossing “*sorato*” Buddhaghosa explains that such a monk stands firm in *adhivāsanakhanti*.¹⁶³ Hence, this sutta also makes it clear that the concept of *khanti* is expressed by several different words.

This formulaic prescription from the *Kakacūpamasutta* is also referenced in the *Mahahatthipadopamasutta*, whose interpretation of it can provide further insight into how this prescription was viewed: “But this was said by the Lord in the Parable of the Saw (*Kakacūpamasutta*): If monks, low-down thieves should carve you limb from limb with a two-handed saw, whoever sets his heart at enmity [*mano padūseyya*]¹⁶⁴, he, for this reason, is not a doer of my teaching.” Unsluggish energy shall come to be stirred up by me, unmuddled mindfulness [*sati*] set up, the body tranquilized, impassible, the mind

¹⁶³ Majjhima Nikāya, mūlapaṇṇāsa-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 3. opammavaggo, 1.

kakacūpamasuttavaṇṇanā, para. 19

¹⁶⁴ We are going to see the term “*mano padūseyya*” used frequently in *suttas* to describe this step of *khanti*. Different translators have chosen to translate this phrase differently. While, Horner chooses to translate it as enmity in the heart, in the next section I choose to translate it as pollutants in the mind. Since I am referencing various translations by different translators, including providing my own when no satisfactory translation exists, there are some challenges in translating this phrase (and others) uniformly.

composed and one-pointed. Now, willingly, let blows from hands affect this body, let blows from clods of earth . . . from sticks . . . from weapons affect it, for this teaching of the Awakened Ones is being done.”¹⁶⁵ (Horner, 1954, p. 232)

In this interpretation, the prescription from the *Kakacūpamasutta* is summarized by quoting the prohibition against harboring anger in the mind, suggesting that this step is the most important and foundational step in the process. Also noteworthy is the role of the meditative practice of memory or mindful alertness [*sati*] in this process.

2.2.2.2 Visuddhimagga

In the *Visuddhimagga*, one can find an indication of Buddhaghosa’s interpretation of the mental process involved in the practice of *khanti* through his description of the Bodhisatta’s thought process while practicing *khanti* in the *khanti Jātakas*.

¹⁶⁵ Vuttaṃ kho panetaṃ bhagavatā kakacūpamovāde – “ubhatodaṇḍakena cepi, bhikkhave, kakacena corā ocarakā aṅgamaṅgāni okanteyyūṃ, tatrāpi yo mano padūseyya na me so tena sāsanaṅkaro”ti. Āraddhaṃ kho pana me vīriyaṃ bhavissati asallīnaṃ, upaṭṭhitā sati asammūṭṭhā, passaddho kāyo asāraddho, samāhitaṃ cittaṃ ekaggaṃ. Kāmaṃ dāni imasmiṃ kāye pañisamphassāpi kamantu, leḍḍusamphassāpi kamantu, daṇḍasamphassāpi kamantu, satthasamphassāpi kamantu, karīyati hidaṃ buddhānaṃ sāsana’nti.

[Majjhima Nikāya, mūlapaṇṇāsapāḷi, opammavaggo, mahāhatthipadopamasuttaṃ (MN 28), paragraph 305]

2.2.2.2.1 Mahakapi Jātaka [JA516]

The first relevant *Jātaka* analyzed by him is the *Mahakapi Jātaka* [JA516]. In this story, a farmer gets lost in a forest and falls into a deep pit. The *Bodhisattva*, a monkey in this life saves the farmer's life with great difficulty. The farmer, however, is ungrateful towards the *Bodhisattva* and tries to kill him by hitting him on the head with a rock. Interpreting the *Bodhisattva*'s thought process in the *Mahakapi Jātaka* after he is hit on the head with a rock, Buddhaghosa says, "Without polluting his mind [*appadūsetvā*] and without thinking of his own sorrow, regardless of his own pain, he made sure that the man reached a safe place."¹⁶⁶

2.2.2.2.2 Sankhapala Jātaka [JA524]

In the *Sankhapala Jātaka* [JA524] the *Bodhisattva* is born in the *Nāga* world. He grows weary of his royal life and returns to earth as a snake. Here he encounters a group of ruffians who torture him in grotesque ways and the *Bodhisattva* practices *khanti* towards them. Buddhaghosa analyses the thought process of the *Bodhisattva* while he was practicing *khanti* and says, "Although he was capable of turning those residents of

¹⁶⁶ tasmim purise cittam appadūsetvā attano ca dukkham acintetvā tameva purisaṃ khemantabhūmiṃ sampāpesi.

[*Visuddhimagga*, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā para.

97]

the Bhoja country into ashes with just a glance, he did not show even the faintest trace of anger [*paduṭṭhākāramattampi na akāsi*] when he opened his eyes..."¹⁶⁷

2.2.2.2.3 Bhuridatta Jātaka [JA543]

In the *Bhuridatta Jātaka* [JA543] the *Bodhisattva* once again lives in the *Nāga* kingdom. This long and episodic *sutta* is filled with several disparate incidents in the Bodhisattva's life. Once, the *Nāga* king becomes a victim of an intoxicated man's wrath who tortures him ruthlessly. The *Bodhisattva*, however, practices *khanti* and does not get angry. Buddhaghosa says that although the Bodhisattva was being tortured, he "did not have even a little impurity in his heart [*manopadosamattampi*] towards that brahman."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ saṅkhapālanāgarājā hutvā tikhiṇāhi sattīhi aṭṭhasu ṭhānesu ovijjhivā pahāramukhehi sakaṇṭakā latāyo pavesetvā nāsāya daḷhaṃ rajjuṃ pakkhipivā soḷasahi bhojaputtehi kājenādāya vayhamāno dharaṇītale ghaṃsiyamānasarīro mahantaṃ dukkhaṃ paccaubhonto kujjhivā olokitamatteneva sabbe bhojaputte bhasmaṃ kātuṃ samatthopi samāno cakkhuṃ ummīletvā paduṭṭhākāramattampi na akāsi. [Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para. 110]

¹⁶⁸ bhūridatto nāma nāgarājā hutvā uposathaṅgāni adhiṭṭhāya vammikamuddhani sayamāno kappuṭṭhānaggisadisena osadhena sakalasarīre siñciyamānopi peḷāya pakkhipivā sakalajambudīpe kīḷāpiyamānopi tasmīṃ brāhmaṇe manopadosamattampi na akāsi.

2.2.2.2.4 Campeyya Jātaka [JA506]

In the *Campeyya Jātaka* [JA506] the Bodhisattva is once again born as a Nāga king. He gets caught by a snake charmer who mercilessly tortures him, while the Bodhisattva practices *khanti*. Buddhaghosa interprets and describes the *Campeyya Jātaka* thusly: “And when he was the royal nāga Campeyya he let no impurity¹⁶⁹ spring up [*manopadosamattampi nuppādesi*] in his mind while he was being cruelly treated by a snake charmer.”¹⁷⁰

[Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para. 98]

¹⁶⁹ *Dosa* is a complex word in Pali having multiple meanings: blemish, fault, anger, ill-will, hatred etc. (T. R. Davids & Stede, 2004) This is due to the fact that the sanskrit *doṣa* and *dveṣa* are both the same word (*dosa*) in Pali. Here I have chosen to translate it using the broader term, impurity, while acknowledging that its meaning could be more specific such as anger or hatred. I will demonstrate in the next section that the impurity most frequently combatted by practitioners of *khanti* in the *jātakas* is anger.

¹⁷⁰ *campeyyopi nāgarājā hutvā ahituṇḍikena viheṭṭhiyamāno manopadosamattampi nuppādesi.*

[Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para. 101]

2.2.2.2.5 Chaddanta Jātaka [JA514]

Buddhaghosa likewise emphasizes the cleansing of the mind as the main point of the *Chaddanta Jātaka*. In the *Chaddanta Jātaka* [JA514] the Bodhisattva is a royal elephant who has two wives. One of the wives develops a grudge against the other and when she is reborn as a queen plots to have the Bodhisattva killed. She feigns an illness and tells the king her only remedy is the tusk of the Bodhisattva. A hunter is sent to capture and kill the Bodhisattva. He shoots the Bodhisattva with a poisoned arrow and the Bodhisattva practices *khanti*. Buddhaghosa analyzes the Bodhisattva’s thought process and says that even after the Bodhisattva was shot with a poisoned arrow, “He did not let his mind be polluted [*cittaṃ nappadūsesi*] towards the evil-doing hunter. Therefore, it is said, “The elephant, pierced by an arrow and filled with an uncorrupt¹⁷¹ heart [*aduṭṭhacitto*], spoke to the hunter.”¹⁷² After receiving the tusks of the Bodhisattva the queen is filled with remorse and dies.

¹⁷¹ The PTS defines *duṭṭha* as “spoilt, corrupt; bad, malignant, wicked etc.” (T. R. Davids & Stede, 2004) There is similar ambiguity in translating *duṭṭha* as there is in translating *dosa*. While I have chosen to translate it as “corrupt” here, it could also mean “hostile”.

¹⁷² tāva anattakārimhi luddake cittaṃ nappadūsesi. yathāha —

“samappito puthusallena nāgo,

aduṭṭhacitto luddakaṃ ajjhabhāsi

[Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para.

83]

In all these examples, the process of *khanti* is described as not having *padosa* [fault or corruption] in the mind and not letting the mind be defiled. But what *padosa* are they specifically referring to? As we shall see, the *khanti Jātakas* clearly show that anger [*kodha*] is the impurity [*padosa*¹⁷³] that a *khanti* practitioner’s mind should remain pure of.

2.2.3 Anger

2.2.3.1 *Khantivādin Jātaka* [JA313]

The *Khantivādin Jātaka*, the most often cited text on *khanti*, gives us a clear definition of *khanti*. In this story, the Bodhisattva is an ascetic who preaches *khanti*. An intoxicated king stumbles upon him and mistaking him to be a false ascetic assaults him brutally and fatally. Soon after killing the Bodhisattva the king also dies and goes to hell. During the assault, while hacking the Bodhisattva’s limbs one by one, the king asks the Bodhisattva, “What is this thing called *khanti*?”¹⁷⁴ and the Bodhisattva replies, “Not being angry [*akujjhanabhāvo*] when abused, defamed and beaten.”¹⁷⁵ This clear and precise

¹⁷³ *Padosa* is another term that has the same ambiguity. It can mean flaw or hatred.

¹⁷⁴ “kā esā khanti nāmā”ti? [Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4.

catukkanipāto, 2. pucimandavaggo n, [313] 3. khantivādījātakavaṇṇanā, para. 4]

¹⁷⁵ “akkosantesu paribhāsantesu paharantesu akujjhanabhāvo”ti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo n, [313] 3. khantivādījātakavaṇṇanā, para. 4]

definition of *khanti* in the most authoritative text on *khanti*, highlights the most important aspect of the process of *khanti* – the negation of anger.

The *paccuppannavatthu* (opening frame) of the *Khantivādin Jātaka* further reinforces that the primary process of *khanti* involves the negation of anger. While narrating the event that stimulated the Buddha’s narration of the *Khantivādin Jātaka*, the *paccuppannavatthu* says that the Buddha once learned of a wrathful monk and asked him, “Why, O monk, having taken refuge under the teaching of the Buddha who is free of anger [*akkodhanassa*], do you show anger [*kodham*]? Wise men in ancient times did not get angry [*kodham*] with another person, even when a thousand blows fell on their body, and their hands, feet, ears, and nose were cut off.”¹⁷⁶ The *paccuppannavatthu* implies that the reason for narrating the *Khantivādin Jātaka* was to demonstrate the practice of not being angry [*akkodhana*], further suggesting an equivalence between the practice of *khanti* and the practice of non-anger [*akkodhana*].

Buddhaghosa also interprets the *Khantivādin Jātaka* story similarly: “In the *Khantivādin Jātaka*, when asked by the foolish king of *Kāsi*, “What do you preach, O ascetic?”, he said, “I am called the preacher of *khanti*.” Having been beaten by a whip with spikes and

¹⁷⁶ “kasmā, tvaṃ bhikkhu, akkodhanassa buddhassa sāsane pabbajitvā kodhaṃ karosi, porāṇakapaṇḍitā sarīre pahārasahasse patante hatthapādakaṇṇanāsāsu chijjamānāsu parassa kodhaṃ na kariṃsū”ti

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo n, [313] 3. khantivādījātakavaṇṇanā, para. 1]

having his hands and feet cut off, he did not create the slightest amount of anger [kopamattampi].”¹⁷⁷ Summarizing the *Khantivādin Jātaka* in the *Visuddhimagga*, he highlights the centrality of non-anger in this story by describing the Buddha’s endurance of the king’s assault with the words *kopamattampi nākāsi*. To him, practicing *khanti* is analogous to not having any anger [*kopa*].

2.2.3.2 *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543]

The same equivalence between *khanti* and non-anger is also seen in other *khanti Jātakas*. In the *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543], where the Bodhisattva is a *nāga* who is captured and tortured, we find a narration of the Bodhisattva’s thoughts while he is being mutilated which gives us a glimpse into his mental process of *khanti*. In this description, the absence of anger is repeated five times: “if I get angry [*kujjheyyaṃ*] with him for his treachery, my morality [*sīlaṃ*] will break¹⁷⁸... I must not get angry [*kujjhissāmi*] with him.” If I look at him, he will explode. Even if he hits me, I will not get

¹⁷⁷ khantivādījātake dummedhena kāsiraññā “kiṃvādī tvaṃ samaṇā”ti puṭṭho
 “khantivādī nāmāhan”ti vutte sakaṇṭakāhi kasāhi tāletvā hatthapādesu chijjamānesu
 kopamattampi nākāsi.

[*Visuddhimagga*, (paṭhama bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para. 78]

¹⁷⁸ sacāhaṃ imassa mittadubbhino kujjheyyaṃ, sīlaṃ me khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati.
 [Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (sattamo bhāgo), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīlanakaṇḍaṃ, para. 114]

angry [*na kujjhissāmi*] at him or look at him. Thinking this, he closed his eyes, and completing the perfection of resolution¹⁷⁹, he placed his head between his hoods and lay perfectly motionless [*niccalova*]¹⁸⁰... The pure [*sucijātiko*] Nāga king did not get angry [*akujjhivā*] for fear of violating the moral precepts, and did not open his eyes¹⁸¹... The

¹⁷⁹ *adhiṭṭhānapārami* is one of the ten perfections to be cultivated by a Bodhisatta.

(Shaw, 2006)

¹⁸⁰ *alampāyano maṃ chindatu vā pacatu vā, sūlena vā vijjhatu, nevassa kujjhissāmī*”ti cintetvā “*sace kho panāhaṃ ime olokessāmi, bhasmā bhaveyyuṃ. maṃ pothentepi na kujjhissāmi na olokessāmī*””ti akkhīni nimīletvā *adhiṭṭhānapāramiṃ purecārikaṃ katvā bhogantare sīsaṃ pakkhipitvā niccalova hutvā nipajji.*

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-*aṭṭhakathā*, (*sattamo bhāgo*), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīlanakaṇḍaṃ, para. 114]

¹⁸¹ *sucijātiko nāgarājā sīlabhedabhayena akujjhivā akkhīnīpi na ummīlesi.*

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-*aṭṭhakathā*, (*sattamo bhāgo*), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīlanakaṇḍaṃ, para. 115]

Great Being felt no anger [*kujjhi*] even though he suffered such pain [*dukkhaṃ*].^{182/183}
(Cowell & Rouse, 1907, p. 97)

Four points are noteworthy in this passage. First, throughout the passage, we see the Bodhisattva's *khanti* and his power to retaliate being presented simultaneously. The statement about the *nāga's* open eyes killing the attacker is clearly a reference to his power. Through this statement, we are told that the Bodhisattva had the power to kill his offender but chose not to. Therefore, his *khanti* was not a sign of weakness or inability. Second, the passage does not negate the existence of physical pain. We are told that the Bodhisattva experienced pain (*dukkhaṃ*), no doubt physical pain because of the mutilations, but he did not get angry (*kujjhi*). Third, the reason for practicing *khanti* is the preservation of *sīla*. This creates a relationship between *khanti* and *sīla*. And lastly, note the poignant metaphor of the Bodhisattva's physical stillness which accompanies his mental stillness. Not only was the Bodhisattva's mind undisturbed by the torture, but even his body remained still [*niccalova*].

¹⁸² mahāsatto evarūpaṃ dukkhaṃ anubhavantopi neva kujjhi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (sattamo bhāgo), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīṇanaṇḍaṃ, para. 115]

¹⁸³ The redacted parts contain graphic descriptions of horrific mutilations being done to Bhuridatta.

2.2.3.3 Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka [JA506]

Similarly, in the *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA506], where the Bodhisattva is once again born as a *nāga* and gets caught by a snake charmer when he comes to the human realm to observe *uposatha*, the text narrates his thought process: “Then he thought, “My poison is powerful, and if I am angry [*kujjhitvā*] and send forth the breath of my nostrils his body will be shattered and scattered like a fist-full of chaff; then my virtue will be broken... the Great Being so feared lest he break his virtue, that he bore [*adhivāsento*] all this torment and never so much as opened an eye to glance at him.”¹⁸⁴ (Rouse, 1901, p. 283)

2.2.3.4 Mātuposaka Jātaka [JA455]

In the *Mātuposaka Jātaka* [JA455] the *Bodhisattva* is a white elephant whose mother is blind. One day a man is stranded in that area and the elephant helps him find his way back. The man then tells the king of the elephant’s splendour and comes with the king’s men to capture him. The Bodhisattva realizes that the man he saved has betrayed him and thinks: “...angered [*kujjhitvā*], I am able to destroy the royal beasts of burden who

¹⁸⁴ ahituṇḍikaṃ disvā cintesi “mama viṣaṃ mahantaṃ, sacāhaṃ kujjhitvā nāsavātaṃ vissajjessāmi, etassa sarīraṃ bhasmamuṭṭhi viya vippakirissati, atha me sīlaṃ khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati, na dāni taṃ olokessāmi”ti. mahāsatto attano sīlabhedabhayena evarūpaṃ dukkhaṃ adhivāsento akkhīni ummīletvā olokanamattampi nākari.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, cariyāpiṭaka-aṭṭhakathā, 2. hatthināgavaggo n, 3.

campeyyanāgacariyāvaṇṇanā, para. 6]

carry the army. But if I get angry [*kujjhissāmi*], my moral practice [*sīlaṃ*] will be broken. Therefore, today I will not get angry [*na kujjhissāmi*] even if I am cut by knives.” With this resolve, having bowed down his head, he stayed motionless [*niccalova*].”¹⁸⁵ Here the Bodhisattva’s practice of *khanti* is described exclusively in terms of not getting angry. Furthermore, the text offers this same description again - the steadiness of Bodhisattva’s mind is mirrored in the steadiness of his body.

2.2.3.5 Mahāsīlava Jātaka [JA51]

In the *Mahāsīlava Jātaka* [JA51] the virtuous king is captured by a rival king and bound up by followers. Describing the king’s thoughts at the time of his capture, the *Jātaka* says, “Even at that time, the great ethical king [or King Sīlava] did not have even a small amount of anger [*āghāta*] towards the thieves.”¹⁸⁶ Here it must be noted that anger is

¹⁸⁵ bodhisattopi hatthācariyaṃ disvā “idaṃ bhayaṃ na aññato uppannaṃ, tassa purisassa santikā uppannaṃ bhavissati, ahaṃ kho pana mahābalo hatthisahassampi viddhaṃsetuṃ samattho homi, kujjhivā saraṭṭhakaṃ senāvāhanaṃ nāsetuṃ, sace pana kujjhissāmi, sīlaṃ me bhijjissati, tasmā ajja sattīhi koṭṭiyamānopi na kujjhissāmi”ti adhiṭṭhāya sīsaṃ nāmetvā niccalova aṭṭhāsi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [455] 1. mātuposakajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 3]

¹⁸⁶ tasmimpi kāle sīlavamahārājā corarañño āghātamattampi nākāsi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 1. ekanipāto, 6. āsīsavaggo, [51] 1. mahāsīlavajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 5]

not the only possible translation of *āghāta*. It could also mean to be hurt, have ill-will, hatred, or even to strike back. However, anger seems to be the best translation, since later in the story, when the king and his ministers are buried in the sand up to their necks and left to die, the king tells his ministers, “without getting angry [*kopaṃ*] at the thieves, cultivate only goodwill [*metta*].”¹⁸⁷ Here he is clearly describing the thought process of *khanti* as not having *kopa* and cultivating *metta*.

Buddhaghosa interprets the Bodhisattva’s process of *khanti* in this narrative similarly, saying, “Again, when he was buried up to his neck in a hole dug into the earth in a charnel grove, along with a thousand companions, he did not pollute his mind even a little bit [*cittappadosamattampi akatvā*]... And when he went to his own bedroom with the help of a spirit and saw his enemy sleeping on his bed, without getting angry [*kopaṃ akatvāva*], without swearing an oath in return¹⁸⁸, he established him in the place of a friend [*mittaṭṭhāne ṭhapayitvā*].”¹⁸⁹ Here, note once again that the two stages are

¹⁸⁷ tadā sīlavamahārājā amacce āmantetvā “corarañño upari kopaṃ akatvā mettāṃ eva bhāvētha, tātā”ti ovadi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 1. ekanipāto, 6. āsīsavaggo, [51] 1. mahāsīlavajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 5]

¹⁸⁸ i.e. taking an oath of revenge towards his enemy, as his enemy had done previously in the *jātaka*

¹⁸⁹ puna saddhiṃ amaccasahassena āmakasusāne galappamāṇaṃ bhūmiṃ khaṇitvā nikhaññamāno cittappadosamattampi akatvā kuṇapakhādanatthaṃ āgatānaṃ

presented clearly and sequentially. First, the king does not get angry at his enemy [*kopaṃ akatvāva*] and then thinks of him as a friend (i.e. produces goodwill towards him).

The most noteworthy aspect in all of these stories is that the process of *khanti* involves ensuring that anger does not arise in the mind in the first place. The emphasis is on keeping the mind pure and unshaken. But what if anger arises? Can one still practice *khanti*? What does one do then?

2.2.3.6 Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā 222

In story 222 of the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, we see the mental process of *khanti* in a tree-spirit, a *rukkhadeva* in whom anger has already arisen. In the story, a monk cuts a tree and harms a *rukkhadeva*. "Furious with anger [*uppannabalavakodhā*], the tree-spirit raised both her hands and exclaimed, "I will strike him dead." In an instant, however, the thought came to her, "This monk is a righteous man; if I kill him, I shall go to Hell. Moreover, if other tree-spirits see monks cutting down their own trees, they will say to themselves, 'Such and such a tree-spirit killed a monk under such circumstances,' and will follow my example and kill other monks. Besides, this monk has a master; I will

siṅgālānaṃ paṃsuviyūhanaṃ nissāya purisakāraṃ katvā paṭiladdhajīvito

yakkhānubhāvena attano sirigabbhaṃ oruyha sirisayane sayitaṃ paccatthikaṃ disvā

kopaṃ akatvāva aññamaññaṃ sapathaṃ katvā taṃ mittaṭṭhāne ṭhapayitvā

[Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para.

75]

therefore content myself with reporting this matter to his master."¹⁹⁰ (Burlingame & Lanman, 1921, pp. Vol 3, p 98) So, she went weeping to the Buddha and told him what had happened. The Buddha commends her for having controlled herself and says: "Whoever controls his anger [*uppatitam kodham*] like a swift-speeding chariot, when it is aroused — Him I call a charioteer; other folk are merely holders of reins."¹⁹¹ (Burlingame & Lanman, 1921, Vol 3, p 99).

Hence, in cases where anger has already arisen, the Buddha advocates a similar cognitive process for "reigning it in" as quickly as possible. The end result is the same — the mind is purified and steady. However, we may note that this narrative is an

¹⁹⁰ devatā uppanabalavakodhā "paharivā naṃ māressāmi"ti ubho hatthe ukkhipitvā evaṃ tāva cintesi — "ayaṃ bhikkhu sīlavā. sacāhaṃ imaṃ māressāmi, nirayagāminī bhavissāmi. sesadevatāpi attano rukkhaṃ chindante bhikkhū disvā 'asukadevatāya evaṃ nāma mārito bhikkhū'ti maṃ pamāṇaṃ katvā bhikkhū māressanti. ayañca sasāmiko bhikkhu, sāmikasseva naṃ kathessāmi"ti ukkhittahatthe apanetvā rodamānā satthu santikaṃ gantvā vanditvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. kodhavaggo n, 2. Aññatarabhikkhuvatthu, para. 2]

¹⁹¹ Yo ve uppatitam kodham ratham bhantamva varaye tamaham sarathim brumi rasmiggaho itaro jano.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. kodhavaggo n, 2. Aññatarabhikkhuvatthu, para. 2]

exception on two accounts. It is the only case where the practitioner of *khanti* has anger arisen in the mind at all; in every other case anger is explicitly quelled before it can enter the mind. Furthermore, it is interesting that this is also the only case where the practitioner of *khanti* is not the Bodhisattva. In every case where the Bodhisattva practices *khanti*, the process is clearly described as not letting anger pollute the mind in the first place.

2.2.3.7 *Samyuttanikāya*

As a last example of anger, let us look at the *Samyuttanikāya* where we find a formulaic description of anger which is repeated in four suttas: *Akkosasuttaṃ* (SN 7.2), *Asurindakasuttaṃ* (SN 7.3), *Vepacittisuttaṃ* (SN 11.4) and *Subhāsitaḥajayasuttaṃ* (SN 11.5): “One who gets angry with an angry person, is even worse than the one who is angry at him. By not getting angry with one who is angry, one wins a difficult battle. He practices for the welfare of both, his own and the others. Having realized the angered state of another, practicing mindfulness, he calms his mind. When he cures both, himself and the other, the people who consider him a fool are unskilled in the *dhamma*.”¹⁹²

¹⁹² “tasseva tena pāpiyo, yo kuddhaṃ paṭikujjhati.

kuddhaṃ appaṭikujjhanto, saṅgāmaṃ jeti dujjayaṃ.

“ubhinnaṃ matthaṃ carati, attano ca parassa ca.

paraṃ saṅkupitaṃ ñatvā, yo sato upasammati.

“ubhinnaṃ tikicchantaṃ, attano ca parassa ca.

Several points in these verses are noteworthy. First, the verse does not contain an explicit reference to *khanti* though it is describing the same process. The commentary, however, contains a helpful gloss of *sato upasammattī* (Mindful, he becomes peaceful) which tells us something about *khanti*. It says, *satiyā samannāgato hutvā adhvāseti* (Possessed of mindfulness, he endures it). This gives two helpful connections. The first is a connection between the practice of *sati* (mindfulness) and *adhivāsana* (endurance), something we have observed before. This statement suggests that establishing oneself in a state of *sati* is a prerequisite to practicing endurance. Second, it suggests that *upasammattī* and *adhivāseti* are synonyms. In the commentaries, we have seen *adhivāseti* being presented as a synonym for *khanti*. This creates an equivalence between *upasammatti* and *khanti*.

Second, the Pali verses contain the word, *tikicchati* (healing), a word that sounds similar to *titikkhati* (forbearance). One possibility is that this is clever wordplay, as has been suggested by Olendzki.¹⁹³ Another possibility is that this may have been an error of verbal transmission, and the original word intended here was *titikkhati* (forbearance). Lastly, the emphasis in these verses is primarily on self-benefit. Non-anger is presented as an option that works for one's own welfare and cures oneself. It also does the same

janā maññanti bāloti, ye dhammassa akovidā”ti.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. arahantavaggo, 2. akkosasuttaṃ (SN 7.2), para. 6]

¹⁹³ <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/ati/tipitaka/sn/sn11/sn11.004.olen.html>

to the victim, but since the first reason given is to practice non-anger in order to not make things worse for oneself, that seems to be the primary motivation here. This is also similar to the several Jātakas seen above where a character stills his anger in order not to break his own *sīla*. A detailed analysis of the reasons presented for practicing khanti will be presented later in this chapter.

It is also helpful to examine the context for the recitation of these verses in each of the four suttas above. In the *Akkosasuttaṃ* (SN 7.2) the Buddha equates not getting affected when someone reviles you to not accepting food from someone, that is, not entering an exchange. To return anger in this logic is literally to take on the abuser's vice and incorporate it within oneself¹⁹⁴: "So too, brahmin, we - who do not abuse anyone, who do not scold anyone, who do not rail against anyone - refuse to accept from you the abuse and scolding and tirade you let loose at us. It still belongs to you, brahmin! It still belongs to you, brahmin! "Brahmin, one who abuses his own abuser, who scolds the one who scolds him, who rails against the one who rails at him - he is said to partake of the meal, to enter upon an exchange. But we do not partake of your meal; we do not enter upon an exchange."¹⁹⁵ (Bodhi, 2000, p. 256) This clarifies another step in the

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Ingalls (1962) which discusses the Pāśūpatas who deliberately provoked people, based on the idea that the abuser would take on the bad *karma* of the abused.

¹⁹⁵ "evameva kho, brāhmaṇa, yaṃ tvaṃ amhe anakkosante akkosasi, arosente rosesi, abhaṇḍante bhaṇḍasi, taṃ te mayaṃ nappaṭiggaṇhāma. tavevetam, brāhmaṇa, hoti; tavevetam, brāhmaṇa, hoti."

process of *khanti*. One must not take the offense that is given and by doing so it remains with the giver.

Based on the Buddha's response, the king and his men assume that the Buddha has gotten angry. They ask him how he got angry despite being an *arahant*. The Buddha replies: "How can anger arise in one who is angerless, in the tamed one of righteous living, in one liberated by perfect knowledge, in the Stable One who abides in peace?"¹⁹⁶ (Bodhi, 2000, p. 256) This important passage highlights that once one has become free of anger [*akkodha*], anger cannot arise. Hence the Buddha asks "*akkodhassa kuto kodho*"? This also explains why, in every single *khanti* narrative examined above, anger does not arise in the Buddha when he is offended - he is *akkodha* and there is no possibility of anger arising within him. The only narrative in which anger is quelled after

"yo kho, brāhmaṇa, akkosantaṃ paccakkosati, rosetaṃ paṭiroseti, bhaṇḍantaṃ paṭibhaṇḍati, ayaṃ vuccati, brāhmaṇa, sambhuñjati vītiharatīti. te mayaṃ tayā neva sambhuñjāma na vītiharāma. tavevetāṃ, brāhmaṇa, hoti; tavevetāṃ, brāhmaṇa, hotī"ti. [Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. arahantavaggo, 2. akkosasuttaṃ (SN 7.2), para. 2]

¹⁹⁶ "akkodhassa kuto kodho, dantassa samajīvino.

sammadaññā vimuttassa, upasantassa tādino.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. arahantavaggo, 2. akkosasuttaṃ (SN 7.2), para. 2]

it arises is DhpA 222, discussed above, in which the person in whom the anger arises is a tree spirit *rukkhadeva*, not the Buddha.

Lastly, the commentary provides a helpful explanation for why the brahman assumed that the Gotama got angry when he said the first few verses. “When he heard the buddha say, “It still belongs to you, brahmin! It still belongs to you, brahmin!”, fear arose in him and he thought “I think the recluse Gotama has cursed me” because he had heard of the tradition of angry ascetics such as Kisavacchā giving curses.” This reference to curses highlights another recurring motif in *khanti* narratives, discussed in detail later in this chapter.

In the *Asurindakasuttam* (SN 7.3), Asurindaka, of the Bharadvaja *gotra*, gets angry with the Buddha and insults him. The Buddha stays silent. Asuri interprets this as his victory and says, “I won!”. The Buddha says: “The fool thinks victory is won by screaming when instead the wise know that endurance [*titikkhā*] is victory.”¹⁹⁷ He then narrates the formulaic verses on anger above. The *Vepacitti sutta* and *Subhāsitaḥajaya Sutta* are very similar in structure and content and differ only in minor details. Both *suttas* discuss the right response to an offense set amidst a battle between Sakka and Vepacitti. The

¹⁹⁷ “jayaṃ ve maññati bālo, vācāya pharusam bhaṇam.

jayañcevassa taṃ hoti, yā titikkhā vijānato.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttam, 1. arahantavaggo, 3.

asurindakasuttam (SN 7.3), para. 2]

argument here is about enduring offense by someone who is weaker and how that might be seen as a sign of weakness and fear. In the *Vepacitti Sutta*, Sakka says: “Let him believe, “That one just tolerates [*titikkhati*] me out of fear. I don’t care. Among the highest good ideals for one’s own welfare, there is none better than tolerance [*khanti*]. When the one who is strong endures [*titikkhati*] the weak, that they call the highest tolerance [*khanti*], the weak must always be tolerant [*khamati*].”¹⁹⁸

The same verses can be found in the *Subhāsitaḥajaya Sutta* and in both, the formulaic verses on anger cited above follow. These verses seem to suggest that *khanti* is a necessity rather than a virtuous choice for the weak but is the virtue of choice among those who are strong. This verse seems to be a polemic against passages like those we have reviewed from the *Mahābhārata* which under some circumstances classify *khanti* as a practice of the weak. I will return to this below.

2.2.4 Cultivation

The second step in the process of *khanti* is the cultivation of positive emotions. Once the mind has been purified of anger, the practitioner of *khanti* frequently takes his practice

¹⁹⁸ “kāmaṃ maññatu vā mā vā, bhayā myāyaṃ titikkhati. sadatthaparamā atthā,

khantiyā bhiyyo na vijjati. “yo have balavā santo, dubbalassa titikkhati. tamāhu paramaṃ khantiṃ, niccaṃ khamati dubbalo.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 11. sakkasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. paṭhamavaggo, 4.

vepacittisuttaṃ (SN 11.4), para. 13]

of *khanti* a step further, by consciously cultivating positive emotions towards his offender.

Most commonly, the process of *khanti* involves the victim sending forth *metta* to the offender. *Metta* is an extremely complex technical Buddhist term, which is in dire need of systematic and comprehensive study. It has been translated in various ways – friendliness, benevolence, kindness, good-will, and in popular mass-media as ‘loving-kindness’¹⁹⁹. In this paper, I choose to translate it as good-will as I believe this makes the most sense given the context. Without entering into a debate over the meaning of the term, here I note its relationship to the process of *khanti*.

We have already seen three examples of *metta* being listed as the second step in the process of *khanti*: in the *Kakacūpamasutta (MN21)*, the *Mahāsīlava Jātaka [JA51]* and Buddhaghosa's analysis of *Mahāsīlava Jātaka [JA51]* in the *Visuddhimagga*.

2.2.4.1 DhpA 223

Another example of the cultivation of *metta* in the process of practicing *khanti* can be seen in the narrative linked with Dhp 223. In this story, a hired consort gets jealous of the wife and unable to control herself, pours a ladleful of boiling butter on the wife's head. The wife sees this coming but bears no ill will towards the consort. As a result, the

¹⁹⁹ The term has become increasingly popular in the recent decade. For example, in 2011, the famous NBA basketball player Ronald William Artest Jr. was so inspired by this Buddhist word that he legally changed his name to “Metta World Peace.” (Bolch, 2011)

boiling butter doesn't burn her, and seeing this, the consort becomes remorseful and apologizes. When the Buddha hears about this he asks the wife what her thought process was when the consort was coming toward her with boiling butter.²⁰⁰ The wife, Uttara, explains, "Reverend Sir, I cultivated goodwill [*mettāya*] towards her, thinking, "the universe is crowded, the brahma world is low, but my friend's qualities are great. For I got the opportunity to hear the *dhamma* and give alms only with her help. If I get angry [*kopo*] at her, may this [the ghee] burn me. If not, may it not burn me."²⁰¹ The Buddha replies, "Well done, well done, Uttara! That is the right way to overcome anger [*kodham*]. For anger [*kodho*] should be overcome with non-anger [*akkodhena*]."²⁰² Here

²⁰⁰ "tayā kiṃ cintitan"ti?

[Khuddaka Nikāya, dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. kodhavaggo n, 3. Uttarāupāsikāvatthu, para. 14]

²⁰¹ "cakkavāḷaṃ atisambādham, brahmaloko atinīcako, mama sahāyikāya guṇova mahanto. ahañhi etaṃ nissāya dānañca dātuṃ dhammañca sotuṃ alatthaṃ, sace me imissā upari kopo atthi, idaṃ maṃ dahatu. no ce, mā dahatū"ti evaṃ cintetvā imaṃ mettāya phariṃ, bhanteti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. kodhavaggo n, 3. Uttarāupāsikāvatthu, para. 14]

²⁰² satthā "sādhu sādhu, uttare, evaṃ kodham jinituṃ vaṭṭati. kodho hi nāma akkodhena, akkosakaparibhāsako anakkosantena aparibhāsantena, thaddhamaccharī

we see how both stages of the process of *khanti* are described in Uttara’s thought process: the purified mind free of anger and a mind filled with *metta*. It is noteworthy that Burlingame and Lanman (1921, Vol 3, p. 106) chose to translate *akkodhena* in this case as “kindness” despite its literal meaning being the absence of anger. They are not entirely incorrect; they have carried over the positive connotation from Uttara’s response to the Buddha, in which she stresses her positive feelings of good-will (*metta*). We have already seen the equivalence between *khanti* and non-anger firmly established in several texts. *Suttas* such as this one suggest that the definition of *khanti* can be taken a step further by associating it with positive virtues as well.

2.2.4.2 Ekarāja Jātaka [JA303]

Another good example of the cultivation of *metta* in the process of *khanti* can be seen in the *Ekarāja Jātaka* [JA303] which presents an alternative course of events between the Bodhisattva and the king of Kosala [Dabbasena] from that which is seen in the *Mahāsīlava Jātaka* [JA51] discussed above. In this version, Dabbasena captures the Bodhisattva and ties him with a cord to the lintel of the door. At this time, we are given insight into his thought process: “The king cultivated goodwill [*mettām*] towards the thieving prince, and having performed the preliminary duties that should be performed

attano santakassa dānena, musāvādī saccavacanena jinitabbo”ti vatvā imaṃ
gāthamāha...

[Khuddaka Nikāya, dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. kodhavaggo n, 3.

Uttarāupāsikāvatthu, para. 14]

before meditation, he was absorbed in meditation [*jhānaṃ*], and bursting his bonds sat cross-legged in the air.”²⁰³ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 9) Here, the process of *khanti* focuses on the cultivation of *metta* and climaxes with the Bodhisattva’s absorption into *jhāna*.

In some Jātakas, *metta* is closely tied to *khanti* by occurring adjacent to it in compounds. For example, in the *Mahiṃsa Jātaka* [JA278], where the Bodhisattva is a virtuous buffalo who is tortured by a monkey, the Bodhisattva is described as, “being full of patience, kindness, and mercy [*khantimettānuddayasampadāya*], took no notice at all of his misconduct.”²⁰⁴ (Rouse, 1895, p. 263) Similarly, in the *Culadhammapāla Jātaka* [JA358], the Bodhisattva’s reaction to being mutilated is described as: “The boy, when his hands were cut off, neither wept nor lamented, but moved by patience and good-will

²⁰³ rājā corarājānaṃ ārabha mettāṃ bhāvetvā kaṣiṇaparikkammaṃ katvā jhānaṃ nibbatesi, bandhanaṃ chijji, tato rājā ākāse pallaṅkena nisīdi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 1. kāliṅgavaggo, [303] 3. ekarājajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 16]

²⁰⁴ bodhisatto khantimettānuddayasampadāya taṃ tassa anācāraṃ na manasākāsi, makkaṭo punappunaṃ tatheva kari.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (dutiyo bhāgo), 3. tikanipāto, 3. udapānavaggo, [278] 8. mahiṃsarājajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 2]

[*khantiñca mettāñca*] bore [*adhivāsesi*] it with resignation.”²⁰⁵ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 193)

2.2.4.3 *Visuddhimagga*

The exegetical literature also notes the role the cultivation of *mettā* plays in the process of *khanti*. In the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa says, “If anger [*paṭigha*] arises in his mind when he focuses his mind on the enemy and remembers the transgressions done by him, then having meditated on goodwill [*mettā*] towards any of the aforementioned people, and having emerged from the meditation, he should remove his anger towards that person by directing goodwill towards that person.”²⁰⁶ Further, the *Visuddhimagga* implies a reciprocal relationship between *metta* and *khanti*. It says that a practitioner who wants to develop goodwill [*mettāṃ*] should “start by contemplating disadvantages

²⁰⁵ so dvīsu hatthesu chijjamānesu neva rodi na paridevi, khantiñca mettāñca purecārikaṃ katvā adhvāsesi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-ka-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 5. pañcakanipāto, 1. maṇikuṇḍalavaggo, [358] 8. cūḷadhammapāḷajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 8]

²⁰⁶ sace paṇassa verimhi cittamupasaṃharato tena katāparādhānussaraṇena paṭighamuppajjati, athānena purimapuggalesu yattha katthaci punappunaṃ mettāṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhahitvā punappunaṃ taṃ puggalaṃ mettāyanta paṭighaṃ vinodetabbāṃ.

[*Visuddhimagga*, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para. 28]

of hatred, and the advantages of tolerance [*khantiya*].”²⁰⁷ As all of these examples illustrate, *metta* is inextricably linked to *khanti*, forming part of the process.

2.3 LITERARY CONVENTIONS

Having explored the meaning and process of *khanti*, I turn to the plots and characters of the *khanti* texts in this section. Careful examination of these texts reveals that these *khanti* stories have consistent conventions of plot and character. The plot of most *khanti* texts follows one of two standardized narrative arcs and contains standardized characters who serve a defined purpose. They are similar in their plotlines, characters, and motifs. In this section, I will present these two narrative arcs and discuss the distinctive features of each.

These conventions of plot and character strongly suggest that these stories are part of a literary tradition. They suggest that the *khanti* stories were crafted carefully and

²⁰⁷ anussatikammaṭṭhānānantaraṃ uddiṭṭhesu pana mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhāti imesu catūsu brahmavihāresu mettāṃ bhāvetukāmena tāva ādikammikena yogāvacarena upacchinnapalibodhena gahitakammaṭṭhānena bhattakiccaṃ katvā bhattasammadaṃ paṭivinodetvā vivitte padese supaññatte āsane sukhanisinnena ādito tāva dose ādīnavo, khantiyañca ānisaṃso paccavekkhitabbo. kasmā? imāya hi bhāvanāya doso pahātabbo, khanti adhigantabbā.

[Visuddhimagga, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para.

1]

intentionally and that these consistently recurring features are hence meaningful and require attention and interpretation. As we will see below, defining the conventions of this corpus helps make sense of several details that seem odd, brings to light small details that might go unnoticed otherwise, and assists a reader in gaining a closer understanding of what the author(s) agenda might be. This is not to say that all stories follow the conventions strictly. There are deviations, of course, but these deviations also become meaningful once we note the conventions²⁰⁸.

2.3.1 Conventions of plot

The most consistent feature in these narratives is the plot. Besides the plot point of the protagonist (the Bodhisattva in most cases) practicing *khanti*, which is obviously common to all these narratives, the events that lead to this moment and the subsequent events which occur as a consequence of the practice of *khanti* also follow conventional narrative arcs. Two distinct narrative arcs are seen in a majority of *khanti* stories and they can be distinguished based on the fate of the Bodhisattva/Buddha, i.e. whether he lives or dies.

²⁰⁸ In her doctoral dissertation, Ohnuma (2006) has similarly worked on the literary conventions of *dehadāna Jātakas*, which have stimulated my thinking on this topic. Her analysis is very valuable for understanding the corpus of *dehadana Jātakas* and her methodology, robust. I believe the corpus of *khanti Jātakas* likewise benefits from such an analysis.

In the first of the two plotlines, plotline (A), the bodhisattva is described as a virtuous being. An offender attacks the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti*, but eventually dies. Soon enough, the offender also dies. The Bodhisattva goes to heaven, and the offender goes to hell.

The best example of a *Jātaka* belonging to category (A) is the *Khantivādin Jātaka*. Other prominent *Jātakas* following this plotline are: *Chaddantahatthi Jātaka* [JA514], *Culadhammapāla Jātaka* [JA358], *Cūla-Nandiya-Jātaka* [JA222], *Dhamma-Jātaka* [JA457], and the *Mahākapi Jātaka*²⁰⁹ [JA516].

In plotline (B), the bodhisattva is described as a virtuous being. An offender attacks the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti*. Viewing the Bodhisattva's virtuous behavior reforms the offender. He is apologetic, repentant and makes material offerings to the Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva rejects these offerings and preaches the *dhamma*. The offender is converted and practices this *dhamma*.

Examples of text that follow this plotline include the *Sarabhamiga Jātaka* [JA483], *Daddara Jātaka* [JA304], *Mahāsīlava Jātaka* [JA51], *Ekarāja Jātaka* [JA303], *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka* [JA455], *Rurumiga Jātaka* [JA482], *Rajovada Jātaka* [JA151], *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA506], *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543], *Uttara Upasika Vatthu* [DhpA 223] and *Akkosa Sutta* [SN 7:2].

²⁰⁹ Here the monkey's death is not explicitly stated, but implied.

As is clear from the analysis above, the two plotlines are quite distinct, and each of them emphasizes very different themes. The defining feature of plotline (A) is the death of the Bodhisattva which demonstrates the perfection of the Bodhisattva's *khanti*. It highlights the extreme, limitless and absolute nature of his *khanti* – that it is unwavering even in the face of death. It is proof of the bodhisattva's *khantipāramitā*. Furthermore, it emphasizes that there is no wrong time for *khanti* and that its practice is unconditional.

On the other hand, the defining plot point of plotline (B) is the reconciliation of the Bodhisattva and his offender. In most cases, the offender surrenders to the Bodhisattva, apologizes, and even makes a material offering (usually his kingdom, if he is a king). This plotline thus emphasizes the strategic-nature of *khanti*. It presents *khanti* as a potent means for the appeasement of one's enemies and hence has political undertones. In some stories that follow this plotline, *khanti* is also explicitly stated to be the most effective political strategy. For example, the *Sarabhanga Jātaka* [JA522] contains a telling statement which positions *khanti* as the ultimate political strategy. Here Sakka asks the Bodhisattva to declare what blessing is found in *khanti* and the Bodhisattva says:

No royal force, however vast its might,

Can win so great advantage in a fight

As the good man by patience [*khantimā*] may secure:

Strong patience [*khantībala*] is of fiercest feuds the cure.²¹⁰ (Francis, 1905, p. 76)

Here *khanti* is declared more powerful than any army and so strong that it can reconcile any feud. This statement can also be read as a repositioning of *khanti*, whose effectiveness as a political strategy is often discussed in the *Mahābhārata* (which was discussed in the previous chapter), as an effective political strategy by the Buddhists. These stories seem to want to establish *khanti* as a practical and effective political strategy for kings [*kṣatriyas*] and use the narrative arc (B) to demonstrate the efficacy of peaceful kingship. I will explore the significance of presenting *khanti* as a political strategy in a comparative context to the *Mahābhārata* in the next chapter.

Secondarily, plotline (B) also emphasizes the transformative power of the Bodhisattva - his ability to pacify and convert sinners, for, at the conclusion of this group of *Jātakas*, the offender is often converted to the path of Buddhist *dhamma* preached by the Bodhisattva.

In addition to their different thematic emphases, the goals of both narrative arcs are also very different. The goal of plotline (B) is clear – to motivate the reader to imitate

²¹⁰“na hetamatthaṃ mahatīpi senā, sarājjikā yujjhamānā labhetha.

yaṃ khantimā sappuriso labhetha, khantībalassūpasamanti verā”ti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātakapāḷi (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. cattālīsanipāto, 522.

sarabhaṅgajātakam (2) (KN 15.522), para. 57]

the Bodhisattva's *khanti* to achieve reconciliation. It presents the Bodhisattva as a figure to be emulated, whose actions we must learn from and apply in our own lives. This is largely because his actions are practical and reap positive results like peace, reconciliation, a gift, words of praise, and *karmic* merit.

The stories in plotline (A), however, are not so simple. Orzech (1994, p. 152), in his analysis of the *Khantivādin Jātaka* in this article on Buddhist self-sacrifice in relation to Rene Girard's theory of violence, theorizes that stories like the *Khantivādin Jātaka* "invite us to identify with and to emulate the behavior of the victims as a way of stopping victimage." His theory is that these stories stop "the process of reciprocal violence" (138) and are hence mimetic models for readers. Orzech's interpretation is plausible. However, it could also be theorized that stories in (A) are intended to be devotional and glorifying in nature. I would argue that the goal of these stories is not to present the Bodhisattva as an exemplary character whose actions we must imitate, but as a glorified and perfect being whom we should be devoted to. This interpretation is supported by the interpretation of scholars who have analyzed such stories from different perspectives. First, Ohnuma (2006) has noted that in their volume on sainthood, Denny, Kieckhefer, and Bond (1988) have theorized that sainthood is a mixture of "otherness" and "imitability". I believe the stories in (A) highlight the first and the stories in (B) the latter²¹¹. The perfection of the Bodhistta and the lengths he would

²¹¹ Ohnuma has also found this classificatory criterion useful in her analysis of *dehadana jātakas*. [p 63]

go to, to preserve his *khanti* highlight his “otherness” from the reader and are hence devotional in nature. Second, Heim (2003) approaches these stories from the perspective of emotions and discusses the ambiguity of morality in stories such as the *Vessantara Jātaka*²¹² which are said to stimulate excessive emotion. She argues that in such stories, emotion is used to engender awe for the Bodhisattva’s perfection and evoke moral consciousness in the reader/audience. Both these scholarly perspectives tend to favor my interpretation of these stories as glorifying the Bodhisattvas rather than presenting him as a mimetic model.

Another point of distinction between these two groups is the tone and genre. Stories in (A) have a tragic ending with the Bodhisattva and his attacker (and occasionally some secondary characters too) dying, while those in (B) have a “happy ending” with reconciliation, reformation of the offender, his establishment on the path of *dhamma* and forgiveness from the Bodhisattva. Stories in (A) can be squarely classified as “tragedies” as they meet all the popular criteria of this genre. In his genre classification of the *Vessantara Jātaka*, Collins uses three criteria for establishing the *Vessantara Jātaka* as a tragedy, which are also useful criteria to judge the *Jātakas* in group (A). First, they fit the dictionary definition of a tragedy: “A play or other literary work of a serious

²¹² In this story, the Bodhisattva is a prince who is devoted to giving gifts boundlessly. He is banished from his kingdom when he gives away a magical elephant. He sets out into the forest with his family where he gives away everything he has left, including his two children wife. Eventually the children are set free.

or sorrowful character, with a fatal or disastrous conclusion.... That branch of dramatic art which treats of sorrowful or terrible events, in a serious and dignified style.”²¹³

Second, Collins notes “the plot involves numerous instances of what an author dealing with Western tragedy calls “a feeling of the inevitability of the avoidable.” This can be seen in the *Jātakas* belonging to group (A). For example, in the *Khantivādin Jātaka*, the king slowly dismembers the Bodhisattva, cutting one limb at a time and giving the Bodhisattva an opportunity to save himself after each dismemberment. However, the readers know that the Bodhisattva is not going to waver in his *khanti* and is eventually going to die. Third, Collins quotes D. Shulman (1991) in relation to the *Rāmāyaṇa* saying “[it] illustrates the tragedy always consequent on perfection or the search for perfection, just as the work as a whole could be characterized by ... the ‘poetics of perfection.’ It creates a sustained, lyrical universe peopled by idealized heroes whose very perfection involves them—and the audience—in recurrent suffering.” This is as true of the *Khantivādin Jātaka* as it for the *Vessantara Jātaka*, both stories that exemplify the bodhisattva’s perfection, in which we see this playing out very clearly. I summarize the differences between group (A) and group (B) in Table IV below:

Table 8: Differences between narrative arcs

	Narrative arc (A)	Narrative arc (B)
End	Bodhisattva dies	Reformation
Theme	Perfection	Conciliatory power

²¹³ The Oxford English Dictionary

Goal	Devotional, glorification	Inspirational, figure to emulate
Quality emphasized	Bodhisattva's otherness	Bodhisattva's relatability
Tone	Tragedy	"Happy ending"

Besides these differences, there are certain plot points that are emphasized in each category. An important point of plotline (A) is the retributive justice at the end of the story. Once the attacker kills the Bodhisattva, by an act of "moral naturalism"²¹⁴ the attacker is also killed and justice is served. These occurrences are stereotypical in content and we see the same phraseology being repeated in several stories. It serves to highlight the graveness of the offender's crime. In most instances, the earth is unable to bear the weight of the attacker's sin and swallows the offender. This is significant, for the earth is known for its firmness, immovability, and most importantly, its ability to endure (hence, its name *kṣamā*). This in turn further highlights the Bodhisattva's patience – even though the earth (whose name is *khamā*) cannot bear the crime, the Bodhisattva can – how great his perfection of *khanti* must be! Furthermore, the contrast in the afterlife fate of the Bodhisattva and the attacker conveys the different *karmic* consequences of *khanti* and its opposite, *kodha*.

In plotline (B), the ends of the stories have a formulaic structure. In most, after the practice of the bodhisattva's *khanti*, its effect on the offender is described. The offender

²¹⁴ This term was coined by Heim (2003, p. 541) to describe this popular recurring motif.

is usually filled with remorse and requests for forgiveness. He also offers a large gift to the Bodhisattva (if the offender is a king, it is usually his entire kingdom). The Bodhisattva refuses the gift and instead asks for the offender to follow the *dhamma*. He gives a sermon and the offender takes the five precepts. The story ends with their conciliation and the reformation of the sinner.

These conventions are helpful to note for they help us make sense of details that would otherwise seem odd. For example, the analysis of the importance of the Bodhisattva's death in narrative arc (A) helps us make sense of a remark in the *Khantivādi Jātaka* [JA313] which states that the versions where the Bodhisattva did not die are incorrect: "And the Bodhisatta died on that same day. And the king's servants and the citizens came with perfumes and wreaths and incense in their hands and performed the Bodhisatta's obsequies. And some said that the Bodhisatta had gone straight back to the Himālayas. But in this they said the thing that was not."²¹⁵ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 28)

²¹⁵ bodhisattopi taṃ divasameva kālamakāsi. rājaparisā ca nāgarā ca

gandhamālādhūmahatthā āgantvā bodhisattassa sarīrakiccaṃ akaṃsu. keci panāhu

"bodhisatto puna himavantameva gato"ti, taṃ abhūtaṃ.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo [313] 3. khantivādījātakavaṇṇanā para. 16]

Further in the gloss of the words, the commentator says, “Some say that his hands, legs, nose, and ears were put back on, that too is false.”²¹⁶

While this comment may come across as baffling, the commentator’s insistence is a signal that something rather important is at stake. Since we find the same conventional plot in other Jātakas, it becomes clear that the commentator’s remark precisely reinforces this conventional plot point – the Bodhisattva’s death – without which the story’s agenda of conveying the Bodhisattva’s perfection would not be achieved.

The same story may also be told more than once and in such a way that each version adheres to a different plot arc. Two Jātakas in particular offer an interesting case study for they are similar in content, but their plots have been changed to fit the two narrative arcs: the *Dhamma-Jātaka* [JA457] and *Rajovada Jātaka* [JA151]. Both *Jātakas* have the same plot – the Bodhisattva is riding on a chariot when he comes face to face with another king who is also on a chariot. Neither king agrees to give way to the other and they mutually decide that the winner of the battle will give way to the other’s chariot²¹⁷.

²¹⁶ ekacce pana “bodhisattassa puna hatthapādakaṇṇanāsā ghaṭitā”ti vadanti, tampi abhūtameva.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo [313] 3. khantivādījātakavaṇṇanā para. 16]

²¹⁷ The motif of two chariots facing each other and engaging in a battle with the agreement that the loser will give way to the winner was common. For a discussion on chariots and their symbolism in debates refer to Manne (1990) and Bodewitz (1974).

In both cases, the Bodhisattva wins and gets his way. Yet, the climax of both stories is different and we can see that it is inspired by the conventions of the two narrative arcs.

In the *Dhamma-Jātaka* [JA457], “at the very moment when the *Bodhisatta* repeated this stanza, *Adhamma* could no longer stand in his car, but head-foremost plunged into the earth which gaped to receive him, and was born again in nethermost hell.”²¹⁸ (Rouse, 1901, p. 65) The end of this Jātaka thus conforms to the conventions of plotline (A). On the other hand, in the *Rajovada Jātaka*, the opposing king takes the Bodhisattva’s instructions [*ovādaṃ gahetvā*], engages himself in merit-making [*dānādāni puññāni katvā*] and goes to heaven at the end of his life [*jīvitapariyosāne saggapurameva pūresi*]. Additionally, the identification of characters at the end of the two Jātakas is modified according to the goals of each category. In the former, the opposing king who goes to hell is Devadatta, while in the latter the opposing king who reconciles with the Bodhisattva is identified as Ananda. I elaborate on the conventions of character in the next section.

²¹⁸ bodhisattena pana imāya gāthāya kathitakkhaṇeyeva adhammo rathe ṭhātuṃ asakkonto avaṃsiro pathaviyaṃ patitvā pathaviyā vivare dinne gantvā avīcimhiyeva nibbatti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [457] 3. dhammadevaputtajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 27]

2.3.2 Conventions of character

There are two main characters in the *Khanti Jātakas* – the *Bodhisattva* and the offender.

In this section, I ask the following questions: what is the characterization of the Bodhisattva in these stories? Who are the offenders in the story? How do conventions of character differ between plotlines (A) and (B)? What purpose does the offender serve? What strategies are used to contrast the offenders with the Bodhisattva? Who are the tertiary characters, what are their conventions, and what purpose do they serve?

2.3.2.1 *Bodhisattva*

We may begin with the first question - who is the Bodhisattva in the story? There is no discernable pattern in category (A). The Bodhisattva is cast as a different character in each of the stories belonging to this group. He is an ascetic, elephant, baby, monkey, god, and ape in the *Khantivādin Jātaka*, *Chaddantahatthi Jātaka*, *Culadhammapāla Jātaka*, *Cūla-Nandiya-Jātaka*, *Dhamma-Jātaka* and *Mahākapi Jātaka* respectively.

Likewise, in category (B) he is a deer, *nāga*, *kṣatriya*, elephant, deer, *kṣatriya*, *nāga* and *nāga* in the *Sarabhamiga Jātaka*, *Daddara Jātaka*, *Mahāsīlava Jātaka*, *Ekarāja Jātaka*, *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka*, *Rurumiga Jātaka*, *Rajovada Jātaka*, *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka* and *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* respectively.

Clearly, there is no pattern in the Bodhisattva's characterization across the two groups.

Without reading too much into this, we could speculate that this diversification demonstrates the universality of *khanti* and its applicability across *varṇas*, humans, animals and *nāgas*. Yet, although we cannot categorize the Bodhisattva's

characterization across groups A and B, we can discern some patterns overall. Across the two groups, whenever the Bodhisattva is an ascetic, he is depicted as a *brahman*, who is born to a wealthy family, is well educated and knowledgeable, and has enough power to curse. The last point serves two important functions. First, it contrasts the Bodhisattva's character with that of other sages who actually do exercise their power to curse, and second, it shows that *khanti* is a power and not a weakness. It clarifies that the Bodhisattva is not practicing *khanti* due to any weakness or inability to retaliate. He has the ability to curse and defeat his attacker but chooses to practice *khanti* instead. In contrast, stories where the bodhisattva is a *kṣatriya* occur primarily in group (B)²¹⁹. This is significant and in line with the observation made above that *Jātakas* in this category aim to demonstrate *khanti* as a viable and practical strategy for conciliation, peace, and political stability.

It is perhaps surprising that in the largest number of *khanti Jātakas* the Bodhisattva is an animal. What do we make of this fact, given the inferior status of animals in the Buddhist hierarchy of beings? We might expect the stories to underplay the animality of these animals in these stories and present them as stand-ins for humans, but contrary to this expectation, the stories emphasize the animality of these animals and make it part of their rhetoric. For example, in the *Sarabhamiga Jātaka (JA 483)* where the

²¹⁹ The only exception to this Culadhammapāla Jātaka where he is a baby who was born to the king. However, as the baby does not have political agency, we can disregard this case for the point I am about to make.

Bodhisattva is an animal, we see the importance of his being an animal emphasized. In this story, a king goes hunting and while chasing a deer (the Bodhisattva), falls into a pit. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti* towards the king and rescues the king from the pit. The king is remorseful for his actions and offers his kingdom to the Bodhisattva out of gratitude. When the king offers the Bodhisattva his kingdom, the Bodhisattva (who is a deer in this text) says, “Great king, I am one of the animals, and I want no kingdom.”²²⁰

Behind the rhetoric employed in these animal stories is the notion that ‘if animals can be so good, how much better must men be’. The same rhetoric is also seen in the *Visuddhimagga*, where Buddhaghosa uses the animality of the Bodhsittva in these stories as a tool to motivate monks to practice *khanti*: “And it is perhaps not so wonderful that one who had become a human being should have acted in that way; but also as an animal he did so. For while the Bodhisattva was the elephant called *Chaddanta*....²²¹ (Ñāṇamoli, 2011, p. 298)

2.3.2.2 Offender

Unlike the characterization of the Bodhisattva, the characterization of the offender is much more defined and there is a clear distinction between the two groups of stories in

²²⁰ “mahārāja, mayaṃ tiracchānagatā, na me rajjenattho...”

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 13. terasakanipāto, [483] 10. sarabhamigajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 14]

²²¹ idañcāpi anacchariyameva, yaṃ manussabhūto evamakāsi. tiracchānabhūtopi pana chaddanto nāma vāraṇo hutvā

terms of who the offender is in each group. In every single case in group (A), the attacker is Devadatta. On the other hand, in group (B), the offender is either a king or a hunter²²². In a majority of stories in group (B) the offender is a king: *Sarabhamiga Jātaka*, *Mahāsīlava Jātaka*, *Ekarāja Jātaka*, *Rurumiga Jātaka*, and *Rajovada Jātaka*. In two cases, even though the offender is not a king, the exposition on *khanti* is given to a king: the *Daddara Jātaka* and *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka*. In three cases the offender is a hunter: *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka*²²³, *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka*, *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka*.

What purpose does the offender serve in each case? The offenders in group (A) and (B) serve very different purposes. In all stories in group (A), the offender Devadatta kills the Bodhisattva in gruesome ways. These stories highlight his cruelty, which is also the impetus for the narration of some Jātakas in group (A) according to their *paccupanavatthu*. For example, in the *Culadhammapāla Jātaka*, the *paccupanavatthu* says, “This story the Master, when dwelling in the Bamboo Grove, told concerning the going about of Devadatta to slay the Bodhisatta.”²²⁴ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 117).

Furthermore, Devadatta’s characterization also serves as a contrast for the Bodhisattva’s character. We can also see a clear connection between the casting of

²²² I include snake charmers in the same category as hunters.

²²³ This story straddles both categories since the attack is done by a hunter but the exposition on *khanti* is given to a king.

²²⁴ idaṃ satthā veḷuvane viharanto devadattassa vadhāya parisakkaṇaṃ ārabba kathesi.

Devadatta as the offender and the agenda of these stories in group (A) to glorify the Buddha, for Devadatta's cruelty gives occasion for the glory of the Bodhisattva to be highlighted.

The agenda of stories in group (B) is to encourage the audience to practice *khanti* in the same way that the hero of the story has done. The message being emphasized is reconciliation. The fact that the offender is often a *kṣatriya* provides further support for my hypothesis that this group of stories aims to establish *khanti* as a political strategy. In this group of stories, *khanti* is demonstrated as a political strategy that is realistic, ethical, practical, and which should be imitated, and hence, what better way to demonstrate this than through an aggressive king whose heart is warmed by the Bodhisattva's practice of *khanti* to the extent that he is willing to give up his entire kingdom?

The relationship between the Bodhisattva and the offender in the two groups is also different. In group (A), the contrast between the Bodhisattva and the attacker is made absolutely clear by the way in which their paths diverge at the end - the Bodhisattva goes to heaven and the offender goes to hell. In group (B), however, after initially contrasting the Bodhisattva and his offender, we see a convergence in their characters and destinies, by the offender undergoing a transformation and becoming a practitioner of the *dhmma* preached by the Bodhisattva and in some cases, both going to heaven at the end of their lives.

Two additional strategies are employed by the *khanti Jātakas* to contrast the offenders with the Bodhisattva. In some stories, the Bodhisattva is made the embodiment of *khanti* and Devadatta of *akhanti*. These characters become paradigmatic stand-ins of the religious beliefs they represent. This strategy can be seen most clearly in the *Dhamma Jātaka* where the Bodhisattva is named *Dhamma* and Devadatta, *Adhamma* – leaving no doubt as to what religious beliefs they represent.

In some *Jātakas* a contrast between the Bodhisattva and Devadatta is also made by casting them in opposing *varṇas*. The Bodhisattva is a *brahman* while the offender is a *kṣatriya* – a king. In these situations, we can discern a specific purpose of casting the characters in these contrasting *varṇas* – to show the superiority of ascetic ideals over *kṣatriya* ideals. As an ascetic, the Bodhisattva is a master of the inner world, while the king dominates the external world. MacQueen (1981) has argued that this contrast between internal and external mastery, which is a common theme in Buddhist literature that can be seen in the Buddha’s biography and verses in the *Dhammapada*, is also a prominent theme in the *Khantivādin Jātaka*. Although I do not fully agree with his reading of the *Khantivādin Jātaka*²²⁵, I agree that this theme features prominently in the *Khantivādin Jātaka* and other stories in group (A).

²²⁵ MacQueen claims that “Having presented these two figures, the text has them engage in what may justly be called a “battle,” wherein each of the combatants is threatened and is moved to make a powerful response.” [248] It is clear from the story that the king is threatening and challenging Kṣāntivādin. But the author also gives two

Besides these two main characters, in several stories, we also see what I would call “foil characters” whose function I will discuss only briefly. This foil character reacts in the opposite way as the Bodhisattva, highlighting the unique aspects of the Bodhisattva’s *khanti*. Good examples of this foil character are the Bodhisattva’s mother in the *Culadhammapala Jātaka* and the harem women in the *Khantivādin Jātaka*. In these examples, the foils become distressed and wail loudly when the offense takes place, while the Bodhisattva practices *khanti* and stays silent. These foil characters also act as

reasons why he thinks Kṣāntivadin is doing the same to the king. I find his interpretation of Kṣāntivadin’s “threats” to the king unconvincing and believe that here he is missing the main point of the Kṣāntivadin Jataka. First, he says: “The ascetic is thus in a position to defy the king, and this is exactly what he does. His reply to the king’s question as to what “forbearance” means, namely, that it means “being without anger when people curse or strike or revile you,” is a direct challenge. The king accepts the challenge and the battle begins.” [249] I do not find this response to be defiant. Its just a simple definition of *kṣānti* and could be included for expositional purposes. Second, he adds: “The king has mislocated his forbearance, failed to find it, failed to touch it. This is virtually a taunt, and it provokes the king to further acts of violence and ensures the continuance of the battle.” [250]. If we read this as taunts, we would not be accepting the story’s main point: that *Kṣāntivadin* was friendly and compassionate to the king even up to the point of death.

the voice of opposition. They object to the crime taking place and play the voice of reason against the offender's *kodha*.

2.4 IMPLICATIONS

This chapter explored the meaning and development of the idea of *khanti* in the Pali Canon. The examination of *khanti* in the Pali canon revealed some fascinating and surprising insights. In this section, I will summarize these findings and discuss their implications on the larger world of Buddhist literature, and the even broader context of early Indian religions, to which these *khanti* narratives belong. I hope that this analysis will not only offer new perspectives into the study of *khanti* but also fresh insights into several larger issues and topics of Buddhist studies that have been unstudied or understudied.

2.4.1 Narrative texts

First, it is noteworthy that while compiling the sources of *khanti*, I found that *khanti* is discussed primarily in the narrative texts of the Pali canon, rather than normative or didactic texts. Even the commentarial traditions of Buddhaghosa and Dhammapala pointed us towards these narratives as the most authoritative sources of *khanti*.

Interestingly, when these commentators gloss the term *khanti*, they did not offer any direct definition. Additionally, they also did not point us toward any normative *suttas* which may have contained a straightforward definition. This was the case in all the glosses of the term *khanti*, and was done consistently by both commentators. This

suggests that the commentators viewed *khanti* as a complex term, devoid of a simple straightforward definition, that is best illustrated through a story.

This fact has important implications. It reveals the importance of narrative literature in expounding the meaning of important Buddhist virtues. The authors of the Pali canon clearly opted to take advantage of the possibilities offered by narratives to demonstrate the meaning of *khanti* in different contexts and scenarios, rather than prescribing a normative process of *khanti* through prescriptive texts.

This data supports the scholarly view that narrative literature is a serious source for understanding early Buddhism Appleton (2016, p. 11); Collins (1998, p. 121); (Collins, 2020); Heim (2003); Strong (1989, pp. 14-15; 2017); Hallisey and Hansen (1996); G. Obeyesekere (1991, p. 231)²²⁶ and R. Obeyesekere (1992, p. x). As Collins (1998) rightly noted, "It is, surely, no more than common sense to recognize that people react to

²²⁶ G. Obeyesekere notes that stories "were once the lifeblood of everyday Buddhism, yet... [they] are almost never part of the scholarly discussion in the modern literature of Buddhism. [Their] almost total neglect in Buddhist Studies is because they have been relegated as unimportant folktales that have little to do with the profoundly philosophical corpus" (231). Similarly, R. Obeyesekere says, "Looking back on my childhood, I realize we were never given religious instruction as such, either in school or at home. We participated in Buddhist rituals and ceremonies . . . and listened to many, many Buddhist stories. That was how we learned to be Buddhists" (x)

problems, ideas and events by telling stories about them..." and that seems to be exactly what the Buddhist did when it came to the idea of *khanti*.

Despite the importance of narrative literature to the Buddhist tradition, there have been only a few comprehensive studies on the stories of the Pali Canon²²⁷. Hallisey and Hansen (1996) lament, "We... find ourselves in the position of having to ask (as if for the first time after a century of intensive, productive scholarship), "What did Buddhists learn from their stories and how did they learn from them?"'" The findings presented in this chapter, provide an answer to Hallisey and Hansen's questions.

The findings of the chapter imply that stories in the Pali canon are far from being inferior sources of knowledge. Rather than being mere vehicles of entertainment or a disparate collection of folk tales, these stories were crafted carefully and served an

²²⁷ Collins (1998, p. 121) noted "there has been little serious work on Buddhist stories beyond the vital task, still scarcely begun, of providing editions and translations of them." Similarly, Strong (1989, pp. 14-15) noted, "there has been a tendency by these authors to dismiss them as more or less the fabrications of biased Buddhist." He imagines these scholars saying "we should not, therefore, take them seriously since they are nothing but the "mendacious fictions of unscrupulous monks" (as though that somehow made them less interesting or important)."

educational purpose.²²⁸ They were instruments of communicating Buddhist ideals and illustrating complex concepts like *khanti*.

My analysis above has revealed that even the commentators of the Pali canon recognized these narratives as authoritative and important sources for the understanding of complex Buddhist ideas. Hence, Buddhist narrative literature must be given as much consideration as normative *suttas* as they carried an equivalent authority within the tradition²²⁹. They must be recognized as “fertile ground” (Heim, 2008), and excavated for insights into Buddhist concepts, just as I did with *khanti*.

²²⁸ This finding supports Collins’ (2020, p. xxix) view that one should avoid “the common assumption that Stories merely “express” or “illustrate” Doctrines, or give voice to some simplistic moral, as do (though only apparently) folklore and “didactic” (children’s) literature (lower- case l). Many of the Birth Stories recounted in [this book] will be seen to be very much more sophisticated, in both Literary (capital L) and ethical senses than Systematic Thought, requiring emotional as well as cognitive intelligence to appreciate . . . [these stories were not the content of] “popular Buddhism,” still less “morality tales” for children, as is so often alleged. . . . Even educated and sophisticated people like stories. And many of the Birth Stories are very complex and sophisticated, as I shall try to show.”

²²⁹ In Collin’s last book, *Wisdom as a Way of Life*, he goes as far as to say that narratives are superior to systematic literature. He says, “I am making a large claim: it is that

Furthermore, the fact that *khanti* was illustrated through the medium of narratives, also tells us something about the nature of *khanti* itself. It implies that *khanti* was understood to be a practical and universal practice within the Pali canon. In my analysis above we have seen *khanti* being explained through a wide range of diverse narratives. In these stories we see monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, ascetics, kings and even animals practice *khanti*. Sometimes the occasions for its practice are relatively small everyday squabbles, and sometimes they are deadly fatal attacks. We see examples of all types of people (and animals) practicing *khanti* in a myriad variety of circumstances. This suggests that *khanti* was presented as a practical solution for everyone, in every situation. Thus, in the Pali canon, *khanti* was not only an abstract concept that was supposed to be perfected through introspection; instead, it was a practical action that had several applications and had to be enacted every day in various life situations.

2.4.2 *Khantijatakas* as a subgenre

The consistency and richness inherent in the meaning of Buddhist *khanti* can also be seen in the plots, characters, and motifs of *khanti* narratives. We have seen how the majority of the *khanti* corpus can be divided into two groups, each having its own distinct plotline, theme, goal, tone, characters, and recurring motifs. Through the use of

narratives rather than texts of systematic thought (“doctrine”) are the heart and humanity of the Pali tradition, and what is standardly presented nowadays as the “Theravāda.” (2000, p. 2)

several examples above we saw how defining the conventions of this corpus helped us make sense of several details that seem odd, brought to light small details that might go unnoticed otherwise, and assisted us in gaining a better understanding of what the author(s) agenda might be.

These conventions of plot and character suggest that the *khanti* stories were crafted carefully and could be classified as a recognizable subgenre of their own. This observation builds on and supports the findings made by Reiko Ohnuma (2006) in “Head, Eyes, Flesh, and Blood: Giving Away the Body in Indian Buddhist Literature,” that examined *dehadāna* narratives to reach similar conclusions. Ohnuma convincingly proves that “gift-of-the-body *jātakas* constitute a separate and identifiable grouping of texts marked by consistent features and conventions that make it meaningful to speak of them as a subgenre... In plotline, characters, structure, imagery, and even the use of stereotypical phraseology, all gift- of- the- body *jātakas* share a certain “family resemblance” that immediately recalls the category to mind.” (52) From my analysis above it is clear that the same can be said about *khanti* narratives.

2.4.3 Anger

My examination of the Buddhist idea of *khanti* has also revealed fascinating insights into the Buddhist idea of anger. In the Pali canon, *khanti* was seen as the opposite of anger. If anger was the disease, *khanti* was the antidote. Even the *Khantivādin Jātaka* defines *khanti* as the state of not being angry [*akujjhanabhāvo*]. Anger is an unstudied subject in

Buddhist studies and I hope that the insights presented in this section serve as a starting point for further research on this topic.

One of the central concerns of the *khanti* narratives is the question of how to deal with anger. Even Buddhaghosa's analysis of *khanti* narratives in the *Visuddhimagga* is undertaken as a response to the question of how one should deal with their anger. One of the unique aspects of the Buddhist idea of anger is the zero-tolerance policy towards anger; in the Buddhist view, the goal was to not let even a tiny amount of anger arise in the mind. For instance, Buddhaghosa interprets the *Khantivādin Jātaka* by saying that even while being mutilated fatally, the Bodhisattva, “did not create the slightest amount of anger [*kopamattampi*].”²³⁰ Similarly, in the *Mahāsīlava Jātaka* [JA51] when the virtuous king is captured by a rival king and bound up by followers, the *Jātaka* says, “Even at that time, the great ethical king [or King Sīlava] did not have even a small amount of anger [*āghāta*] towards the thieves.”²³¹ No amount of anger was acceptable

²³⁰ khantivādījātake dummedhena kāsiraññā “kiṃvādī tvaṃ samaṇā”ti puṭṭho
“khantivādī nāmāhan”ti vutte sakaṇṭakāhi kasāhi tāletvā hatthapādesu chijjamānesu
kopamattampi nākāsi.

[*Visuddhimagga*, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 9. brahmavihāraniddeso, mettābhāvanākathā, para.
78]

²³¹ tasmimpi kāle sīlavamahārājā corarañño āghātamattampi nākāsi.

[*Khuddaka Nikāya*, *jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 1. ekanipāto, 6. āsīsavaggo,
[51] 1. mahāsīlavajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 5]

in the Pali canon. The goal was to nip this vice in the bud and keep the mind completely free of anger.

Furthermore, the *khanti* stories also give us specific reasons as to why the Buddhists viewed anger negatively. They tell us that anger breaks one's morality. For example, consider the *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543] in which the Bodhisattva is a *nāga* who is captured by a snake charmer. During his period of captivity, the Bodhisattva thinks, "If I were angry [*kujjheyyaṃ*] with him for his treachery, my moral character [*sīlaṃ*] would be injured [*khaṇḍaṃ*]." ²³² Similarly, in the *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA506] too the Bodhisattva is born as a *nāga* and is caught by a snake charmer. "Then he thought, "My poison is powerful, and if I am angry [*kujjhitvā*] and send forth the breath of my nostrils his body will be shattered and scattered like a fist-full of chaff; then my virtue [*sīlaṃ*] will be broken... But the Great Being so feared lest he break his virtue [*sīlabhedabhayena*], that he bore all this torment and never so much as opened an eye to glance at him." ²³³ Following the same pattern, in the *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka* [JA455] the

²³² sacāhaṃ imassa mittadubbhino kujjheyyaṃ, sīlaṃ me khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (sattamo bhāgo), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīḷanakaṇḍaṃ para. 114]

²³³ ahituṇḍikaṃ disvā cintesi "mama viṣaṃ mahantaṃ, sacāhaṃ kujjhitvā nāsavātaṃ vissajjessāmi, etassa sarīraṃ bhasmamuṭṭhi viya vippakirissati, atha me sīlaṃ khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati, na dāni taṃ olokessāmi"ti... mahāsatto attano sīlabhedabhayena evarūpaṃ dukkhaṃ adhvāsento akkhīni ummīletvā olokanamattampi nākari.

Bodhisattva is a white elephant who is captured by the king's men. He thinks, "if I give way to anger [*kujjhissāmi*], my virtue [*sīlaṃ*] will be marred. So today I will not be angry, not even though pierced with knives."²³⁴

In another group of *suttas*, the reason for not getting angry is that it is beneficial to the self. Four suttas in the *Samyuttanikāya - Akkosasuttaṃ* (SN 7.2), *Asurindakasuttaṃ* (SN 7.3), *Vepacittisuttaṃ* (SN 11.4) and *Subhāsitañāyāsuttaṃ* (SN 11.5) – contain a formulaic verse that emphasizes the selfish reasons for the practice of *khanti*: "One who repays an angry man with anger thereby makes things worse for himself."²³⁵ (Bodhi, 2000, pp. 256-257). The *Vepacitti Sutta* also contains a verse that echoes the same reason: "Of goals that culminate in one's own good none is found better than patience [*khantya*]."²³⁶ (Bodhi, 2000, p. 324).

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-ka-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 15. vīsatinipāto, [506] 10. campeyyajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 6]

²³⁴ sace pana kujjhissāmi, sīlaṃ me bhijjissati, tasmā ajja sattīhi koṭṭiyamānopi na kujjhissāmi”ti adhiṭṭhāya sīsaṃ nāmetvā niccalova aṭṭhāsi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-ka-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [455] 1. mātuposakajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 3]

²³⁵ “tasseva tena pāpiyo, yo kuddhaṃ paṭikujjhati.

kuddhaṃ appaṭikujjhanto, saṅgāmaṃ jetaṃ dujjayaṃ.

²³⁶ sadatthaparamā atthā, khantyaṃ bhiyyo na vijjati.

Another unique feature of the Buddhist idea of anger is that it was viewed very differently from pain. Within the Pali canon’s worldview, one could experience pain without experiencing anger. For example in the *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543] it is said “The Great Being felt no anger [*kujjhi*] even though he suffered such pain [*dukkhaṃ*].²³⁷²³⁸ (Cowell & Rouse, 1907, p. 97). This is interesting because it suggests that anger was not a type of pain. Pain was seen as a physical sensation while anger was seen as an optional emotional response to it. The ideal Buddhist would feel pain without feeling any anger.

My analysis has also shed some light on the question of how one should quell their anger. Above, I have discussed a formulaic description of anger which is repeated in four suttas of the *Samyuttanikāya*.²³⁹ I have noted how the commentary to these verses

[*Samyutta Nikāya*, *sagāthāvaggo*, 11. *sakkasamyuttaṃ*, 1. *paṭhamavaggo*, 4. *vepacittisuttaṃ*, para. 14]

²³⁷ *mahāsatto evarūpaṃ dukkhaṃ anubhavantopi neva kujjhi.*

[*Khuddaka Nikāya*, *jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*, (*sattamo bhāgo*), 22. *mahānipāto n*, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, *kīlanakaṇḍaṃ*, para. 115]

²³⁸ The redacted parts contain graphic descriptions of horrific mutilations being done to Bhuridatta.

²³⁹ “*tasseva tena pāpiyo, yo kuddhaṃ paṭikujjhati.*

kuddhaṃ appaṭikujjhanto, saṅgāmaṃ jeti dujjayaṃ.

“*ubhinnamatthaṃ carati, attano ca parassa ca.*

states that “*satiyā samannāgato hutvā adhvāseti*” which translates to “possessed of mindfulness, he endures it”. This statement tells us that in order to quell one’s anger, one needs to be mindful. Hence, my analysis suggests that mindfulness is the way to keep one’s mind anger-free.

Lastly, another unique aspect of the Buddhist worldview on anger is that once one has quelled their anger it cannot occur in that person again. In the *Akkosasutta*, the king and his men assume that the Buddha has gotten angry and they ask him how he got angry despite being an *arahant*. The Buddha replies: "How can anger arise in one who is

paraṃ saṅkupitaṃ ñatvā, yo sato upasammati.

“ubhinnaṃ tikicchantānaṃ, attano ca parassa ca.

janā maññanti bāloti, ye dhammassa akovidā”ti.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, sagāthāvaggo, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. arahantavaggo, 2. akkosasuttaṃ (SN 7.2), para. 6]

This passage is found in the *Akkosasuttaṃ* (SN 7.2), *Asurindakasuttaṃ* (SN 7.3), *Vepacittisuttaṃ* (SN 11.4) and *Subhāsitaṃjayaṃsuttaṃ* (SN 11.5) and can be translated as follows: “One who gets angry with an angry person is even worse than the one who is angry at him. By not getting angry with one who is angry, one wins a difficult battle. He practices for the welfare of both, his own and the others. Having realized the angered state of another, practicing mindfulness, he calms his mind. When he cures both, himself and the other, the people who consider him a fool are unskilled in the *dhamma*.”

angerless, in the tamed one of righteous living, in one liberated by perfect knowledge, in the Stable One who abides in peace?" (Bodhi, 2000, p. 256) This important passage highlights that once one has become free of anger [*akkodha*], anger cannot arise.

2.4.4 *Mettā*

Parallely, *khanti* also sheds some much-needed light on the Buddhist idea of *mettā*. *Mettā* is a popular²⁴⁰, pervasive, and yet, obscure Buddhist concept in the Pali canon that is in dire need of scholarly attention. Although one of the Buddhist perfections, it is an unstudied concept that continues to confound scholars.

My analysis above has revealed that *mettā* is an integral part of the process of *khanti* and has a symbiotic relationship with it. Specifically, *mettā* is the second step in the process of *khanti*. This implies that *khanti* is a larger process that includes *mettā*; one half of *khanti* is *mettā*. The close association between *mettā* and *khanti* helps us gain a greater understanding of both these unique Buddhist ideas.

²⁴⁰ This term has become popular in pop culture. For example, former professional basketball player Ron Artest officially changed his name to "Metta World Peace" in 2011 and then to "Metta Sandiford-Artest" in 2020 (Baer, 2020). Additionally, the concept of *mettā* has also attracted a lot of scholarly attention from the scientific community who has been interested in exploring the therapeutic potention of *mettā* meditation (Carson et al., 2005; Galante, Galante, Bekkers, & Gallacher, 2014; Hofmann et al., 2015; Mehan & Morris, 2018; Zeng, Chiu, Wang, Oei, & Leung, 2015).

First, the findings from this chapter allow us to correct a major misconception about *khanti* – that the practice of *khanti* means remaining unaffected by what is happening. This perception can be seen in one commentarial description of *khanti* and has also been proposed in modern scholarship. In the *Maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā* of the *Khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā*, we get an *atthavaṇṇanā* of *khanti* which says: “*Khanti* is tolerance as endurance. A monk who is endowed with it, when abused with the ten types of abuse, or when injured, executed, imprisoned, etc., he is unchanged [*nibbikāro*] like a person who has neither heard [*asuṇanto*] nor seen it [*apassanto*], like *Khantivādi*.”²⁴¹ Here the commentary states that a monk who possesses *khanti* remains so unaffected by an offense that it is as though he did not hear or see it. This statement interprets the process of *khanti* as being impassive [*nibbikāro*], and unaffected by an offense. A similar interpretation of the process of *khanti* has also been suggested by Schopen (1989, pp. 139, n. 120), who says, “As I understand the term, it more commonly means not “to endure” or “to accept” but to remain “unaffected by”.” This interpretation does not do justice to the examples studied above. As we have seen, in most *khanti* narratives, the practitioner is greatly affected by the offense committed

²⁴¹ *khanti nāma adhvāsanakkhanti, tāya samannāgato bhikkhu dasahi akkosavatthūhi akkosante vadhabandhādīhi vā vihesante puggale asuṇanto viya apassanto viya ca nibbikāro hoti khantivādī viya.*

[*Khuddaka Nikāya, khuddakapāṭha-aṭṭhakathā, 5. maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā, khantīcātīgāthāvaṇṇanā, para. 2*]

against him. The offense acts like a stimulus or a catalyst to produce the complementary positive emotions of *metta* thereby bringing about a change – a positive one - in the practitioner.

Additionally, the integration of *mettā* into *khanti* takes the definition and process of *khanti* beyond the simple practice of tolerance – a solitary endeavor – to a social practice which now also involves others. The practice of tolerance is limited to the victim, but when the cultivation of goodwill is added to the process of *khanti*, it crosses the boundary between the victim and the offender and makes the offender part of the process. This act of making solitary practices social can also be seen in other Buddhist processes, like *tapas*. Kloppenborg (1990, pp. 59-60) has noted how the addition of goodwill [*mettācittā*] to the redefinition of the term '*tapas*' "seems to be a first attempt to incorporate social emotions in the - formerly and by nature - rather anti-social practice of asceticism." When the practitioner of *khanti* engages in the conscious act of cultivating goodwill towards the offender and the rest of the world, he is consciously shifting his focus from himself to others. This act, of including others in the practice of *khanti*, suggests that it is closer to being a social practice, rather than an asocial practice.

Third, my findings imply that to study *mettā*, a scholar would need to look into the concept of *khanti*. Since the *khanti* narratives present *mettā* as an integral part of *khanti*, no serious examination of *mettā* can ignore this corpus. Additionally, my findings also point to a strong link between *mettā* and anger. They present *mettā* as a

replacement for the emotion of anger and as a way to conquer it. For instance, in the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa says that the way to negate one's anger towards a certain person is to develop *mettā* for him - "If anger [*paṭigha*] arises in his mind when he focuses his mind on the enemy and remembers the transgressions done by him, then having meditated on goodwill [*mettā*] towards any of the aforementioned people, and having emerged from the meditation, he should remove his anger towards that person by directing goodwill towards that person." This straightforward exposition helps clarify the relationship between these three intricately linked concepts – *khanti*, *mettā*, and anger. It suggests that another way of understanding the process of *khanti* is to view it as a replacement of anger with *mettā*.

2.4.5 *Khanti* as a universal Buddhist ethic

The Theravāda Buddhists can also be seen including their idea of *khanti* into their system of ethics, thereby making it an integral part of their ideology. This can be gleaned from the Pali *khanti* narratives where one of the main reasons for the practice of *khanti* is the preservation of ethics [*sīla*]²⁴². This has already been seen above in the examples from the *Bhūridattanāgarāja Jātaka* [JA543],²⁴³ the *Campeyyanāgarāja Jātaka*

²⁴² While *sīla* is another complex term that can refer to a wide range of things, I will argue that in the context of these narratives it likely means a code of conduct or ethical code.

²⁴³ *sacāhaṃ imassa mittadubbhino kujjheyyaṃ, sīlaṃ me khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati. mayā kho pana paṭhamaññeva caturaṅgasamannāgato uposatho adhiṭṭhito, so yathādhiṭṭhitova*

[JA506],²⁴⁴ and the *Māti-Posaka-Jātaka* [JA455].²⁴⁵ These examples clearly demonstrate that the *khanti* narratives emphasize that the reason for the Bodhisattva's practice of *khanti* is maintaining his *sīla*. This suggests that *khanti* was an integral part of the Theravāda Buddhist idea of ethics [*sīla*]; failing to practice *khanti* results in a breach of the Buddhist code of conduct.

Furthermore, I will argue that *khanti* was not only an ethic for the Theravāda Buddhists, but a *universal* Buddhist ethic. In the *Mahābhārata* the two practices of *kṣānti* are

hotu, alampāyano maṃ chindatu vā pacatu vā, sūlena vā vijjhatu, nevassa kujjhissāmī"ti cintetvā "sace kho panāhaṃ ime olokessāmi, bhasmā bhaveyyuṃ.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (sattamo bhāgo), 22. mahānipāto n, [543] 6.

bhūridattajātakavaṇṇanā, kīḷanakaṇḍaṃ, para. 114]

²⁴⁴ ahituṇḍikaṃ disvā cintesi "mama viṣaṃ mahantaṃ, sacāhaṃ kujjhivā nāsavātaṃ vissajjessāmi, etassa sarīraṃ bhasmamuṭṭhi viya vippakirissati, atha me sīlaṃ khaṇḍaṃ bhavissati, na dāni taṃ olokessāmī"ti... mahāsatto attano sīlabhedabhayena evarūpaṃ dukkhaṃ adhivāsento akkhīni ummīletvā olokanamattampi nākari.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 15. vīsatinipāto, [506] 10.

campeyyajātakavaṇṇanā para. 6]

²⁴⁵ sace pana kujjhissāmi, sīlaṃ me bhijjissati, tasmā ajja sattīhi koṭṭiyamānopi na kujjhissāmī"ti adhiṭṭhāya sīsaṃ nāmetvā niccalova aṭṭhāsi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [455] 1.

mātuposakajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 3]

advocated for different *varnas*. There is no universal notion of *kṣānti* which applies to everyone in the epic. By contrast, in the Pali canon there is no differentiation in the prescription of its practice by *varṇa* or any other categorization. Without being overly reductive, the *Mahābhārata* can arguably be interpreted as a story of kings and a book on the nature of kingship and kingship advice. Within this broad context, *kṣānti* was presented as one of many duties of a king and clear limits were set on when and why a king ought to practice this virtue. The Pali canon, with its broad scope and non-exclusive focus on kingship, situates its idea of *khanti* as an important universal virtue that ought to be practiced without any limits by all beings regardless of their *varṇa*, gender or even species. Above, I have discussed several examples of the Pali *khanti* narratives where *khanti* is espoused for ascetics, kings, women, and even animals. These findings suggest that one can make a broader argument that the ethics of the *Mahābhārata* are essentially an agent-based virtue ethics, whereas Pali Canon's Buddhist ethics tends to be universal. Hence, the differences in *khanti* and *kṣānti* can be seen as a result of the affirmation and rejection of *varṇa*, respectively, in these two bodies of texts.

2.4.6 *Khanti* as an alternative political strategy

In my discussion of the *Mahābhārata*, I have demonstrated how one of the recurring and prominent reasons given for *kṣānti* is a political and strategic advantage. This is evident in the normative definition of K_2 where the explicit motivation for the practice of K_2 is *dharma*, *artha* and *loksamgrahana* and this reason was also seen being given repeatedly in several discussions related to K_2 in the “*kṣānti* debate.” Overall, it can be

said that the *Mahābhārata* prescribed K₂ as an effective political strategy for kings and *kṣatriyas*.

In several *khanti* narratives, the Theravāda Buddhists can be seen presenting *khanti* as the most effective political strategy. Furthermore, their discussion of *khanti* in these texts is rooted in rich political imagery and has strong political undertones. Several examples of this have already been discussed above in my analysis of *khanti* narratives with plotline (B), all of which present *khanti* as the most effective political strategy.

Below I discuss a few more examples.

In the *Sarabhangā Jātaka* [JA522], Sakka asks the Bodhisattva, “Holy sir, declare to us the blessing to be found in this patience,” and the Great Being says, “Not even a strong army [*mahatīpi senā*] is as advantageous in a war [*yujjhamānā labhetha*] as *khanti* is to a good man during hostilities [*verā*].”²⁴⁶ This verse says that *khanti* should be practiced because it is the greatest advantage that a good man can have during a fight, greater than the advantage of a strong army to a king during a war. In other words, for a person who has *khanti* as his army, hostilities cease to exist. This analogy equates *khanti* with a strong royal army and touts it as an astute and effective tactical strategy. The context

²⁴⁶ “na hetamatthaṃ mahatīpi senā, sarājikā yujjhamānā labhetha.

yaṃ khantimā sappuriso labhetha, khantībalassūpasamanti verā”ti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātakapāḷi (dutiyo bhāgo), 17. cattālīsanipāto, 522.

sarabhaṅgajātakaṃ (2) (KN 15.522), para. 57]

for the use of *khanti* here is also important to note – hostilities [*verā*]. The *bodhisattva* in this verse is hence preaching that *khanti* is the best way to win a fight and should be practiced when one is in a contentious situation; it is also a way to void fights altogether. The war analogy, along with the extensive use of political terminology [*mahatīpi senā, yujjhamānā, verā*] supply strong political undertones to this verse. This suggests that the presentation of the *khanti* as the ultimate strategy to win a fight might be influenced, at least in part, by the *Mahābhārata's* treatment of K_2 as an effective political strategy.

Another example is the following verse which can be found in the *Rajovada Jātaka* [JA151] where the Bodhisattva's charioteer praises the Bodhisattva by saying the following words about him: "He conquers anger with non-anger, evil with goodness, the miserly with charity, and lies with truth. Such is this king. Therefore, O driver! Get out of the way!"²⁴⁷ Here the charioteer is implying that the Bodhisattva uses *akodha*, for conquering those who are angry. I have already demonstrated above how the Theravāda Buddhists defined *khanti* as *akodha*, making the allusion to *khanti* clear in

²⁴⁷ akkodhena jine kodhaṃ, asādhuṃ sādhuṇā jine.

jine kadariyaṃ dānena, saccenālikavādināṃ.

etādiso ayaṃ rājā, maggā uyyāhi sārathīti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātakapāḷi (paṭhamo bhāgo), 2. dukanipāto, 1. daḷhavaggo n, 151.

rājovādajātakaṃ (2-1-1) (KN 14.151), para. 6]

this case. The repeated use of the term conquers [*jine*] as well the context of a battle (of words) against a rival king, imparts a subtle political subtext to this verse.

Similarly, the political effectiveness of *khanti* can also be discerned from four suttas of the *Samyuttanikāya*: *Akkosasuttaṃ* (SN 7.2), *Asurindakasuttaṃ* (SN 7.3), *Vepacittisuttaṃ* (SN 11.4) and *Subhāsitaḥajayasuttaṃ* (SN 11.5). All four suttas make the following assertion: “One wins a battle that is difficult to win by not repaying an angry man with anger.”²⁴⁸ Once again, this verse, rich with political imagery, presents *khanti* as a political strategy to win difficult battles [*saṅgāmaṃ*]. Moreover, in the *Asurindakasuttaṃ* (SN 7.3), when a Bharadvaja gets angry with the Buddha and insults him, the Buddha stays silent and the Bharadvāja interprets this as his victory and says, “I won!”. The Buddha says: “The fool thinks he is victorious when he uses harsh words. But for one who is wise *titikkhā* is the only victory.”²⁴⁹ Once again, the Bodhisattva is presenting *titikkhā*, the most common synonym of *khanti*, as the only path to victory [*jaya*].

²⁴⁸ kuddhaṃ appaṭikujjhanto, saṅgāmaṃ jetaṃ dujjayaṃ.

²⁴⁹ “jayaṃ ve maññati bālo, vācāya pharusāṃ bhaṇaṃ.

jayañcevassa taṃ hoti, yā titikkhā vijānato.”

[*Samyutta Nikāya*, *sagāthāvaggo*, 7. brāhmaṇasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. arahantavaggo, 3.

asurindakasuttaṃ n (SN 7.3), para. 2]

Hence, in all of these examples *khanti* is being described using rich political imagery of war, victory, armies, and kings. Its benefits and the reasons for its practice are contextualized within a political setting. In the next chapter, I will revisit this point and discuss how it relates to the *Mahābhārata*.

2.4.7 Translating *khanti*

Lastly, understanding the meaning and process of *khanti* also has vital implications for translating the term *khanti* in Pali Buddhist texts. I started this chapter by discussing scholarly issues with the translation of *khanti*. I will now revisit this issue knowing what we know now about the meaning of *khanti*.

The most common semantic equivalent of *khanti* in English is “forgiveness.” However, based on my analysis of the Buddhist meaning of *khanti*, there is a major problem in using this term to denote Buddhist *khanti*. The OED defines the verb “forgive” as “stop feeling angry or resentful towards (someone) for an offense, flaw, or mistake.”²⁵⁰ This definition implies a state of being angry as a precursor to the act of forgiveness, for in order to “stop feeling angry,” one would have to be in a state of anger prior to that. Yet, as we have seen in the *khanti* Jātakas, the first and most foundational step in the practice of *khanti* is keeping the mind pure and not letting it get angry in the first place. In that sense, the Buddhist practice of *khanti* is thus very different from the meaning implied by the English word “forgiveness”.

²⁵⁰ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/forgive>

Other common scholarly translations of *khanti* are “endurance”, “tolerance” and “patience.” To “endure” is defined as “[to] suffer (something painful or difficult) patiently.”²⁵¹ The practitioner of *khanti* does suffer, but as the texts we examined above specify, the suffering is only physical and not mental. Moreover, this term does not capture the rich mental process of keeping the mind pure and cultivating positive emotions. Next, to “tolerate” is to “allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of (something that one dislikes or disagrees with) without interference.”²⁵² Once again, this definition fails to be an accurate equivalent for *khanti*. Not only does it not capture the process of keeping the mind pure and cultivating positive emotions, but it also specifies that the process of tolerance occurs without interference. In several *Jātakas*, the Bodhisattva does try to intervene in the sinner’s attack and try to persuade the sinner from not committing the crime, such as the *Khantivādin Jātaka*, where the Bodhisattva makes various exhortations to the king to stop him from committing a crime. Hence, both these terms fail to capture the essence of Buddhist *khanti*.

The third option, “patience” is defined as “the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious.”²⁵³ “Suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious” resembles the first step in the Buddhist process of *khanti*, however, it fails to incorporate the second step completely. Also, in order to

²⁵¹ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/endure>

²⁵² <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/tolerate>

²⁵³ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/patience>

apply this definition to the first step of *khanti*, we would have to specify that the suffering is physical and not mental, a distinction that is not made in this definition. Furthermore, there is another danger in using this term in the translation of *khanti*. One of the meanings of patience is “the capacity to accept or tolerate delay,” which imparts a sense a temporariness to its practice. This meaning suggests that the practitioner of *khanti* is tolerating a delay and once the delay has ended, so would the tolerance. This interpretation grossly misunderstands the “perfection” of *khanti* which strips it of any temporariness and makes it an everlasting, eternal state of being.

Lastly, I examine “composure” as a possible candidate for translating *khanti*, as suggested by Schopen (1989). “Composure” is defined as “the state or feeling of being calm and in control of oneself.”²⁵⁴ This term also fails to encapsulate the complexity of either of the two steps involved in the process of *khanti*.

Based on the above analysis, I would argue that being a complex, multi-stage process, no single word in English is an accurate semantic equivalent of *khanti*. The richness of its process is severely diminished when this term is translated as any of the above. Yet, for the practical purposes of translating, if one were forced to choose a term I would suggest that the translator acknowledge the limitations of whichever term he uses from the candidates discussed above and include a disclaimer of the limitations of that English term for the reader.

²⁵⁴ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/composure>

Failing to caveat the English translation of *khanti* in Pali texts will severely limit the reader's understanding of the meaning of the text and diminish its richness. Consider the *Khanti-Vaṇṇana-Jātaka* [JA225] as an example. As the name of this *Jātaka* suggests, *khanti* is a central concept in this *Jātaka*. Yet, in this *Jātaka*, we are not given any explanation of the meaning or process of *khanti*. *Khanti* is simply mentioned in one verse uttered by a king to his courtier who is having troubles with his attendant. The king says, "I too have a zealous servant; and here he stands. Good men are difficult to find, so I prefer *khanti*."²⁵⁵ Cowell and Rouse (1907) translate *khanti* as patience here. However, another scholar could choose to translate it differently: forgiveness, endurance, tolerance, composure, etc. Each of these alternatives would significantly change the meaning and moral of the story. Having unraveled its meaning and the systematic mental process inherent in this term, we now know what exactly is being expounded by this verse – keeping the mind pure (without anger) and cultivating complementary positive virtues like *mettā*. Regardless of the English term, the translator uses to translate *khanti* in this case, it would be very helpful to address the precise meaning of *khanti* in the translation and caveat the limitations of the English term used to translate it.

²⁵⁵ amhākampatthi puriso, ediso idha vijjati. dullabho aṅgasampanno, khantirasmāka ruccatīti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātakapāḷi (paṭhamo bhāgo), 2. dukanipāto, 8. kāsāvavaggo n, 225.

khantivaṇṇajātakaṃ (2-8-5), para. 5]

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter investigated the precise meaning of the term *khanti* in the Pali canon. I started the investigation by methodically selecting my sources and consulting a wide range of *suttās* and commentaries from the *Dīghanikāya*, *Majjhimanikāya*, *Samyuttanikāya*, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, *Nidānakathā*, *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*, *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*, *Suttanipāta*, and *Khuddakapāṭha* that discussed and presented the Pali Buddhist idea of *khanti*. Through a thorough examination of these sources, I proved that *khanti* is a systematic, two-step process of ‘purification’ of negative emotions, specifically anger, followed by ‘cultivation’ of complementary Buddhist virtues, specifically goodwill (*mettā*).

Next, I examined literary conventions of plot, character, and motifs within the corpus of *khanti* texts discussed above and argued that this body of literature has consistent characteristics and follows set conventions. I divided the *khanti* texts into two groups (A) and (B) according to their plotlines and characters, and demonstrated how each group served its own distinct purpose – the former of glorifying and edifying the Bodhisattva while the latter of presenting him as a relatable figure who should be emulated.

Lastly, I discuss the implications of these findings in the broader context of the Pali canon, Buddhist narrative literature, the Buddhist ideas of anger and *mettā*, and Theravāda Buddhist ethics.

3 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF *KṢĀNTI* AND *KHANTI*

In this section I will engage in a comparative analysis of how the terms *kṣānti* and *khanti* are used and treated in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon. I will start by discussing broad differences between their meaning and usage in the two bodies of texts. I will then discuss the relationship and interaction between the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon as it relates to their treatment of *kṣānti* and *khanti*. Lastly, based upon this intertextuality I will present a hypothesis on how the particular meanings of the terms *kṣānti* and *khanti* developed in the in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon respectively.

3.1 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN *KṢĀNTI* AND *KHANTI*

3.1.1 Breadth of meaning

Foremost it is noteworthy that there is a stark difference in the breadth of meaning of the terms *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon. The meaning of *khanti* in the Pali canon is narrow and specific. It is a precisely defined, monosemic term that means the absence of anger and the addition of *mettā*. Conversely, the term *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* is broader and encompasses a wider range of meanings. It is a polysemic term that is differentiated based on several factors noted above such as the agent's *varṇa*. Hence, it can be surmised that the term *kṣānti* has a significantly broader range of meanings in the *Mahābhārata* than *khanti* does in the Pali canon.

3.1.2 Importance in the tradition

There is also a significant difference in the importance given to the practice of *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon. The Pali canon gives great importance to the virtue and practice of *khanti*, a fact which is evident given the status of *khanti* as one of the perfections [*pāramitā*] of a *Bodhisattva*. As a perfection, the practice of *khanti* is prescribed to be extreme, limitless, and absolute. It must be unwavering in the practitioner even in the face of death (as seen in several narratives above). In addition to being limitless, the perfection of *khanti* is also prescribed as unconditional. Several examples discussed in the previous chapter emphasize the fact that the Theravāda Buddhist virtue of *khanti* must be practiced in every situation, without exception.

The treatment of *kṣānti*, in the *Mahābhārata*, is quite different, however. In the *Mahābhārata*, *K₁* has some resonance with the Buddhist idea of *khanti* due to its normative definition in which its object is everything – the pleasant and the unpleasant. However, *kṣānti* is only one of many virtues of a *brahman* and does not have any extraordinary significance. It is not emphasized to the same extent as it is in the Pali Canon, and the theoretical prescription of it being practiced in every situation by a *brahman* is seldom followed in practice²⁵⁶.

²⁵⁶ This can be gleaned from the several instances of brahmins in the *Mahābhārata* being enraged and exacting revenge upon their wrongdoers in the form of curses. Examples include the episode of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga (*Āraṇyakaparvan*, chapters 110-113), the

The second type of *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata*, K₂, is even more contrasting to the Buddhist idea of *khanti*. Its practice has clear limits (as was discussed in length in the “*kṣānti* debate”) and it is conditional on several accounts - who practices it, towards whom it is practiced, for how long it is practiced, and why. Hence, one can see a clear distinction between the Theravāda Buddhist’s and *Mahābhārata*’s idea of *khanti/kṣānti* in terms of its importance in the philosophical ideals of the tradition and the extent of its practice.

3.1.3 Relationship with *mettā*

Another major difference between the Theravāda Buddhist’s and *Mahābhārata*’s idea of *khanti/kṣānti* is the inclusion or exclusion of *mettā*. In the Pali canon *khanti* is a two-step, sequential process of ‘purification’ and ‘cultivation’ where the first step involves “purification” of negative emotions, specifically anger, which is followed by the cultivation of the complementary Buddhist virtue of *mettā*. In the *Mahābhārata* K₁ has similar properties to the ‘purification’ element of Buddhist *khanti* as it involves the relinquishment of negative feelings. However, it does not take the next step of the inclusion of cultivation of positive feelings in its practice. K₂ on the other hand does not include either process. Rather than purify anger, it co-exists with it. The inclusion of *mettā* to the Theravāda Buddhist process of *khanti* is hence an important distinction.

episode of *Sauptikaparvan* (chapter 16) where Kṛṣṇa curses Aśvatthāman, the episode of sage Kiṃdama cursing Pāṇḍu (*Ādiparvan*, Chapter 109), and the episode involving a cow-owning sage cursing Karṇa (*Śāntiparvan*, Chapter 2).

3.1.4 Relationship with *dharma*

In a previous chapter, I have also discussed how the *Mahābhārata* held an equivocal view on whether *kṣānti* is considered *dharma*. Depending on the practitioner and the situation, *kṣānti* was at times considered *adharmā* or the wrong thing to do. The Pali canon, however, takes an affirmative stand on this issue and claims that *khanti* is always the right thing to do and that it is an integral part of *dhamma*. It emphasizes that the practice of *khanti* is absolute and omnipotent; after all, it is a “perfection,” to be practiced in every situation without any limits.

Consider the illustrative example of the *Dhamma-Jātaka* [JA457] which makes this point clearly. In this *Jātaka* the Bodhisattva is called *Dhamma* and Devadatta, *Adhamma*. *Dhamma* and *Adhamma*, each on their own chariot, engage in a battle of words with the agreement that the winner of the battle will give way to the other’s chariot. Expectedly, *Adhamma* loses, falls into the earth, and goes to Avici hell. The *Bodhisattva* then recites the following verses: “*Adhamma*, whose strength was war, was killed and subdued by *dhamma*, whose strength (*bala*) is *khanti*. He is swallowed by the earth while the other who is happy, very strong (*atibalo*) and exerts himself in truth, ascended his chariot and went forth on the path.”²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ khantībalo yuddhabalaṃ vijetvā, hantvā adhammaṃ nihanitva bhūmyā.

pāyāsi vitto abhiruyha sandanaṃ, maggeneva atibalo saccanikkamo.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [457] 3.

dhammadevaputtajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 32]

In these verses, *dhamma* is described as one whose strength is *khanti*. Moreover, this verse uses *khantibalo* as a substitute for *dhamma*²⁵⁸. This implies that the Theravāda Buddhists were attempting to equate their idea of *khanti* with their idea of *dhamma*. This contrasts with the *Mahābhārata* where this equation was explicitly denied by virtue of claiming that *kṣānti* can occasionally be *adharmā*.

3.1.5 Strength or weakness

In a previous chapter I have also discussed how *kṣānti* in the *Mahābhārata* had an ambivalent position as a strength or weakness. While K_1 was mostly considered a strength of brahmins, K_1 was perceived to be a weakness of *kṣatriyas* and K_2 to be of limited strategic use.

The Theravāda Buddhists, however, took a definitive position on this issue and interpreted *khanti* as a strength, particularly that of *brahmans*. Consider this illustrative verse which occurs in the *Vāseṭṭhasuttam* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* [MN 98] and states, “He who endures [*titikkhati*], verbal abuse, blows and imprisonment without any ill will [*akkosam*] in his mind, whose power is the power of *khanti* [*khantibalam*], him I call a

²⁵⁸ Also note that this verse describes *adhamma* as one who is skilled in war. This equivalence suggests that proficiency in war was *adhammic*, which suggests that the broad Pali Buddhist view of war was negative.

*Brahman.*²⁵⁹ In this verse, *khanti* can clearly be seen described as a strength (*bala*) based on its occurrence in the compound *khantībalaṃ*. In this verse, a *brahman* is redefined as one who practices *khanti* by forgoing ill will [*akkosaṃ*], enduring abuse [*titikkhati*²⁶⁰], and having the strength of patience [*khantībalaṃ*] – all typical characteristics of the systematic Buddhist definition of *khanti* I have discussed above. This suggests that, far from being an expression of weakness, the Buddhist viewed the practice of *khanti* as a strength. Additionally, it may also be noted that in the *Dhamma Jātaka* discussed above, *Dhamma* was described as one whose strength is *khanti* [*khantībalo*]²⁶¹. Reiterating this in the next verse was the affirmation that *Dhamma* is “very strong” [*atibalo*].

²⁵⁹ akkosam vadhabandham ca aduṭṭho yo titikkhati, khantībalaṃ balānīkaṃ tam ahaṃ brūmi brāhmaṇaṃ. [Majjhima Nikāya, majjhimaṇṇāsapāḷi, 5. brāhmaṇavaggo n, 8. vāseṭṭhasuttaṃ n (MN 98), para 69]

[Majjhima Nikāya, majjhimaṇṇāsapāḷi, 5. brāhmaṇavaggo n, 8. vāseṭṭhasuttaṃ n (MN 98) para. 70]

²⁶⁰ This is the Pali word for the Sanskrit term ‘*titikṣā*’. Here, the Pali text seems to be using it as a synonym of *khanti* while the Mahabharata endeavored to distinguish the terms *titikṣā* and *kṣānti*.

²⁶¹ khantībalo yuddhabalaṃ vijetvā, hantvā adhammaṃ nihanitva bhūmyā.

pāyāsi vitto abhiruyha sandanaṃ, maggeneva atibalo saccanikkamo.

3.2 INTERTEXTUALITY

These broad differences might give the impression that the treatments of *kṣānti* and *khanti* were disparate and unrelated in the *Mahābhārata* and Pali canon. However, a comparative analysis of the two bodies of texts reveals hints of intertextuality between them. In this section, I will investigate how the different ideas of *khanti* and *kṣānti* in the Pali Canon and the *Mahābhārata* relate to and interacted with one another.

It has been well established by several prominent scholars²⁶² (Appleton, 2016; Black, 2010; Black & Geen, 2010; Gombrich, 1992; Granoff, 1991, 2005; McGovern, 2018;

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (catuttho bhāgo), 11. ekādasakanipāto, [457] 3. dhammadevaputtajātakavaṇṇanā, para. 32]

²⁶² One of the firsts to emphasize it, Granoff (1991), in her comparative study of Buddhist narratives and episodes from the *Mahabharata*, notes how early Indian narrative literature shares a common pool of motifs and characteristics. The following year, in a paper which effectively illustrates the importance of intertextual studies, Gombrich (1992) argued that “we cannot understand the original meaning of the AS [*Agganna Sutta*] (to its first speaker and audience) unless we realize that it makes several allusions, at crucial points, to Brahmanical scriptures.” Two additional noteworthy studies followed in the next decade. Söhnen-Thieme (2009) in her paper on parallel stories in the *Mahābhārata* and *Jātakas* listed several *Jātakas* that have shared motifs with the *Mahābhārata* and argued that comparison of these texts “may allow insights into the ways whereby motifs have been adapted to a particular context or

Söhnen-Thieme, 2009) that early Indian narrative literature had a “shared narrative universe.”²⁶³ These scholars have explored the literary connections between the Brahmanical and Buddhist texts, noting that the meaning and development of their ideas cannot be understood without contextualizing them. In this section, I build upon their insightful works and engage in an intertextual analysis by analyzing the meaning of *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon within the context of each other.

3.2.1 Pali canon’s overarching attitude towards the *Mahābhārata*

Before I delve into the *khanti* narratives of the Pali canon and discuss their interaction with the *Mahābhārata*, it is important to note the overall context of these *khanti* narratives. This is because the corpus of *khanti* narratives is an integral part of the Pali canon and the overarching attitude of the Pali canon towards the *Mahābhārata* is also

cultural background”. These benefits were more clearly demonstrated by Granoff (2005) who compared Buddhist and Jain narratives and concluded that the contrasts between the stories “serve an important function of clearly marking Buddhist practice as different from the practices of its Jain rivals” [131] and hence play an important role in “clearly defining Buddhist practices and defining Buddhism itself as a distinctive entity with its own unique identity.” [137] More recent intertextual studies include Black and Geen (2010), Black (2010), Appleton (2016); McGovern (2018).

²⁶³ This helpful phrase was coined by Appleton (2016) to describe the “complex dynamic of commonality and exchange” [179] in early Indian narratives.

reflective of the general attitude of the Pali Buddhist *khanti* narratives towards the *Mahābhārata*. I will argue that the Pali Buddhist texts are explicitly derogatory towards the *Mahābhārata* in five different ways. This can be gleaned from the several telling statements that occur across the Pali canon criticizing or ridiculing the *Mahābhārata*.

In the Pali texts, the *Mahābhārata* is referred to as the *bhāratayuddha*, meaning the Bhārata war. This is a direct and unambiguous reference to the *Mahābhārata*. There are five main criticisms that the Pali commentaries levy against the *Mahābhārata*.

First, the *bhāratayuddha* is deemed as idle chatter or frivolous conversation (*samphappalāpa*). Examples of such cases can be found in the Dīgha Nikāya

commentaries,²⁶⁴ Majjhima Nikāya commentaries,²⁶⁵ and Saṃyutta Nikāya commentaries.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ anattaviññāpikā kāyavacīpayogasamuṭṭhāpikā akusalacetanā **samphappalāpo**. so āsevanamandatāya appasāvajjo, āsevanamahantatāya mahāsāvajjo, tassa dve sambhārā — bhāratayuddhasītāharaṇādiniratthakakathāpurekkhāratā, tathārūpī kathā kathanañca.

[Dīgha Nikāya, sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā, 1. brahmajālasuttavaṇṇanā, cūlasīlavaṇṇanā para. 126] Gombrich (1985) has also noted this reference.

²⁶⁵ anattaviññāpakakāyavacīpayogasamuṭṭhāpikā akusalacetanā **samphappalāpo**. so āsevanamandatāya appasāvajjo, āsevanamahantatāya mahāsāvajjo. tassa dve sambhārā bhāratayuddhasītāharaṇādiniratthakakathāpurekkhāratā, tathārūpīkathākathananti. [Majjhima Nikāya, mūlapaṇṇāsa-aṭṭhakathā, (paṭhamo bhāgo), 1. mūlapariyāyavaggo, 9. sammādiṭṭhisuttavaṇṇanā, akusalakammaṭṭhavaṇṇanā para 9]

²⁶⁶ anattaviññāpikā kāyavacīpayogasamuṭṭhāpikā akusalacetanā **samphappalāpo**. so āsevanamandatāya appasāvajjo, āsevanamahantatāya mahāsāvajjo. tassa dve sambhārā — bhāratayuddha-sītāharaṇādi-niratthakakathā-purekkhāratā, tathārūpīkathākathanañcāti.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, nidānavagga-aṭṭhakathā, 3. dhātusaṃyuttaṃ, 3. kammaṭṭhavaṇṇanā, 3-5. pañcasikkhāpadasuttādivaṇṇanā para. 12]

Secondly, the *Mahābhārata* is also ridiculed as a childish story (*tiracchānakathā*) across the commentaries of the *Dīgha Nikāya*²⁶⁷, *Majjhima Nikāya*²⁶⁸, *Samyutta Nikāya*,²⁶⁹ and *Anguttara Nikāya*²⁷⁰. It is noteworthy that the term *tiracchāna* is a term that literally

²⁶⁷ yuddhepi bhāratayuddhādīsu asukena asuko evaṃ mārito, evaṃ viddhoti

kāmassādaseneva kathā **tiracchānakathā**.

[Dīgha Nikāya, sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā, 1. brahmajālasuttavaṇṇanā, majjhimasīlavaṇṇanā, para. 21]

²⁶⁸ yuddhepi bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti

kāmassādaseneva kathā **tiracchānakathā**.

[Majjhima Nikāya, majjhimaṇṇāsa-aṭṭhakathā, 3. paribbājakavaggo n, 6. sandakasuttavaṇṇanā, para. 3]

²⁶⁹ yuddhepi bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti

kāmassādaseneva kathā **tiracchānakathā**, “tepi nāma khayam gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā pana sabbattha kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Samyutta Nikāya, mahāvagga-aṭṭhakathā, 12. saccasamyuttam, 1. samādhivaggo n, 10. tiracchānakathāsuttavaṇṇanā, para. 1]

²⁷⁰ yuddhesupi bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti

kāmassādaseneva kathā tiracchānakathā, “tepi nāma khayam gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā pana sabbattha kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Anguttara Nikāya, dasakanipāta-aṭṭhakathā, 2. dutiyapaṇṇāsakaṃ, (7) 2. yamakavaggo, 9-10. kathāvatthusuttadvayaṇṇanā para. 1]

means animals and the term *tiracchānakathā* is also used to describe stories or talks about animals²⁷¹. Since animals were looked down upon in the Pali Buddhist ideological universe, the use of this phrase is hence derogatory on two levels²⁷². Elsewhere in the Pali Canon we can also find a detailed list of all the types of the stories the Buddhists considered to be childish talk²⁷³. This is a standardized list that occurs in several

²⁷¹ This suggests that the text could also be referring to stories such as the *Pañcatantra* which are primarily about animals.

²⁷² While the normative position of animals in the Buddhist hierarchy of beings is below that of humans and considered lowly, in practice their position is more complex given their proliferation in Buddhist literature and specially the Jātakas where the Bodhisattva is often cast in the role of an animal character. The study of animals in Buddhist narrative literature is still in its infancy and several scholars have noted the need for more attention on this subject (Appleton, 2014, p. 200; Ohnuma, 2017).

²⁷³ “yathā vā paneke bhonto samaṇabrāhmaṇā saddhādeyyāni bhojanāni bhuñjitvā te evarūpaṃ tiracchānakathaṃ anuyuttā viharanti, seyyathidaṃ — rājakathaṃ corakathaṃ mahāmatthakathaṃ senākathaṃ bhayakathaṃ yuddhakathaṃ annakathaṃ pānakathaṃ vatthakathaṃ sayanakathaṃ mālākathaṃ gandhakathaṃ ñātikathaṃ yānakathaṃ gāmakathaṃ nigamakathaṃ nagarakathaṃ janapadakathaṃ itthikathaṃ sūrakathaṃ visikhākathaṃ kumbhaṭṭhānakathaṃ pubbapetakathaṃ nānattakathaṃ lokakkhāyikaṃ samuddakkhāyikaṃ itibhavābhavakathaṃ iti vā iti evarūpāya

suttas²⁷⁴. It includes talk about: kings, thieves, chief ministers, armies, fear, war, food, drinking, clothes, garlands, smells, relatives, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, provinces, women, heroes, streets, places of water pots, deceased spirits, gossip, nature, cosmogony, and such pointless talks.

Thirdly, in several of the examples noted above, the comments regarding the *bhāratayuddha* feature in a section that glosses the term *corakathā*.²⁷⁵ This term means talk of thieves or stories of thieves, another direct criticism of the *Mahābhārata*.

tiracchānakathāya paṭivirato samaṇo gotamo'ti — iti vā hi, bhikkhave, puthujjano tathāgatassa vaṇṇaṃ vadamāno vadeyya.

[Dīgha Nikāya, sīlakkhandhavaggaṃpāḷi, 1. brahmajālasuttaṃ n, majjhimasīlaṃ (DN 1.3), para. 7]

²⁷⁴ (DN 2.14), para. 7; (DN 9.1), para. 3; (DN 25.1), para. 2; (DN 25.8), para. 3; (MN 76.1), para. 1; (MN 77.1), para. 1; (MN 78.1), para. 2; (MN 79.1), para. 2; (SN 56.10), para. 1; (AN 10.69), para. 1; (AN 10.69), para. 3; (AN 10.70), para. 1

²⁷⁵ aniyānikattā saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtā kathāti tiracchānakathā. tattha rājānaṃ ārabba mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko evaṃ mahānubhāvotiādinā nayena pavattā kathā rājakathā. esa nayo **corakathādīsu**. tesu asuko rājā abhirūpo dassanīyotiādinā nayena gehassitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti... yuddhepi bhāratayuddhādīsu asukena asuko evaṃ mārito, evaṃ viddhoti kāmāssādavaseneva kathā tiracchānakathā.

[Dīgha Nikāya, sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā, 1. brahmajālasuttavaṇṇanā,

majjhimasīlavaṇṇanā, para. 21]

dasame anekavihitanti anekavidhaṃ. tiracchānakathanti aniyyānikattā

saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtaṃ kathaṃ. rājakathantiādīsu rājānaṃ ārabba

“mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko evaṃ mahānubhāvo”tiādinā nayena

pavattakathā rājakathā. esa nayo **corakathā**dīsu. tesu “asuko rājā abhirūpo

dassanīyo”tiādinā nayena gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti.... yuddhepi

bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti kāmāssādaseneva

kathā tiracchānakathā, “tepi nāma khayaṃ gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā pana sabbattha

kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, mahāvagga-aṭṭhakathā, 12. saccasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. samādhivaggo n, 10.

tiracchānakathāsuttavaṇṇanā, para. 1]

navame tiracchānakathanti aniyyānikattā saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtaṃ

kathaṃ. tattha rājānaṃ ārabba “mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko

evaṃmahānubhāvo”tiādinā nayena pavattakathā rājakathā. esa nayo **corakathā**dīsu.

tesu “asuko rājā abhirūpo dassanīyo”tiādinā gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti...

yuddhesupi bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti

kāmāssādaseneva kathā tiracchānakathā, “tepi nāma khayaṃ gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā

pana sabbattha kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Aṅguttara Nikāya, dasakanipāta-aṭṭhakathā, 2. dutiyapaṇṇāsakaṃ, (7) 2. yamakavaggo,

9-10. kathāvatthusuttadvayaṇṇanā para. 1]

Fourthly, the Pali commentaries also explicitly state that the Buddha did not recite the *Mahābhārata*. In a Dīgha Nikāya commentary²⁷⁶, the commentator gives examples of stories that the Buddha does not recite, among which the *Mahābhārata* can be found, alongside the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Lastly, the *Mahābhārata* (and *Rāmāyaṇa*) are also referred to as “aniyyānika”²⁷⁷ which means that they have no salvific value. This suggests that the epics were seen as

²⁷⁶ **na taṃ tathāgato byākarotīti** taṃ bhāratayuddhasītāharaṇasadiṣaṃ

aniyyānikakathaṃ tathāgato na katheti.

[Dīgha Nikāya, pāthikavaggaṭṭhakathā, 6. pāsādikasuttavaṇṇanā,
pañhabyākaraṇavaṇṇanā para. 2]

²⁷⁷ taṃ bhāratayuddhasītāharaṇasadiṣaṃ **aniyyānikakathaṃ** tathāgato na katheti.

[Dīgha Nikāya, pāthikavaggaṭṭhakathā, 6. pāsādikasuttavaṇṇanā,
pañhabyākaraṇavaṇṇanā, para. 2]

aniyyānikattā saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtā kathāti tiracchānakathā. tattha rājānaṃ ārabha mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko evaṃ mahānubhāvotiādinā nayena pavattā kathā rājakathā. esa nayo corakathādīsu. tesu asuko rājā abhirūpo dassanīyotiādinā nayena gehassitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti. sopi nāma evaṃ mahānubhāvo khayamaṃ gatoti evaṃ pavattā pana kammaṭṭhānabhāve tiṭṭhati. coresu mūladevo evaṃ mahānubhāvo, meghamālo evaṃ mahānubhāvoti tesamaṃ kammaṃ paṭicca aho sūrāti gehassitakathāva tiracchānakathā. yuddhepi **bhāratayuddhādīsu** asukena asuko evaṃ mārito, evaṃ viddhoti kāmassādaseneva kathā tiracchānakathā.

[Dīgha Nikāya, sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā, 1. brahmajālasuttavaṇṇanā,

majjhimasīlavaṇṇanā, para. 21]

tiracchānakathanti **aniyyānikattā** saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtaṃ kathaṃ.
rājakathantiādīsu rājānaṃ ārabba “mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko evaṃ
mahānubhāvo”tiādinā nayena pavattakathā rājakathā. esa nayo corakathādīsu. tesu
“asuko rājā abhirūpo dassanīyo”tiādinā nayena gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti.
“sopi nāma evaṃ mahānubhāvo khayaṃ gato”ti evaṃ pavattā pana kammaṭṭhānabhāve
tiṭṭhati. coresupi “mūladevo evaṃ mahānubhāvo meghamālo evaṃ mahānubhāvo”ti
tesaṃ kammaṃ paṭicca “aho sūrā”ti gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā. yuddhepi
bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti kāmāsādavaseneva
kathā tiracchānakathā, “tepi nāma khayaṃ gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā pana sabbattha
kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Saṃyutta Nikāya, mahāvagga-aṭṭhakathā, 12. saccasaṃyuttaṃ, 1. samādhivaggo n, 10.

tiracchānakathāsuttavaṇṇanā, para. 1]

navame tiracchānakathanti **aniyyānikattā** saggamokkhamaggānaṃ tiracchānabhūtaṃ
kathaṃ. tattha rājānaṃ ārabba “mahāsammato mandhātā dhammāsoko
evaṃmahānubhāvo”tiādinā nayena pavattakathā rājakathā. esa nayo corakathādīsu.
tesu “asuko rājā abhirūpo dassanīyo”tiādinā gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā hoti, “sopi
nāma evaṃmahānubhāvo khayaṃ gato”ti evaṃ pavattā pana kammaṭṭhānabhāve
tiṭṭhati. coresupi “mūladevo evaṃmahānubhāvo, meghadevo evaṃmahānubhāvo”ti
tesaṃ kammaṃ paṭicca “aho sūrā”ti gehasitakathāva tiracchānakathā. yuddhesupi

literature (that was read for pleasure) and criticism here can be taken as a more general criticism of *belle lettres* as a whole; i.e. literature that is read for pleasure and does not lead to salvation was condemned in Pali Buddhist commentaries.

It is important to note that the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which is called the “*sītāharaṇa*” (the kidnapping of Sita) in the Pali commentaries, faces all of the same criticisms levied on the *Mahābhārata*, thus implying that the critical attitude of the Pali Buddhists towards the *Mahābhārata* had less to do with the particularities of that text and more to do with their general attitude towards Brahmanical narrative texts which were deemed to have no value for the Buddhist religious quest.

Having established the overarching critical and derogatory attitude of the Pali Buddhists towards the *Mahābhārata*, I will now discuss how the meaning and development of *khanti* was also influenced by a well-known phenomenon of intertextuality between the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon - the Pali Buddhist redefinition and appropriation of Brahmanical terminology.

bhāratayuddhādīsu “asukena asuko evaṃ mārito evaṃ viddho”ti kammassādaseneva kathā tiracchānakathā, “tepi nāma khayam gatā”ti evaṃ pavattā pana sabbattha kammaṭṭhānameva hoti.

[Aṅguttara Nikāya, dasakanipāta-aṭṭhakathā, 2. dutiyapaṇṇāsakaṃ, (7) 2. yamakavaggo, 9-10. kathāvattusuttadvayavaṇṇanā para. 1]

3.2.2 Redefinition and appropriation

In a previous section, I discussed how the Pali Buddhist definition of *khanti* was equated with the Pali Buddhist idea of *dhamma*. The Pali Buddhist interpretation of the term *dhamma* has been studied carefully by Gethin (2004) and as part of his examination, Gethin also studied reinterpretations of the term *dhamma* in Buddhist texts and noted that such reinterpretations were consistent with “the general tendency of early Buddhist thought to appropriate Brahmanical terminology and reinterpret it in its own terms...” (2004, p. 532). This phenomenon can also be observed in the examples discussed above, such as the *Dhamma Jātaka*, where the Brahmanical idea of *dharma* has been reinterpreted by the Pali Buddhists as being synonymous with their definition of the term *khanti*. By equating “*dhamma*” with “*khanti*,” an equation that the *Mahābhārata* explicitly denies by virtue of claiming that *kṣānti* can occasionally be *adharma*, the Pali Buddhists seem to be attempting to redefine the omnipresent and critical Brahmanical term “*dharma*” by infusing it with the Buddhist practice of *khanti*.²⁷⁸ The same phenomenon can also be observed in the case of the *Vāseṭṭhasutta* discussed

²⁷⁸ This relationship between *khanti* and *dhamma* also suggests the importance of *khanti* in Pali Buddhist thought. *Dhamma* is arguably one of the most important and pervasive technical terms in Brahmanical religious literature such as the *Mahābhārata*. By redefining the term *dharma* and equating it with *khanti* in the Pali canon, the Pali Buddhists are thrusting a great level of importance to their idea of *khanti* – far greater than the *Mahābhārata* confers on its idea of *kṣānti*.

above where the Pali Buddhists redefine the highest and most respected class in society, the '*brahmans*', as those who practice the Buddhist virtue of *khanti*.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁹ This instance of the Buddhist redefinition of the term '*brahman*' is part of a larger trend which has been studied by Bailey (1991, 2011); Norman (1991) and most recently, McGovern (2018). Bailey argues that for the Buddhists, the *brahmin* constituted "a ready-made symbol system possessing a high level of social legitimacy that could be appropriated as a target of criticism, while simultaneously being a vehicle of communication" (1991, p. 19). He argues that the Buddhists made abundant use of this symbol as a rhetorical device to establish their own identity and redefined what it meant to be an ideal brahmin by listing a large number of 'Buddhist' qualities that should be possessed by him²⁷⁹. Norman (1991) also analyzed several terms that were re-interpreted by the Buddha and hypothesized three different reasons for the existence of this trend – the convenience of using terms that were well known to the audience, to prove Brahmanism wrong, and to prove the correctness of Buddhism over Brahmanism. I find all these reasons very plausible and applicable to the narratives discussed above. Mostly recently, McGovern (2018) wrote a monograph titled 'The Snake and the Mongoose: The Emergence of Identity in Early Indian Religion' where he argues "Buddhism, Jainism, and Brahmanism/Hinduism emerged out of a period of contestation over the category Brahman, which all of them sought to claim." [4] He argues that "'the Brahman'" was not a "stable and self-evident agent in Indian history" and that in some narratives the Buddhists describe monks as Brahmins, not with the

3.2.3 Development of *kṣānti* and *khanti*

Based on the intertextuality noted above, I will end this section by presenting a few hypotheses on the development of the ideas of *kṣānti* and *khanti* in the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon. I want to emphasize the word *hypotheses* here: it is impossible to prove conclusively how complex religious ideas such as *kṣānti* and *khanti* developed in bodies of texts as large as the *Mahābhārata* and the Pali canon, for that would require being privy to the thought process of the authors of these texts and a comprehensive knowledge of all texts that influenced their thinking. Hence, the theories presented in this section are simply my hypotheses based on the evidence available at this time and

intent to criticize “real” Brahmins but to simply refer to that category. He says, “Brahman was not primarily a category of otherness in ancient India, but of selfhood...” [129] He notes that this is true of only certain instances of the usage of this term (Brahman) in Buddhist literature and not true of later texts such as “encounter dialogues” between the Buddha and various *brāhmaṇas* where the Buddhists are clearly critical of Brahmins, whom they view as the “other” and attempt to redefine the term. The example of the *Vāseṭṭhasutta* noted above is clearly part of the “encounter dialogues,” as it details the encounter between two brahmins arguing about what the characteristics of a true brahman are, and the Bodhisattva intervening and giving a detailed description of what a true brahman is and is not. It is a clear example of a case where the Buddhists are employing the familiar rhetorical strategy described by Bailey (1991, 2011); Norman (1991).

constitute what I believe to be the most likely scenario as to how these ideas developed based on my extensive study of *kṣānti* and *khanti* for this thesis.

I believe that the examples presented above suggest that the Buddhists developed their idea of *khanti* in conversation with and against the prevailing Brahmanical ideologies of *kṣānti*. In this section, I will hypothesize that the Buddhist idea of *khanti* was developed as a response to the *Mahābhārata's* idea of *kṣānti* and was used by the Pali Buddhists as an identity marker to differentiate themselves and their philosophical ideas from those of the *Mahābhārata*.

I discussed above how the Pali Buddhists defined the term *khanti* by redefining the Brahmanical terms *dharma* and *brahmin* and infusing them with their idea of *khanti*. I have also discussed, in the previous chapter, how the Pali Buddhists presented *khanti* as an effective political strategy and a universal virtue to be practiced by all beings. I now hypothesize that the Pali Buddhists' repeated insistence on *khanti* being an effective political strategy can be interpreted as a response to the *Mahābhārata's* presentation of K_2 as a political strategy for *kṣatriyas*. The Theravāda Buddhists were likely aware of the idea of K_2 *kṣānti* and responded to that, critically, through stories that contained "Plotline B" (discussed above) where *khanti* was overtly presented as an effective and better political strategy.

In the previous chapter I have also discussed how the Theravāda Buddhists presented *khanti* as a universal virtue to be practiced by all beings. Here, I hypothesize that their presentation of *khanti* as a universal ethic for all beings can be seen as their rejection of

the *Mahābhārata's* system of *varṇa*. The Pali canon's idea of *kṣānti* seems to refute the caste bifurcation created by the *Mahābhārata's* idea of *kṣānti* and presents a universal model of *kṣānti* that is applicable to all *varṇas* (and works equally well as a religious ethic and political strategy). This hypothesis is lent further support by the fact that in several stories there is an opposition between the Bodhisattva being a *brahman* and the offender being a *kṣatriya*. In these situations, one can discern a specific purpose of casting the characters in these contrasting *varṇas* – to show the superiority of ascetic ideals over *kṣatriya* ideals, and once this superiority is established, to make it universally applicable.

Additionally, I hypothesize that the Buddhist definition of *khanti* was influenced by the *Mahābhārata's* definition of K_1 and was a modification of it. The Pali Buddhists embellished K_1 's characteristic of non-anger and added the aspect of the cultivation of *mettā* to their reinterpretation of *khanti*. In addition, *khanti* was made universal and a perfection (limitless and unconditional in its practice). These changes made the Pali Buddhist's idea of *khanti* distinct from the *Mahābhārata's* definition of K_1 .

Lastly, I hypothesize that the Pali Buddhists had three main agendas in mind while developing their idea of *khanti* - to further their critical agenda towards the *Mahābhārata* (as discussed above), to differentiate their ideology from the ideology of the Brahmans propagated through the *Mahābhārata*, and to establish their own unique religious identity. I noted above that the Pali Buddhist literature and Brahmanical epics including the *Mahābhārata* were created and consumed in a shared narrative universe.

Shared plotlines, characters, and motifs suggest that these narratives represented traditions that shared a common religious setting where they likely competed against one another on many levels. From this one can infer that forming distinct identities and creating boundaries between the traditions would have been one of the primary agendas of these traditions. The Pali Buddhist *khanti* narratives can be seen as participating in this identity-forming process by making the Pali canon's philosophical ideas distinct from that of the *Mahābhārata's*.

I must reiterate that a trajectory different from the hypothesis I presented above is also plausible (that the *Mahābhārata* was influenced more by the Pali materials rather than the other way). The presentation of my hypothesis above does not mean that I am negating the possibility of any alternatives. It is simply the trajectory that I believe, based on my research for this thesis, is the likely scenario for what could have occurred.

CONCLUSION

When reading about the brutal and merciless mutilation of the ascetic *Khantivādi* in the *Khantivādiijātaka*, one cannot help but feel certain emotions. The text is often graphic when describing the violence and injustice done to the *Bodhisatta*. In the *Khantivādiijātaka* we are told, “the *Bodhisatta's* outer and inner skins were cut through to the flesh, and the blood flowed... the blood flowed from the extremities of his hands and feet like lac juice from a leaking jar... His whole body was now covered with

blood...”²⁸⁰ (Francis & Neil, 1897, pp. 27-29). In the *Culadhammapālajātaka*, where the *Bodhisatta* is a little baby who is violently hacked into pieces and murdered by his father, the text says, “when the *Bodhisatta* was only seven months old, he had his hands and feet and head cut off and his body encircled with sword cuts, as it were with a garland.”²⁸¹ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 118) The text describes in graphic detail, as the king hacks the baby’s limbs one by one until he chops him up into little pieces and scatters the bits on the floor. It would be unusual for a reader to not feel any emotion while reading these graphic descriptions. For me, the emotion was undoubtedly the feeling of anger towards the perpetrator of these heinous, vicious crimes²⁸².

²⁸⁰ bodhisattassa chavi bhijji. cammaṃ bhijji, maṃsaṃ chijji, lohitaṃ paggharati...

hatthapādakoṭṭhi ghaṭachiddehi lākhāraso viya lohitaṃ paggharati... sakalasarīre lohitaṃ ahoṣi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-ka-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo n, [313] 3. khantivādijātakavaṇṇanā]

²⁸¹ bodhisattassa sattamāsikakāle hatthapāde ca sīsañca chedāpetvā asimālakaṃ nāma kāresi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jāta-ka-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 5. pañcakanipāto, 1.

maṇikuṇḍalavaggo n, [358] 8. cūḷadhammapālajātakavaṇṇanā]

²⁸² Here, it is worth noting that Collins (2020) has argued that reading Pali narratives with Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is important in order to correctly understand them. He says, “The capacity to understand and empathize with characters within a narrative, to

Yet, in both stories, the *Bodhisatta* reacts very differently towards the atrocities committed against him. In the *Khantivādijātaka* he says, “Long live the king, who cut off my hands, legs, nose and ears! For, one such as me does not get angry.”²⁸³ and in the *Culadhammapālajātaka* we are told, “The boy, when his hands were cut off, neither wept nor lamented, but moved by *khanti* and *mettā*, bore it with resignation.”²⁸⁴ (Francis & Neil, 1897, p. 118 with modifications) The *Bodhisatta*, thus, has a diametrically opposite reaction to that of the readers. He feels no anger while experiencing these gruesome crimes and instead practices the emotion²⁸⁵ of *khanti*. The

see the psychological and moral complexity of their actions and relations, to feel (and I do mean feel) the kinds of ethical and practical difficulties which they face, certainly requires a significant capacity for Emotional Intelligence...” (p. xxvii).

²⁸³ yo me hatthe ca pāde ca, kaṇṇanāsañca chedayi. ciraṃ jīvatu so rājā, na hi kujjhanti mādisāti.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 4. catukkanipāto, 2.

pucimandavaggo n, [313] 3. khantivādijātakavaṇṇanā]

²⁸⁴ so dvīsu hatthesu chijjamānesu neva rodi na paridevi, khantiñca mettañca purecārikaṃ katvā adhivāsesi.

[Khuddaka Nikāya, jātika-aṭṭhakathā, (tatiyo bhāgo), 5. pañcakanipāto, 1.

maṇikuṇḍalavaggo n, [358] 8. cūḷadhammapālajātakavaṇṇanā]

²⁸⁵ I argue that in the stories of the Pali canon, *khanti* can be understood as both a skill and an emotion. Its status as a skill can be attributed to the fact that it is practiced by

reader, upon reading this, might at first be surprised and even shocked, but soon learns that this is the right emotion to feel in the face of such situations. As one reads several of these *khanti* narratives, the message become stronger, and the reader is thoroughly conditioned. Having read these *khanti* stories over and over again for the purpose of this dissertation, I can attest to this; I feel my own angry reactions receding, and the feeling of *khanti* strengthening.

I would argue that the *khanti* narratives had an ethical function of not only preaching about *khanti*, but evoking and instilling the emotion of *khanti* in the readers. This is done by showing the Bodhisattva's emotional reaction of *khanti* in each situation, glorifying the emotion of *khanti* and giving reasons for its practice. One can fathom that the ethical goal of these narratives is to fashion devotees who are instilled with and practice *khanti*. These findings also suggest that the *khanti* narratives in the *Pali* canon

the *bodhisattva* in several lifetimes until it is perfected by him and constitutes one of the *pāramitās*. Its status as an emotion is less obvious but equally important. This notion comes from the antonym of *khanti* – *kodha* (anger). Anger is defined as “a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility.” The Oxford English Dictionary similarly defines the broad category of “emotion” as “a strong feeling deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others.” Based on the status of anger as an emotion, and *khanti* as its antidote, we can view *khanti* as its opposing emotion.

<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/anger>

were sophisticated literary works crafted intentionally. The *khanti* narratives were textual instruments for emotionally conditioning ethical readers.

Furthermore, it is worth noting in the Pali canon, *khanti* is presented as a positive, desirable Buddhist emotion. The tradition wanted its followers to cultivate the emotion of *khanti* and practice it in their own lives. In popular culture, Buddhism is often viewed as a religious tradition that viewed emotions as undesirable and that the goal of a Buddhist practitioner is to be indifferent or unaffected by emotions. The findings presented here reject this assumption and suggest that the Pali Buddhist authors of the *khanti* narratives viewed only certain emotions such as anger negatively, but others such as *khanti* as productive and desirable. Overall, I would argue that the degree to which certain emotions such as *khanti* were considered ethically productive in Pali Buddhism has been underestimated so far.

The field of Buddhist ethics has only recently encountered an interest in the topic of Buddhist emotions whose study is still in its infancy.²⁸⁶ My personal anecdotal

²⁸⁶ In 1995 Marks, Ames, and Solomon (1995) argued that emotions “lie at the very heart of ethics, determining our values, focusing our vision, influencing our every judgment, giving meaning to our lives.” But the study of emotions is only now gaining momentum. In 2003 there was a series of articles in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (JAAR) centered on the question of how religious traditions produce distinctive emotions. Three of these articles focused on the importance and role of emotions in Buddhist narrative literature.

experience shared above has resonance with the observations of Berkwitz (2003); Collins (2020); Heim (2003); Rotman (2003)²⁸⁷. I would like to join these scholars in their

Scholars have noted that the subject of emotions is still in its infancy in the study of South Asian Buddhism and in need of further scholarly attention (Keown, 2016; Trainor, 2003). Urging more scholarship on emotions Heim (2008, pp. 17, 31) says, “Buddhism deals directly with the emotions as a chief concern of its doctrine and practice... Scholars of religion and ethics do well then to investigate emotions, because through them we can detect the things religious traditions care most about.” Most recently, Collins (2020, p. xxx) also emphasized the importance of emotions in Pali literature and argued that “the Buddhist educational project” had the goal of creating “wise and emotionally intelligent people.”

An excellent case in point for the study of the emotions in narrative literature is Mrozik (2006) who has explored the role of Buddhist narrative literature, particularly Ārya Sura’s *Jātakamālā*, in “fostering the cultivation of ethically valorised emotions.” (91) Her essay focuses on the emotion of astonishment and its valorisation in the aforementioned text and leads to fascinating insights into the role of emotions in Buddhist literature.

²⁸⁷ Berkwitz (2003) has argued that emotions are “cultural products” that are instilled via narratives to spur ethical action. Through a close reading of medieval Buddhist histories, he showed how these texts were “preoccupied with transforming how people felt and lived in the world” [581]. He argued that these narratives did not simply “elicit”

advocacy for scholarship that looks beyond the didactic quality of narratives and focuses on the emotional and ethical components which motivated the production and reception of these narratives.

The same, however, cannot be said of the *kṣānti* narratives in the *Mahābhārata*. The *Mahābhārata* has different prescriptions for people based on their *varṇa*. The prescription for brahmins is similar to the contemporary western practice of forgiveness, as discussed above.²⁸⁸ The prescription for *kṣatriyas*, however, is different.

or “evoke” certain emotions from readers, but “instilled” them which then informed their ethical subjectivity and actions.

Heim (2003) similarly argued that emotions can spur moral insight and lead to ethical action. She said that Buddhist literature supports the view that “emotions and mental states can be cultivated and trained in ways that can make them reliable and useful as moral guides.” Urging more scholarship on this, she said “the study of Buddhist ethics holds out considerable potential for genuine advances in the exploration of moods and motivations as they impact moral as well as religious lives.” [552]

Rotman (2003) also noted that emotions can compel one towards ethical action, even against one’s will. It is noteworthy that all three scholars - Berkwitz (2003); Heim (2003); Rotman (2003) - chose narrative literature as the locus of their discussion on emotions.

²⁸⁸ However, it must be noted that these were only the theoretical prescriptions for the different classes in the *Mahābhārata*. As discussed above, the prescriptions were seldom followed by *brahmins*.

Forgiveness is perceived as a weakness among this royal class. For them, patience is a royal virtue which essentially entails 'biding time' or 'waiting for the right moment to strike.' Being a war epic centered on *kṣatriya* protagonists, the *Mahābhārata* is rich with discussions of this *kṣānti* [K₂]. One of the *Mahābhārata's* central themes is revenge and recurring topics include whether to seek revenge, how and when. Within this context, K₂ features prominently as a sound political strategy for times when one does not have the upper hand. Its importance and efficacy can be fathomed by the fact that if a *kṣatriya* is weak and attacks a strong enemy, he not only risks defeat but also the loss of his life.

Despite the differences between the meanings and treatments of *kṣānti* in the Pali canon and *Mahābhārata*, I was able to discern links between them which enabled me to formulate a theory on their development. Noting this process of development helped contextualize the Pali canon's treatment of *khanti* to a great extent, as discussed above.

The findings of this dissertation also make significant contributions to the interdisciplinary scholarly understanding of the ideas of forgiveness and patience. We now know what these ideas looked like in the Pali canon and the *Mahābhārata*, how they differed from the contemporary western ideas of forgiveness and patience and what they shared in common with it. There are major differences between *kṣānti* and the Western ideas of forgiveness. Two key differences are worth noting. First, *kṣānti* does not require apologies and is independent of the words and actions of the perpetrator. This is in contrast to the modern western where the idea of "unconditional forgiveness" is a relatively recent and novel concept (Garrard & McNaughton, 2003). Second, in my study of *kṣānti* in the Pali canon and the *Mahābhārata* I did not encounter any ideas

linked to the concept of “divine forgiveness”, as is often talked about in certain other religious traditions.

Lastly, the conclusions of my dissertation on the different ways of translating *kṣānti* in the Pali canon and *Mahābhārata* serve as a cautionary tale for all future translations of the *Mahābhārata* and other early Indian texts which contain technical terms that could potentially have multiple meanings within the same text and/or different meanings across two or more texts. It demonstrates the importance of differentiating between these different meanings and being careful in choosing the right word to translate it in every instance of its use.

The methodology exercised in this paper also has implications for future scholarship. It demonstrates that a close analysis of technical terms such as *kṣānti* in individual texts can be very fruitful. While this has recently been done for the term “*dharma*” (Bowles, 2007; Brockington, 2004; Fitzgerald, 2004a; Hildebeitel, 2011a; Olivelle, 2004b), my dissertation is the first one to focus on “*kṣānti*.” Implying the novelty and significance of such studies, Olivelle (2004a, p. 421) has described them as “a new genre of literature.” My dissertation also contributes to this “new genre” and I would like to propose that *kṣānti* be next frontier for such studies with its meaning and development being investigated in Jain texts, Mahayana Buddhists texts and other Brahmanical narratives such as the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Alternatively, a similar project could also be undertaken with a focus on the Sanskrit term “*maitri*” (Pali: *mettā*) in the Pali canon and the *Mahābhārata*. Based on my preliminary analysis of it during this dissertation, I believe such an endeavor would yield interesting insights.

4 APPENDIX

4.1 JĀTAKATTHAVAṆṆANĀ

4.1.1 *Khantivādin Jātaka* [JA313]

The *Khantivādin Jātaka*, the most often cited text on *khanti*, gives us a clear definition of *khanti*. In this story the Bodhisattva is an ascetic who preaches *khanti*. An intoxicated king stumbles upon him and mistaking him to be a false ascetic assault him brutally and fatally. Soon after killing the Bodhisattva the king also dies and goes to hell.

4.1.2 *Chaddanta Jātaka* [JA514]

Here the Bodhisattva is a royal elephant who has two wives. One of the wives develops a grudge against the other and when she is reborn as a queen plots to have the Bodhisattva killed. She feigns an illness and tells the king her only remedy is the tusk of the Bodhisattva. A hunter is sent to capture and kill the Bodhisattva. He shoots the Bodhisattva with a poisoned arrow and the Bodhisattva practices *khanti*. After receiving the tusks of the Bodhisattva the queen is filled with remorse and dies.

4.1.3 *Mātuposaka Jātaka* [JA455]

In this story the Bodhisattva is a white elephant whose mother is blind. One day a man is stranded in that area and the elephant helps him find his way back. The man then tells the king of the elephant's splendor and comes with the king's men to capture him. The Bodhisattva realizes that the man he saved has betrayed him and practices *khanti*

towards him. Eventually the king releases him, touched by the Bodhisattva's love for his mother.

4.1.4 Sankhapala Jātaka [JA524]

Here the Bodhisattva is born in the Nāga world. He grows weary of his royal life and returns to earth as a snake. Here he encounters a group of ruffians who torture him in grotesque ways and the Bodhisattva practices *khanti* towards them. He is rescued by a rich householder who the Bodhisattva invites to his Nāga kingdom.

4.1.5 Bhuridatta Jātaka [JA543]

In this story the *Bodhisattva* once again lives in the *Nāga* kingdom. This long and episodic sutta is filled with several disparate incidents in the *Bodhisattva's* life. Once, the *Nāga* king becomes a victim of an intoxicated man's wrath who tortures him ruthlessly. The *Bodhisattva*, however, practices *khanti* and does not get angry.

4.1.6 Campeyya Jātaka [JA506]

In this *Jātaka* the Bodhisattva is once again born as a Nāga king. He gets caught by a snake charmer who mercilessly tortures him, while the Bodhisattva practices *khanti*.

4.1.7 Mahāsīlava Jātaka (JA51)

In this *Jātaka* a virtuous king refuses to sanction war and is captured by a rival king. The king and his followers are buried alive but the king practices *khanti* and advocates that his followers do the same. Eventually they escape and the king manages to regain his kingdom.

4.1.8 Ekarāja Jātaka (JA303)

This story is similar to the *Mahāsīlava Jātaka (JA51)*. Here too, the virtuous king, the Bodhisattva is taken as a prisoner and tortured. He practices *khanti* which eventually turns his enemy remorseful.

4.1.9 Mahākapi Jātaka [516]

In this story, a farmer gets lost in a forest and falls into a deep pit. The *Bodhisattva*, a monkey in this life saves the farmer's life with great difficulty. The farmer, however, is ungrateful towards the Bodhisattva and tries to kill him by hitting him on the head with a rock. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti* and the farmer is struck with leprosy.

4.1.10 Mahiṃsa Jātaka [JA278]

Here the Bodhisattva is a virtuous buffalo who is tortured by a monkey. The Bodhisattva does not retaliate and practices *khanti* instead. Eventually the monkey is killed due to his wicked deeds.

4.1.11 Culadhammapāla Jātaka [JA358]

A king is jealous of his wife's affection for their baby boy, the Bodhisattva. Enraged he has the baby mutilated and killed. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti* while being killed. The king is eventually punished and goes to hell.

4.1.12 Sarabhanga Jātaka [JA522]

In this story a skillful archer, the Bodhisattva, declines offers made to him by a king and retires to live in a hermitage. Here he answers a series of questions posed to him by

various people and converts them all to the ascetic life. One of the questions asked by Sakka is what blessing is found in *khanti*.

4.1.13 Dhamma-Jātaka [JA457] and Rajovada Jātaka [JA151].

Both *Jātakas* have the same plot – the Bodhisattva is riding on a chariot when he comes face to face with another king who is also on a chariot. Neither king agrees to give way to other and they mutually decide that the winner of the battle will give way to the other's chariot. In both cases the Bodhisattva wins and gets his way.

4.1.14 Sarabhamiga Jātaka (JA 483)

Here the Bodhisattva is an animal, we see the importance of his being an animal emphasized. In this story a king goes hunting and while chasing a deer (the Bodhisattva), falls into a pit. The Bodhisattva practices *khanti* towards the king and rescues the king from the pit. The king is remorseful for his actions and offers his kingdom to the Bodhisattva out of gratitude.

4.1.15 Khanti-Vaṇṇana-Jātaka (JA225)

A short story of a king who reforms his courtier through passive aggressive words aimed at him.

4.1.16 Cūla-Nandiya-Jātaka (JA222)

The Bodhisattva is a monkey who lived in the forest with his brother and blind mother. He leaves his herd to take care of his mother. One day a cruel man spots the mother and decides to kill her. The brothers offer themselves to the hunter and ask him to spare the

mother. One by one, the cruel man kills them all. Forces of nature soon kill this cruel man and his family and the man learns his lesson.

4.1.17 *Daddara Jātaka (JA304)*

Here the Bodhisattva is a Nāga, who along with his brother is banished from the kingdom by their father. Outside the kingdom they face abuses and physical violence. Their pride is humbled by this treatment and after a few years their father calls them back home.

4.1.18 *Kassapamandiya Jātaka (JA312)*

A father and his son set out on a journey. On the way, the father loses his patience with the young boy and reprimands him. The Bodhisatta admonishes the father and the father gets reformed.

4.2 MAJJHIMANIKĀYA

4.2.1 *Kakacūpama Sutta (MN 21)*

The Kakacūpamasutta gives us the clearest and most emphatic description of the two steps in the process of khanti. In this sutta the Buddha reprimands a monk who is known to have frequent disagreements with nuns. He then also narrates the story of an ill-tempered woman who gained a bad reputation because of her temperament. Throughout this lengthy sutta, the Buddha gives us a formulaic description of the mental process that a monk should follow when verbally or physically assaulted. Although the

term *khanti* is not used in the *sutta* itself it is used in the commentary to this *sutta* by Buddhaghosa.

4.2.2 Mahahatthipadopama Sutta (MN 28)

This is a technical *sutta* that describes the four elements. The *sutta* connects the four noble truths and the twelve links of dependent origination of the five aggregates. For the purposes of this dissertation, only the reference to the *Kakacūpamasutta* is relevant.

4.2.3 Vāseṭṭhasuttaṃ [MN 98]

A long *sutta* where two brahmins argue about what the characteristics of a true brahmin are. Since neither can convince the other, the Bodhisattva intervenes and gives a detailed description of what a true brahmin is and is not.

4.3 SAṂYUTTANIKĀYA

4.3.1 Akkosa Sutta (SN 7.2)

In this *sutta*, the Buddha discusses anger and answers the best response when someone is angry with one. He equates not getting affected when someone reviles you to not accepting food from someone, that is, not entering an exchange. To return anger in this logic, is literally to take on the abuser's vice and incorporate it within oneself.

4.3.2 Asurindakasutta (SN 7.3)

In the *Asurindakasutta* (SN 7.3), Asurindaka, of the Bharadvaja *gotra*, gets angry with the Buddha and insults him. The Buddha stays silent. Asuri interprets this as his victory

and says that he won. The Buddha says that the fool thinks victory is won by screaming, when instead the wise know that tolerance is true victory.

4.3.3 *Vepacitti Sutta (SN 11.4) and Subhāsitaḥaya Sutta (SN 11.5)*

The *Vepacitti sutta* and *Subhāsitaḥaya Sutta* are very similar in structure and content and differ only in minor details. Both *suttas* discuss the right response to an offense set amidst a battle between Sakka and Vepacitti. The argument here is about enduring offense by someone who is weaker and how that might be seen as a sign of weakness and fear. The Buddha argues that tolerance is a necessity rather than a virtuous choice for the weak but is the virtue of choice among those who are strong.

4.3.4 *Maha-mangala Sutta (SN 2.4)*

In this *sutta* the Buddha answers the question about what the greatest blessing is. Among a long list of things he says are blessings, *khanti* is included.

4.4 KHUDDAKAPĀṬHA

4.4.1 *Karaṇīyamettā Sutta (Khp 9)*

This is a popular *sutta* has been discoursed by the Boddhisattva to monks for their protection from tree deities. The discourse details the right conduct for monks and the method to practice *metta*.

4.5 DHAMMAPADA-AṬṬHAKATHĀ

4.5.1 Dhpa 222

In this story, a monk cuts a tree and harms a *rukkhadeva* (tree deity). The *rukkhadeva* is angered and plans to attack the monk but stops thinking that he will get a bad reputation and other *rukkhadevas* will follow suit. He decides to report the matter to the monk's master, the Buddha. The Buddha commends the *rukkhadeva* and condemns anger.

4.5.2 Dhpa 223

In this story a hired consort gets jealous of the wife and unable to control herself, pours a ladleful of boiling butter on the wife's head. The wife sees this coming but bears no ill will towards the consort and practices *khanti* instead. As a result, the boiling butter doesn't burn her and seeing this, the consort becomes remorseful and apologizes. When the Buddha hears about this he asks the wife what her thought process was when the consort was coming toward her with boiling butter. The wife, Uttara, explains, she practiced *khanti*. The Buddha commends her.

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