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I hope this review makes clear that this is a fascinating and important book. I encourage others to read and engage with it critically, as I have attempted to do here.

Notes

1 – See Alfred I. Tauber, "The Immune System and Its Ecology," *Philosophy of Science* 75 (2008): 241.

2 – Quoted by Ganeri from N. Ross Reat, *The Origins of Indian Psychology* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1990), p. 303.

Paying Attention to Buddhaghosa and Pāli Buddhist Philosophy

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The value of Jonardon Ganeri's work to cross-cultural philosophy is beyond comparison. He has been and continues to be a singular and unrepeatable force of philosophical creativity. His new monograph *Attention, Not Self (AnS)* is another deep contribution. *AnS* is of special importance because it engages so seriously with the work of Buddhaghosa, a much-neglected fifth-century Buddhist philosopher whose commentarial works form the intellectual backbone of the Pāli *tipiṭaka* of Theravāda Buddhism.[1]

I cannot hope to treat all the nuance and depth of Ganeri's newest offering here. The book is, quite frankly, dizzying in the density and extensiveness of its argument, even for an expert. Nevertheless, I shall try to comment on several parts of the text in some detail and say something more holistic about its place in Ganeri's corpus as well as in the context of cross-cultural philosophy more generally. My main argument is that Ganeri attributes views to Buddhaghosa that the latter does not hold. Embedded in this complaint is the assumption that we should try to get a thinker *right* and on their own terms as a precursor to seeing how their views interface with those of others. It is an assumption I will rely on throughout. Though my remarks will be critical, *AnS* is important because of its originality and depth of treatment. It represents an important step in trying to do cross-cultural philosophy, and it should be carefully studied.

In the opening section, I provide some critical remarks about the extent to which different models in Buddhaghosa's philosophy map onto contemporary

categories in the philosophy of mind and cognitive science. I then turn to some issues of translation and hermeneutical ambiguity in section 2, focusing on the sutta literature. In section 3, I analyze Ganeri's attempt to argue that Buddhaghosa was a non-reductive theorist of persons *(puggala)*. Finally, I conclude with some methodological reflections on the distinction between comparative and cosmopolitan philosophy.

I. Models and Maps

A steady feature of the contemporary discourse on Buddhism has been an overwhelming emphasis on the various ways that certain facets of Buddhist philosophical psychology seem to converge with the project of contemporary philosophy of mind (Ganeri 2001; Ganeri 2012; Siderits 2007; Garfield 2015; Thompson 2015a). In this section, I explore two claims that Ganeri makes about model overlap. The first pertains to the five aggregates in Buddhism and the phenomenal/access-consciousness distinction in contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science. The second concerns Ganeri's claim that Buddhaghosa's two Abhidhammic models of mental function overlap with the doxastic/sub-doxastic distinction or between a fully personal level of processing that is both phenomenal and intentional on the one hand, and a cognitive-scientific causal story about how such states are realized on the other.

The Five Aggregates and Contemporary Cognitive Science

Ganeri sees an overlap between two categories of the five aggregates model and the phenomenal/access-consciousness distinction. Ganeri claims that "It will transpire that Buddhists fully appreciate the distinction between p-consciousness and a-consciousness, which arises in connection with their distinction between felt evaluation *(vedanā)* and identificatory labeling *(saññā)*" (*AnS*, p. 49; see image 2.1 in *AnS*, p. 41). Phenomenal consciousness refers to experience or the quality of there being something it is like to be in certain kinds of mental states (Nagel 1974). Access consciousness is that type of awareness that facilitates certain types of intentional behavioral output on the basis of content being available to the system. According to Ganeri, Buddhaghosa's understanding of *vedanā* overlaps with phenomenal consciousness, and *saññā* is connected with access consciousness. I don't think things are so straightforward. That is, I will argue that the distinction between p-consciousness and a-consciousness does not arise primarily in connection with the distinction between *vedanā* and *saññā* but also includes the other two mental aggregates, *viññāṇa* and *saṅkhāra*. My proposal is that 'phenomenal consciousness' can be seen in both the *viññāṇa* and *vedanā* aggregates. So also, what philosophers call 'access consciousness' can be seen in both the *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* aggregates.

First I will address the connection between phenomenal consciousness and *vedanā*. Ganeri's argument for this connection comes in two steps. The first is to distance the concept of *viññāṇa* from phenomenal consciousness. The second is to explicate Buddhaghosa's analysis of *vedanā* in what I think is a lopsided way. Regarding *viññāṇa*, Ganeri claims that "one must take care not to be misled into supposing that it has thereby been established that *viññāṇa* is a locus of phenomenal quality. . . . In fact *viññāṇa* is defined simply as thoughts having an intentional object" (*AnS*, p. 49). The reference that Ganeri provides for this claim is *Fount*, p. 63, and seems to me to be incorrect. It is not *viññāṇa* that is defined as having an object, but *citta*. Buddhaghosa claims that "By *'citta'* (consciousness) is meant that which 'considers' *(cinteti)* its object *(ārammaṇaṃ)*, meaning that consciousness *(cittaṃ)* 'knows' *(vijānāti)* [its object]."[2] Ganeri points out (*AnS*, p. 55) that this notion of 'object' is robustly normative and intentional, one that is available to an embodied subject in a conscious engagement with a meaningful world. But if that is so, it is not clear how this reference supports the idea that *viññāṇa* refers only to a basic kind of non-phenomenal discriminating intentionality. Why? Because the quote actually pertains to *citta* and not *viññāṇa*, and Ganeri will argue at length that *citta* is phenomenal (*AnS*, pp. 50–56). Even if the terminology was correct, it is clear from the semantic analysis of *ārammana* provided by both Buddhaghosa and Ganeri that the kind of object under discussion here is an object of phenomenal intentionality. More argument is needed on Ganeri's part to earn the conclusion that *viññāṇa* is not an instance of phenomenal consciousness but that *citta* is. I will return to this point below, in the subsection on "Two Abhidhammic Models of Mind."

I now want to flag an important point that Ganeri makes about Buddhgahosa's account of *vedanā* and about phenomenal consciousness itself. Consider the following remark about the 'mental paint' conception of phenomenal consciousness (Block 2003; Harman 1990): "The 'mental paint' simile is misleading, however, insofar as it is insensitive to the idea motivating phenomenological description in a language of 'felt evaluation' *(vedanā)*, namely, that phenomenal qualities are not merely decorative but solicit action" (*AnS*, p. 53). I agree with this idea that a proper account of the phenomenal character of experience will irreducibly include an affective component that ties the embodied agent to a world of solicitation and response (Smith 2018). This strikes me as a highly promising view of phenomenal consciousness, one that avoids the problems of thinking of experience as a kind of nomological dangler (Smart 1959).

However, I worry that Ganeri emphasizes one dimension of *vedanā* at the expense of another that is equally important. Consider the following remarks from Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*: "Among the others [i.e., other aggregates], however, whatever has the characteristic of being felt should be understood, all taken together, as the feeling aggregate" (*Vis* 452, xiv.81).[3]

Further, "what is said to have the characteristic of being felt is just feeling [or feeling itself]" (*Vis* 460, xiv.125).[4] The relevance of these passages to our understanding of *vedanā* and its relation to phenomenal consciousness is as follows. First, *vedanā* are not just 'felt evaluations.' Feelings are not *just* mental events that situate objects of perception in a hodological appraisal space or evaluate objects according to their potential for action solicitation (see *Fount*, p. 109). Rather, feelings are also occurrent mental events that can be taken as objects of *viññāṇa*. It is feelings that are felt in terms of their hedonic valence, as being pleasant, unpleasant, or neither *(sukha, dukkha, adukkham-asukhā)*. These categories do not just apply to objects of perception. Ganeri makes *vedanā* too adverbial in an attempt to construe its contribution to perception in terms of categorizing objects of experience in an affective way. I agree that this is a component of the functional profile of *vedanā*. But with such an exclusive focus, Ganeri neglects the contribution to phenomenal character made by *viññāṇa*. He claims that the latter is a consumer system for the affectively encoded phenomenal feelings embodied by the former. He approvingly cites the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* in support of this view (*AnS*, p. 104; *M* i.293; Bodhi 2005, p. 388):

> 'Consciousness, consciousness' is said, friend. With reference to what is consciousness said?

> 'It cognizes, it cognizes,' friend; that is why it is called 'consciousness.' What does it cognize? It cognizes '[This is] pleasant'; it cognizes '[This is] painful'; it cognizes: '[This is] neither-painful-nor-pleasant.' 'It cognizes, it cognizes,' friend; that is why 'consciousness' is said.[5]

The important claim Buddhaghosa is making here is that the function of *viññāṇa* is to 'know' or 'cognize' its object by providing the cognitive system with an epistemic relation to it. Ganeri then argues that because the object of knowledge that is offered in the rest of the answer is *vedanā*, we should conclude that "'Consciousness' *(viññāṇa)* should here be understood as the consuming system responsible for judgments about action and planning" (*AnS*, p. 104).

I disagree that *viññāṇa* is best thought of as a 'consuming system' for judgment. As Bhikkhu Bodhi points out, Buddhaghosa himself notes in the commentary here:

> The question concerns the consciousness with which the person described as 'one who is wise' examines formations, that is, the consciousness of insight by which that person arrived (at his attainment), the mind which does the work of meditation. Ven. Sāriputta answers by explaining the meditation subject of feeling, in the way it has come down in the Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness. The Pāli construction *sukhan ti pi vijānāti* indicates that feeling is being treated as the direct object of consciousness rather than as an affective tone of the experience; to show this the words 'that is' have been supplied in brackets and the entire phrase set in quotation marks. (Bodhi 2005, p. 1237 n. 431)

It is clear that the relation between *vedanā* and *viññāṇa* here represents a special case that happens in the context of meditative cultivation. To construe this example as a general account of how *viññāṇa* operates with respect to *vedanā* is too strong, especially when it is reduced to the way that conscious perception of the world feeds our judgments and planning. In ordinary experience, they work together to give a person knowledge of an object. One registers the perceptual presence of the object *(viññāṇa)* through a sensory channel; the other situates the object in a hodological appraisal space and encodes its hedonic valence *(vedanā)*. In the context of this discourse however, *vedanā* becomes the object of *viññāṇa*. In having feelings as our objects, the feelings constitute the content of the experience. In the ordinary case *vedanā* provides 'the affective tone of experience' and the content is the object that made contact *(phassa)* with the relevant sensory system. In meditative experience, we are conscious *of* our feelings, not just *with* them when we're wrapped up in the world as in ordinary experience.

For Pāli Buddhist philosophers, *vedanā* plays the dual role of providing affective evaluational structure to perceptual content while also being the content of a special kind of experience. Therefore, since *viññāṇa* knows *(vijānāti)* its object (in this case, *vedanā*) and this knowledge is phenomenal due to the meditative context (rather than being merely a judgment-forming mechanism), it follows that *viññāṇa* plays some role in the constitution of phenomenal character. I conclude that Ganeri's attempt to construe *vedanā* as being primarily responsible for phenomenal character and denying that *viññāṇa* has anything to do with phenomenal character is unsuccessful. A more parsimonious conclusion is that phenomenal character is embraced by both of these concepts, one providing for the object-directed character of phenomenal consciousness and one for its irreducibly affective contours.[6]

Moving on to the connection between access consciousness and *saññā*, we have a similar situation. The semantic range of the notion *'saññā'* is far narrower than what philosophers and cognitive science are talking about when they refer to 'access consciousness.' Ganeri cites an important definition of access consciousness that we can begin with (*AnS*, p. 99): "A state is access conscious (a-conscious) if, in virtue of one's having the state, a representation of its content is (1) inferentially promiscuous, that is, poised for use as a premise in reasoning, (2) poised for rational control for action, and (3) poised for rational control of speech" (Block 1995, p. 231). I agree with Ganeri when (at *AnS*, p. 96) he speaks of *saññā* as a kind of labeling that allows us to categorize elements of our experience under sortal concepts. For Buddhaghosa, *saññā* is a kind of 'seeing-as.' However, this does not line up with Block's definition of access consciousness. Block is clearly referring to a way of being poised to use content as a means of generating certain kinds of behavioral output. I also agree with Ganeri's further claim that what really matters for access consciousness is "the global availability of the content in cognitive, information-processing tasks" (ibid.).

Even then, such states are individuated by their potential outputs at the level of speech, inference, and intentional action (i.e., the 'tasks'), not just in terms of how these contents might be organized under sortals on the basis of past experience.

Ganeri does not make use of the notion of *saṅkhāra*, though it is helpful in establishing the inter-theoretic identification he is after, even if it is not a clean one. The notion of *saṅkhāra* is a bit slippery, but for our purposes we can note two contexts of use. The first is as one of the five aggregates and the second is in the twelve-point formulation of dependent origination (*paticcasamupada*). First, in the context of the *citta-cetasika* model of mental function (for more, see "Two Abhidhammic Models of Mind" below), the role of *saṅkhāra* is to structure the intentional relation of *citta* to its object. However, *saṅkhāra*-s are also the karmically active part of the mind that functions as the condition (*paccaya*) for the arising of *viññāṇa* in dependent origination. When playing this role, *saṅkhāra*-s are individuated on the basis of their moral valence and by different types of behavioral output, namely bodily, mental, and verbal formations (*Vis* 527, xvii.44). Further, Buddhaghosa also explains that *saṅkhāra*-s "have the characteristic of forming. Their function is to accumulate. They are manifested as pervasion (*vipphārapaccu-paṭṭhānā*)" (*Vis* 462, xiv.132), and again, "they are manifested as volition (*cetanā*)" (*Vis* 528, xvii.51). These passages describe the functional profile of *saṅkhāra*s in terms of *saṅkhāra*s manifesting or appearing (*paccupaṭṭhānā*), as pervading (*vipphāra*), and volition (*cetanā*). I take Buddhaghosa's view here to be that the karmically active part of the mind has a holistic influence over the other *cetasika*-s that are conditioning the occurrent *citta*. This looks very similar indeed to the idea that access consciousness is a kind of global workspace that integrates perceptual content for the purposes of selective behavioral output.

Saṅkhāra becomes manifest in the mental economy by exercising a reactive global influence on how available content is funneled to various behavioral outputs on the basis of existing intentions. This is not the way that access consciousness should be divorced from *saññā*. I agree with Ganeri that there is a connection here. My claim is that there are more robust resources for establishing an inter-theoretic identity between access consciousness and Buddhist philosophical categories if one thinks more carefully about the nature of *saṅkhāra*. Access consciousness is about the system's capacity to act in different ways on the basis of content being available to a global consumer system that can use that content as the basis for generating different sorts of behavioral outputs. By contrast, *saññā* is the capacity of the mind to apprehend perceptual particulars as falling under kinds. It refers to our ability to perceive things as the things they are. In order to do justice to the latter concept from a Buddhist point of view, we need to think about the dimensions of *saṅkhāra* that categorize its function in terms of types of behavioral output that condition subsequent moments of

consciousness *(viññāṇa)*. This seems like an important point of overlap between the aggregates schema and access consciousness that would be helpful to Ganeri's constructive project.

Two Abhidhammic Models of Mind

I will now discuss Ganeri's comparison of two Abhidhammic models of mind in Buddhaghosa's philosophy, namely the *citta-cetasika* and *vīthi-citta* models. Ganeri's discussion of these models is fascinating and insightful, helping to solve a serious exegetical problem in Buddhaghosa's writing. Readers of Buddhaghosa know that the connection between them is difficult to discern, and Ganeri offers a creative and philosophically sophisticated way of explaining that relation. Here is Ganeri giving a preliminary description of the *vīthi-citta* transitioning from rest to action:

> If the stimulus is sufficiently strong to capture attention and so interrupt the default state, an instruction *(āvajjana)* to orient a sense modality produces a first visual acknowledgement *(cakkhu-viññāṇa)*, a mere seeing *(dassana-matta)*. Having a first visual acknowledgement of the presence of an object, is not yet, however, being conscious of it. *(AnS, p. 41)*

In short, his claim is that the *citta-cetasika* model explains the way in which full-blown world-involving conscious intentionality takes up with its objects. By contrast, the *vīthi-citta* model provides an analysis of the causal interactions of non-conscious cognitive modules whose development over short timescales leads to the emergence of the sort of consciousness explained by the first model *(AnS, p. 57)*. I am largely sympathetic with this proposal.

Ganeri's view is that the *citta-cetasika* model is operating at the doxastic level of intentional life, the contents of which are cognitively accessible, subject to evaluation and self-criticism *(AnS, p. 60)*. By contrast, the *vīthi-citta* is a sub-doxastic set of cognitive modules that are cognitively insulated. On this interpretation, the *vīthi-citta* is a causal process that 'underpins' the emergence of conscious intentionality. I agree with the claim that the difference between these models maps a doxastic/sub-doxastic distinction, but I disagree that phenomenal consciousness falls on the doxastic side of the model partition. I think Buddhaghosa would agree with me. Therefore, I will argue that, according to Buddhaghosa, phenomenality goes 'all the way down' to the most basic processes of *citta* articulated in the *vīthi-citta*.

According to Ganeri, the need for an explanation of how these two models of mental function are related is borne of the his conviction that "the theoretical terminology does not overlap at all" between the two models. Further: "There is no obvious way to translate the terms of either account into those of the other or in any other way to achieve nomological reduction of one account to the other" *(AnS, pp. 58–59)*. On the lack of terminological overlap however, it is worth noting that Ganeri is quite selective. He

includes only those non-*citta* concomitants from the *citta-cetasika* model in the first list and then neglects to note that the terms of the *vīthi-citta* are often themselves classified as *types* of *citta*. Thus, both models elaborate on the activities of *citta*. One explains the development of *citta* over time *(vīthi-citta)*, the other explains how *citta* takes up with its objects *(citta-cetasika)*. The *vīthi* is a path *of* consciousness, with each stage being a relatively un-accessed moment of phenomenal awareness that acquires more and more cognitive complexity as the *vīthi* takes up with the available content in increasingly recursive and value-encoded ways.

The argument for my view of how these models are related begins with an analysis of *bhavaṅga*. The *bhavaṅga* is a subliminal mental event that functions to sustain the causal continuity of the stream of mind moments when more ordinary sensory-cognitive happenings become dormant. It is the default resting state of the *vīthi-citta*. Ganeri defines *bhavaṅga* in the following way: "Untasked thought (*bhavaṅga*, the rest or default state) is now what is to be described as 'passive'; the content of the default state consists in a residue of 'innate' autobiographical semantic information" (*AnS*, p. 22).[7] I do not agree with Ganeri that the proper way to think of this mind moment is as an instance of *thought* that possesses auto-biographical content. This is because it is far too subliminal to have this kind of representational architecture. In Buddhaghosa's view, it only arises when the other six modes of consciousness subside, between active moments of perception, in deep dreamless sleep and at the moment of death and rebirth. Further, Buddhaghosa would maintain that for a mental state to have semantic content, it would need to be processed by the mind-door *(mano-viññāṇa)*. Therefore, I prefer to think of the term as a kind of primal embodied sentience that makes the organism the kind of organism it is rather than a kind of thought it has about itself (Gethin 1994; Smith 2018). Putting aside this disagreement, what is important to note here is that the *bhavaṅga* is a resting state of the *vīthi-citta* that is interrupted by the activity that begins with an adverting or orienting response to sensory perturbation *(āvajjana)* and ends with working memory *(javana)* delivering the contents of that sensory engagement to consciousness and its fully intentional concom-itants *(citta-cetasika)*.

Consider the following claim from the *Visuddhimagga* that pertains to the role of *bhavaṅga* in the rebirth process (here I follow Ñāṇamoli's translation verbatim) (*Vis* 458, xiv.114):

> When the rebirth-linking consciousness has ceased, then, following on whatever kind of rebirth-linking it may be, the same kinds, being the result of that same *kamma* whatever it may be, occur as life-continuum consciousness with that same object; and again those same kinds. And as long as there is no other kind of arising of consciousness to interrupt the continuity, they also go on occurring endlessly in periods of dreamless sleep, etc., like the current of a river.[8]

The key philological point here is that *bhavaṅga* is explicitly classified as an instance of *viññāṇa*, suggesting that Buddhaghosa thinks of this mind moment as an occurrence of un-accessed, subtle phenomenal awareness. However, since Ganeri thinks that *viññāṇa* is not phenomenal, he can perhaps resist interpreting this citation as claiming that we are phenomenally conscious during deep dreamless sleep.[9] Whatever we might say about the case of dreamless sleep, it seems highly plausible that we should interpret the process of rebirth-linking as an experiential one. This is, after all, the karmic culmination of an individual life (see *AnS*, pp. 335 ff.). A few verses later, Buddhaghosa further claims that "For the last life-continuum consciousness of all in one becoming is called death *(cuti)* because of falling *(cavanatta)* from that [becoming]" (*Vis* 460, xiv.123).[10] In this sentence, Buddhaghosa calls the *bhavaṅga* a moment of *citta* rather than *viññāṇa* as he did a few sentences earlier. Buddhaghosa is clearly using these terms interchangeably, as the context of analysis is one and the same between these two citations, in terms not only of the analysis of the mind moment *(bhavaṅga)* but of the context in which this mind moment is executing its function (rebirth-linking).

Ganeri has already argued that Buddhaghosa thinks that *citta* is a phenomenal concept (at *AnS*, pp. 73–76). Therefore, since *bhavaṅga* is clearly an instance of *citta* for Buddhaghosa, it follows that *bhavaṅga* is also phenomenal. It also follows that, since Buddhaghosa is clearly using *citta* and *viññāṇa* interchangeably to refer to a single moment of phenomenal awareness, we should think of *viññāṇa* as phenomenal as well. Furthermore, if the most basic passive element of the *vīthi-citta* is a moment of phenomenal awareness, then the more active moments of the process are also phenomenal. Why think that the active world-involving information states embodied by the active parts of the *vīthi-citta* are not phenomenal while the default resting state is? The first mind moment that arises after the adverting *(āvajjana)* is also called *viññāṇa* (*AnS*, p. 58). The growing complexity exemplified by its development of the *vīthi-citta* should be read as an increasing degree of access to phenomenal content rather than the eventual achievement of phenomenality at the end of the process. The *citta-cetasika* model explains the ways in which *citta* can be intentional with respect to an object, synchronically, at a given time and how the presence or absence of various *cetasika*-s can help one to determine the moral valence of their occurrent mental state. The *vīthi-citta* model explains the way in which moments of *citta* arise *diachronically* in a series and through progressive complexification of intentional and attentional engagement with the world.

On this interpretation, the distinction between sub-doxastic and doxastic remains apt as long as we keep in mind that for Buddhaghosa phenomenality goes all the way down. This accords well with a wider view of Buddhist and Indian philosophical views about how meditation helps to re-structure the mind. As Evan Thompson notes (Thompson 2015a, p. 8):

One way to think about the Indian yogic idea of subtle consciousness is to see it as pointing to deeper levels of phenomenal consciousness to which we don't ordinarily have cognitive access, especially if our minds are restless and un-trained in meditation. According to this way of thinking . . . much of what Western science and philosophy would describe as unconscious might qualify as conscious, in the sense of involving subtle levels of phenomenal awareness that could be made accessible through meditative mental training.

This conclusion is not without its costs. Buddhaghosa also claims of the *bhavaṅga* that it is pure and luminous: "It *[citta]* is also said to be white in the sense of pure. Concerning the *bhavaṅga*, that is said" (*Fount*, p. 140).[11] But how can a moment of *bhavaṅga* bear the karmic baggage of a being's life at the moment of rebirth-linking and define the being as the being it is (which is only possible on the basis of previous karmic baggage) *and* be that which is pure and luminous?[12] It is not Ganeri's job to solve this problem for Buddhaghosa. But this is precisely a place where Buddhaghosa's thought looks inconsistent, and it is these inconsistencies, as much as his sophisticat-ed consistencies, that make him worth taking up. The hermeneutical worry here is that Ganeri sometimes writes of Buddhaghosa as if he were a systematic philosopher of mind with a clean system with no holes.

A final note on the connection between *citta* and intentional content is in order. Ganeri seems to have a somewhat reductive understanding of *citta*, claiming that "there is a 'space' or 'frame' of awareness *(citta)* which is in fact nothing more than [a] range of experiential, attentive, and agentive functions *(cetasika)* that take place within it" (*AnS*, p. 9). This idea suggests that *citta* is both nothing over and above its concomitants and yet also claims that it contains them. This is confusing, especially in light of Ganeri's attempt to explain how intentionality works in such a model. For example, he is explicit in claiming that *citta* and *viññāṇa* (here posited as equivalents rather than as distinct) are responsible for i-consciousness (read: non-phenomenal intentionality), with *vedanā* identified with phenomenal consciousness and *saññā* being identical with access consciousness (*AnS*, p. 41). However, further on (at *AnS*, p. 102) Ganeri claims that *vedanā* and *saññā* "jointly exhaust intentionality" because both disappear in cessation *(nirodha-samāpatti)*, which is assumed, perhaps plausibly, to be non-intentional. The inconsistencies in the claims here make it difficult to follow Ganeri's attempts at various inter-theoretic identifications.

II. Attention, Translation, and Hermeneutics

I turn now to the question of how to interpret Buddhaghosa in his capacity as a Buddhist philosopher and as an 'attentionalist' (Ganeri's term). Ganeri's work in *AnS* is intent on organizing Buddhaghosa's view(s) around a singular notion of 'Attention,' a notion that has no semantic root in Pāli (*AnS*, pp. 31,

67). What, then, is the purpose of this organization? If attention is not a natural kind, then why think that its concept has the semantic power to generalize over so many cognitive functions that the Pāli Buddhists were keen to keep distinct? What makes each of these a species of a single genus? (cf. *AnS*, p. 31). Here I treat Ganeri's attempt to construe various Pāli terms as iterations of attention, as well as some more general problems of translation that create problems for construing Buddhaghosa as an 'attentionalist.'

Terminological Questions about Buddhaghosa's Attentionalism

One of the wonderful things about Ganeri's work in *AnS* is his way of showing how different cognitive functions in the Pāli Buddhist texts seem closely related to different ways that contemporary attention researchers talk about different kinds of attention. I find myself quite sympathetic to Ganeri's various claims about the close inter-theoretic overlap between these two sorts of discourse. My critical remarks here focus on a few ways in which Ganeri's attempt to construe the Pāli terms for attention as amenable to inter-theoretic identification comes at the cost of some of their more explicit soteriological functions in the Buddhist framework from which they emerge.

There are a number of Pāli terms that look like what contemporary philosophers and psychologists might call 'attention.' The two that Ganeri spends the most time on are *ekaggatā*, which literally means 'one pointedness,' and *manasikāra*, which is usually translated simply as 'attention' where its literal meaning is something like 'producing in the mind.' Ganeri variously translates *manasikāra* as 'bringing-to-mind' (*AnS*, p. 12), 'attentional focusing' (*AnS*, p. 38), and 'focal attention' (*AnS*, p. 87). I want to focus on Buddhaghosa's functional understanding of how this mind moment works.

Ganeri cites a rather long passage from the *Visuddhimagga* where Buddhaghosa explains three different roles for *manasikāra* (*AnS*, p. 64; *Vis* 466, xiv.152).[13] In all three roles, *manasikāra* has the job of yoking other parts of the mind-stream with objects. In the first context of analysis, *manasikāra* is responsible for "driving associated states to the object." In the second, it turns the mind to a sensory door, but not to the object that stimulated that sense-door. Finally, it has a regulatory function for the running of *javana* at the mind-door. These details are relevant because they show that *manasikāra* plays a kind of orienting role that facilitates contact with an object through the organization of other mental concomitants. What is 'brought to mind' is not just the object of attention. Rather, *manasikāra* gathers all the relevant mental factors that are necessary for perceptual attention and orients them to the object in question. Thus, *manasikāra* coordinates other *cetasika*-s to allow *citta* to know an object. This is why 'attentional focusing' seems a bit strained as a description of this mind moment. It facilitates the mind's focusing on an object by organizing other

mental events, not by actually being the mind moment that does the focusing. On this reading, perhaps *manasikāra* looks more like Jesse Prinz's (2011, pp. 193–194) notion of orienting, which Prinz wants to deny is attention. That is no argument against Ganeri's view, but it does raise the issue of whether his proposed inter-theoretic identification is wholly successful here.

Another related worry is Ganeri's treatment of strongly normative modes of meditative attention like *samādhi*, *upacāra*, and *jhāna* (*AnS*, p. 240). Here I echo a concern voiced by John McDowell (1994) about Gareth Evans' *Varieties of Reference* (1982) that there is too much 'smooth naturalism' in Ganeri's description of these terms.[14] I would have liked to see more analysis of how these attentional terms function in the context of Buddhaghosa's interpretation of Buddhist soteriology. The notion of *jhāna* is particularly relevant in this regard. Ganeri doesn't really discuss the supramundane context in which *jhāna* arises. These are incredibly rarified states of consciousness in which ordinary cognitive function is seriously altered (Shulman 2014, p. 22). But the way Ganeri describes them makes it seem as though anyone with some level of non-distracted attention has attained full absorption (cf. *AnS*, p. 240). The idea that *ekaggatā* or singleness of mind in the context of *jhāna* is merely a 'phenomenology of steadiness' is too reductive. There are several canonical descriptions of *jhāna* that can be found in the suttas and in the middle chapters of the *Visuddhimagga* that treat the development of *samādhi* at length. These terms bring with them powerful soteriological semantic connotations that are central to a proper understanding of how they are used by Buddhist philosophers, and here Buddhaghosa is no exception. It would be intriguing to consider whether these more canonically Buddhist accounts of meditative contemplation could have any bearing on Ganeri's account of Buddhaghosa and the latter's relevance to contemporary attention theory.

The Importance of Sutta and Matters of Translation
Everything Buddhaghosa wrote was a commentary on a stratum of texts that preceded him. Yet we get very little treatment of this relationship in *AnS*. In putting Buddhaghosa into a relationship with contemporary philosophy and psychology of attention, we lose sight of Buddhaghosa's most important relationship: his connection to the Pāli *tipiṭaka*. Even though Ganeri cites ample passages from Buddhaghosa's texts, in *AnS* we hear very little of Buddhaghosa's situation or motivations. Here I note two cases where Ganeri *does* deal with the sutta texts but in a way that is problematic because of mistranslation.

In setting up his claim that Buddhaghosa is an attentionalist, he makes reference to Buddhaghosa's commentarial ambitions in composing the *Visuddhimagga*. Ganeri claims (*AnS*, pp. 30–31):

> Buddhaghosa's Attentionalism is strikingly on display in the organizational structure of his most famous work, *The Path of Purification*. The whole book

takes the overt form of a sustained reflection on the meaning of a single quotation from the Canon: 'Cultivate attention, bhikkhus; a bhikkhu who attends knows things as they are' (*samādhiṃ, bhikkhave, bhāvetha; samāhito, bhikkhave, bhikkhu yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, S* iii.13). The book begins and ends with this quotation, and its contents are substantially devoted to exploring the meaning of this one statement. (cf. Bodhi 2000)

There are two things to say about this. The first is that translating *samādhi* as 'attention' is quite a stretch and certainly etymologically suspect. I am not aware of any Buddhist translator ever translating this term in such a way. It seems to erase the special place that *samādhi* has in the cultivation of the path to liberation.

Second, the passage Ganeri cites here is not the actual piece of text that Buddhaghosa uses for framing the *Visuddhimagga*. In fact, the text that Ganeri translates in the citation above appears only once in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vis 371, XI.121) as far as I can tell. The actual opening passage of the text that Buddhaghosa uses as his commentarial frame is:

> *Sīle patiṭṭhāya naro sapañño, cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ;*
> *Ātāpī nipako bhikkhu, so imaṃ vijaṭaye jaṭanti. (S i.13)*

I would translate this in the following way:

> When a wise person, having established themselves in virtue,
> Develops consciousness and insight,
> The *bhikkhu* ardent and wise,
> He disentangles the tangled.

The error seems to be that in quoting the PTS edition, Ganeri erroneously cites the third section (iii) rather than the first (i) of the *nikāya*. It is also worth noting that in the actual opening passage no mention of any terms that could be reasonably construed as 'attention' are present. Rather, the entire text is organized around the notion of the gradual purification of the mind starting with *sīla*, then *samādhi*, and finally *paññā* (cf. *Vis* 443, xiv.32). Thus, if we wish to construe Buddhaghosa's philosophical project in the *Visuddhimagga* as being organized around a single concept, I suggest that the central organizing concept of this book is actually 'purification' *(visuddhi)*. This is evident not only from the book's title and an appreciation of the content of the main sutta text around which the text is organized as a commentary but also from the fact that the chapters are set up to mirror the seven purifications laid out in the *Rathavinīta Sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* i.145 ff.).

Ganeri continues his commentary on *S* iii.13 in the following way: "The application in question speaks of a particular sort of attention, expert absorbed attention *(samādhi)*, and a particular sort of knowledge, insight *(paññā)*, into fundamental moral truths" (ibid.).[15] It is interesting to claim

that the insight is about morality. Unlike other Buddhist philosophers (e.g., Santideva), who take a certain kind of moral reasoning to be constitutive of insight, Buddhaghosa sees morality as a necessary but instrumental step on the path to liberation from *dukkha*. It is the first of seven steps in the purification process. Now if by 'moral truths' Ganeri means something broader regarding the norms constitutive of the four noble truths involved in understanding the dependently arisen reality of *dukkha*, then this is certainly a reasonable thing to say. However, given that Buddhaghosa is quite explicit that morality *per se* is only the first and coarsest level of purification, it is not clear what is to be gained by referring to insight as knowledge of moral truth.

Further, when Ganeri presses this point later (*AnS*, p. 150), he misquotes the *Dhammapada* in his attempt to explain the connection between attention and moral knowledge. There he cites *Dhammapada* 277–279 as claiming that

> Constructing activities are all impermanent: When he sees thus with insight, and turns away from what is ill, that is the path to purity. Constructing activities are all suffering: When he sees thus with insight, and turns away from what is ill, that is the path to purity. Constructing activities are all not self: When he sees thus with insight, and turns away from what is ill, that is the path to purity.[16]

However, in eliding the shift in the third *pada* from *saṅkhāra* to *dhamma* the translation erroneously renders the topic of each *pada* as 'constructing activities.' The scope of the negation of self *(anatta)* is wider than the scope of attributing impermanence *(anicca)* and suffering *(dukkha)*. These kinds of details are relevant because in this very text, at an earlier stage, progress to ultimate insight into the nature of all elements of existence (*dhamma*s, not just *saṅkhāra*) is explicated in terms going beyond good and evil. Thus, "Whose mind is free from lust, Whose mind is unperplexed, and who has abandoned merit and evil. There is no fear for one who is awake" (*Dhammapada* 39; cf. Norman 1997).[17]

The purpose of pointing out these translation errors is to note a general trend in *AnS* that tends to either ignore or mis-construe Buddhaghosa's relation to the sutta material on which he comments. Further, because of the consistency of these difficulties, our sense of Buddhaghosa's potential philosophical contribution starts to become somewhat distorted.

III. Buddhaghosa and Ganeri on Persons

Such difficulties are clear in Ganeri's discussion of personhood (*AnS*, chap. 14). This part of the book is the most interesting to me, and I am grateful to Ganeri for bringing Buddhaghosa into this discussion as it is central to contemporary discussions of Buddhist philosophy of self and personhood (cf.

Thompson 2015a, chap. 10; Ganeri 2013; Garfield 2015; Siderits et al. 2011).

Buddhaghosa on Persons

Ganeri conceives of the Pāli Buddhist theory of persons *(puggala)* as being immune to both the criticisms leveled against hardcore reductionist theories of persons like Vausbandhu's, but also to objections leveled against the Pudgalavādin theory of persons. In particular, Ganeri claims that "A virtue of Buddhist philosophy in Pāli—the Theravāda as opposed to the Mahāyāna—is that it promises to show us how to evade the implication of impersonalism without committing us to individuals *qua* metaphysical selves. It promises to do this through a clarification of the real nature of attention" (*AnS*, p. 13). Further, "While Sarvāstivāda tends towards a metaphysical reification of the fundamental units of analysis (Pāli: *dhamma*; Sanskrit: *dharma*), the Pāli Theravāda puts more emphasis on an experiential interpretation of them" (*AnS*, p. 34). And "we will see that there is no mereological reduction of individuals" (*AnS*, pp. 34–35). Finally, because of this alleged non-reductionism about persons, "much of the criticism leveled against the Sarvāstivāda formulation of Abhidharma by later Buddhist Mahāyāna thinkers, criticism that would become a standard trope in Tibetan, is simply not applicable to the Pāli Abhidhamma (and especially the Mahāvihāra) theory" (*AnS*, p. 35).

It would be good for Buddhist philosophy if there were a reading of the notion of personhood that can achieve the kind of middle-ground that Ganeri envisions here. I further think that with some creative interpretation and some selective reading, we might generate a version of a Buddhist philosophical worldview that can accommodate such a reading. Such a view would involve a much closer look at the sutta literature that is afforded in *AnS*. I argue here that Buddhaghosa would certainly reject it. This is important because at this point in the book, it becomes difficult to disentangle Buddhaghosa's voice from Ganeri's. It is not always clear who is speaking and what views are being attributed to whom. It is not clear how to track the citations I offer in the previous paragraph in relation to Buddhaghosa's clear reductionist commitments. For example, perhaps there is a distinction being invoked between the Pāli Buddhist view and Buddhaghosa's view. Even if that is so, Buddhaghosa's claims are the ones being analyzed here, so I am inclined to see these two potential views being rolled into one in *AnS*.

Ganeri cites a long passage (*AnS*, p. 18) from the *Visuddhimagga* (*Vis* 593–594, xviii.28). Here is the key part: "In many hundred suttas it is only minded body *(nāma-rūpa)* that is illustrated, not a being *(satta)*, not a 'person' *(puggala)*." The quote then goes on to utilize the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth to reductively analyze these composite concepts into more basic constituents, just as with the parts of a chariot. The interesting thing about this passage is that the target of this analysis is terms like 'being' *(satta)* or 'person' *(puggala)*. The metaphysically top-heavy

notion of an *ātman*, a soul-like entity that allegedly moves from life to life in the process of reincarnation, does not figure. Buddhaghosa appears to pull no punches here by being a straightforward reductionist about the referents of all these terms.

Later on (*AnS*, pp. 297–298), Ganeri cites Buddhaghosa again (*Vis* 348, xi.30); the comparison is between a butcher who has slaughtered a cow and a *bhikkhu* who has analyzed their personhood into its constituents. Buddhaghosa says: "so too this *bhikkhu*, while still a foolish ordinary person—both formerly as a layman and as one gone forth into homelessness—does not lose the perception 'living being' *(satto)* or 'man' *(poso)* or 'person' *(puggala)* so long as he does not, by resolution of the compact into elements, review this body, however placed, however disposed, as consisting of elements. But when he does review it as consisting of elements, he loses the identification 'living being' and his mind establishes itself upon the elements." When Ganeri cites this passage he omits the locution "while still a foolish ordinary person—both formerly as a layman and as one gone forth into homelessness." This is a powerful omission because it clearly draws a connection between losing the relevant identification and being foolish. Regardless of whether one is a householder or a renunciate, as long as one continues to have the perception of oneself as being a 'being,' a 'man,' or a 'person,' one is foolish. Losing this perception by 'resolving one's mind' on the elements is how one abandons foolishness. Thus, it is unclear where the motivation is to construe Buddhaghosa or the Pāli Buddhists more widely as being non-reductive about persons (*AnS*, pp. 34–35). In the cited passage, Buddhaghosa is straightforwardly saying that we should reduce the person *(puggala)* to the momentary arising and passing away of those elements that constitute the minded body *(nāma-rūpa)* to avoid living a life of foolishness.

Ganeri's response to this kind of reductionism is to propose a shift "to a perspective based on value . . . to make ideas about the moral status of the individual central in framing the discussion, ideas about what is important in a subject's life" (*AnS*, p. 296). I agree with Ganeri's claim that "Commitment to an 'axiological,' value-centered, conception of persons does not entail commitment to the Authorship view" (ibid.). Ganeri claims that this axiological shift is also a move away from "too exclusive a focus on sterile puzzles about the metaphysics of personal identity over time" (ibid.). The positive proposal is then put in terms of a new question:

> The salient question now is not what are the relationships that bind mental particulars together into discrete causal chains but what it is to inhabit and endorse particular mental states, to occupy a mental life that is fashioned by them (cravings, inserted thoughts, downed memories or desires, being all part of the same causal stream but not part of who one is). (*AnS*, pp. 296–297)

I'm not sure what to make of this distinction between diachronic continuity and synchronic endorsement. It strikes me that we cannot have an account of what it means to endorse or reject particular mental states without an account of what it means for those mental states to arise and pass away in time. Endorsement, after all, is a kind of diachronic commitment to what a wholesome future would be like on the basis of present endorsements as well as a recognition of how past commitments have helped to structure the present. When we factor into this equation the fact that Buddhaghosa has already given us an explicit commitment to reductionism about persons, the sharp distinction between commitments of the *puggala* and the succession of the aggregates *(khandha-santāna)* starts to break down. These two modes of describing the normative contours of moral life look like two sides of a spinning karmic coin to me. And according to Buddhaghosa, the only way to stop that spinning is to abandon perceptions of oneself as being a person and to "resolve one's mind on the elements."

If Ganeri wants to claim the axiological view as Buddhaghosa's or that of the Pāli Buddhists more generally, he needs to cite sources that support that attribution. If he is now defending a positive philosophical position that Buddhaghosa and the Pāli Buddhists reject—and I have argued here, on the basis of Ganeri's citations, that Buddhaghosa at least would reject this view—then he should say so.[18] If what is going on here is that Ganeri is articulating his own view in opposition to Buddhaghosa's—though, again, he seems to put this view in the mouth of the Pāli Buddhists in several places (*AnS*, pp. 13, 34–35)—then it is worth noting, at the climax of the book, that the positive proposal on offer is quite literally the opposite view of persons endorsed by the philosophical protagonist we have been following closely up until this point. If that is in fact what is going on here, then it's a strange way to end a book, which up until now has read like a philosophical reconstruction of Buddhaghosa's views on mind.

The Apophatic Theory of Individuating Persons

On a closely related note, let me comment briefly on Ganeri's claim that Buddhaghosa has an apophatic view of persons *(puggala)*. The claim is: "As the immune system determines the boundaries of a living organism so complex affective-cognitive response determines the boundaries of persons: there is a constitutive tie between what is wholesome to one's human flourishing and one's boundaries as an individual" (*AnS*, p. 35). Further, Ganeri also says that "The concept of a person in Pāli Buddhism is a negative one: . . . by being the concept of attributes concerning which there is no disgust. No active principle binds these states together, and there is nothing I can point to as the essence of me: all there is to being the person one is is the absence of disaffection" (*AnS*, p. 303). So, here we have a distinctive theory of persons and the claim that this is a theory that is embraced by all of Pāli Buddhism, not just Buddhaghosa.

The extent to which Pāli Buddhism can be construed as endorsing such a view will depend on what this theory is a theory of. If it's a theory of how persons arise, that is, how the *nāma-rūpa* is formed and taken to be a *puggala*, then Pāli Buddhists will certainly reject this view. In brief, this is because the contours of our personhood are built up out of both wholesome and unwholesome actions *(kamma)* and their attendant results *(phala)*. If, on the other hand, Ganeri's theory is about how one develops moral *character*, then I see no incompatibility with this view and the Pāli Buddhist's antecedent philosophical commitments. However, it is not clear to me what Ganeri is after. In the passage cited above, it appears that he is after the more robust view, that the apophatic process is a construction of persons or beings. But then he also claims, in setting up a quote from the sutta literature (*S* iii.70, at *AnS*, p. 300), that there is a "mechanism by which the formation of *character* does take place" (my emphasis).

My reasons for denying that Pāli Buddhists could be apophatic theorists of personhood in the fuller sense are as follows. There are four links that come in two pairs at the beginning and end of the twelve-point formulation of the dependent origination *(paṭiccasamuppāda)* that will constrain any Pāli Buddhist theory of how persons are built. The first pair is (a) *avijāapaccayā saṅkhāra*, or ignorance is the condition for the arising of formations, and *saṅkhāra paccaya viññāṇa*, or formations are the condition for the arising of consciousness. The second pair is (b) *upādāna paccaya bhāva*, or clinging is the condition for the arising of becoming and *bhāva paccaya jāti*, or becoming is the condition for the arising of birth (*Vis*, chap. xvii). Buddhists are committed to the view that beings only exist because of the ignorance that encodes their past *kamma* with a moral valence (*kusala* or *akusala*, wholesome or unwholesome), which results in the fruit *(phala)* of their current existence. The boundaries of the person are constituted by the causal activity of the five aggregates affected by clinging, and this process is *dukkha*.

To claim that "A person is a being whose boundaries are defined through an activity of disattention" (*AnS*, p. 303) is true for Pāli Buddhists, but not in the way that Ganeri claims. This is because Ganeri also thinks that "all there is to being the person one is is the absence of disaffection" (ibid.). For Ganeri, what is included in my personhood are those states that I don't disaffect or disavow. But it is precisely those repressed and unwholesome states that keep me bounded within the confines of cyclic existence *(saṃsāra)*; it is such states that determine my karmic destiny, the form of life I will take in lives to come. Thus, to claim that what makes me who I am does not include those disaffected states is to deny a basic principle of Buddhist views about karmic continuity, namely that it is our ignorance *(avijjā)* that forms the basis of our karmically active formations *(saṅkhāra)*, and it is these that give rise to the continuity of consciousness *(viññāṇa)* that defines the scope of our lives through our deep habits of clinging or

appropriation *(upādana)*, which in turn shape our becoming *(bhava)* in this life and perhaps the next *(bhaāva paccaya jāti)*.

It is worth noting here that the Buddhist position I am reconstructing has a philosophical plausibility that the apophatic view lacks. Namely, the Buddhist view explains how even the things that we disavow, repress, and dis-attend have a powerful influence over the contours of our life; they help make us who and what we are. The more we push things away and ignore them, the more they shape us. It is a strange view to say that what makes us who we are as persons are only those collections of mental states that we do not dis-attend. One might think that quite the opposite is true, as the Buddhists seem to. I also note here as I did at the end of the previous subsection, that there is a concern about authorial voice here as well. I have argued that Ganeri *does* put this view in the mouths of the Pāli Buddhists (see *AnS*, p. 303) and that he is wrong to do so. But even if this were denied, it is unclear why the positive proposal would emerge in such stark and opposing contrast to the commitments of the philosophers on whose views we have spent so much time up until this point.

IV. Conclusion: From Comparative to Borderless Philosophy . . . and Back Again

As a cross-cultural philosopher of mind, Ganeri is a proponent of a borderless philosophy that crosses or even erases traditional boundaries between cultures and traditions. The vision of philosophy on offer here is one where there are few or no boundaries in the ideational cosmopolis of dialectical exchange, except those that help us ask, and perhaps start to answer, a well-framed philosophical question. The fruitfulness of such a vision rests on the question of what we mean when we say that philosophy is 'borderless' (Chakrabarti and Weber 2015). I would offer a cautious endorsement of a borderless philosophy in the following sense. Philosophers need to learn to let down their guard in terms of which resources they engage with when trying to address a philosophical question, especially those questions that have been dealt with by several different cultures of philosophy. Ganeri's career is a rather inspired example of the fruits such an approach can bear (see Ganeri 2001; 2012 especially in this regard).

At the conclusion of *AnS*, this 'borderless' approach to philosophy is framed in stark methodological contrast to 'comparative philosophy.' Ganeri claims of *AnS* that "This is not comparative philosophy of mind, the ambition of which is to demonstrate affinities and differences between theories that have arisen in different cultures, perhaps to extract the highest common factor among them, or to appraise or model one in terms of the other" (*AnS*, p. 341). But there is an important danger lurking here: when we help ourselves too much to the rhetoric of universal philosophical concern and perennial questions, it is easy to lose track of the historical conditions that

circumscribe the horizon of concern of those authors with whom we wish to engage. I fear that *AnS* is at least somewhat guilty of this more problematic form of borderlessness. Because of this, *AnS* presents a highly constructed and somewhat contorted picture of Buddhaghosa's thought.

In offering criticisms of Ganeri's reading of Buddhaghosa throughout this review, my tacit claim has been that the borderless approach is somewhat over-applied in *AnS*. The reason I think so is because the primary texts that are being worked with here are from one author whose actual views are available to us if we read him carefully. Thus, I believe that it is incumbent upon Ganeri to (a) give an accurate reading of Buddhaghosa and (b) explain *why* and *how* this reading helps us address a well-defined problem in contemporary philosophy of mind. In terms of addressing (b), Ganeri's book is successful in that it invites us to appreciate that 'attention' might be present in our mental lives in different and more complex ways than we might originally have thought. Regarding (a), I have argued that Ganeri gets Buddhaghosa wrong on a number of fronts, under-emphasizing Buddhaghosa's inconsistencies, goals, and source material. While this might or might not bear on the theory of attention, mind, and person that Ganeri wants to articulate, it does raise the question of whether Buddhaghosa held this view. I therefore maintain that comparative philosophy remains important as a methodological precursor to a fully borderless fusion philosophy. We can't go beyond borders until we fully assess their contours. We can't do philosophy with those ancient and departed philosophers until we have some sense of what they think is true and false.

I want to flag an important response to this line of criticism that is available to Ganeri and to forestall it. The response goes like this. There is a difference between providing a philosophical history *of* a thinker and doing philosophy *with* a thinker. Ganeri is clearly trying to do the latter and not the former. Therefore, any qualms I might have about accuracy of representation are missing the philosophical forest for the trees. Thus, it can be argued that in terms of (a) accuracy of representation and (b) philosophical fruit, the fruits of *AnS* are sufficient to ignore any problems that might exist on account of any textual inaccuracies it might contain. Perhaps I have been too pedantic and accused Ganeri of failing to accomplish an aim he has in fact not tried to achieve. In claiming that Buddhaghosa has interesting philosophical points to make to contemporary discussions of attention, Ganeri is not obliged to give a completely accurate picture of what Buddhaghosa thought. Fair enough.[19]

My response in return is twofold. First, why not do both? I see no reason to trade off on either of these explanatory targets, especially when meeting one (a) helps the case of meeting another (b). I have tried to show that in getting Buddhaghosa right we can still tell a compelling story about his connection with contemporary discourse on the mind.[20] Accuracy of representation helps us see better what Buddhaghosa's contribution might be now.

Second, throughout the book, Ganeri frames his approach as one of putting claims in the mouths of Buddhaghosa in particular, and the Pāli Buddhists more widely.[21] Therefore, by showing that these thinkers don't hold those views, this shows also that Ganeri has gotten things wrong in terms of his own framing of the goal of the text, at least part of which seems to be to tell us what these thinkers thought. This second part of my response can be framed in the form of a request for clarification. Ganeri has not been as clear as he might have been about the authorial voice of *AnS*. Is it Ganeri himself, a reconstruction of Buddhaghosa, or some hybrid of these (call him 'Ganerighosa,' perhaps)? A more explicit discussion of the degree of resolution Ganeri is attempting to work with in engaging Buddhaghosa and the extent to which he is an 'Attentionalist' would help the reader assess how accountable the author is to an accurate portrayal of his main philosophical protagonist—though, I must confess, I see no reason not to aim for both a high degree of accuracy and a thoroughgoing application of the historically embedded view to our contemporary philosophical milieu.

Lastly, I note a decided shift in Ganeri's thinking in *AnS*, but it remains relatively unthematized there. Namely, in previous work Ganeri has strongly emphasized the importance of the self (Ganeri 2012, 2013). By contrast, in *AnS* we see a rejection of the self, or at least one particular version of it. I suspect that the lack of a sustained treatment of this shift is a function of the author's humble approach to cross-cultural philosophy, not wishing to foreground the evolution of his own thinking but rather focusing on the insights of those with whose work he is engaged. The issue here is that Ganeri's own thinking on the nature of self is vital to both contemporary research and the history of Indian philosophy. Ganeri is not just an interpreter of that tradition, he is a participant—indeed, arguably the most important living cross-cultural philosopher. Hence, we must measure the worth of his writings not just as attempts to reflect and revitalize the works of those who came before but also in terms of a personal philosophical evolution of the author himself. Understanding the shift in his thinking from endorsing the Self (cf. Ganeri 2012 in particular) to his now more decidedly Buddhist position of seeming to reject it, is both historically and philosophically vital. At the outset of *AnS*, Ganeri does endorse his previous view (*AnS*, p. 13) and then targets views of action that claim there is such a thing as 'agent causation' (*AnS*, p. 14). But it is not as clear as would be ideal how this denial of self *qua* agent causation squares with (a) the preservation of a notion of selfhood he might hope to preserve from previous work (especially Ganeri 2012) and (b) the strong strands of reductionism I have highlighted in Buddhaghosa. I hope that Ganeri will offer his readers some analysis of this development in his thinking and whether he conceives of his denial of the self in *AnS* as being continuous or not with his endorsement of the self in his earlier work.

To conclude, Ganeri has laid down a significant contribution that contemporary Buddhist philosophers and philosophers of mind and attention

should take seriously. *AnS* deserves to be studied very carefully, indeed. Buddhaghosa and the Pāli texts that he engages with are substantially philosophical and deserve the same kind of careful consideration as their Mahāyāna forebears. Ganeri is to be commended for bringing Buddhaghosa and the Pāli texts into the open window of philosophical attention. I can only hope that other philosophers will follow his courageous example and give these texts the careful reading they so richly deserve.

Notes

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Abbreviations are used in the Notes as follows:

AnS   *Attention, Not Self*. See Ganeri 2018.
Fount *Atthasālinī* (Fount of meaning; Expositor). See Tin 1999.
S   *Saṃyutta Nikāya*. See Bodhi 2000.
Vis   *Visuddhimagga*. See Buddhaghosa 2000.

1 – To be sure, there is a good deal of work that has been done on Pāli Buddhism and Buddhaghosa (Gethin 1992; Harvey 1995; Heim 2013; Karunadasa 2014; Shulman 2014). However, to my mind, Buddhaghosa and the Pāli canon on which his works rest remain very much in the background of contemporary cross-cultural philosophy, which, in its Buddhist register, remains preoccupied with what Jan Westerhoff calls "The Golden Age of Buddhist philosophy" (Westerhoff 2018).

2 – *cittan ti ārammaṇaṃ cintetī ti cittaṃ vijānātī ti attho.*

3 – *Itaresu pana yaṃkiñci vedayitalakkhaṇaṃ, sabbaṃ taṃ ekato katvā vedanākkhandho.*

4 – *etthāpi vedayitalakkhaṇaṃ nāma vedanāva.*

5 – *'viññāṇaṃ viññāṇan'ti, āvuso, vuccati. kittāvatā nu kho, āvuso, viññāṇanti vuccatī"ti? 'vijānāti vijānātī'ti kho, āvuso, tasmā viññāṇanti vuccati. 'kiñca vijānāti? sukhantipi vijānāti, dukkhantipi vijānāti, adukkhamasukhantipi vijānāti. 'vijānāti vijānātī'ti kho, āvuso, tasmā viññāṇanti vuccatī"ti.*

    Ganeri opts to translate *vijānāti* as 'One is conscious' rather than as 'It cognizes.' *Viññāṇa* and *vijānāti* are two different terms, even if they are closely related. The latter is not merely the adverbial rendering of the

former. One concept *(vijānāti)* is used to define the other *(viññāṇa)* in terms of how the latter takes up with an object that is its occasioning cause; namely *viññāṇa* takes up with its object by cognizing *(vijānāti)* it. Another potential rendering for the epistemic verb here is 'knows.'

6 – I will return to this point below in the section on "Two Abhidhammic Models of Mind" when I explore Buddhaghosa's use of the terms *viññāṇa* and *citta* with respect to *bhavaṅga*.

7 – Definitionally, the literal rendering of *bhavaṅga* is 'factor of existence.' Ñāṇamoli Bhikkhu translates *bhavaṅga* as 'life-continuum' in his English edition of Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*. Buddhaghosa there refers to the *bhavaṅga* as a kind of 'stream' that flows in the absence of ordinary sensory cognitive functions (*Vis* 459, xiv.114). Peter Harvey's (1995, p. 161) etymological analysis suggests that we should think of *bhavaṅga* as a kind of becoming *(bhāva)*.

8 – *Paṭisandhiviññāṇe pana niruddhe taṃ taṃ paṭisandhiviññāṇamanu- bandhamānaṃ tassa tasseva kammassa vipākabhūtaṃ tasmiññeva ārammaṇe tādisameva bhavaṅgaviññāṇaṃ nāma pavattati, punapi tādisanti evaṃ asati santānavinivattake aññasmiṃ cittuppāde nadīso- taṃ viya supinaṃ apassato niddokkamanakālādīsu aparimāṇasaṅk- hyampi pavattatiyevāti.*

9 – See Thompson 2015b, however, for arguments that we are phenome- nally conscious during deep dreamless sleep.

10 – *Ekasmiṃ hi bhave yaṃ sabbapacchimaṃ bhavaṅgacittaṃ, taṃ tato cavanattā cutīti vuccati.*

11 – *Tameva parisuddhaṭṭhena paṇḍaraṃ. Bhavaṅgaṃ sandhāyetaṃ vuttaṃ.*

12 – See Analayo 2017 and Smith 2018 for more on luminosity and *bhavaṅga*.

13 – I do not reproduce the whole passage here but only extract a few selections.

14 – Ganeri is certainly aware of the need to construe Buddhist philosophy as being engaged with a world that is 'normatively alive' and thus cannot be accused of the specific kind of category mistake McDowell wants to foist on Evans. Rather the worry is merely an analogous one about the extent to which Ganeri's wish to reconstruct Buddhaghosa as a philosopher who should be taken seriously by contemporary attention theorists distorts the extent to which his philosophical psychology is irreducibly embedded in a project of emancipation, the contours of which are quite supramundane and canonically Buddhist.

15 – In the passage Ganeri erroneously cites, the notion of *paññā* does not appear, though it does appear in the actual opening passage.

16 – *"sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā"ti, yadā paññāya passati. atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiyā.*

"sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā"ti, yadā paññāya passati. atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiyā.

"sabbe dhammā anattā"ti, yadā paññāya passati. atha nibbindati dukkhe, esa maggo visuddhiyā.

17 – *anavassutacittassa, ananvāhatacetaso, puññapāpapahīnassa, natthi jāgarato bhayaṃ.*

18 – I maintain that it is possible to read the Pāli suttas as being non-reductionist about persons or selves, though I myself do not read them that way. Ganeri has offered little textual analysis of this stratum of the texts in connection with their claims about self and personhood. Those who engage this question directly include Gethin (1986), Hamilton (2000), and Davis (2016).

19 – My thanks to Jonardon Ganeri and Matthew Dasti for pushing me to be clearer about this issue.

20 – For example, I maintain that my reading of Buddhaghosa's account of the *vīthi-citta* is both more accurate and more plausible as an account of how latent mental functions should be understood in light of the phenomenal/access consciousness distinction (see the section on "Two Abhidhammic Models of Mind").

21 – For examples I have cited in this paper, see *AnS*, pp. 13, 30–31, 34–35, 49, 303.

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Response to Monima Chadha and Sean M. Smith Reviews of *Attention, Not Self*

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I thank Sean Smith and Monima Chadha for their reviews of *Attention, Not Self* and for their commentary. It has been rewarding to think through the issues they have raised, and I am grateful to both.

Let me begin with the methodological principle that Sean Smith endorses at the beginning of his review. Smith says this: "My main argument is that Ganeri attributes views to Buddhaghosa that the latter does not hold. Embedded in this complaint is the assumption that we should try to get a thinker right and on their own terms as a precursor to seeing how their views interface with those of others. It is an assumption I will rely on throughout." Let me call this the Exegesis First assumption. The assumption takes the form of a prescriptive rule governing intellectual engagement with historical texts, the rule being that philological exegesis should precede philosophical engagement. Now I do think there are intellectual disciplines for which Exegesis First supplies a governing constraint. Most historians of philosophy will endorse it, I believe. The leading historian of philosophy, Peter Adamson, for example, has formulated twenty "Rules for History of Philosophy," and he comments that "With all these worries about avoiding anachronism, you may have gotten the impression that I am only worried about 'getting the text right,' and in fact I do think that is a first step in dealing with any historical source material." So Smith's claim that I am guilty of violating this rule would have application if *Attention, Not Self* were a work in the discipline of history of philosophy.

However, it is not. My book is, rather, a contribution to a newly emerging sub-discipline within philosophy, one that has been variously designated "cross-cultural philosophy" (Garfield, Thompson), "cosmopolitanism in philosophy" (Ganeri), and "philosophy without borders" (Chakrabarti). I state this clearly in the Introduction, and devote the Postscript entirely to setting