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BUDDHIST MOTIVATION TO SUPPORT IHL, FROM CONCERN TO MINIMISE HARMS INFLICTED BY MILITARY ACTION TO BOTH THOSE WHO SUFFER THEM AND THOSE WHO INFLICT THEM

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on how Buddhist ethics contains ideas and principles that would urge those in a combat situation to minimise the harm they do to others, within the requirements of their military goal. This international humanitarian law principle is in line with both compassion for others and a concern to limit the bad karmic results to the combatant of their intentional killing and maiming. The motive for an act of killing can worsen or lessen its karmic results, and non-combat actions such as helping the wounded can generate good karmic results which can dilute, though not cancel, the bad karma of killing. Harm to both humans and non-humans is to be avoided wherever possible, but killing a human is worse than killing an animal. The *Mahāvamsa* passage on combatants killed by King Dutthagāmaṇi's army as mostly being less than human, such that killing them produced little or no bad karma, is a totally implausible statement to put in the mouths of monks whom the text says were *Arahats*, spiritually enlightened ones.

KEYWORDS animals and humans; compassion; killing; karmic results; intention; motive; *Mahāvamsa*; *Vinaya*; *Yodhājīva Sutta*; international humanitarian law

Buddhism and international humanitarian law (IHL)¹

Given that a key principle of Buddhism is non-violence, and that violence – deliberately killing or injuring – is seen to bring bad karmic results to the perpetrator of it, then Buddhist combatants surely have a strong motive to limit the effects of their military violence in accord with IHL principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. Both Buddhism and IHL aim to minimise harm and suffering, and while armed conflict will of course bring some of these, both Buddhist principles and IHL surely agree: the less, the better. This is strongly illustrated, for example, by a story of the Buddha-admiring god Sakka, who in warring conflict with the *asura* demi-gods, seeks to avoid his passing chariots even accidentally killing birds in their nests (S.I.224).²

While IHL spells out the specifics, which are then codified by states, Buddhism emphasises broader ethical principles, and a motivational framework. That said, there is a broad functional parallel between the life of a member of the armed forces and the life of a monk. Both live a disciplined life whose members are committed to the shared goals of their organisation. In the life of a monk, the general ethical principles of Buddhism are elaborated, extended and codified in detail. For a member of the armed forces, there are the general rules of military discipline, but in addition, knowledge of, training in and requirement to follow the rules of IHL support the relevant ethical norms that prevent 'might should be rightly exercised' from becoming 'might is right'.

Moreover, for Buddhism, whether one is a lay person living by the five precepts or a monastic living by over 200, practice includes regular recitation of the precepts, so as to bring them actively to mind with a positive resolve to follow them. This same practice may also be helpful with IHL rules, at least for Buddhists used to chanting precepts. At least for Theravāda Buddhism, it is better to know and seek to follow an ethical principle, even when one sometimes lapses from adhering to it, than to act badly without even trying not to. Some other schools, though, held that as precept-taking is a serious matter, it is better not to take a particular precept until one thinks one will be able to keep it (Harvey 2000, 82–87). One can certainly recognise that the positive resolve of precept-taking is good in itself and also makes bad behaviour less likely. The same surely applies to IHL rules. Alertness to rules and repercussions if they are broken helps guard behavioural standards from gradually deteriorating in an organisation. As expressed in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)'s *The Roots of Restraint in War* (2018, 9):

An exclusive focus on the law is not as effective at influencing behaviour as a combination of the law and the values underpinning it. Linking the law to local norms and values gives it greater traction. The role of law is vital in setting standards, but encouraging individuals to internalize the values it represents through socialization is a more durable way of promoting restraint.

That said, armed forces and their governments should not seek to protect their reputations by *hiding* any IHL contraventions done by them. Transparency in admitting fault is actually a better way to protect an organisation's reputation, as when hidden faults become known, the previous hiding of them adds to the loss of reputation. One can see this, for example, in religious organisations that have tried to hide instances of sexual wrongdoing amongst their clergy, which then later became publicly known.

Buddhism and killing

Buddhist members of the armed forces are always open to the possibility that they will kill or injure one or more human beings, or support others in doing so. As Buddhists, the first of the five ethical precepts is: 'I undertake the training-precept (*sikkhā-padam*) to abstain from striking down (*atipātā*) living beings (*pāṇā*; literally "breathers")' (Khp.1), which is based on the description of how a person accomplished in ethical discipline (*sīla*) behaves (e.g. A. IV.284). Vibh-a.381 explains 'from striking down a living being' as 'from destruction of a living being; "from killing" is the meaning'. As otherwise expressed:

Abandoning the striking down of living beings, he abstains from this; without stick or sword, scrupulous, compassionate, trembling for the welfare of all living beings. (M.I.345; cf. D.I.4)

One should not kill (*na hāne*) a living being ... (A.I.214 and 254)

Laying aside violence (*daṇḍam*) in respect of all beings, towards those in the world both firm and frail, he should not kill (*na hane*) living beings, or cause to kill, or approve of others killing (*hanatam*). (Sn.394)

The first precept is a commitment to avoid deliberate killing of any human or animal, which is a fundamental principle that should guide all behaviour. Lapses will occur, but a person should recognise and acknowledge these as lapses, while re-affirming their commitment to the precept. Injuring but not killing a being is clearly against the spirit of the precept, but does not fully break it – though a verse form of the precept at A.III.213 expresses it simply in terms of non-injury: 'To the utmost of one's ability, one should not injure living beings (*na himse pāṇa-bhūtāni*) ...'. The first precept is broken even if a being is killed by someone else being ordered by one to do this, when both the orderer and the agent break the precept, unless the agent mistakenly kills a being other than the intended one, when only he or she is responsible (Khp-a.29–30). Overall, the first precept expresses the value of non-injury: *ahimsā* in Sanskrit, *avihimsā* in Pali (M.III.73), with the resolve for this being an aspect of right resolve, the second factor of the Noble Eight-factored Path.

Breaking the first precept is seen to naturally lead to unpleasant results due to the ripening of karma:

Monks, killing living beings, if practised, cultivated, and repeated, leads to the hells, leads to an animal womb, leads to the world of ghosts. The slightest karmic result of killing living beings leads to shortness of life as a human being. (A.IV.247)

Some man or woman kills living beings and is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings. Because of performing and undertaking such action, on the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, a state of affliction, hell. . . . [or] wherever he is reborn, he is short-lived. (M.III.203).

Hence, killing in war is clearly seen as having bad karmic consequences. Once the Buddha was asked by a person who made his living as a warrior (*yodhājīva*) – it is unclear whether this means a professional soldier or a mercenary – whether one such as him who dies in battle is reborn in a special heaven. In response, the Buddha is silent, but when the man twice more repeats the question, he explains that such a person is actually reborn in a hell or as an animal, especially insofar as he dies with his mind in a misdirected state, wishing the death of others:

When, headman, a *yodhājīva* is one who strives and exerts himself in battle, his mind is already low, depraved and misdirected by the thought: ‘Let these beings be slain, slaughtered, annihilated, destroyed and exterminated’. If others then slay him and finish him off while he is striving and exerting himself in battle, then, with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the ‘Battle-Slain Hell’.³

The passage continues on the *view* that a warrior is reborn in the heaven of the battle-slain *devas* after dying with such a ‘mind . . . depraved and misdirected by the thought . . .’. Here, the Buddha says that holding such a wrong view itself leads to being reborn in hell or as an animal. Michael Jerryson (2018, 466) reads this as meaning that ‘Yodhājīva is cautioned to avoid debased thought at the time of death but not to avoid the act of killing’. This is clearly a misreading, as the Buddha is replying to the question of whether a warrior who dies in battle is reborn in a heaven. The question is not, as such, about his state of mind when dying. That said, it makes sense to say that the state of mind at death will have *some* effect on the nature of the entailed bad rebirth.

Buddhist-related concern at the havoc caused by war is shown in two examples (cf. Gethin 2007, 74–78). The Indian emperor Asoka (268–239 BCE) is widely revered by Buddhists as a great exemplar of Buddhist social ethics. In the early part of his reign, prior to becoming a committed Buddhist, he had conquered the Kalinga region, but his Kalinga Rock Edict⁴ expressed horror at the carnage that this had caused. In ancient Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) it is said that the Buddhist King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi (Sinhala Duṭugāmuṇu, 101–77 BCE), after defeating a South Indian Tamil ruler in the north of the Island, expressed distressed concern at having caused the deaths of a ‘very large number/ complete army’ (*akkhohiṇī*) (*Mahāvamsa* ch. XXV.103, 108; see Geiger 1912).

The value of human life, and the degree to which this is variable

In war, abuses of IHL are more likely to occur if the ‘enemy’ is seen as radically *different* from one, an alien ‘other’ with no shared common human interests, and indeed as less than human. This can contribute to ‘moral disengagement’, as described in the ICRC’s *The Roots of Behaviour in War* (2004, 10):

Whether insidiously or directly, the enemy is demonized and considered as vermin. And vermin have to be exterminated. Sometimes, the enemy is compared with a disease which needs to be eradicated. Once politicians, journalists, scientists, judges and intellectuals equate the enemy with vermin or viruses, combatants find it easier not only to attack them but also to rationalize the most extreme kinds of behaviour and to convince themselves that they are justified and necessary.

As there is a minority theme in Buddhist history which seems to echo such an idea, it needs examining and critically exploring. The classic expression of it again relates to King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi.⁵ In response to his above concern, the *Mahāvamsa*, a late fifth-century CE chronicle of Ceylon claims (XXV.109–111) that eight enlightened monks (*Arahats*) fly through the air to reassure the king that:

That deed presents no obstacle on your path to heaven. You caused the death of just one and a half people [*manujā*], O king. One had taken the refuges [i.e. were Buddhist], the other the Five Precepts as well. The rest were wicked men of wrong view [*micchādittḥī ca dussilā*] who died like (or: as considered as) beasts [*pasu⁶-samā*]. You will in many ways illuminate the Buddha’s teaching, so stop worrying. (Transl. Gombrich 2006, 141, with Pali added⁷)

This was written many centuries after the events it purports to describe, at a time of renewed threat from South India; indeed, H. L. Seneviratne (1999, 21) says, ‘the entire story is probably fictional’, while Rupert Gethin describes it as ‘largely legendary’ (2007, 75). The surprising nature of the claim, put in the mouth of supposed *Arahats* – saints who are incapable of lying⁸ – strongly indicates that if this was said, it was *not* by any *Arahat*. Gethin comments on these ‘*Arahats*’, or rather on Mahānāma, the text’s author, ‘How did these ... come to get their Buddhism so wrong?’ (2007, 63 and 76–77). Now, it would have been appropriate for King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi to regret the deaths he and his army had caused, but the actual issue here is this surprising claim: that most of the people killed were not *really*, or not *fully*, human, so that there was little problem in killing them. True, the *Mahā-kammavibhaṅga Sutta* says that one who does bad action *may* still be reborn in a heaven in their next life, before their bad karma later catches up with them (M.III.209–215; Harvey 2000, 24–25). Nevertheless, other authoritative Buddhist texts strongly suggest that it is always worse to kill a human than to kill an animal – and even killing an animal has bad karmic consequences.

The first lay precept covers killing a human or an animal: it is against the intentional killing of any ‘breather’ or living being, but in the monastic code a monk or nun who deliberately kills a human is ‘defeated’ in the monastic life (Vin.III.73), whereas killing an animal, down to an ant, is a lesser offence (Vin. IV.124–125). Any human, belonging to any population, must have the past good karma to have been reborn a human, whereas an animal rebirth is a lower one, based on less good past karma. Moreover, being born as a human is a rare and precious opportunity for spiritual improvement. To gain a human or divine rebirth, or have two in a row, is said to be rare (S.V.75–76; cf. Dhṛ.182). As against the number of beings born in other realms, those reborn as humans are like a pinch of sand compared to the size of the Earth (S. II.263), or the number of India’s pleasant groves compared to its rough terrain (A.I.35). The chance for a being in a hell to be reborn as a human is less than that of a blind turtle, surfacing once a century, to happen to put its head through a ring moved by the winds across the surface of the sea (M.II.169; Bca. IV.20). Tibetan Buddhists thus talk of having attained a ‘precious human rebirth’ (Guenther 1959, 14–21); a marvellous opportunity for spiritual growth that should be used wisely and respected in others.

That said, some early schools other than the Theravāda seem to have accepted that, sometimes, killing an animal could be worse than killing a human. Ann Heirman (2020, especially 31–34) discusses the views of Chinese *vinaya* master Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), who drew on some Indian *vinaya* commentaries and treatises. In his discussion on killing (T40 no. 1804, 49a9–14), Daoxuan cites the *Lü ershieh mingliao lun*⁹ a *vinaya* commentary by the Indian monk *Buddhatrāta (?–?), a member of the Sāmmītiya school:

As mentioned in the *Mingliao lun* ... [i]f one acts intentionally, one experiences a heavy karmic effect. As this text explains, since there is no shame and not even a beginning of repentance, this is a non-benevolent state of mind. Therefore, the *Chengshi lun* [T32 no. 1646, 291a11–13] says that killing an ant with an evil state of mind is worse than killing a person with a compassionate state of mind. Since the karmic effect will be heavy, one certainly receives retribution, even if one expiates the *pācittika* offence¹⁰ ... (cited by Heirman 2020, 32)

Daoxuan (T40 no. 1804, 92c22–24) himself cites the *Chengshi lun* (T32 no. 1646, 318c12–14), the translation of the **Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* compiled by the Indian monk Harivarman in the middle of the third century CE:

As said in the *Ṣaṭpādābhidharma* [*liu zu pitan* 六足毘曇] texts [of the Sarvāstivāda *abhidharma*] killing a perverted person is a lighter [offence] than killing an insect or an ant. The reason for this is that such a person is polluting the world and causing a lot of damage.

Daoxuan ‘concludes that killing even an ant with evil intent (*hai xin* 害心) is worse than killing a human being with compassion (*ci xin* 慈心)’ (Heirman 2020, 32). The above quote seems to indicate that by killing with compassion,

Daoxuan probably had in mind the killing of an *evil* human being. For him, irrespective of the lesser *vinaya* offence, the karmic consequences of intentionally killing even an ant are severe. As to whether they can be more severe than killing a bad person, Heirman says, ‘in this instance he goes very far, and I am not so sure that if one would confront him with what he is actually saying, he would go as far. On the other hand, intention (including careless behaviour) is primordial’ (Heirman 2020, 32).

That said, the Mahāyāna *Mahā-parinirvāṇa Sūtra* (composed around the fourth century CE in India or Central Asia) explicitly says: ‘Sentient beings possess the five good roots such as faith, but the *icchāntika* has eternally severed those roots. Thus, while it is a fault to kill an ant, it is not a fault to kill an *icchāntika*’ (Taishō 1, 562b). The idea of an *icchāntika* is that of a person who is an evil-doer incapable of salvation: one who ‘slanders the true *Dharma*’ repeatedly and without any signs of remorse; or breaks some of the most serious monastic rules, entailing defeat; or does one of the five deadly actions, such as killing a parent, without contrition (Taishō 374, xvi, 459a–460b, as cited in Demiéville 1957, 368; Welch 1972, 281).

That it is worse to kill an ant than a serious evil-doer is not found in the Pali Canon, but it is agreed amongst the schools that it is worse to kill some humans than to kill others. The most heinous actions, which are seen to definitely lead to hell in one’s next rebirth, include intentionally killing one’s mother, father or an *Arahat* (Vibh.378, M-a.IV.109–110). This implies that it is very bad to harm those one should have positive regard for, or who are of great ethical and spiritual worth.¹¹ More generally, the great Theravāda commentator Buddhaghosa (fifth century CE) says on the first precept:

‘Striking down of a living being’ is, as regards a living being that one perceives as living, the will to kill it (*vadha-cetanā*), expressed through body or speech, occasioning an attack which cuts off its life-faculty. That action, in regard to those without good qualities (*guṇa-*) – animals etc. – is of lesser fault (*appa-sāvajjo*) when they are small, greater fault when they have a large physical frame. Why? Because of the greater effort involved. Where the effort is the same, (it is greater) because of the object (*vatthu-*) (of the act) being greater. *In regard to those with good qualities – humans etc. – the action is of lesser fault when they are of few good qualities, greater fault when they are of many good qualities. But when size or good qualities are equal, the fault of the action is lesser due to the (relative) mildness of the mental defilements and of the attack, and greater due to their intensity.* Five factors are involved: a living being, the actual perceiving of a living being, a thought of killing, the attack, and death as a result of it. (M-a. I.198, cf. Khp-a.28–9 and As.97; and see Gethin 2004, 71–2)

Note, for later, that this also sees the state of mind of a killer as affecting the degree of unwholesomeness of the act of killing, and the intensity of the action.

That it is worse to kill a human than an animal, and a more virtuous human than a less virtuous one, seems to be a mirror image of the *sutta* idea there is more good karma in giving to a human than an animal, and to a more

virtuous human than a less virtuous one. The *Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga Sutta*, at M. III.255, gives a list of beings and the relative amount of good karma that comes from giving to them: (a) to an animal, giving repays $\times 100$ (in terms of various good qualities and benefits); (b) to an ordinary person (*puthujjana*)¹² who is unvirtuous, $\times 1000$; to a virtuous ordinary person, 100×1000 ; to a non-Buddhist who is free from lust for sense-pleasures, $\times 100,000 \times 100,000$; to one practising for realisation of the fruit that is stream-entry, the result is incalculable, immeasurable, with this being even greater for the other kinds of spiritually noble persons, up to the *Arahat*. This implies that the bad karma of harming such beings might vary on a similar scale.

Indeed, this implication is spelled out in the *Vibhaṅga* commentary (Vibh-a.382–383). This says that the fault (*vajja*) in an act of killing an animal increases based on the size of the animal, giving as examples a small ant, large ant, small bird, large bird, iguana, hare, deer, ox, horse and elephant. It is worse again to kill a human, with the fault increasing in this order: one of bad conduct (*dussīla*); one of 'cattle-like virtue (*gorūpa-sīlaka*), which the sub-commentary explains as 'naturally good' (*pakati-bhaddo*), perhaps meaning one whose virtuous behaviour comes from dull, unthinking routine; one who has gone for refuge to the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha; one who keeps the five precepts; a novice; an ordinary (*puthujjana*-) monk; a Stream-enterer; a Once-returner; a Non-returner; an *Arahant*. This is echoed in the twelfth-century *Upāsaka-janālaṅkāra* (Upj.206) of Ānanda, which then adds, 'However, all (types of) killing living beings entails a great fault (*pāṇātipāto pi mahā-sāvajjo va*)'. The text later refers to the story (Dhp-a.III.41–42) of woman reborn in a low hell due to drowning a dog (Upj.209).

So in a war situation, while it is appropriate to avoid killing animals if this can be avoided, it is even more important to avoid, or at least minimise, killing humans. It is of course hard to know of the level of virtue among 'enemies', but any population will certainly include people of developed virtue. And the Theravāda, at least, holds that one does not need to *know* a person is more virtuous for it to be worse to kill them (see note 11). So if one is taken in by wrong speech in the form of divisive false smears and propaganda about the 'evil' enemy community – nowadays aided by such as Facebook – this is no excuse. The more virtuous, though, will certainly be found among medical staff dedicated to helping others, while combatants are allied to the non-virtue of killing, and so in that respect are less virtuous. Children, of course, are generally more innocent than adults. Verses that imply violence towards the defenceless is particularly bad are:

He who does harm with violence to non-violent innocent people, goes very soon indeed to one of these ten states: sharp pain, or disaster, bodily injury, serious illness, or derangement of mind, trouble from the king, or grave charges, loss of relatives, or loss of wealth, or houses destroyed by ravaging fire; upon dissolution of the body that ignorant man is born in hell. (Dhp.137–140)

As regards those who need medical attention and care, the Buddha said, 'whoever wishes to take care of me should take care of the sick' (Vin.I.301).

Besides the level of virtue, there is also the aspect of human connection and returning kindnesses. People of a different nation, ethnic group, culture and/or religion may be seen as in some ways 'other' or 'alien'; yet Buddhist teachings hold that, due to the countless past lives that we have all had, it is difficult to find a person (or animal) that in some past life has not been a close relative or friend and been very good to one (S.II.189–190). And of course, a person may in future be reborn as a member of the community he or she is currently fighting.

In IHL, while there is no reference to it being worse to kill or harm *more virtuous* people, its rules do *not* accept the targeting of either wounded or captured combatants, medical staff or civilians not directly participating in hostilities, but *do* tolerate – or at least are reconciled to – the targeting of able-bodied, non-surrendering enemy combatants and civilians directly participating in hostilities.¹³ This might be seen to imply that IHL sees the killing and disablement of the former as worse than the killing and disablement of the latter. So Buddhist concerns, though sometimes articulated based on differing principles, seem to align with the IHL principle of *distinction*.

Minimising harm to others and oneself in a combat situation

For a combatant in a situation of armed conflict, some breaking of the first Buddhist precept is likely. But the precept should nevertheless be lived up to as far, and as often, as possible. This accords with the IHL principles of: *military necessity* – the parties to an armed conflict may only use 'that degree and kind of force required to achieve the legitimate purpose of a conflict';¹⁴ *proportionality* – 'a military objective may be attacked only after [first concluding] that civilian losses are not expected to outweigh the military advantage foreseen';¹⁵ and *precautions* – 'a party to an armed conflict must take constant care to spare civilians or civilian objects when carrying out military operations'.¹⁶ This will mean that there is (1) minimum death and injury inflicted, and (2) minimum karmic harm to the precept-breaking combatant.

Buddhist ethics sees intentionally harming others as bringing harm to oneself, through the karmic results of the action. Hence it is said that one should reflect before (as well as during and after) a bodily action:

Would this action that I wish to do with the body lead to my own affliction (-*attabyābādḥāya*), or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences (*dukkhudraya*-), with painful ripening (*dukkhavipāka*-)? (*Ambalattṭhikārāhulovāda Sutta*, M.I.415)

If so, such an action is of the kind to avoid, due to the physical harm or mental hurt to others, and the psycho-ethical harm to oneself. Hence it is said that being mindful helps one take true care of oneself in a way that also cares for others. The cultivation of wholesome states of mind in oneself means that one treats others better; and by patient acceptance, harmlessness and kindness and compassion to others, while this directly benefits them, it also benefits oneself (S.V.169).

Knowledge of and alertness to IHL principles, and their emphasis within the relevant armed force, will be vital in relation to reducing harm to others. But the degree to which IHL norms affect the actual behaviour of a Buddhist combatant will be enhanced by their commitment to and mindful bearing in mind Buddhist ethical norms, and also that karmic self-harm will increase with the degree to which these are broken. While being mindful of values and norms is an individual practice, it can certainly be enhanced by the example of those one associates with. Relevant here is the role of socialisation. As the ICRC's *The Roots of Restraint in War* (2018, 25) says:

There are three types of socialization identified that are of interest to us here. The first (Type 0) involves no internalization of norms, just temporary norm adoption following instrumental calculations of punishment or reward. The other two types involve differing degrees of internalization: learning and following a norm in order to conform to group expectations and behaviour (Type 1); and fully internalizing the norm, so that it becomes part of the individual's identity – the 'right thing to do' (Type 2).

Here it is worth reflecting on a key emphasis in Asanga Tilakaratne's article in this volume. He points out that the ethics of the monastic and lay Nirvana-seeker has no place for any kind of violence and killing, but that there is some place for limited violence within the ethics of the general Buddhist laity, who seek a happier state within *samsāra*, the conditioned realm of rebirths. In fact, a Buddhist whose focus is on happier future experiences in *samsāra* has a very strong motive, if a combatant, to avoid performing the evil actions involved in breaking IHL principles, as these will bring bad karmic results. The kinds of actions that violate IHL principles will be both unskillful/unwholesome (*akusala*) and 'demeritorious' (*apuñña*), evil (*pāpa*).

While I would not personally agree with Tilakaratne that 'meritorious' (*puñña*) actions are generally *akusala*/unskillful/unwholesome, I recognise that the attitude people may hold in seeking to do some *puñña* actions can have some *akusala* elements, e.g. 'I am going to give so that I can benefit from the good karmic results of this act'. Ironically, though, the lower the motive for a good action, the less good karma will come from it (A.IV.60–63; Harvey 2000, 19–21). Similarly, avoiding a bad action that breaks IHL out of compassion is a higher motive than doing so simply to avoid the bad karmic results of carrying it out, but it is a motivational factor that is surely relevant to many in a Buddhist context.

Minimising death and injury to the 'enemy'

Anger and fear are key states of mind that might make a combatant use more lethal force than is necessary, such as when a wounded enemy is killed or otherwise mistreated, or when non-combatants who directly or indirectly support them are harmed. Here, the calm and mental discipline that Buddhist practices enhance can play a beneficial role. Buddhism is very critical of anger and hatred, and we see above that Buddhaghosa says 'the fault of the action is lesser due to the (relative) mildness of the mental defilements and of the attack, and greater due to their intensity'.

Being more mindful aids self-discipline and not being carried away by one's emotions, and also aids both alertness and concentration. These qualities should help in avoiding or reducing 'collateral damage' to non-combatants through carelessness in targeting, which might arise due to a willingness to rely on poor intelligence, or being too gung-ho. Good concentration can aid precise targeting – though *during* the firing of a weapon aimed at killing or injuring, it will be unmindful *wrong* concentration¹⁷ – while mindfulness should aid in bearing in mind IHL norms and that certain people should *not* be targeted.

Mental alertness may also bring the benefit of thinking of clever stratagems for gaining a military objective with minimum loss of life on both sides. The (*Mahā*)-*Ummagga Jātaka*¹⁸ has the Buddha in a past life, as the advisor to a king, using spies, skilful devices and even deceptions to ensure that an impending armed conflict is avoided.

Minimising karmic harm to combatants themselves

As regards minimising karmic harm to the combatant, the associated mental state should be such as to minimise unwholesome, 'demeritorious' (*apuñña*) qualities, such as anger/hatred. The karmic harm from an action such as killing is also said to be lesser for someone with an overall well-developed moral and mental discipline than for a person in whom these are less developed. At A. I.249–250 (Threes, *sutta* 100, 'A Lump of Salt'), the Buddha says that, for a person whose mindfulness of the body,¹⁹ ethical discipline (*sīla*), heart/mind (*citta*) and wisdom (*paññā*) are undeveloped, a small evil deed may lead to rebirth in a hell, just as a pinch of salt in a cup of water makes it undrinkable. For a person with developed mindfulness of the body, ethical discipline, heart/mind and wisdom, though, the same action will produce its karmic results in the present life, with little, if any, in a future life, just as a pinch of salt does not make the River Ganges undrinkable. This seems to imply that, in a spiritually developed person, a small moral slip will have less effect, as it will be 'diluted' by his or her generally moral nature. For a spiritually undeveloped person, described here as 'limited and small-minded (*paritta appātumo*), he

dwells in suffering', the same act has a greater impact. It 'flavours' a person's character more, so to speak, setting up greater reverberations within it, in tune with other such reverberations. The good person suffers less from his or her bad action, though as most of the karmic results come in *this* life for him or her, this may not be immediately apparent. Such this-life results may perhaps include painful regret.

While this *sutta* passage concerns a small bad action, not one such as killing in war, the implication is that having a good character generally lessens the karmic effect of a precept-breaking action. So one in the armed forces should aim to be well developed in these qualities, so that the bad karma of any killing or wounding that they do will be relatively diluted, though not cancelled, by the good karma of their good qualities. Such good qualities can of course be cultivated as part of military life. This certainly includes IHL-related actions such as ensuring care for wounded combatants and non-combatants, from either side, and ensuring that they have food and shelter. Other such actions are peacekeeping activities, which may include preventing members of one ethnic group attacking members of another, so as to protect one group from physical harm and the other from generating bad karma by harming them. Other such actions are delivering help at times of disasters, voluntary charitable activities and generosity to the Saṅgha. Also, letting go of hatred, anger and distorted views about former enemies will be of benefit both for social harmony and inner calm.

The roots of unwholesome action are said in Buddhism to be greed, hatred and delusion (M.I.47). One expression of delusion is adherence to a wrong view, such as that there is nothing wrong with killing, and that an enemy is not to be respected as a human being with similar concerns and interests to oneself. This means that a combatant who acts from such a view will be likely not only to bring more harm to others, and break IHL, but also to generate more karmic harm to himself. To denigrate the humanity of an 'enemy' ignores that any human must have a good karmic past to have been reborn a human.

The basis of Buddhist ethics is a version of the golden rule: do not inflict on another being what you would not want done to you (*Veḷudvāreyyā Sutta*, S. V.353–356). Thus it is wrong to dismiss or completely override the interests of someone else. Buddhist precepts do get broken by Buddhists, but this should always be acknowledged by the precept-breaker, and not minimised as unimportant. There is a need to remain *mindful* of them, to bear them in mind. To deny that others have interests that should be respected as far as possible is delusion and wrong view.

At *Milindapañha* 84, it is said that if an evil action is done 'unknowingly (*ajānato*)', it has a worse karmic effect than if it is done 'knowingly'. This is illustrated by saying that a person taking hold of a red-hot iron ball is more severely burnt if he does so unknowingly. This suggests that an evil action – such as killing (Mil.158) – is worse if it is done without restraint or compunction. This will be the case if an action is not seen as at all wrong, as there will be no

holding back on the volitional force put into the action. The commentary (29) on Mil.158 talks of the 'non-knowing of evil (*pāpa-ajānana-*)'. Such a mode of action can be seen to include indiscriminate attacks and superfluous injury, which are prohibited in IHL. Even when this is done in obedience to an order, this should make no difference, whether in Buddhist ethics or IHL.

The interplay of intentions and motives

The administration of law in courts often refers to motive, in deciding what a person is charged with or guilty of, but also in deciding the degree of penalty. In IHL, considerations of an act's intention are found in the articles of the conventions that deal with what are known as 'grave breaches': violations that are meant to incur criminal penalties. Here, use of the word 'wilful' shows the importance of the perpetrator's mental state (for example Geneva Convention I Art 50, Geneva Convention II Art 51 and Geneva Convention III 130²⁰). Further, motivational factors in the mind of a combatant and/or his/her commander may make an IHL infringement less or more likely to occur.

For Buddhism, the key feature of an action, in terms of its ethical/unethical nature and its consequent karmic results, is its *cetanā*, the volition expressed in the action. 'It is volition (*cetanā*), O monks, that I call karma; having willed (*cetayitvā*), one acts through body, speech or mind' (A.III.415). *Cetanā* includes the motive for which an action is done, but particularly its immediate intention and the related immediate mental impulse which sets it going and sustains it. Note that the *intention* involved in killing may arise from differing *motives*, for example greed for an inheritance or the desire to protect someone else from harm. 'Karma' (Pāli *kamma*, Sanskrit *karma*), literally 'action', is the overall psychological impulse behind an action, that which plants a karmic 'seed' and sets in motion a chain of causes culminating in a karmic fruit. Actions, then, must be intentional if they are to generate karmic fruits: accidentally treading on an insect does not have such an effect, as the Jains believe, though reckless carelessness includes its own kind of bad intention (Harvey 1999, 276–278).

Reckless or negligent behaviour in war (e.g. by failing to take all feasible precautions in setting up an attack) can lead to indiscriminate killing or harming; this would tend to come from delusion and lack of concern for the consequences of one's actions on others and oneself. An uncaring attitude in war can also lead to immense suffering for the civilian population, for example when a commander proceeds with an attack even when it becomes clear that the killing or harming of civilians would be excessive compared to the military advantage gained by striking the target. This would tend to come from attachment to one's own goals and a degree of indifference to the fate of the civilian population. From a Buddhist perspective, repeated negligent indifference would tend to be the worst of these two, but reckless attachment could be worse if it arose from strong delusion.

Actions that are unskillful/unwholesome (*akusala*) are seen as ones that are rooted in greed, hatred/aversion (*dosa*) and/or delusion, and such actions bring unpleasant karmic fruits (M.I.47²¹). Those that are skilful/wholesome (*kusala*) are seen as ones that are rooted in non-greed (generosity, renunciation), non-hatred (kindness, compassion) and/or non-delusion (clarity of mind, wisdom), with such actions bringing pleasant karmic fruits. The karmic effects of an act will thus vary according to the nature of the roots of its volition.

As regards killing, Rupert Gethin comments:

the possibility that an act of killing a living being can be motivated by wholesome (*kusala*) states of mind is simply not allowed in Abhidhamma Buddhist psychology; the intention to kill another being always crucially involves hatred or aversion (Gethin 2004). While certain acts of killing may be manifestations of stronger and more intense instances of anger, hatred or aversion, no act of killing can be entirely free of these. There can be no justification of any act of killing as entirely blameless, as entirely free of the taint of aversion or hatred. In Abhidhamma terms, acts of killing can only ever be justified as more or less *akusala*, never as purely *kusala* ... there is no possibility of killing in war being *kusala*. (Gethin 2007, 70–71)

The karmic results of intentional killing will be worse when the roots are mainly (for example) anger, revenge or deluded prejudice than if there is an associated motive of protecting others. In such cases, the motive of protecting others will have its own, positive fruits, alongside the negative fruits of an act of killing. Indeed, given that a combatant will generate bad karmic result from some of their actions, their *willingness to do this, out of a desire to defend others from harm*, can itself be seen as a positive mental action.

Some Mahāyāna texts actually justify killing a human being on the grounds of compassion in dire circumstances (Harvey 2000, 15–38). The *Upāya-kausalya Sūtra* tells of the Buddha in a past life as a Bodhisattva sea captain who knows that a thief on his ship is planning to kill the 500 passengers, who are all Bodhisattvas of some level. To save them, *and* to save the thief from the bad karma from killing the 500, *and* to save the passengers the bad karma that would come from angrily killing the thief themselves, if they knew of the plot, he chooses to kill the man himself (Tatz 1994, 73–76). While he knows that his killing the thief may lead to his being reborn in hell for ‘a hundred thousand aeons’, he is willing to endure this for the sake of preventing suffering to the others, his act being done ‘with great compassion and skill in means’. Consequently, the round of rebirths was ‘curtailed’ for him by ‘a hundred thousand aeons’, though in a later life, he, as the Buddha, treads on a thorn as ‘the residue of the fruition of that deed’ (Tatz 1994, 76). The implication seems to be, then, that the act had various bad karmic consequences, though not as bad as if it had been done without such a compassionate motivation. If the captain had not acknowledged that the deed could lead to many rebirths in hell, and not been *willing* to suffer

accordingly, compassion (and wisdom) would have been lacking, and he *would* have suffered long in hell. That is, a long stretch in hell is only avoided here by willingly risking it in helping others. Even so, according to John Dunne,²² most contemporary Tibetans assert that the *Bodhisattva* in the above story ‘was reborn in hell because he took a life, but did not remain there long because the attitude behind the act was based on compassion’.

detailed study of the idea of compassionate killing in Indian Mahāyāna writings, Stephen Jenkins remarks on ‘how broadly influential’ the *Upāyakauśalya Sūtra* has been (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 299), and that many great Indian Mahāyāna thinkers have cited it and shared a ‘general agreement that compassionate violence can be an auspicious merit-making opportunity without negative karmic consequences’ (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 300). He notes that the writings of Asaṅga (fourth century) are an influential source, here. The latter talks of a Bodhisattva killing a thief about to kill many people of high spiritual development (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 301):

The bodhisattva, seeing this imminent tragedy, realises that if he kills the thief then he himself may go to hell. But he decides that it is better that he go to hell than allow this person to suffer such a fate.

With this attitude, the *bodhisattva*, having discerned either a neutral or auspicious mind²³ [*kuśalacitto*]; regretting [*ṛtīyamānaḥ*] and employing a mind of empathy [*anukampācittam*] alone, then takes that living being’s life. [That *bodhisattva*] becomes blameless [*anāpattiko*] and produces abundant merit [*puṇyam*]. [*Bodhisattvabhūmi* 113.24–114.2]

Jenkins also reports a story, from the *Mahā-upāyakauśalya Sūtra*,²⁴ of a man in a caravan of 500 travellers, who kills the scout of 500 threatening bandits, even though he is his friend, to prevent the bandits killing the travellers or the latter killing the scout, with himself taking on the bad karma of killing (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 314). He points to ‘a general pattern in Mahāyāna thought wherein the more pure a bodhisattva’s intention is to go to hell, the less likely she is to do it. ... those who intend to endure hell realms do not, precisely because they are willing to do so’ (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 319).

He says that ‘I have not yet located an example where a compassionate killer suffers negative karmic consequences’ (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 320), and points out (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 317) that the Buddha only treads on a thorn to teach others that bad actions have karmic consequences, though it was not itself a consequence of his own bad karma (Tatz 1994, 77). But this seems to be about portraying the Buddha as beyond all karmic results, which still apply even to *Arahats*. Jenkins himself cites Bhāviveka (490–570) (Eckel 2008, 185) as referring to those who turned from great evil to good, such as the mass murderer Aṅgulimāla, the patricidal King Ajātaśatru and the wicked King

Aśoka, as only spending a fleeting amount of time in hell. On the compassionate captain in the *Upāyakaśālyā Sūtra*, Bhāviveka says that he certainly knew he would be reborn in hell, but only for a short time (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 320, citing Eckel 2008, 188). In line with this, contemporary Tibetan scholars see compassionate killers as spending an extremely brief period in hell (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 321).

This is all very well, but there is a problem: might this ‘get-out-of-jail-free’ card stop working once it becomes widely known? To escape rebirth in hell by compassionately risking such a rebirth in helping others, one must believe that there is a genuine risk. But one familiar with the above ideas might well doubt that there *is* a genuine risk. But then, there is now a risk again, so a compassionate killer can again avoid hell, from compassionately risking it! But this is all very risky. And as Jenkins points out (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 322–324), the *Upāyakaśālyā Sūtra* passage is to discourage killing by emphasising how bad its karmic results can be (at least for the non-compassionate killer in very constrained circumstances).

Given that Buddhism holds that an action can be physical, verbal or *mental*, then the intentional thought to later do a physical or verbal action is itself a kind of action.²⁵ On the negative side, for a combatant this includes a resolve to kill if necessary in an upcoming combat event; at a lesser level, it would include the acceptance of the general possibility of future killing when joining the army.²⁶ But on the positive side, it would include hoping to avoid the need to kill, and regret at having done so. It also includes the aspiration to defend one’s community, one’s comrades and indeed oneself, and also non-combatants on either or no side in a conflict. Note that it is said that the duties of the ideal kind of ruler – for Buddhism, a *Cakka-vatti* – include that he ‘arrange rightful (*dhammika*) shelter, protection and defense for ... brahmin householders, for town-dwellers and countryfolk, for ascetics and brahmin(-renouncer)s, for animals and birds’. (D.III.61). Such duties are also surely applicable to a member of the armed forces.

Nevertheless, when it comes to firing a weapon at someone, the immediate intention or volitional impulse will include physically harming them, which is an unwholesome intention. While in general all a combatant really needs to do in combat is to *incapacitate* an enemy, so that they can no longer contribute to actions that bring military harm to one’s own side, sometimes the situation requires an action that is highly likely to kill or maim an enemy, which then becomes part of the intended result. Moreover, if the background motive, or the dominating state of mind when acting, is revenge, or a wish to show off – or to prevent enemies from a different country, ethnic group or religion from being able to survive and flourish as human beings, even if they do not bring any real harm to one’s own side – this is more unwholesome and karmically harmful in Buddhist terms. For IHL, the intention behind an act can be relevant, as pointed

out above. Nevertheless, it does not seem concerned about deeper background motivation. If a combatant's conduct is lawful – for instance, lawfully killing an enemy combatant – it is irrelevant whether his behaviour was motivated by revenge, wanting to show off or wanting to prevent the enemy from flourishing. So here, law and ethics/morality part ways. Consequently, wholesome states of mind certainly help to undergird compliance with the law, but they are not a necessary pre-condition for legitimate action under IHL.

Conclusion

So, we see that the outlook and values of Buddhism provide many factors that should help motivate Buddhist members of an armed force to act in accord with IHL, as in doing so they will also be acting in accord with Buddhist values. While their job means that they may well break the first ethical precept of Buddhism, against killing, they can still seek to *minimise* the harm to others of their military actions, and consequently reduce the karmic harm to themselves. Buddhist concerns should also motivate them to be as ethically disciplined, generous and helpful as they can be, in protecting and aiding their own community and those beyond it, whether human or animal.

Notes

1. For a brief introduction to IHL, see the introduction to this volume.
2. See Premasiri in this volume and cf. DhP-a.I.279, Jat.I.202–03.
3. *Yodhājīva Sutta*, S.V.308–09. The Buddha then says the same when questioned by an elephant warrior (*hattāroha*) and a cavalry warrior (*assāroha*).
4. Nikam and McKeon (1959), 27–30.
5. For a different perspective on this passage, see Tilakaratne in this volume. See also the discussion in Premasiri.
6. *Pasu* generally means cattle.
7. See Deegalle (2002); Gombrich (1971, 257–258) discusses the views of some Sri Lankan village monks on this passage.
8. Though they might have the meditative power to be able to know the degree of virtue of each member of a defeated army!
9. 律二十二明了論 (*Treatise on the Elucidation of 22[Verses] on Vinaya*), T24 no. 1461.
10. An offence that, in *Vinaya* terms, is never as serious as killing a human.
11. The terrible results of killing a parent do not occur if the act was unintentional (Kv.593), but Theravādin texts (Vin-a.444–445 and Upj.315; Harvey 1999, 275) hold that the result is entailed even if the intended victim was an animal or another person (the Sārvāstivādin AKB.iv.103d differs on this), or if the parent is not known to be a parent (the Mahāyāna Uss.179 differs on this). Vin-a.444–445 explains this as being because of the intention to kill; that there was ignorance of what kind of being would be the victim is seen as irrelevant.

12. That is, a person who has not attained any of the levels of enlightenment: as a Stream-enterer, Once-returner, Non-returner, or a fully enlightened person, an *Arahat*, or one firmly established on the path to any of these four states.
13. ICRC (2014, 6–7, 46–49).
14. ICRC (2014, 6).
15. ICRC (2014, 47).
16. ICRC (2014, 48).
17. As, in Theravāda Abhidhamma theory, mindfulness is only present in wholesome mind-states (Bodhi 1993, 83–86), there can be no actual mindfulness at the moment of firing. Some other Buddhist traditions have lower standards for true mindfulness, such that it can occur in unwholesome mind states. The Theravāda sees reference to ‘wrong mindfulness’ in the *suttas* as really a form of misremembering or calling to mind in a wrong way (As.250; Gethin 2001, 42–44).
18. No. 546, Jat.VI.329–478, also known as the *Mahosadha Jātaka*; newly translated in Appleton and Shaw (2012, 187–333). See Premasiri in this volume.
19. *Kāya* – literally, simply ‘body’, but explained in the commentary (A-a.II.361) as mindful contemplation of the body.
20. GCI Art 50: Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949: Commentary of 2016, Article 50: Grave Breaches: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Comment.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=21B052420B219A72C1257F7D00587FC3>
 GCII Art 51: Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea. Geneva, 12 August 1949: Commentary of 2017, Article 51: Grave Breaches: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Comment.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=51B3435E776E06CEC1258115003EC277>
 GCIII 130: Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949: Commentary of 2020 Article 130: Grave Breaches: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Comment.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=B0BAF7DBF7E5B3FAC1258584004494BF>
21. Harvey (1995, 2010, and 2000, 42–43, 46–49).
22. John Dunne, ‘Precept Keeping’ posting to ‘Buddha-L’ Internet discussion forum, 26 July 1995, and ‘Killing Hitler’ posting, 21 March 1996.
23. There is debate over whether this means the mind of the killer or killed; either is plausible, but Jenkins favours the view of the commentator Jinaputra that it concerns the mind of the killer (Jenkins [2010] 2011, 303–304).
24. Demiéville (1957, 379), citing Taishō (156, vii, 161b–162a).
25. Specifically cited examples of unwholesome mental action are covetousness, ill will and wrong view (M.I.47). Heim (2014, 72, 41) explains that such mental actions are fully developed active mind states, which go beyond the general motivational roots of greed, hatred and delusion, with the covetousness and ill will actually planning a specific future action. Similarly, As.77 explains that there is a mental act of giving when one resolves to make a particular gift in the future.
26. Vasubandhu, giving the Sarvāstivāda view, says that if a person is conscripted into an army, then unless he has previously resolved ‘Even in order to save my life, I shall not kill a living being’, he will share in the guilt of any killing done by others in the army, as all members share a common goal, and thus mutually incite one another (AKB.iv 72c–d).

Abbreviations

A	<i>Āṅguttara Nikāya</i> ; tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi, <i>The Incremental Discourses of the Buddha</i> , Wisdom in 2012.
A-a	Untranslated commentary on A: <i>Manorathapūraṇī</i> .
AK	<i>Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣyam</i> (of Vasubandhu – mostly Sarvāstivāda); tr. L. M. Pruden (from L. de La Vallée Poussin's French translation), <i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam</i> , 4 vols., Berkeley, Asian Humanities Press, 1991.
As	<i>Aṭṭhasālinī</i> ; (tr. Pe Maung Tin), <i>The Expositor</i> , 2 vols., London, PTS, 1920 and 1921.
Bca	<i>Bodhicaryāvatāra</i> of Śāntideva; tr. K. Crosby and A. Skilton, <i>Śāntideva: The Bodhicaryāvatāra</i> , Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1995.
D	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i> ; tr. M. Walshe, <i>Long Discourses of the Buddha</i> , 2nd revised edition, Boston, Wisdom, 1996, one vol.
Dhp	<i>Dhammapada</i> ; tr. K. R. Norman, <i>The Word of the Doctrine</i> , London, PTS, 1997; tr. V. Roebuck, <i>The Dhammapada</i> , London, Penguin, 2010. Buddhārakkhita and Thānissaro translations on Access to Insight website.
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā</i> , commentary on Dhp; tr. E. W. Burlingame, <i>Buddhist Legends</i> , 3 vols., Harvard Oriental Series, Harvard University Press, 1921; repr. London, PTS, 1995.
Jat	<i>Jātaka with Commentary</i> ; tr. by various hands under E. B. Cowell, <i>The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births</i> , 6 vols., London, PTS, 1895–1907. S. Shaw, <i>The Jātakas: Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta</i> , New Delhi: Penguin, 2006, translates 26 of the <i>Jātakas</i> .
Khp	<i>Khuddaka-pāṭha</i> ; tr. with its commentary, Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, <i>Minor Readings and Illustrations</i> , London, PTS, 1960.
Khp-a	Commentary on Khp: see last item for translation.
Kv	<i>Kathāvatthu</i> ; tr. S. Z. Aung and C. A. F. Rhys Davids, <i>Points of Controversy</i> , London, PTS, 1915.
M	<i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> ; tr. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, <i>The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha</i> , Boston, Wisdom, 1995.
M-a	Untranslated commentary on M: <i>Papañcasūdanī</i> .
Mil	<i>Milindapañha</i> ; tr. I. B. Horner, <i>Milinda's Questions</i> , 2 vols., London, PTS, 1963 and 1964.
PTS	Pali Text Society.
S	<i>Samyutta Nikāya</i> ; tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi, <i>The Connected Discourses of the Buddha</i> , Boston, Wisdom, 2005, one vol.
Sn	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i> ; tr. K. R. Norman, <i>The Group of Discourses</i> , in paperback <i>The Rhinoceros Horn and Other Early Buddhist Poems</i> , London, PTS, 1984; tr. K. R. Norman, <i>The Group of Discourses Vol.II</i> , London, PTS, 1992, revised translation with introduction and notes.
Upj	<i>Upāsaka-jānālaṅkāra</i> ; tr. Giulio Agostini, <i>The Ornament of Lay Followers: Upāsakajanālaṅkāra</i> , Bristol, Pali Text Society, 2015.
Uss	<i>Upāsaka-śīla Sūtra</i> ; tr. Heng-ching Shih, <i>The Sūtra on Upāsaka Precepts</i> , Berkeley, Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai, 1994 (translation from Chinese of Taishō, vol. 24, text 1488). References are to translation pagination.
Vibh	<i>Vibhāṅga</i> ; tr. U. Thittila, <i>The Book of Analysis</i> , London, PTS, 1969.
Vibh-a	Commentary on Vibh., <i>Sammohavinodanī</i> ; tr. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, <i>The Dispeller of Delusion</i> , 2 vols., Oxford, PTS, 1996.
Vin	<i>Vinaya Piṭaka</i> ; tr. I. B. Horner, <i>The Book of the Discipline</i> , 6 vols., London, PTS, 1938–1966. Vin III and IV are translated respectively as <i>Book of the Discipline</i> , vols. I plus II (1-163), and II (164-416) plus III, with Vin. I and II as <i>Book of the Discipline</i> , vols. IV and V, and Vin V is <i>Book of the Discipline VI</i> .
Vin-a	Untranslated commentary on Vin: <i>Samantapāsādikā</i> .

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