

Title	Philological Study on Nibbāna-related Words in the Suttanipāta and Its Commentary Paramatthajotikā
Author(s)	Tomita, Mariko
Citation	待兼山論叢. 哲学篇. 2023, 57, p. 21-40
Version Type	VoR
URL	<a href="https://hdl.handle.net/11094/94900">https://hdl.handle.net/11094/94900</a>
rights	
Note	

*Osaka University Knowledge Archive : OUKA*

<https://ir.library.osaka-u.ac.jp/>

Osaka University

# Philological Study on *Nibbāna*-related Words in the *Suttanipāta* and Its Commentary *Paramatthajotikā*

Mariko TOMITA

Keywords: *nibbāna* / *Suttanipāta* / *Paramatthajotikā* / Pāli Canon

## 1. Introduction<sup>1)</sup>

*Nibbāna* [Sanskrit (Skt.) *nirvāṇa*] is the most important concept and ultimate goal in Buddhism. Previous studies<sup>2)</sup> generally follow the interpretations of the commentaries and define *nibbāna* in two ways. One is a state where human's fire elements, meaning earthly desires, have gone out. Such a state is reachable while one is alive and can be called "*nibbāna* in the present life." The other is a state at and after the end of life, that is, physical death, of a liberated person or an Arhat, and it can be called "*nibbāna* at and after the end of life."<sup>3)</sup>

In this paper, I examine philologically all the *nibbāna*-related words<sup>4)</sup> in the *Suttanipāta* (Sn).<sup>5)</sup> It is a unique and famous *sutta* that contains the oldest stratum<sup>6)</sup> of the Pāli Canon, which some scholarship asserts contains discourses actually spoken by Gotama Buddha.<sup>7)</sup> In analyzing *nibbāna*-related words, I focus on whether each word about the state of a person (1) implies *nibbāna* in the present life, (2) implies *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, or (3) does not make clear the timing of *nibbāna*. I also check who utters the word. At the same time, I investigate if there are differences in meaning among these words.<sup>8)</sup> I then compare my findings with the Sn commentary *Paramatthajotikā* (Pj).<sup>9)</sup>

## 2. *Nibbāna*-related words in Sn

There are 51 examples of *nibbāna*-related words in Sn.<sup>10)</sup> The oldest stratum consists of verses only, which contains 16 examples, including 11 nouns. In the rest of Sn's verses, there are 30 examples, including 16 past participles. In the prose, there are 5 examples of *parinibbuta*, which occur within the same *sutta* (See Section 2.2. below).

### 2. 1. *Nibbāna*

Most examples in the oldest stratum appear as the noun *nibbāna*,<sup>11)</sup> in which the definitions of *nibbāna* are expounded in vv. 1094 and 1109. Since then, in the Pāli Nikāyas we cannot find such definitions taking the form of "this and that are *nibbāna*," except one instance.<sup>12)</sup> This fact suggests that Gotama Buddha needed to define *nibbāna* in his early teaching days, and it soon became one of the important technical terms in Buddhism. Let us review v. 1094 in the *Kappamāṇavapucchā* (Ch. V - 11), a short *sutta* with only 4 verses. Besides *nibbānaṃ*, *nibbuta*<sup>13)</sup> and *diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā* also appear in v. 1095.

*akiñcanaṃ anādānaṃ etaṃ dīpaṃ anāparaṃ,*

*nibbānaṃ iti naṃ brūmi, jarāmaccuparikkhayaṃ.* (v. 1094)

Own nothing, taking nothing. This is the unparalleled island.

I call it *nibbāna*. [It (*nibbāna*) is] the extinction of old age and death.

*etad aññāya ye satā diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā,*

*na te Māra-vasānugā, na te Mārassa paddhagū ti* (v. 1095)

Having understood this, those who are mindful and *abhinibbuta* in this life,<sup>14)</sup>

they are not under Māra's control. They are not Māra's servants.

The above v. 1094 expresses human conditions of being in the state of *nibbāna*. The word *akiñcanaṃ* (own nothing) illustrates Gotama Buddha in v. 455. It means that such a person has neither physical possessions, social status, nor mental problems.<sup>15)</sup> The word *anādānaṃ* (taking nothing), a derivative of an-ā-DĀ, often appears with *nibbāna*-related words. In vv. 630 and 638, this word is used with *nibbuta*, implying the state of *nibbāna* in the present life. Words *akiñcanaṃ* and *anādānaṃ* sometimes appear together, such as in vv. 620 and 645 [= *Dhammapada* (Dhp) vv. 396 and 421]. They indicate the state of a living person with no sensual pleasures nor earthly desires and there is nothing more to take in.

Another definition of *nibbāna* is *jarāmaccuparikkhayaṃ* (the extinction of old age and death). This means to stop *saṃsāra*, or transmigration and rebirth, and one may naturally think that this happens (2) at and after the end of life. However, textual evidence shows that it is not necessarily so. This *sutta* is a case in point. The context of “own nothing, taking nothing” is clearly about a living person, and then “the extinction of old age and death” is also explained as *nibbāna*. Here, different interpretations are possible regarding the timing of *nibbāna*. One is that “own nothing, taking nothing” and “the extinction of old age and death” are the attributes of a living person, implying (1) *nibbāna* in the present life. In this case, although this liberated person will physically face aging and death, these natural life courses are no longer applicable to that person. The other is that the person who owns nothing and takes nothing will eradicate old age and death to attain (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life. Since either interpretation is possible, in v. 1094, (3) the timing of *nibbāna* is undecidable.

On the other hand, in v. 1095, the compound *diṭṭhadhammābhiniibbutā* (those who have attained *abhiniibbutā* in their present lives) apparently refers to the state of living persons. They will get older and die physically, but the text says they are “not under Māra’s control.” This indicates that they have already overcome death in this life and that death no longer applies to them, implying (1) *nibbāna* in the present

life. This is clear due to the use of the past participle *nibbutā* and *diṭṭhadhamma* (in the present life) in the compound. From the overall context of this *sutta*, the previous verse (v. 1094), too, may also suggest (1) *nibbāna* in the present life, although the possibility of (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life cannot be denied.

I've reviewed the other examples of *nibbāna* in Sn and found that almost all are about a living person, but do not make clear the timing of *nibbāna*. Therefore, I suggest that the timing of *nibbāna* does not necessarily reflect the context.

## 2. 2. *Nibbuta*

The past participle *nibbuta* appears more frequently in the younger strata, which consists of verse and prose. *Nibbuta* means that the person did achieve such a state and that they have maintained the state since then. Among the *nibbuta* examples in Sn, only the *Vaṅgīsasutta* (Ch. II - 12) refers to (2) the state of *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, which are *parinibbutaṃ* in v. 346 and *parinibbutos* in prose (pp. 59-60).<sup>16)</sup> All the other *parinibbuta* examples in Sn refer to the state of *nibbāna* in the present life.<sup>17)</sup>

On the other hand, there are *abhinibbutatta* in vv. 343 and 783 as well as *nibbuta* in v. 707, which do not make clear whether the person is in the state of *nibbāna* or not. At the same time, however, there are examples of *abhinibbutatta* clearly referring to *nibbāna* in the present life. They appear in v. 456, in which Gotama Buddha calls himself *abhinibbutatto*, as well as in v. 469, in which *abhinibbutatto* is an attribute of Buddha Tathāgata. *Parinibbuto* also appears in v. 467 as such in the same *Sundarikabhāradvājasuttta* (Ch. III - 4). The fact that *abhinibbutatta* and *parinibbuta* appear in the same *sutta* suggests that the nuance of *nibbāna* must differ between them. I detect that *parinibbuta* tends to be used with the elements of "understanding" (JÑĀ [know] derivatives such as *paññā*) and/or the concept of "life and death" in the same verse.<sup>18)</sup>

Therefore, it has become clear that depending on the context of the *sutta*, the

timing and meaning of *nibbāna* differ even in the same *nibbuta* word.

### 2. 3. *Nibbuti*

The term *nibbuti*<sup>19)</sup> is defined as “calm” (*santi*) in v. 933 of the oldest stratum. There is no direct mention of calmness in the above-mentioned definitions of *nibbāna*. Therefore, a calm person may not necessarily be in the state of *nibbāna*. However, in this *Tuvaṇṇasutta* (Ch. VI - 14), one definition of *nibbāna*, “taking nothing” (*anādāna*), appears and it implies a liberated person’s calm mind. This is suggested in v. 919: “there is nothing taken up by the person who has calmed in his inner self” (*ajjhataṃ upasantassa n’atthi attā*<sup>20)</sup>).

The above findings suggest that *nibbuti*, *santi*, and *nibbuta* all signify a calm inner state. Although these words are mostly the attributes of the liberated sage who has attained *nibbāna* in the present life, on some occasions they may not necessarily indicate the state of *nibbāna*, depending on the context of the *sutta*.

In summary of my findings regarding the total of 51 *nibbāna*-related words in Sn, whereas 20 cases (*nibbuti*, *nibbanti*, *nibbuta* examples) clearly indicate (1) *nibbāna* in the present life and 7 cases (*parinibbuta*, *nibbāyi*) indicate (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, 21 cases (*nibbuti*, *nibbāti*, *nibbāna* examples) show (3) the timing of *nibbāna* is undecidable and 3 cases (*nibbuta* examples) are not even sure whether the word implies *nibbāna* or not.

### 3. The commentator’s exegesis in Pj

Pj uses fixed *nibbāna*-related expressions to indicate either (1) *nibbāna* in the present life or (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, except for a few cases when both interpretations are provided.<sup>21)</sup>

### 3. 1. *Nibbāna* in the present life

In Pj II p. 592, “one’s own *nibbāna*” (*nibbānam attano*; vv. 1061 and 1062) is explained as “for the quenching of one’s own passion etc.” (*attano rāgādīnaṃ nibbānathāya*). Pj II p. 399 interprets “to obtain *nibbāna*” (*nibbānapattiyā*) in v. 454 as “to obtain the quenching of earthly desires” (*kilesanibbānaṃ pāpeti*). Pj II p. 506 explains that *parinibbuto* in v. 735 means “becomes *parinibbuta* with earthly desires completely quenched” (*kilesaparinibbānena parinibbuto hoti*). From these exegeses, it is clear that Pj views *nibbāna* in the present life as the extinction of earthly desires (*kilesa*), including passion (*rāga*) [Pj II p. 521: *rāgādikilesa*], and uses the term *nibbāna* in its original sense of “quenching.” At times, Pj also includes “fire” (*aggi*) or “burning” (*pariāha*) when discussing earthly desires as the human element to be quenched. For example, Pj II p. 407 paraphrases *parinibbuto* in v. 467 as “cool like a lake since the burning of earthly desires has been completely quenched” (*udakarahado va sīto parinibbutakilesapariāhattā*). Likewise, Pj II p. 32 understands “fire” of “the fire has been quenched” (*nibbuto gini*) in v. 19 as passion (*rāga*) and explains that this happened when Gotama Buddha was under the Bodhi tree at the time of his awakening.

Besides nir-VĀ<sup>2</sup> (quench [the fire]) derivatives, Pj also uses ŚĀM (quell) derivatives to express the state of *nibbāna* in the present life. One example is Pj II p. 365, where *parinibbuto* in v. 370 is described as to “have become cool by quelling the fire of earthly desires” (*kilesaggivūpasamena sītibhūto*). A similar interpretation can be seen in the explanation of *abhinibbutatto* in v. 783: “quelled is to become calmed down by cooling down earthly desires, the same state as *abhinibbutatta*” (*santo ti rāgādikilesavūpasamena santo, tathā abhinibbutatto* [Pj II p. 521]). In this context, it is also noted that Pj interprets *diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā* in v. 1087 in the same way: “having known and seen the dharma and having quenched passion etc., they are *abhinibbuta*” (*viditadhammā diṭṭhadhammā rāgādinibbānena ca*

*abhinibbutā* [Pj II p. 596]). Also, *nibbuti* in v. 933 is explained in a similar way: “quelling of passion etc.” (*rāgādīnaṃ santi* [Pj II p. 565]). Thus, Pj often replaces *nibbuti* with *santi*. Furthermore, it explains ŚAM (quell) derivatives as *nibbāna* (ex. *upasame* in v. 737 [Pj II p. 506]). These pieces of textual evidence indicate that Pj understands derivatives of *nir-VĀ<sup>2</sup>* (quench [the fire]) and ŚAM (quell) as synonyms for *nibbāna*.

In addition to the above exegeses, there is an expression in Pj as “by way of *nibbāna* with residue of fuel remaining” (*saupādisesanibbānavasena* [Pj II p. 362]) to explain *parinibbutaṃ* in v. 359. This phrase is about Gotama Buddha. Therefore, it explicitly means the state of *nibbāna* in the present life.

### 3. 2. *Nibbāna* at and after the end of life

Pj interprets some *nibbāna*-related words in Sn as meaning *nibbāna* at and after the end of life. It explains the verb *nibbanti* in v. 235 as follows: “by way of ceasing the last consciousness, just like this lamp goes out, [the wise] are quenched” (*carimaviññāṇanirodhena, yathāyam<sup>22)</sup> padīpo nibbuto, evaṃ nibbanti* [Pj I p. 195]). It also says that Gotama Buddha expounded this *sutta* “due to the virtue of attaining *nibbāna* without residue of fuel remaining” (*anupādisesanibbānappattiguṇaṃ nissāya* [Pj I p. 194]).<sup>23)</sup> In case of *parinibbanti* in v. 765, Pj II p. 510 uses the set phrase “attain *nibbāna* completely into the *nibbāna* element without residue of fuel remaining” (*anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbanti*), indicating *nibbāna* at and after the end of life.<sup>24)</sup>

## 4. Conclusion

In light of my findings regarding the *nibbāna*-related words in Sn and the interpretations of Pj, I conclude that Pj speaks of two types of *nibbāna*, namely, (1) *nibbāna* in the present life and (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, using fixed



expressions. By the time of Pj, these were already the established theory on *nibbāna*, and the text reflects orthodox Theravada ideas on the subject that are later developments. Previous studies generally follow the interpretations of the commentary and tend to take these two types of *nibbāna* as a premise.<sup>25)</sup>

On the other hand, the views on *nibbāna* elucidated in Sn show more variety and contain ambiguity. Moreover, I've detected differences in meaning and usage between the *nibbāna*-related words. Even the same term sometimes implies a different meaning and/or timing of *nibbāna*. Concerning the timing of *nibbāna*, among the total of 51 examples of *nibbāna*-related words in Sn, I've found that 21 unclear examples, in contrast with 2 in Pj. When the context indicates a living person, Pj is likely to interpret *nibbāna* as being attained in the present life.

As shown in the definitions of *nibbāna* (v. 1094: own nothing, taking nothing, the extinction of old age and death; v. 1109: the abandonment of craving), since the Pāli Canon's oldest stratum, or, in another words, from the early days of Gotama Buddha's discourses, *nibbāna* has been taught while leaving its timing ambiguous. The interpretation of its timing depends on how one understands one definition of *nibbāna*, the extinction of death, which means to overcome or sever *saṃsāra*. There is the possibility of holding a following view: it could only be attained at and after the end of life when the extinction of death physically comes, and therefore, when the extinction of death or *saṃsāra* is expressed for a living person, it should be understood that the liberated person has earned the ticket or the right to reach such a state in the present life.

However, it is also true that Gotama Buddha needed to stress that *nibbāna* can be attained in this life,<sup>26)</sup> because there was a wide-spread concern among people in his time about the afterlife and they tended to relate *nibbāna* with the end of life.<sup>27)</sup> Indeed, *nibbāna* illustrating the end of life is not specifically expressed in Gotama Buddha's discourses in Sn.<sup>28)</sup> What I mean by (3) "does not make clear the timing of *nibbāna*" is that the example in question could imply either (1) *nibbāna* in the

present life or (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, or imply both (1) and (2). The *nibbāna* attained in the present life continues even after the end of life.

Since “death” (*maraṇa/maccu*) is no longer applicable to the liberated person, to illustrate the end of his life, *nibbāna*-related words were applied again, while avoiding using the term “death.” This has led *nibbāna*, *parinibbāna*, *parinibbuta*, and *nibbāyati*, etc. to also imply the end of life per se, namely physical death, of the liberated person in the younger strata of the Pāli Canon. That is how the idea of the two types of *nibbāna* emerged in early Buddhism.

- 1) This paper is the summary of the presentation paper at the World Sanskrit Conference 2023, which was based on Tomita 2021 as a reexamination of part of my doctoral dissertation (Tomita 2018). This work is supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP19K12948. I use the Pali Text Society editions (Ee) and refer to other editions [Burmese edition (Be) and Seamese (Thai) edition (Se)].
- 2) Major studies regarding *nibbāna* include Enomoto 2012, Collins 2010, Hwang 2006, Fujita 1988a; 1988b, etc. I’ve listed them in reverse chronological order, as newer studies review previous findings.
- 3) I deliberately avoid using the term “death” for an Arhat, as textual evidence suggests that one who has attained *nibbāna* in the present life has reached a “deathless” state (*amata*: Sn vv. 204, 225, 228, etc.).
- 4) *Nibbāna*, *nibbuti*, *nibbāti*, *nibbāyati*, *nibbuta* and their compounds, including those with the *pari* and *abhi* prefixes.
- 5) Sn is included in the Khuddaka-nikāya. Many studies and translations of Sn are available, such as Bodhi 2017, Norman 2006 (Revised edition; First edition 1992), Murakami and Oikawa 1990 (New format 2009), Nakamura 1984, Jayawickrama 1978, etc. In this paper, I use my own translations after referring to previous translations.
- 6) It is widely recognized that Sn Chapter (Ch.) VI (the *Aṭṭhakavagga*) and Ch. V (the *Pārāyanavagga*; excluding the preface and conclusion) belong to the oldest stratum of the Pāli Canon. This view relates to a theory that verse is older than prose (Bodhi 2017: 27–32, Namikawa 2005: 8–10, Aramaki 1985: 2–3, Nakamura 1984: 433–445, etc.). There are opposing arguments (de Jong 2000: 171–180, Murakami and Oikawa

1990: 275–283, etc.).

- 7) For example, see Aramaki 1985 and Wynne 2007: 98–100, 127, etc.
- 8) Fujita 1988a: 265 argues that the meaning of *nibbuti* and *nibbuta* is the same as *nibbāna*. Fujita 1988b: 3, 5 and Namikawa 2005: 96–97 simply conclude that the meaning and usage of *abhinibbuta* are similar to *parinibbuta*. It seems to me that they lack a detailed text analysis concerning *nibbuti* and *abhinibbuta*.
- 9) Pj II (*Suttanipāta-aṭṭhakathā*) and a part of Pj I (*Khuddakapāṭhā-aṭṭhakathā*). Buddhaghosa is presented as the author of Pj (Pj II p. 608), on which some previous studies cast doubt (von Hinüber 1996: 129–131, etc.). My study also covers the *Mahāniddeśa* (Nidd I) and the *Cullaniddeśa* (Nidd II) in the Khuddaka-nikāya, comparing them with Sn and Pj. Refer to the Appendix. As the exegeses of Sn Ch. VI and V, Nidd I and II occupy a position in-between Sn and Pj.
- 10) See the Appendix, which lists all the examples in Sn with my findings as well as the interpretations of Pj and Nidd, if any.
- 11) Although there are several theories regarding its etymology, *nibbāna* is *nir-VĀ<sup>2</sup>* (quench or extinguish), derived from a root verb *VĀ<sup>2</sup>* (quench [the fire]). See EWAia Bd. II: 537–538. The prefix *nir-* [nis-] indicates “outward” or “away from.” The present indicative form is *nibbāyati*. In old verse, *nibbāti*, which is derived from *VĀ<sup>1</sup>* ([wind] blow), is substituted for *nibbāyati* (derived from *VĀ<sup>2</sup>*) and means quenching [the fire] (ex. *parinibbāti*: Sn v. 765, *Theragāthā* (Th) v. 364, Aṅguttara-nikāya III pp. 41G (*gāthā*), 43G, 357G; *nibbāti*: Sn vv. 235, 915, *Jātaka* (Ja) II p. 235G). In contrast, no *VĀ<sup>2</sup>* derivatives are used as a substitution for *VĀ<sup>1</sup>*.

We can find an example indicating this original meaning in Sn v. 591: “just as the fire burning a house is quenched with water” (*yathā saraṇam ādittaṃ vārīṇā parinibbāye* [3rd, singular, optative; metri causa for *parinibbāye*]). This shows that when *nibbāna*-related words are applied to a person, it means that some fire element(s) of the person, not the person per se, is/(are) quenched. Refer also to Enomoto 2012: 150–151. On the other hand, concerning *nibbāna* at the end of life, Fujita 1988a: 273–274 argues that the human’s existence itself is quenched. This view of Fujita, I think, is not the correct understanding of *nibbāna*. Even after Gotama Buddha’s life ended, which is often called *parinibbāna*, his physical body still existed, and even after his cremation, his bone relics still existed. Collins 2010: 67 suggests that the metaphor of the quenched fire refers to an Arhat after death. However, such metaphors in Sn vv. 19 and 235 are about a living person.

- 12) There is another one in prose: “The extinction of passion, the extinction of hatred, and

the extinction of delusion. This is called *nibbāna*” (*rāgakkhayo dosakkhayo mohakkhayo idaṃ vuccati nibbānanti* [Saṃyutta-nikāya IV pp. 251, 261]). Cf: another definition in the oldest stratum, Sn v. 1109: “by the abandonment of craving, it is called *nibbāna*” (*taṇhāya vippahānena nibbānaṃ iti vuccati*).

According to previous studies, in the *Upaniṣads*, *nirvāṇa* seemingly was not established as the term meaning liberation. In the *Bhagavadgītā* of the *Mahābhārata*, there are five examples of *nirvāṇa* (Fujita 1988a: 266–267, Tsuji 1980: 333, 409–411, etc.). Fujita holds that *parinirvāṇa* was used to mean liberation in the *Mahābhārata* and concludes that it is Buddhism alone that attaches high value to the term. Tsuji suggests that the *Bhagavadgītā* may have borrowed the term *nirvāṇa* from Buddhist texts.

- 13) This is a Pāli form of Skt. *nirvṛta*, a derivative of VR̥ (cover). However, in the Pāli Canon, *nibbuta* is used as the past participle of *nibbāyati* (Enomoto 2005: 557). This usage is confirmed in Sn v. 19: *nibbuto gini*, “the fire is quenched.” This metaphor implies the state of Gotama Buddha. Jain seniors use *nirvūḍa*, a Jain form of *nibbuta*, in the same way (Enomoto 2005).
- 14) This compound *diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā* can also be translated literally as “those who are in the state of *nibbuta*, having seen the dharma.” Refer to Tomita 2018: 84–89; 2012: 7–10 for the other examples of this compound in early Pāli texts.
- 15) Note that *akiñcana* has another meaning as one of the stages of concentration. Depending on the context, it could imply a liberated person or a person who is not yet liberated but still practicing. For example, the *Upasīvamāṇavapucchā* (Ch. V - 7) uses this term to indicate the stage of concentration. Regarding this *sutta*, refer to Tomita 2014.
- 16) In this *sutta*, *nibbāyi* in v. 354 also indicates the end of life. Refer to Tomita 2008.
- 17) There are 7 examples: vv. 359, 370, 467, 735, 737, 739, 758. See the Appendix.
- 18) Ex.: vv. 186, 204, 737, 739, etc. See the Appendix and Tomita 2018: 90, 97–98.
- 19) Skt. *nirvṛti*, a derivative of VR̥ (cover). Just like *nibbuta*, *nibbuti* means “the quenched fire” as an abstract noun or action noun of nir-VĀ<sup>2</sup>. In Sn, there is no example of *nibbuti* directly describing “the quenched fire,” but one example can be found in Th v. 32: “I will exchange a thing being burned to *nibbuti*” (*tappamānena nibbutim nimmissaṃ*).
- 20) I take *attā* here as Skt. *ātta* [the past participle of ā + DĀ (take)], same as vv. 787 and 858. From the context of this *sutta*, I think, it is not appropriate to take *attā* here as *attan* (self).

- 21) There are two instances in Pj: *nibbānapattiyā* in v. 454 and *parinibbanti* in v. 765. I note when my interpretation is different from Pj (see below).
- 22) Be: *yathāyaṃ*.
- 23) Here, v. 235 in the *Ratanasutta* (Ch. II - 1) reads, “[There are] sages who have minds detached from clinging to future existence, whose seeds are extinct, and who have no desire for growth. They are quenched, just like this lamp” (*virattacittā āyatike bhavasmim̐/ te khīṇabījā avirūhichandā/ nibbanti dhīrā yathāyaṃ* [Be: *yathāyaṃ padīpo*]). In contrast to Pj’s interpretation, I understand this verse as about the broader topic of the present life, and therefore hold that it is highly likely that this verse implies *nibbāna* in the present life.
- 24) Right before this, Pj II p. 510 refers to *nibbāna* in the present life as well, by stating that “[the sages] attain *nibbāna* completely by way of quenching earthly desires” (*kilesaparinibbānena parinibbanti*). I understand *parinibbanti* in v. 765 in this *Dvayatānupassanāsutta* (Ch. III - 12) as probably meaning to attain *nibbāna* in the present life. I think that the statement describes general terms related to the present life and that multiple examples of *parinibbuta* in this *sutta* clearly indicate *nibbāna* in the present life.
- 25) The *Itivuttaka* pp. 38–39 [No. 44] alone expounds an established theory of the two types of *nibbāna*, *saupādisesā nibbānadhātu* and *anupādisesā nibbānadhātu*, in early Pāli texts. Refer to Tomita 2023.
- 26) Sn says that Gotama Buddha or the person who has attained *nibbāna* in the present life “has reached the other shore” (*pāragata* in vv. 21, 359, 638 etc.) and “has gone beyond and crossed over a raging torrent of *saṃsāra*” (*saṃsāra-m-oham accagā tiṇṇo* in v. 638 etc.; Ee; Be; Se: *saṃsāram moham*). I understand this phrase as *saṃsāra-m-oham* (<*ogham*). Cf.: *Udānavarga* XXXIII: *saṃsāraugham*. Pj II p. 469 interprets it as *saṃsāra* and delusion (*moha*).
- 27) Sn deals with the themes, such as the afterlife in the *Ālavakasutta* (Ch. I - 10), the sorrow of death in the *Sallasutta* (Ch. III - 8), the deathless, having crossed over *saṃsāra* and reached the other shore, and the extinction of birth in the *Vasethhasutta* (Ch. III - 9); and crossing over *saṃsāra* and the non-returner in the *Dvayatānupassanāsutta* (Ch. III - 12). The texts state that Gotama Buddha or the liberated one completely knows the passing away and rebirth of beings (ex. v. 643) and people ask him the afterlife of particular persons. The *Vaṅgīsasutta* is one such example.
- 28) In the above-mentioned *Vaṅgīsasutta*, it was Vaṅgīsa who repeatedly utters *parinibbuta*, when asking whether his deceased teacher has attained *parinibbuta* or

not. Gotama Buddha neither replies “yes” nor uses “*parinibbuta*” but instead answers in v. 355 as follows: *acchecchi tanhaṃ idha nāmarūpe/ kaṅhassa sotam dīgharattānusayitam./ atāri jātimaraṇaṃ asesam* (He cut off craving for name-and-form in this world. He crossed over birth and death entirely, the stream of darkness which has long been latent). Pj II p. 351 explains this verse as, “It means that [he] attained *parinibbāna* without residue of fuel remaining” (*anupādiseso parinibbāyī ti dasseti* [Be: *anupādisesāya nibbānadhātuyā parinibbāyī*]). Although Pj sees Gotama Buddha as referring to *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, I hold that he may also be referring to the state of *nibbāna* while alive, because in v. 351, Vaṅḡisa calls Gotama Buddha “the one who has eliminated birth and death entirely” (*pahīnajātimaraṇaṃ asesam*).

### Bibliography

Be : Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka version 4.0, Vipassana Research Institute, 2008.

Ee : Pali Text Society latest editions.

EWAia : *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*, Manfred Mayrhofer (ed.), Bd. I: 1986–1992; II: 1992–1996; III: 2001, Heidelberg.

Se : CD-ROM version 4, Mahidol University Computing Center, Bangkok, 1994.

Aramaki 1985: Noritoshi Aramaki, “Can the *Attadaṇḍasutta* (Sn 935–954) be the Buddha’s Words?” [Attadaṇḍasutta (Sn 935–954) wa Shakuson no Kotoba de Arieruka (in Japanese)], *Nihon Bukkyo Gakkai Nenpo* (*The Journal of the Nippon Buddhist Research Association*), 1985, 50, pp. 1–18.

Bodhi 2017: Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Suttanipāta, An Ancient Collection of the Buddha’s Discourses together with its Commentaries*, Somerville, Wisdom Publications, 2017.

Collins 2010: Steven Collins, *Nirvana, Concept, Imagery, Narrative*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Enomoto 2012: Fumio Enomoto, “*Nirvāṇa* in Early Buddhism with Reference to the Doctrine of Non-Self.” [Shoki Butten ni okeru Nehan — Mugasetu to Kanrenshite — (in Japanese)], *Bukkyo Kenkyu* (*Buddhist Studies*), 2012, 40, pp. 149–160.

Enomoto 2005: Fumio Enomoto, “On *nibbuta/nivvuḍa*” [*nibbuta/nivvuḍa ni tsuite* (in Japanese)], *Nagasaki Hojun Hakase Koki Kinen Ronshu; Bukkyo to Jainakyo* (*Buddhism and Jainism: Essays in Honour of Dr. Hojun Nagasaki on His Seventieth Birthday*), Heigakuji Shoten, 2005, pp. 553–560.

Fujita 1988a: Kotatsu Fujita, “*Nibbāna*” [Nehan (in Japanese)], *Iwanami Koza; Toyo Shiso*

- Indo Bukkyo 2*, Vol. 9, Iwanami Shoten, 1988, pp. 264–286.
- Fujita 1988b: Kotatsu Fujita, “*Nibbāna* in Early Buddhism — *nibbāna* and *parinibbāna* —” [Genshi Bukkyo ni okeru Nehan — *nibbāna* to *parinibbāna* — (in Japanese)], *Indogaku Bukkyogaku Kenkyu (Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies)*, 1988, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 1–12.
- von Hinüber 1996: Oskar von Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1996.
- Hwang 2006: Soonil Hwang, *Metaphor and Literalism in Buddhism: The doctrinal history of nirvana*, Oxon, Routledge, 2006.
- Jayawickrama 1978: N. A. Jayawickrama, “A Critical Analysis of the Sutta Nipāta, General Observations and Conclusions,” *Pali Buddhist Review*, Pali Buddhist Union, 1978, 3 (3), pp. 100–113.
- de Jong 2000: J. W. de Jong, ed. Jonathan A. Silk, “The Buddha and His Teachings,” *Wisdom, Compassion, and the Search for Understanding: The Buddhist Studies Legacy of Gadjin M. Nagao*, Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 2000, pp. 171–181.
- Murakami and Oikawa 1990: Shinkan Murakami and Shinkai Oikawa, *Hotoke no Kotoba Chu — Paramatthajotikā Kenkyu: Hotoke to Seiten no Densho* (in Japanese), Shunjyusha Publishing Company, 1990 (2009: new edition).
- Nakamura 1984: Hajime Nakamura, *Words of the Buddha — Suttanipāta —* [*Buddha no Kotoba — Suttanipāta —* (in Japanese)], Iwanami Shoten, 1984.
- Namikawa 2005: Takayoshi Namikawa, *Godama Buddha Ko* (in Japanese), Daizoshuppan, 2005.
- Norman 2006: K. R. Norman, *The Group of Discourses (Sutta-nipāta)*, Second edition, Lancaster, The Pali Text Society, 2006.
- Tomita 2023: Mariko Tomita, “The Development of the Two Types of *Nibbāna* in Early *Pāli Suttas*” [Pali Go Shoki Bukkyo Kyoten ni okeru Nishu Nehan eno Tenkai (in Japanese)], *Shinshu Bunka (Bulletin of the Institute of Shin Buddhist Culture)*, 2023, Vol. 32, pp. 1–26.
- Tomita 2021: Mariko Tomita, “*Nibbāna* in *Suttanipāta* — in Comparison with Its Commentary *Paramatthajotikā* —” [Pali Seiten *Suttanipāta* ni okeru Nehan — Chushaku *Paramatthajotikā* no Kaishaku to Hikaku shite (in Japanese)], *Pali Gaku Bukkyo Bunka Gaku (Journal of Pali and Buddhist Studies)*, 2021, Vol. 34, pp. 1–27.
- Tomita 2018: Mariko Tomita, “Basic Research on *Nibbāna* in Early Buddhist Sutras — with the *Suttanipāta* as the Base Material —” [Shoki Butten ni okeru Nehan no Kisoteki Kenkyu — *Suttanipāta* wo Kihon Shiryo to shite (in Japanese)], Doctoral Dissertation,

Osaka University, 2018.

- Tomita 2014: Mariko Tomita, “Issues on *Nibbāna* with Special Reference to Verse No. 1074 of the *Upasīvamāṇavapucchā* in the *Suttanipāta*,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 2014, 44, online edition (print edition: 2016, pp. 377–391), Springer.
- Tomita 2012: Mariko Tomita, “Suttas on *Nibbāna* in Early Buddhism with Special Reference to *Abhinibbuta* Compounds and *Parinibbuta*” [Nehan no Shoso to Shoki Bukkyo Kyoten — *Abhinibbuta* Fukugogo to *Parinibbuta* wo fukumu Kyoten ni tsuite (in Japanese)], *Nihon Bukkyo Gakkai Nenpo (The Journal of the Nippon Buddhist Research Association)*, 2012, 77, pp. 1–27.
- Tomita 2008: Mariko Tomita, “*Nibbāna* Described in the *Vaṅṅīsasutta* of the *Suttanipāta*” [*Suttanipāta Vaṅṅīsasutta* ni okeru Nehan ni tsuite (in Japanese)], *Machikaneyamaronso*, 2008, Vol. 42; Philosophy, pp. 49–66.
- Tsuji 1980: Naoshiro Tsuji, *Bhagavadgītā*, Kodansha, 1980.
- Wynne 2007: Alexander Wynne, *The Origin of Buddhist Meditation*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2007.

(Visiting Fellow of the Graduate School of Humanities)



Appendix: List of nibbāna-related words in Sn Timing (Life or End) ✓ : explicit; — — both or inexplicit; ( ) indirect

Ch.	Sutta	Sutta title Verse no.	Nibbāna-related words	Spoken by	Context	Timing of nibbāna		No kilesa
						Life	End	
<b>The oldest stratum (verse)</b>								
4	3	Duṭṭhaṭṭhakasutta						
		Sn 783-a	abhinibbutatto	No mention	Life	△		
4	7	Tissametteyyasuttam						
		Sn 822-d	nibbānasantike	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	
4	14	Tuvāṭakasutta						
		Sn 915-c	nibbāti	Inquirer	Life	—	—	
		Sn 917-d	nibbuti	Bhagavā	Life	(✓)		
		Sn 933-c	nibbutiṃ (definition)	Bhagavā	Life	(✓)		
4	15	Attadaṇḍasutta						
		Sn 940-e	nibbānam attano	Bhagavā		—	—	
		Sn 942-d	nibbānamanaso	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	
5	3	Tissametteyyamānavapucchā						
		Sn 1041-c	nibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
5	6	Dhotakamānavapucchā						
		Sn 1061-d	nibbānam attano	Dhotaka		—	—	
		Sn 1062-d	nibbānam attano	Bhagavā		—	—	
5	9	Hemakamānavapucchā						
		Sn 1086-d	nibbānapadam	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	✓
		Sn 1087-b	diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
5	11	Kappamānavapucchā						
		Sn 1094-c	nibbānam (definition)	Bhagavā		—	—	
		Sn 1095-b	diṭṭhadhammābhinibbutā	Bhagavā	Life	✓		
5	14	Udayamānavapucchā						
		Sn 1108-d	nibbānam	Udaya	Life	—	—	
		Sn 1109-d	nibbānam (definition)	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	✓
<b>The younger strata (verse, prose)</b>								
1	2	Dhaniya						
		Sn 19-c	nibbuto*	Bhagavā	Life	(✓)		
1	5	Cunda						
		Sn 86-b	nibbānābhirato	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	✓
1	10	Ālavaka	(with prose)					
		Sn 186-b	nibbānapattiyā	Buddha	Life	—	—	
1	11	Vijaya						
		Sn 204-d	nibbāna-padam (Be: nibbānam padamaccutam)	Buddha		—	—	✓
2	1	Ratana	Buddha, Dhamma, Saṃgha	unknown				
		Sn 228-d	nibbutiṃ (parallel: Ja III p. 523)		Life	—	—	
		Sn 233-d	nibbānagāmiṃ			—	—	
		Sn 235-d	nibbantī*		Life	✓		✓

Own nothing	No take in	Island	Under-standing	No birth and death	Notes	Nidd		Comm.	
						Life	End	Life	End
					santo, bhikkhu	✓		✓	
					ussadā n'atthi				
					Learn viveka.	✓			
	✓				viveka, santipada	—	—	(✓)	
	(✓)				Sn 919: upasanta	✓			
	(✓)				= santi	✓		✓	
					sikkhe	✓		(✓)	
						—	—	(✓)	
					tassa no santi iñjitā	✓		✓	
					sikkhe	✓		✓	
						✓			
			✓		tiṇṇā loke visattikan	✓		✓	
					aññāya, upasantā				
✓	✓	✓		✓		—	—		
			✓	✓**	** overcame death during lifetime				
					aññāya [ger.]				
					loka			(✓)	
					tañhāya vippahānena			(✓)	
					gini *metaphor Gotama			✓	
					tiṇṇakathamkatho			✓	
					visallo, anānugiddho				
			✓		labhate paññaṃ			✓	
			✓	✓	idha; ajjhagā [aor.], paññānavā			✓	
					chandarāgaviratto; amataṃ santiṃ				
				✓	bhuñjamānā			✓	
					amata				
					Sn 225: Gotama = amata				
					leading to nibbāna				
				(✓)**	*Metaphor of an extinguished fire				✓

Ch.	Sutta	Sutta title	Nibbāna-related words	Spoken by	Context	Timing of nibbāna		No kilesa
						Life	End	
		<b>Verse no.</b>						
2	4	Mahāmaṅgala (with prose)						
		Sn 267-c	nibbānasacchikiriyā	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	
2	12	Vaṅḡisa	(with prose)					
		p. 59 prose	aciraparinibbuto	prose			✓	
		p. 59	parinibbuto	Inquirer	End		✓	
		p. 59	parinibbuto	Inquirer	End		✓	
		p. 60	parinibbuto	Inquirer	End		✓	
		p. 60	parinibbuto	Inquirer	End		✓	
		Sn 343-d	abhinibbutatto	Inquirer	Life	△		
		Sn 346-b	parinibbutaṃ	Inquirer	End		✓	
		Sn 354-c	nibbāyi	Inquirer	End		✓	
2	13	Sammāparibbājanīya						
		Sn 359-b	parinibbutaṃ	Inquirer	Life	✓		✓
		365-c	nibbānapadābhīpatthayāno	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	
		370-c	parinibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
3	3	Subhāsita	(with prose)					
		454-b	nibbānapattiyā	Inquirer		—	—	
3	4	Sundarikabhāradvāja (with prose)						
		456-b	abhinibbutatto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		
		467-c	parinibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
		469-c	abhinibbutatto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
3	6	Sabhiya	(with prose)					
		514-b	parinibbānagato	Bhagavā	Life	—	—	✓
3	8	Salla						
		591-b	parinibbaye*	No mention	Life	—	—	
		593-d	nibbuto	No mention	Life	(✓)		(✓)
3	9	Vāsetṭha	(with prose)					
		630-b	nibbutaṃ	Bhagavā	Life	✓		
		638-e	nibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		
3	11	Nālaka						
		707-d	nibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	△		
3	12	Dvayatānupassanā	(with prose)					
		Sn 735-d	parinibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
		Sn 737-d	parinibbutā	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
		Sn 739-f	parinibbuto	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
		Sn 758-a	nibbānaṃ	Bhagavā		—	—	
		Sn 758-d	parinibbutā	Bhagavā	Life	✓		✓
		Sn 765-d	parinibbanti	Bhagavā	Life	✓		

Own nothing	No take in	Island	Under-standing	No birth and death	Notes	Comm.	
						Life	End
						✓	
							✓
							✓
							✓
							✓
					nāto yasassī	✓	
					[aor.] so ādu saupādiseso		✓
			✓	✓ **	about Gotama Buddha	✓	
					nibbānapada		✓
	✓				āsavakhīno	✓	
					to attain nibbāna	—	—
	(✓)				about Gotama Buddha	✓	
			✓	(✓)	kāme hitvā	✓	
					vedī jātimaraṇassa antaṃ		
					tathāgata		
				✓	vitṭṇakaṃkho	✓	
					khīṇapunabbhavo		
					saraṇam ādittaṃ vāriṇā		
					*Metaphor of an extinguished fire		
	✓				anādānaṃ	✓	
	✓			✓ **	anupādāya	✓	
					jhāyī/samsāra-m-oham accagā		
					Sn 620; 645: akiñcanaṃ anādānaṃ		
						✓	
					viññānūpasamā, nicchāto	✓	
			✓		upasame ratā, aññāya	✓	
			✓		ñatvāna, vedanānaṃ khayā,		
					nicchāto		
					amosadhammaṃ		
			✓		tad ariyā saccato vidū		
					saccābhisamayā nicchātā		
	✓		✓		aññāya, anāsavā	—	—

## Summary

Philological Study on *Nibbāna*-related Words  
in the *Suttanipāta* and Its Commentary *Paramatthajotikā*

Mariko TOMITA

In this paper, I examine philologically all the *nibbāna*-related words in the *Suttanipāta* (Sn), a unique and famous Pāli *sutta* that contains the oldest stratum of the Pāli Canon, and compare my findings with the commentary *Paramatthajotikā* (Pj). I focus on whether each *nibbāna*-related word about the state of a person (1) implies *nibbāna* in the present life, (2) implies *nibbāna* at and after the end of life, or (3) does not make clear the timing of *nibbāna*. By so doing, I find that for many instances of *nibbāna*-related words in Sn, (3) the timing of *nibbāna* is unclear. This suggests a new understanding that the Sn author, unlike the Pj author, often times does not intend to differentiate between (1) *nibbāna* in the present life and (2) *nibbāna* at and after the end of life. Nevertheless, it appears that while people are mostly concerned with the afterlife and connect liberation to the end of life, Sn also emphasizes that *nibbāna* can be attained during one's lifetime. By the time of Pj, the two types of *nibbāna* were already the established theory on *nibbāna*, and the text reflects orthodox Theravada ideas on the subject that are later developments.