AN 10.70 — Kathavatthu Sutta: Topics of Conversation (2)

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Source revision: sha256:7c411108530c04aafcca0ac43267ed12227cbb2653320e8ae0bb686e566bb783

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Savatthi at Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's monastery. Now at that time a large number of monks, after the meal, on returning from their alms round, had gathered at the meeting hall and were engaged in many kinds of bestial topics of conversation: conversation about kings, robbers, & ministers of state; armies, alarms, & battles; food & drink; clothing, furniture, garlands, & scents; relatives; vehicles; villages, towns, cities, the countryside; women & heroes; the gossip of the street & the well; tales of the dead; tales of diversity, the creation of the world & of the sea; talk of whether things exist or not.

Then the Blessed One, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the meeting hall and, on arrival, sat down on a seat made ready. As he was sitting there, he addressed the monks: "For what topic of conversation are you gathered together here? In the midst of what topic of conversation have you been interrupted?"

"Just now, lord, after the meal, on returning from our alms round, we gathered at the meeting hall and got engaged in many kinds of bestial topics of conversation: conversation about kings, robbers, & ministers of state; armies, alarms, & battles; food & drink; clothing,

furniture, garlands, & scents; relatives; vehicles; villages, towns, cities, the countryside; women & heroes; the gossip of the street & the well; tales of the dead; tales of diversity, the creation of the world & of the sea; talk of whether things exist or not."

"It isn't right, monks, that sons of good families, on having gone forth out of faith from home to the homeless life, should get engaged in such topics of conversation, i.e., conversation about kings, robbers, & ministers of state... talk of whether things exist or not.

"Monks, there are these ten grounds for praise. Which ten?

"There is the case where a monk himself is modest and instigates talk on modesty among the monks. The fact that he is modest and instigates talk on modesty among the monks is grounds for praise.

"He himself is contented and instigates talk on contentment among the monks...

"He himself is secluded and instigates talk on seclusion among the monks...

"He himself is non-entangled and instigates talk on non-entanglement among the monks...

"He himself has his persistence aroused and instigates talk on arousing persistence among the monks...

"He himself is consummate in virtue and instigates talk on being consummate in virtue among the monks...

"He himself is consummate in concentration and instigates talk on being consummate in concentration among the monks...

"He himself is consummate in discernment and instigates talk on being consummate in discernment among the monks...

"He himself is consummate in release and instigates talk on being consummate in release among the monks...

"He himself is consummate in knowledge & vision of release and instigates talk on being consummate in knowledge & vision of release among the monks. The fact that he is consummate in knowledge & vision of release and instigates talk on being consummate in knowledge & vision of release among the monks is grounds for praise.

"These are the ten grounds for praise."

See also: AN 10.69