
Selected *Madhyama-āgama* Discourse Passages
and their Pāli Parallels

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Abstract

In the present paper I study passages from the *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation in order to document the contribution comparative study can offer for understanding and at times correcting Pāli discourse material.

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Keywords

Comparative Studies; Madhyama-āgama; Pāli Discourses

1. Introduction

In the present paper I survey a selection of passages from the *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation as entry no. 26 in the Taishō edition. My main aim is to document the contribution such passages can offer for an alternative understanding, or even for a correction, of their Pāli counterparts.¹ The evidence I survey is quite variegated; some differences have considerable consequences for our understanding of early Buddhist thought, whereas others merely testify to the type of errors that naturally occur during oral transmission.

When considered collectively, these instances make it in my view impossible, methodologically speaking, to consider the Pāli version as invariably the earliest and most trustworthy specimen of a particular discourse.² Instead, a proper appreciation of Buddhist thought and history makes a comparative study of all parallel versions indispensable. I believe that the selected *Madhyama-āgama* passages I present below suffice to bear out the methodological need to go beyond basing one's research on Pāli material only.³ Needless to say, the

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¹ This paper was originally presented at a seminar on the *Madhyama-āgama* held at the Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts in October 2015. It incorporates cases discussed in more detail in Anālayo 2011b; cf. also Anālayo 2005a and 2005b and, for a survey of instances that corroborate the main point I make in this paper, Bodhi 2012: 72–74. I am indebted to Rod Bucknell, *bhikkhuni* Dhammadinnā, Mike Running, and the reviewers for commenting on a draft version of this paper.

² Here I am forced to disagree with von Hinüber 2015b: 198, who in reply to criticism I raised in Anālayo 2008b (of a hypothesis presented by von Hinüber 2008) argues that “concentration on the Theravāda tradition is neither a ‘methodological problem’ (p. 114) nor a ‘methodological shortcoming’ (p. 122), but a methodological necessity. Only the oldest levels of the Buddhist tradition we can reach might occasionally tell something about the very early history of Buddhism.”

³ The decision to focus on *Madhyama-āgama* discourses simply reflects the topic of the seminar to which I contributed this paper. The same potential exists for parallels preserved in the other *Āgamas*, in Indic language fragments, in Tibetan translation, etc. In fact von Hinüber 2015b: 197 note 4 refers to my study of the *Nandakovāda-sutta*, Anālayo 2010a, which clearly shows that the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel has preserved an earlier presentation than its Pāli counterpart; cf. also note 157 below.

same holds even more so the other way round, in that a study of the Chinese *Āgamas* must take into consideration their Pāli parallels. The circumstance that in this paper I focus on the potential contribution of a Chinese *Āgama* to a study of the Pāli discourses is simply motivated by the fact that this potential is not as widely recognized as the help the Pāli texts offer for understanding and studying their Chinese parallels.

My presentation follows the sequence of the discourses in the *Madhyama-āgama* collection and thereby can also be read as a commentary alongside the translation of the collection that is at present under preparation.⁴ In the case of differences that I have already examined in detail elsewhere as part of a study of the respective discourse, I just summarize my findings and refer to those publications for further details.

2. MĀ 9: The Seven Stages of Purification

The seven stages of purification are a central topic in the *Rathavinīta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, where they form part of a discussion between the Buddha's chief disciple Sāriputta and another eminent disciple named Puṇṇa Mantāniputta. In the *Rathavinīta-sutta*, the question asked by Sāriputta to get the discussion started takes the following form:

Venerable friend, is the holy life lived under our Blessed One?⁵

The form this question takes is somewhat unexpected. It makes little sense for a Buddhist monk to ask another Buddhist monk whether the holy life or *brahmacariya*, a standard reference to the monastic life, is being lived under the Buddha. The *Madhyama-āgama* version of the question, with which Sāriputta begins the discussion, reads as follows:

Venerable friend, are you practising the holy life under the recluse

⁴ The first volume has already been published, Bingenheimer et al. 2013; the remainder has been translated and is being prepared for publication.

⁵ MN 24 at MN I 147,16: *bhagavati no, āvuso, brahmacariyaṃ vussatī ti?*

Gotama?⁶

Although the question in the *Madhyama-āgama* version as such reads more meaningfully, it is unusual for a disciple of the Buddha to be depicted as referring to his teacher as “the recluse Gotama”. In such contexts in the early discourses the respectful expression *bhagavant* would be the appropriate form of reference. That the expression found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is not simply the result of an error by the translator can be seen from another parallel preserved in Sanskrit fragments, which contains the word “recluse”, *śramaṇa*, in a context paralleling one of Sāriputta’s questions about the purpose of the holy life under the Buddha.⁷

Close inspection of the narrative setting indicates that this is more likely to be the original reading. The parallel versions agree in reporting that Puṇṇā was surprised to find out, at the end of their discussion, that the person with whom he had been conversing was the Buddha’s chief disciple Sāriputta. This part reads as follows in the *Madhyama-āgama* version:

Now I have been discussing with a disciple of the Blessed One without knowing it, I have been discussing with the second most respected one without knowing it,⁸ I have been discussing with the general of the

⁶ MĀ 9 at T I 430b26: 賢者從沙門瞿曇修梵行耶? This question has already been translated by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 144, without discussing this indeed very minor difference in formulation from MN 24.

⁷ SHT VI 1329 B1, Bechert and Wille 1989: 84 (identified by J. Chung and M. Schmidt in Bechert and Wille 2000: 201). The version of the question in EĀ 39.10 at T II 734b18 instead employs the expression “Blessed One”; also here Sāriputta addresses Mantāniputta by his name. This does not seem a particularly meaningful presentation, because later the same discourse reports that, at the end of their discussion, Sāriputta asked for Mantāniputta’s name, EĀ 39.10 at T II 735a19: 汝今為名何等? (a query also reported in the parallels). This shows that the wording of the passage at T II 734b18 is not reliable, as it conflicts with the remainder of the same discourse.

⁸ In MN 24 at MN I 150,27 Puṇṇa calls Sāriputta “the disciple who is comparable to the teacher”, *satthukappa sāvaka*. Although this does involve high praise, it does not put him on the same level as the Buddha; Sāriputta remains merely a disciple. This conforms to the way he is presented in other early discourses, *pace* Karashima 2015: 186f, who proposes that “in the *Suttanipāta* ... disciples, such as Sāriputta/Sāriputra, are designated as *buddhas*. Śākyamuni proclaimed that anybody, who follows his

Dharma without knowing it, I have been discussing with the disciple who keeps the wheel of Dharma rolling without knowing it. If I had known this was the venerable Sāriputta, I would not have been able to say a single sentence in reply, let alone discuss in such depth.⁹

Another point relevant to the narrative background against which the above episode is probably best read emerges from an episode found in the different *Vinayas*, according to which the typical Buddhist way of sewing up robes would have been decided only at an already somewhat evolved stage in the development of Buddhist monasticism.¹⁰ Considering the present discourse from the viewpoint of this depiction, it would follow that during earlier times members of the monastic community would presumably not have been easily recognizable by their outer appearance as Buddhist monks, in that they would supposedly have dressed in the way used in general among recluses and wanderers roaming the Ganges valley. The appropriateness of such a reading can be seen from yet another episode found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda and Sarvāstivāda *Vinayas*, according to which King Bimbisāra

teachings and his practices together with its mode of living, can become a *buddha*,” and then states that “much later ... the hierarchy of lay Buddhists, disciples, *pratyekabuddhas* and Śākyamuni Buddha was formed.” Karashima does not provide a more specific reference and I have not been able to identify any passage in the *Suttanipāta* that presents Sāriputta as a Buddha or even as completely on a par with the Buddha. In fact, whereas the hierarchy mentioned by Karashima is consistently reflected in the early discourses extant from various transmission lineages, the idea of becoming a Buddha is clearly a later development; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010b.

⁹ MĀ 9 at T I 431b27 to 431c1. The parallel passages are MN 24 at MN I 150,27 and EĀ 39.10 at T II 735b1; cf. also SHT II 163b R6, Waldschmidt et al. 1968: 16.

¹⁰ According to the episode in question, the Buddha told Ānanda that from now on the robes should be sewn together conforming to the pattern of paddy fields; cf. the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 855a20, the Mahāsaṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 454c27 (where the instruction is given not to Ānanda, but to unnamed monks), the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 137a22, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Dutt 1984: 50,11, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 194c25, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin I 287,7. As Ānanda is on record for becoming the Buddha’s personal attendant only about twenty years after the Buddha’s awakening (cf. Th 1041ff), it would follow that the regulation concerning the way to sew Buddhist robes should not be reckoned as belonging to an early stage in the history of the Buddhist monastic order.

worshipped a heterodox practitioner, mistaking him to be a Buddhist monk.¹¹

If the same perspective should hold for the narrative setting of the *Rathavināta-sutta*, it would follow that Sāriputta can be visualized as someone who need not have been immediately recognizable as a Buddhist monk. On this assumption, in order not to reveal his identity prematurely by betraying that he is a disciple of the Buddha, it would indeed make sense for Sāriputta to be shown as using the expression “the recluse Gotama”.¹² If this should indeed be the more original formulation, it could easily have happened, in the course of transmission, that the apparent inappropriateness of Sāriputta using such an expression resulted in it being replaced by the term *bhagavant*.

This in itself minor variation carries further significance, since the narrative context to which it points also makes it fairly probable that the topic of discussion chosen by Sāriputta would have been one of general interest among ancient Indian wanderers and recluses. Had he been shown instead to broach a topic characteristic of Buddhist thought, then in the narrative setting of the discourse this would have also run the risk of prematurely revealing his identity as a disciple of the Buddha.

Now the main doctrinal topic of the *Rathavināta-sutta*, the seven stages of purification, occurs in fact only in this discourse and its parallels, and as part of a set of nine purifications in the *Dasuttara-sutta* and its parallels.¹³ Only with the *Visuddhimagga* do the seven stages of purification come to the foreground as the chief framework for progress on the path.

In the *Rathavināta-sutta* and in the *Dasuttara-sutta* the seven stages lead up to liberation, but do not include liberation itself. Liberation instead constitutes a separate stage of purification mentioned only in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, placed after the set of seven stages.

¹¹ Cf. Dutt 1984: 49,3 and T 1435 at T XXIII 194c12.

¹² Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012c: 70–77.

¹³ DN 34 at DN III 288,16 and its parallels in Sanskrit fragments, Schlingloff 1962: 18, DĀ 10 at T I 56a23, and T 13 at T I 238c25.

Yet in his *Visuddhimagga* Buddhaghosa assigns the four levels of awakening to the seventh purification.¹⁴ This does not square with the implications of the seventh purification either in the *Rathavināta-sutta* or in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, where the seventh stage leads up to but differs from arrival at the final goal. This in turn gives the impression that even Buddhaghosa himself was not sufficiently familiar with the significance of the seven stages of purification.¹⁵ In this way, an in itself minor difference in the *Madhyama-āgama* version provides a significant perspective on the main teaching in the *Rathavināta-sutta*, which acquired a position of central importance in later Theravāda exegesis.

¹⁴ Vism 672,4: *sotāpattimaggo sakadāgāmimaggo anāgāmimaggo arahattamaggo ti imesu pana catusu maggesu nānaṃ nānadassanavisuddhi nāma*; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2005c and 2009c: 8–11. In reply to my suggestions in these two papers, Endo 2015: 55 argues that the circumstance that the discussion in MN 24 was not reported to the Buddha implies that “the topic of the seven stages of purification was a well-known subject among the Buddhists in ancient times.” Yet the reporting of a discussion to the Buddha usually happens when a disciple is uncertain whether he or she has represented the Buddha’s position correctly in a debate-type situation. This is not the case in the present instance. Endo 2015: 68 also comments that “the scheme of ‘seven stages of purification’, it is contended, was commonly practiced and aspired to among the various contemplative and philosophical traditions in ancient India. But this contention does not supply the reason why the Buddhists *should* adopt this scheme” In Anālayo 2009c I suggested that the reason for adoption of the scheme could be related to Buddhaghosa’s compilation of the *Visuddhimagga* in competition with the *Vimuttimagga*. Endo 2015: 70 also argues that it can “be inferred that Buddhaghosa did *not* adopt the scheme of sevenfold purification (*satta-visuddhi*) as the structural scaffolding of the *Visuddhimagga*, but that by reducing and incorporating the last two items of ‘*paññā*’ and ‘*vimutti*’ of the ‘nine factors of exertion for purity’ (*nava pārissuddhi-padhāniyaṅga*) into the category of ‘*nānadassana*’ ... the list of purifications finally *became* ‘seven’ in the *Visuddhimagga*.” This suggestion does not seem to work, as the terminology used by Buddhaghosa corresponds to the *visuddhi* terminology in MN 24, not to the expression *pārissuddhi-padhāniyaṅga* used in DN 34. Moreover, Endo’s suggestion does not solve the problem, since Buddhaghosa does include under the seventh purification what does not belong there, whether this seventh purification is taken from the scheme in MN 24 or from the scheme in DN 34.

¹⁵ The present case thus seems to conform to a pattern noted by von Hinüber 2015a: 354 in regard to the commentators Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, who “did not always work with the same care and concentration. Consequently, oversights and weakness in systematization help to trace the material they had at hand, and to detect their method of approach.”

3. MĀ 15: Karma and Its Fruit

A topic closely related to the theme of purification is karma. The *Karajakāya-sutta* among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* begins broaching this topic with a statement on karma that reflects Jain thought,¹⁶ a statement not found in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel and presumably the result of an error in transmission.¹⁷ The *Karajakāya-sutta* also appears to have lost an exposition of the ten unwholesome courses of action, found in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, which would have originally led to its inclusion among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. Clearly the *Karajakāya-sutta* has suffered from errors during its transmission that can be corrected by recourse to its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹⁸

4. MĀ 16: The Kālāmas and Doubt

According to another discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha told the Kālāmas that it is appropriate for them to have doubts about various views. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, however, he rather told them not to have doubts.¹⁹

Although in this case it is not easy to decide which of the two versions has preserved the earlier reading, the difference is significant in so far

¹⁶ AN 10.208 at AN V 299,14: *na tvevāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃveditvā dukkhass'antakiriyaṃ vadāmi* (B²: *appaṭisaṃveditvā*); “yet, monks, I do not say that there is a making of an end of *dukkha* without having experienced [the fruits of] intentional deeds that have been undertaken and accumulated.” According to, e.g., the Jain *Dasaveyāliya-sutta*, Lalwani 1973: 212,1, liberation will be attained only when one’s former bad deeds have been experienced, wherefore it is impossible to reach liberation without karmic retribution being either experienced or else expiated through asceticism.

¹⁷ MĀ 15 at T I 437b27 instead points out that unintentionally performed deeds do not entail karmic retribution; cf. also D 4094 *ju* 236b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a5.

¹⁸ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009b.

¹⁹ AN 3.65 at AN I 189,6 and MĀ 16 at T I 438c12; the same type of difference recurs between SN 42.13 at SN IV 350,15 and MĀ 20 at T I 447a22.

as the advice to the Kālāmas given in the Pāli version is not supported by its parallel and thus its claim to represent early Buddhist thought does not stand on as firm a ground as it would have if the same position had also been reflected in its parallel.²⁰ In other words, discussions of the advice to the Kālāmas need to keep in mind the possibility that the Pāli version could be the result of a change that occurred during transmission and thus its testimony regarding the early Buddhist attitude towards free enquiry and the resolution of doubt is comparatively less certain than other discourses on this and other topic that are supported by their parallels.

5. MĀ 19: A Critique of the Jains

Returning to the topic of the Jains, a minor difference between a Pāli discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel that is also related to Jain thought can be found in the case of the *Devadaha-sutta* and its parallel, which report the Buddha examining the fruitlessness of Jain asceticism. In the Pāli version the Buddha announces ten grounds for censuring the Jains.²¹ Following this announcement, however, he specifies only five. These are that pain may be caused by:

- one's former deeds (1),
- a creator god (2),
- the company one keeps (3),
- one's type of life form (4),
- one's present practice (5).

In each of these five cases the Jains are to be censured for experienc-

²⁰ According to Bodhi 2012: 73f, “in contemporary Buddhist circles it has become almost *de rigueur* to regard the Kālāma Sutta as *the* essential Buddhist text ... held up as proof that the Buddha anticipated Western empiricism, free inquiry, and the scientific method, that he endorsed the personal determination of truth ... it has become one of the most commonly quoted Buddhist texts, offered as the key to convince those with modernist leanings that the Buddha was their forerunner.”

²¹ MN 101 at MN II 222,2: *dasa sahadhammikā vādānūvādā*; on the expression *sahadhammiko vādānūvādo* cf. also Alsdorf 1959.

ing such pain. Then the Buddha points out that even in the absence of each of these five, the Jains are to be censured. Yet the absence of these five does not provide any real ground for censure, let alone five more grounds. Thus the exposition does not contain what the initial announcement promises.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the exposition of grounds for censure works through a similar set of five topics, although in a different sequence. Here, too, the Jains are to be censured for their experience of pain, if this experience is attributable to:

- former deeds (1),
- the company one keeps (2),
- one's destiny (3),
- one's view (4),
- a supreme god (5).

In the *Madhyama-āgama* version this exposition does not result in an internal inconsistency, however, as here the Buddha announces at the outset that he will deliver five grounds for criticism.²²

This gives the impression that an error in textual transmission has affected the *Devadaha-sutta*, resulting in the incorrect count of ten grounds for criticism. Recourse to the *Madhyama-āgama* version helps to clarify this situation.

6. MĀ 29: Right View and the End of *dukkha*

Moving from the fruitlessness of Jain asceticism to the fruits of the Buddhist path, the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* concludes expositions of arrival at right view, a reference to stream-entry, by mentioning the making of an end of *dukkha*.²³ This type of statement is out of context, since

²² MĀ 19 at T I 443c18: 得五詰責.

²³ MN 9 at MN I 47,22: *so sabbaso rāgānusayaṃ pahāya paṭighānusayaṃ paṭivinodetvā asmī ti diṭṭhimānānusayaṃ samūhanitvā avijjaṃ pahāya vijjaṃ uppādetvā diṭṭhe va dhamme dukkhass'antakaro (C': antaṅkaro) hoti. ettāvataṃ pi kho, āvuso, ariyasāvako sammādiṭṭhi hoti*; “by completely abandoning the underlying tendency to lust,

to make an end of *dukkha* represents full awakening. The *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* follows each reference to making an end of *dukkha* by declaring that “to that extent”, *ettāvatā*, a noble disciple is endowed with right view and has gained perfect confidence in the teaching. Such right view and perfect confidence are already gained with stream-entry, at which stage the making of an end of *dukkha* is yet to be accomplished. Hence the expression “to that extent” does not tally with the content of the passage to which it refers.²⁴

The *Madhyama-āgama* version and other parallels, however, describe right view without any comparable statement regarding the overcoming of *dukkha*,²⁵ making it safe to conclude that the passage in the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* is the result of an error in transmission.

7. MĀ 32: The Bodhisattva Already Supreme at Birth

Shifting from the right view gained with stream-entry to qualities of the Buddha, the *Acchariyabbhutadhamma-sutta* presents a listing of the Buddha’s marvellous qualities, one of which is that the Buddha-to-be, right after being born, made the following proclamation:

I am highest in the world, I am best in the world, I am supreme in the

having abolished the underlying tendency to irritation, having exterminated the underlying tendency to the conceited view ‘I am’, abandoning ignorance and having given rise to knowledge, he here and now is one who makes an end of *dukkha*; to that extent, friend, a noble disciple is of right view.” This formulation continues for subsequent expositions of right view in the discourse.

²⁴ Ps I 197,²⁴ records a discussion between the rehearsing monks on the significance of the present passage. Evidently they also had difficulties reconciling the statements made in this passage with the main theme of the discourse.

²⁵ MĀ 29 at T I 461c8 and its parallels S 474 folio 16R7, Tripāṭhī 1962: 51, and SĀ 344 at T II 94b24; cf. also Anālayo 2011d: 20.

world, this is my last birth, there will be no more renewed becoming.²⁶

For the bodhisattva Gotama to make such a proclamation right after his birth implies that he was inevitably destined to awakening, that his struggle to reach awakening by various methods was anyway destined to be successful. This is the case even to such an extent that already now as a baby he can proclaim to have reached the transcendence of future birth that comes only once full awakening has been attained.²⁷

This passage reflects a mature stage in the apotheosis of the Buddha, whereby the qualities that according to other discourses were the outcome of his struggle for awakening came to be considered as already in his possession at the time when he was born.

No such proclamation is recorded in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, confirming the impression that the above passage in the Pāli version reflects distinctly late developments.²⁸ Nevertheless, the *Madhyama-āgama* version also offers a distinctly late indication, which comes at the outset of the listing of marvellous qualities of the Buddha. This reads as follows:

The Blessed One, at the time of the Buddha Kassapa, made his initial vow to realize Buddhahood.²⁹

No such statement is found in the *Acchariyabbhutadhamma-sutta*.

²⁶ MN 123 at MN III 123,21: *aggo 'ham asmi lokassa, settho 'ham asmi lokassa, jettho 'ham asmi lokassa* (B^c and S^c have the last two in the opposite sequence), *ayam antimā jāti, natthi dāni punabbhavo ti*.

²⁷ Silk 2003: 864 points out that, according to this proclamation of supremacy, the bodhisattva “is virtually fully awakened (‘enlightened’) from the moment of his birth”, highlighting the resulting contrast where “the infant, upon his birth, knows everything; the young man he becomes knows nothing.”

²⁸ As already noted by Nakamura 1980/1999: 18, “the verse claimed to have been proclaimed by the Buddha at his birth was composed very late.”

²⁹ MĀ 32 at T I 469c24: 世尊迦葉佛時始願佛道. Minh Chau 1964/1991: 160f has already translated this passage and also summarized the statement quoted above from MN 123. In his comparison he mentions in relation to the first that this vow is usually associated with Dīpaṅkara Buddha. In relation to the second he notes that the Pāli version additionally mentions that the bodhisattva stood on his own feet and faced north.

Together with the apotheosis of the Buddha-to-be evident in the Pāli version, this evidently late statement in the *Madhyama-āgama* about a time in the past when the future Buddha Gotama presumably took the vow to attain Buddhahood can be seen to reflect the beginnings of what was to become the bodhisattva ideal.³⁰

Even though my survey in this paper focuses on cases where the *Madhyama-āgama* version provides significant indications regarding its Pāli counterpart, the present case reflects the fact already mentioned in the introduction that the same potential certainly applies the other way around, in that the Pāli discourses often offer significant indications regarding their *Āgama* parallels. In fact the *Madhyama-āgama* contains some distinctly late discourses that have no Pāli parallel.

One example is a discourse that works through a series of topics that form the scaffolding of the *Dharmaskandha*.³¹ Yet another example is the last discourse in the collection. This could only have come into being in the written medium, since giving the full texts of all of its abbreviations would make it longer than the remainder of the *Madhyama-āgama* collection.³² Still another example is a listing of noble beings that refers to an arahant who can fall away from his attainment, a notion that reflects a considerable and school-specific development in the conception of what becoming an arahant implies.³³

8. MĀ 34: Acela Kassapa's Repeated Going Forth

The conception of an arahant is also the topic of my next example

³⁰ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010b.

³¹ MĀ 86 at T I 562a19; cf. Watanabe 1983/1996: 54 and Anālayo 2014a: 41–44. Incidentally this discourse and MĀ 127 are strong indicators for the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, on which cf. also Anālayo 2008c: 7, 2012b: 516–521 (in reply to Chung and Fukita 2011) and Anālayo 2017b (in reply to Chung 2015 and 2017).

³² MĀ 222 at T I 805c10; cf. Anālayo 2014a: 44–47.

³³ MĀ 127 at T I 616a18; for the counterpart expression in a quotation of this discourse in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* cf. Wogihara 1936: 566,34.

from the *Bakkula-sutta*, which reports that the marvellous qualities of the monk Bakkula inspired the ascetic Acela Kassapa to go forth.³⁴ Having gone forth he in due course became an arahant. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel does not give the name of Bakkula's visitor and, even though he clearly was delighted on hearing about the marvellous qualities of Bakkula, he did not go forth, nor is there any indication that he reached any level of awakening.³⁵

Such variations regarding the effect of a discourse on its listeners are a recurrent feature that emerges from comparative studies of parallel versions. What makes this case of particular interest is the circumstance that Acela Kassapa's going forth recurs in other Pāli discourses. A discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya* reports that Acela Kassapa went forth after hearing a discourse by the Buddha on asceticism.³⁶ In this case the *Dīgha-āgama* parallel agrees that Acela Kassapa went forth.³⁷ According to both versions, after going forth he became an arahant.

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* also reports that Acela Kassapa went forth and eventually became an arahant, this time after hearing a different discourse by the Buddha on the topic of what causes pleasure and pain.³⁸ According to three parallels to this discourse, however, Acela Kassapa instead attained stream-entry during the discourse, did not go forth, and was soon after killed by a cow.³⁹

In another discourse in the same *Samyutta-nikāya* Acela Kassapa once more goes forth and eventually becomes an arahant, this time after

³⁴ MN 124 at MN III 127,14.

³⁵ MĀ 34 at T I 475c13 just reports that he rejoiced together with the monks who were present. Minh Chau 1964/1991: 75 already noted that only the Pāli version reports his going forth and attaining of arahantship.

³⁶ DN 8 at DN I 176,29.

³⁷ DĀ 25 at T I 104c11, which at T I 102c26 introduces him as 倮形梵志姓迦葉; listed in Akanuma 1930/1994: 4 as corresponding to the name Acela Kassapa.

³⁸ SN 12.17 at SN II 21,26.

³⁹ SĀ 302 at T II 86b3, T 499 at T XIV 768c20, and fragment S 474 folio 14R2, Tripāṭhī 1962: 47; cf. also SHT V 1133a A3, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 128.

being inspired by a meeting with the householder Citta.⁴⁰ A parallel in the *Samyukta-āgama* reports the same happy outcome, with the difference that it does not provide the name of the one who was so inspired by the householder Citta as to go forth as a Buddhist monk.⁴¹

In sum, according to the Pāli discourses Acela Kassapa went forth and became an arahant on these four occasions:

- DN 8 after meeting the Buddha (discourse on asceticism),
- MN 124 after meeting Bakkula,
- SN 12.7 after meeting the Buddha (discourse on pleasure and pain),
- SN 41.9 after meeting Citta.

Although the same person can go forth on several occasions, it would not be possible for the same person to become an arahant each time.⁴² Nor does it seem particularly probable that four different persons by the same name of Acela Kassapa went forth and became arahants. This makes it possible that Acela Kassapa's going forth in the *Bakkula-sutta* is a case of integrating material that stems from an originally different context.

Judging from the situation in the Chinese *Āgama* parallels, the *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse in which he gets to hear a discourse from the Buddha about asceticism could well have been the place of origin of the depiction of his going forth and eventual attainment of full awakening.

9. MĀ 59: The Marks of a Buddha

Another *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse, the *Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, lists the thirty-two marks that adorn the body of a *mahāpurisa* and then proclaims that one endowed with these marks will become either a wheel-turning

⁴⁰ SN 41.9 at SN IV 302,9; von Hinüber 1997: 68 already noted this instance and MN 124 as separate occasions where Acela Kassapa is on record for having gone forth.

⁴¹ SĀ 573 at T II 152b24.

⁴² In fact Malalasekera 1937/1995: 26 finds it difficult to reconcile the different reports of Acela Kassapa's going forth.

king or a Buddha. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel concludes after a similar exposition.⁴³ The *Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, however, continues with a detailed exposition of what karmic deeds done in the past will lead to a particular mark and in what way these karmic deeds relate to qualities of a wheel-turning king or a Buddha. This exposition appears to be a commentarial type of presentation that has become part of the Pāli discourse.⁴⁴

10. MĀ 70: The Future Buddha Maitreya

Proceeding from the past of the Buddha Gotama to the future, the advent of the next Buddha Metteyya/Maitreya is not reported at all in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Cakkavatti-(sīhanāda)-sutta*.⁴⁵ A closer study of the narrative context makes it safe to conclude that the motif of the future Buddha is a later addition.⁴⁶

11. MĀ 79: The Radiance of *Devas*

Moving from Buddhas to *devas*, the *Anuruddha-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel illustrate the radiance of a congregation of *devas* with the example of several lamps that have been brought into a room, as a result of which their radiance becomes unified and it is no longer possible to distinguish the individual radiance of each lamp.

When the *devas* disperse again, however, their individual radiance can

⁴³ MĀ 59 at T I 494b6, corresponding to DN 30 at DN III 145,17.

⁴⁴ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2017a.

⁴⁵ DN 26 at DN III 76,1 (cf. also DĀ 6 at T I 41c29); for the description of the future wheel-turning king under whose reign in DN 26 the arising of the next Buddha takes place cf. MĀ 70 at T I 524b29. The absence of any such reference in MĀ 70 has already been noted by Karashima et al. 2000: 310f note 121 (cf. Karashima 2013: 178; owing to my ignorance of Japanese I am not able to consult Karashima et al. 2000). The addition of *sīhanāda* to the title is not found in the Asian editions.

⁴⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010b: 107–113 and 2014b.

be recognized. To illustrate this, the *Anuruddha-sutta* describes removing the lamps from the house in which they had been placed.⁴⁷ This illustration seems to be slightly incomplete. Although removing the lamps would indeed stop the merging of their radiance, one would expect some additional specification in the simile to illustrate the radiance of individual *devas*.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel furnishes such additional information. It describes that, after being removed from the room in which they had been together, the lamps are put into separate rooms.⁴⁸ This helps to appreciate the point the simile is meant to illustrate.

12. MĀ 85: The Conceit of Being from a High Family

Another difference of similarly minor significance can be seen in the *Sappurisa-sutta*, which in agreement with its parallels examines various occasions for the arising of conceit. The first such occasion in the parallel versions concerns someone who comes from a high-ranking family.⁴⁹ This seems indeed a potential source of conceit, particularly in the hierarchical society in ancient India.

The *Sappurisa-sutta* covers the same topic in four different ways, all of which in one way or another refer to a superior type of family. Each of these receives a separate and full treatment as a distinct occasion for conceit. The four are:

- the *uccākula*, the “high family”,
- the *mahākula*, the “great family”,
- the *mahābhogakula*, “the family of great wealth”,

⁴⁷ MN 127 at MN III 148,5: *seyyathāpi, gahapati, puriso tāni sambahulāni telappadīpāni tamhā gharā nīhareyya.*

⁴⁸ MĀ 79 at T I 550b15: 猶如有人從一室中出眾多燈，分著諸室。

⁴⁹ MĀ 85 at T I 561a26: 豪貴族, T 48 at T I 837c29: 大姓, and EĀ 17.9 at T II 585a23: 豪族。

- the *ulārabhogakula*, “the family of outstanding wealth”.⁵⁰

Although there could indeed be a difference between a family of high social standing and a family that has much wealth, the four types of family described in the *Sappurisa-sutta* do not seem to result in four distinct occasions for the arising of conceit.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel as well as other parallels have only a single reference to conceit based on one’s family, after which they continue with quite different qualities that could arouse conceit. This suggests that perhaps during the course of oral transmission this part of the *Sappurisa-sutta* underwent expansion through attracting synonyms. Eventually these synonyms would have become independent qualities, resulting in its present listing of four types of family.

13. MĀ 97: The Three Types of Craving

Shifting from conceit to craving, the *Mahānidāna-sutta* refers to three types of craving: craving for sensual pleasures, craving for becoming, and craving for non-becoming, *kāmatanḥā*, *bhavatanḥā*, and *vibhava-tanḥā*. In its ensuing exposition it then refers back to “those two states”, *ime dve dhammā*.⁵¹ This reference is puzzling. The commentary understands this to refer to the difference between primordial craving and craving arisen during action.⁵²

A similar reference to two *dhammas* occurs also in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, with the decisive difference that here this reference is preceded by indeed mentioning only two types of craving,

⁵⁰ MN 113 at MN III 37,15.

⁵¹ DN 15 at DN II 61,33: *ime dve dhammā dvayena vedanāya ekasamosaraṇā bhavanti*. Rhys Davids 1910: 58 translated this as “these two aspects [of craving] from being dual become united through the sensation” and Walshe 1987: 225 as “these two things become united in one by feeling”.

⁵² Sv II 500,18: *ime dve dhammā ti vaṭṭamūlatanḥā ca samudācāratanḥā cā ti*.

craving for sensual pleasures and for becoming.⁵³ Two further parallels preserved in Chinese agree with the *Madhyama-āgama*, in that they speak of two types of craving, namely for sensual pleasure and for becoming, and then refer back to these as “two states”.⁵⁴ Sanskrit fragment parallels have also preserved references to the two types of craving or else to the two *dharmas*.⁵⁵

This reflects a recurrent difference between Pāli (and *Dīrgha-āgama*) discourses on the one hand and *Madhyama-āgama* (and *Samyukta-āgama*) discourses on the other hand.⁵⁶ The fact that in the present context the Pāli version has preserved a reference to two states would lend support to the hypothesis that this passage originally only mentioned two types of craving. If that should indeed be the case, then the idea of craving for non-becoming would be a later addition at least in the case of this discourse.⁵⁷

⁵³ MĀ 97 at T I 579b22: 欲愛及有愛，此二法因覺; this case has already been noted by Choong 2000: 166 note 78.

⁵⁴ T 14 at T I 243a19: 欲愛亦有愛，是二皆痛相會 and T 52 at T I 845a9: 欲愛，有愛，由此二法生諸過失。 Another parallel in DĀ 13 at T I 61a22 just refers to craving at the present juncture, although at an earlier point at T I 60c13 it does mention three types of craving: 欲愛，有愛，無有愛者。

⁵⁵ SHT III 822R7r, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 40: *dve ānanda tṛṣṇe, kāmatr[ṣṇ]ā bhava-tṛṣṇā ca* (identified as a parallel to DN 15 by Tang Huyen in Bechert and Wille 1995: 268) and Or 15009/140Ar3, Kudo 2009: 191: *dvau dharmau dvayena vedanā*.

⁵⁶ In regard to a reference to the three types of craving in EĀ 49.5 at T II 797c8: 欲愛，有愛，無有愛， it needs to be kept in mind that this discourse appears to be the result of a reworking of parts of the *Ekottarika-āgama* collection in China; cf. Anālayo 2014/2015: 65. This makes it uncertain whether a reference to three types of craving was already present in the Indic original of the collection.

⁵⁷ The suggestion by Choong 2016: 37 note 19 that variations between listings of either two or three types of craving imply that both are late, in that “this implies that in early Buddhism craving may have meant simply craving for the six sense objects” is unconvincing. Variations like the one observed in the present instance point to the possibility of a gradual evolution from two to three cravings; they do not imply that both are late.

14. MĀ 98: The Four Noble Truths and *Satipaṭṭhāna*

According to the teaching of the four noble truths, craving is the chief culprit for the arising of *dukkha*. The exposition of contemplation of *dharmas* in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* has a long exposition on these four noble truths, a topic not found at all in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.⁵⁸ The same holds for a parallel in the *Ekottarika-āgama*; in fact even the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, otherwise similar, only has a short reference to the four noble truths.⁵⁹ This makes it safe to conclude that the long exposition in the *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse reflects a later development.⁶⁰

15. MĀ 101: Thought Control and Awakening

Proceeding from *satipaṭṭhāna* to thoughts, early Buddhist meditative theory recognizes a variety of unwholesome thoughts that need to be overcome in order to progress to awakening. For the purpose of dealing with such types of thought, the *Vitakkasaṅṭhāna-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel describe five methods that are to be employed in order to prevent unwholesome thoughts from remaining in the mind. This exposition being completed, the *Vitakkasaṅṭhāna-sutta* concludes its presentation with the following statement:

Whatever thought he will wish, that thought he will think; whatever thought he will not wish, that thought he will not think. He has cut off craving, done away with the fetters, and made an end of *dukkha* through rightly comprehending conceit.⁶¹

⁵⁸ DN 22 at DN II 304,22 to 313,27 and MĀ 98 at T I 584a14 (here and below for EĀ 12.1, the reference is to the beginning of the exposition of contemplation of *dharmas*).

⁵⁹ EĀ 12.1 at T II 569a18 and MN 10 at MN I 62,21 to 62,24.

⁶⁰ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014a: 91–100.

⁶¹ MN 20 at MN I 122,3: *yaṃ vitakkaṃ ākaṅkhissati taṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkessati, yaṃ vitakkaṃ nākaṅkhissati na taṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkessati, acchecchi taṇhaṃ, vāvattayi*

This reads as if mere control of one’s thoughts results in full awakening. Such a conclusion is not easily reconciled with what other early Buddhist discourses indicate regarding requirements for progress to full awakening. The corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel proceeds as follows:

He thinks what he wishes to think and does not think what he does not [wish] to think. If a monk thinks what he wishes to think and does not think what he does not wish to think, then such a monk is reckoned as thinking according to his intentions and as having mastery over the courses of thought.⁶²

With this the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse concludes. The absence of any reference to making an end of *dukkha* is certainly more pertinent to the context. In fact closer inspection shows that in the *Vitakkasaṅ-
thāna-sutta* the making of an end of *dukkha* is formulated in the past tense, unlike the mastery over one’s thoughts, which is in the future tense. To stand in a meaningful relationship to each other, the use of the two tenses should be the reverse. This confirms the impression that also suggests itself from the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, in that the reference to cutting off craving and making an end of *dukkha* are spurious elements in the *Vitakkasaṅthāna-sutta*. That is, it seems that in this case a passage not belonging to the discourse has come to be part of it at some point during its transmission.

Another difference of minor relevance concerns the title of the discourse. The stilling of thought, *vitakkasaṅthāna*, is only one of the five methods that both discourses present for the purpose of cultivating the higher mind.⁶³ The title of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse is rather “On the Higher Mind”. This expresses the content of the whole

saṃyojanaṃ (B^c and S^c: *vivattayi saññojanaṃ*), *sammā mānābhisamayā antamakāsi dukkhassā ti*.

⁶² MĀ 101 at T I 589a6: 欲念則念，不念則不念。若比丘欲念則念，不欲念則不念者，是謂比丘隨意諸念，自在諸念跡。The fact that MĀ 101 does not have a reference to cutting off craving has already been pointed out by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 244.

⁶³ The title of the discourse is found in MN 20 at MN I 122,8.

exposition, whereas the Pāli title reflects only one of its aspects.⁶⁴

16. MĀ 102: A Simile out of Context

Continuing with the topic of thoughts, the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report how the Buddha, in the period before his awakening, handled the arising of unwholesome thoughts. Whenever an unwholesome thought arose, the future Buddha would quickly dispel it, as he was aware of the danger inherent in such thoughts.

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse compares this to a cowherd who will stop the cows from straying into the ripe crop, as he knows that he will incur trouble if he does not prevent them from eating the crop.⁶⁵ After having explained this approach to thought and illustrated it with the cowherd simile, in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse the Buddha turns to the general nature of the mind, explaining that whatever one frequently thinks about will eventually lead to a corresponding inclination of the mind.

The *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* presents the same topics in a different sequence. It first takes up the dispelling of unwholesome thought, then describes how the mind follows the course set by whatever one frequently thinks about, and only after that brings in the simile of the cowherd.⁶⁶ Its sequence is thus as follows:

- dispelling of unwholesome thought,
- frequent thinking leads to mental inclination,
- cowherd simile.

Here the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse presents a more straightforward sequence, since the purpose of the cowherd simile is to illustrate the need to take firm action and have fear of unwanted consequences, not

⁶⁴ MĀ 101 at T I 588a3: 增上心經.

⁶⁵ MĀ 102 at T I 589a27.

⁶⁶ MN 19 at MN I 115,29.

to exemplify that frequent thoughts lead to a mental inclination. Therefore the simile of the cowherd finds its best placing right after the exposition of unwholesome thoughts, as an illustration of this exposition, the placing it has in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse. In contrast, the placing of the simile in the Pāli version seems to be the result of a shift of the passage from its proper location. Such shifting of a passage within a text is in fact a recurrent feature of orally transmitted literature.⁶⁷

17. MĀ 104: Conversion and Its Consequences

Another topic related to the period before the Buddha's awakening is asceticism. The *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta* reports a detailed exposition to a group of wanderers on this topic of asceticism,⁶⁸ evidently suited to their interest. At the end of his talk the Buddha invited the wanderers to join his ranks, stating that they should not think he wanted them to abandon the recitation of their rules, *uddesa*,⁶⁹ or their way of life, *ājīva*. Instead, they will be free to follow their own *uddesa* and *ājīva*.⁷⁰

This is unexpected, since according to what tradition reckons to have been the first sermon delivered by the recently awakened Buddha, to implement his teaching requires a middle path of practice avoiding the two extremes, one of which is asceticism.⁷¹ This rather gives the im-

⁶⁷ For several examples cf. Anālayo 2011b: 874–876.

⁶⁸ The addition of *sīhanāda* to the title is not found in the Asian editions.

⁶⁹ Regarding this term cf., e.g., the phrase *ekuddeso* in the definition of *saṃvāsa* at Vin III 28,20. Upasak 1975: 43 defines *uddesa* as “recitation (particularly of the Pātimohkha [sic])”; Cone 2001: 428 lists, besides “recitation” and “brief statement”, etc., also “that to which one refers, point of authority” as a possible meaning of *uddesa*.

⁷⁰ DN 25 at DN III 56,14: *yo eva vo uddeso, so eva vo uddeso hotu ... yo eva vo ājīvo so eva vo ājīvo hotu* (C: *yo eva te uddeso, so eva te uddeso hotu ... yo eva te ājīvo so eva te ājīvo hotu*, S: *yo evaṃ te uddeso, soyeva te uddeso hotu ... yo ca te ājīvo soyeva te ājīvo hotu*).

⁷¹ For a study of the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* in the light of its Chinese parallels cf. Anālayo 2012a and 2013a.

pression that ascetics joining the Buddhist order would be required to give up their *uddesa* and *ājīvā*, instead of which they would have to adopt the type of rules observed by other Buddhist monastics and their type of livelihood.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in fact does not have a reference to *uddesa* or *ājīvā*. It agrees with the Pāli version in stating that the Buddha was not motivated by desire for disciples,⁷² after which the next two reasons given are that the Buddha was also not desirous of offerings or fame.⁷³ The final reason in the *Madhyama-āgama* version takes the form of a reference to the wholesome teachings of these wanderers which the Buddha supposedly is going to destroy, probably corresponding to the last of the four reasons given in the Pāli version, according to which the wanderers might suspect that the Buddha wants to establish them in things that they consider unwholesome.⁷⁴

In this way, between the reference to desiring disciples and this last reference, shared by the two versions, the *Madhyama-āgama* version presents a natural continuity of the theme of desire by mentioning offerings and fame, whereas the Pāli version instead brings in *uddesa* and *ājīvā*. To my knowledge the present passage in the *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta* is unique in suggesting that wanderers could join the Buddhist order without needing to adopt the rules and form of livelihood incumbent on Buddhist monastics.⁷⁵ In this respect the

⁷² Before mentioning the desire for disciples, MĀ 104 at T I 595b18 lists as its first topic the desire to be the teacher. This seems redundant, as this topic is implicitly covered by a reference to desire for disciples, found in both versions.

⁷³ MĀ 104 at T I 595b22 and 595b24 lists the suspicions that “the recluse Gotama teaches the Dharma because he is desirous of offerings”, 沙門瞿曇貪供養故說法, and “the recluse Gotama teaches the Dharma because he is desirous of fame”, 沙門瞿曇貪稱譽故說法.

⁷⁴ MĀ 104 at T I 595b26 and DN 25 at DN III 56,19.

⁷⁵ Walshe 1987: 600 note 777 concludes on this part of DN 25 that “the extreme tolerance of Buddhism is shown here. This can be quoted to those who, wishing to practise, e.g. Buddhist meditation, are worried about their prior allegiance to another faith. But see DN 29.4” (in fact the passage quoted, DN 29 at DN III 119,3, stands in direct contrast to what he concludes from DN 25). Brekke 1996: 19 sees in the same passage more a defensive spirit, as “one gets the impression ... that the Buddha is used

Madhyama-āgama version has preserved a presentation that concords better with what other texts convey.

18. MĀ 111: The Cause and Result of Feeling

Proceeding from asceticism to feeling, a discourse among the Sixes of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in presenting contact as what causes feeling, but differ when it comes to the result (*vipāka*) of feeling. Whereas the *Madhyama-āgama* refers to craving, a presentation clearly in line with the standard exposition of dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*), the Pāli discourse rather speaks of the production of individual existence as the result of one's merit or demerit.⁷⁶

The same is already mentioned in the preceding passage in the Pāli version, which takes up the topic of the result of sensual pleasures. The *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree that sensual pleasures indeed result in a form of existence related to one's merit and demerit.⁷⁷ This makes it safe to conclude that the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse would have suffered from an error in transmission whereby a passage originally only meant to explain the results of sensual pleasures was accidentally also applied to the results of feeling.⁷⁸

to accusations about ruthless missionary activity among members of other sects". Freiberger 2000: 126 suggests two possible interpretations of the passage in DN 25: a) the Buddha indeed invited the wanderers to continue with their way of life, etc., b) the passage is a rhetorical means for the purposes of conversion.

⁷⁶ MĀ 111 at T I 599c12 and AN 6.63 at AN III 411,23.

⁷⁷ MĀ 111 at T I 600a14 and AN 6.63 at AN III 412,25 (the sequence of topics differs in the two versions).

⁷⁸ The same type of error during transmission can also be seen in MĀ 111 at T I 600b11 and 600b14, which seems to have mixed up the result and the diversity of *dukkha*, in contrast to the preferable presentation in AN 6.63 at AN III 416,14, according to which the diversity of *dukkha* is to be seen in its different manifestations (strong or weak, etc.) and the result of *dukkha* in being afflicted.

19. MĀ 112: Wholesome and Unwholesome Qualities

Feelings and their relation to craving are of course central in the arising of either wholesome or else unwholesome qualities. The distinction between these two is taken up in another discourse among the Sixes of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, which describe different individuals according to the wholesome or unwholesome quality of their mind.⁷⁹ The second case taken up in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* version concerns someone who manifests wholesome qualities but the roots of unwholesomeness are still in the mind and will eventually lead to the decline of that person. The second case in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel is someone who manifests unwholesome qualities but still has the roots of wholesomeness, which will eventually also be cut off.

The two versions agree in illustrating their respective second case with good seeds that are sown in a place where they cannot grow.⁸⁰ The simile seems appropriate for illustrating wholesome roots that will not lead to wholesome states, as is the case of the *Madhyama-āgama* version, not unwholesome roots as in the Pāli version, for which spoiled seeds would be more appropriate.

This can in fact be seen in relation to the case of someone who is thoroughly unwholesome, in which case both versions speak of spoiled seeds. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version's illustration of this thoroughly unwholesome case the spoiled seeds are sown in a barren field without timely water, whereas in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse

⁷⁹ A difference in relation to their respective introduction to this exposition is similar to a difference between MN 136 at MN III 209,¹² and its parallel MĀ 171 at T I 707a¹⁹, which I discussed in *Anālayo* 2011b: 778. In the present case, too, MĀ 112 at T I 601a¹⁵ has the complete sentence, whereas AN 6.62 at AN III 404,⁵ seems truncated.

⁸⁰ In MĀ 112 at T I 601b²⁹ the seeds will not grow because they do not receive timely rain; in AN 6.62 at AN III 405,²⁰ they will not grow because they have been put on a rock.

the spoiled seeds are sown in a well-prepared field.⁸¹ As an illustration of the utterly hopeless case of someone completely immersed in unwholesomeness the *Madhyama-āgama* illustration appears to fit better.

In sum, it seems fair to assume that the similes in the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* discourse have suffered from an error in transmission.

Another puzzling aspect in the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* discourse is a reference in yet another simile, which mentions midnight as the time for the meal.⁸² The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agrees with the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* version in regard to the preceding part of the simile, which refers to the rising of the sun. It differs in so far as it next describes that the sun has risen higher and mealtime has arrived.⁸³ This is a more natural phrasing of the simile and the reference to a meal at midnight could be the result of some confusion in the transmission of this part of the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* discourse.

20. MĀ 113: Two Parallels – One Discourse

Proceeding with another example that involves the *Āṅuttara-nikāya*, a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama* actually has two parallels in this collection, found among the Eights and the Tens of the *Āṅuttara-nikāya*. The parallel versions agree in presenting a series of short questions and their replies. The difference between the two *Āṅuttara-nikāya* versions is that the one among the Tens has two additional questions, which query what all things culminate in and what constitutes the consummation of all things. The reply is that all things culminate

⁸¹ MĀ 112 at T I 601c14 and AN 6.62 at AN III 406,14.

⁸² AN 6.62 at AN III 407,19: *aḍḍharattam* (B^c: *addharattam*) *bhatakālasamaye*. Based on the commentarial gloss on *bhatakālasamaye* at Mp III 406,7 as *rājakulānam bhatakālasaṅkhāte samaye*, Bodhi 2012: 1767 note 1408 reasons that “perhaps in the Buddha’s time the royal court ended the day with a midnight meal.”

⁸³ MĀ 112 at T I 601a28: “the sun has risen high and the time of the meal has arrived”, 日轉昇上, 至于食時; although the wording seems clearly preferable, the placing of this simile in MĀ 112 is less apt.

in the deathless and all things have Nirvāṇa as their consummation.⁸⁴ As already pointed out by Bodhi (2012: 1845 note 2069), these two replies “seem to be synonymous”.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agrees with its *Aṅguttara-nikāya* counterparts in mentioning that wisdom is supreme among all things, whose essence is liberation, which are the last two qualities in the listing given in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse found among the Eights and the two qualities that in the discourse among the Tens lead up to the references to the deathless and Nirvāṇa.

The *Madhyama-āgama* version just mentions a single item at this juncture, which is Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things.⁸⁵ The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse then continues with an exposition that parallels the next discourses among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*.⁸⁶

This gives the impression that perhaps during oral transmission the last reference to Nirvāṇa came to be doubled by adding the synonymous deathless and in some way the remainder of the text also became a separate discourse. In fact this separate discourse starts off with the phrase “therefore monks, you should train like this”, *tasmā ti ha bhikkhave, evam sikkhitabbaṃ*, which does hang a little in the air.⁸⁷ Such a phrase would serve naturally as a connector to something described earlier, as it does in the *Madhyama-āgama* version.⁸⁸ The

⁸⁴ AN 10.58 at AN V 107,10; neither topics is covered in the otherwise similar AN 8.83 at AN IV 339,4.

⁸⁵ MĀ 113 at T I 602c16: 涅槃為諸法訖。Another parallel preserved as an individual translation, which shows several differences compared to MĀ 113 and thus seems to be reflecting a different lineage of transmission, agrees in also mentioning only a single item, namely Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things; cf. T 59 at T I 855c16.

⁸⁶ This has already been pointed out by Bodhi 2012: 1845 note 2069.

⁸⁷ AN 10.59 at AN V 107,14.

⁸⁸ MĀ 113 at T I 602c16 continues after the reference to Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things with the phrase “therefore, monks, you should train like this”, 是故比丘，當如是學 to introduce the remainder of its exposition. A comparable transition can also be found at this juncture in the other parallel, T 59 at T I 855c21: “monks, train like this”, 諸比丘，當學是。

same is considerably less natural as an introductory phrase for a new exposition.

21. MĀ 116: The Buddha's Refusal to Ordain Women

Another discourse among the Eights in the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* reports that the Buddha, on being requested to grant the going forth to his fostermother and thereby found an order of nuns, flatly refused.⁸⁹ According to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, however, he offered her the alternative of shaving off her hair and donning robes to live a form of celibate life,⁹⁰ presumably in the more protected environment at home instead of wandering around freely in India.

In view of the fact that a number of other discourses consider the existence of an order of nuns an integral aspect of the teaching of the Buddha, the *Madhyama-āgama* version seems to have preserved an earlier version of the Buddha's reaction to the request of his fostermother, in that the point at issue would have been how her going forth should take place, not whether to grant it to her at all.⁹¹

22. MĀ 128: Giving to Outsiders

Still continuing with the *Āṅuttara-nikāya*, a discourse among the Fives of this collection has a verse according to which fools give to those outside (of the Buddha's dispensation).⁹² This stands in direct contrast to a discourse among the Threes of the same *Āṅuttara-ni-*

⁸⁹ AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,7.

⁹⁰ MĀ 116 at T I 605a17.

⁹¹ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011c and 2016a.

⁹² AN 5.179 at AN III 214,14: *bālā ca avijānantā, dummedhā assutāvino, bahiddhā denti* (B^c: *dadanti*) *dānāni*.

kāya, which in agreement with several parallels reports that the Buddha quite explicitly denied that he had ever stated that gifts should only be given to those in his dispensation and not to others.⁹³ Another contrastive example is the report in the *Upāli-sutta* and its parallel that the Buddha encouraged the recently converted Upāli to continue giving alms to his former teachers, the Jains.⁹⁴

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the discourse from the Fives of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* has a different version of the respective verse. This version instead proclaims that giving to a fool will bring little fruit.⁹⁵ Such a formulation of the verse implies no negative assessment of outsiders as recipients of gifts and concords with the presentation of the fruitfulness of gifts found elsewhere in the discourses. This leaves open the possibility that the present version of the verse in the discourse from the Fives of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* is the result of a later change. In fact the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* and a range of parallels explicitly describe the worthiness of a gift made to an outsider free from lust,⁹⁶ thereby confirming that the presentation in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse is out of keeping with the position taken in general in early Buddhist discourse.

The *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* itself has another noteworthy instance, also related to the worthiness of making gifts. The Pāli version states that a gift received by an immoral and evil monk will be of incalcula-

⁹³ AN 3.57 at AN I 161,¹³ and its parallels SĀ 95 at T II 26a¹⁴, SĀ² 261 at T II 465c¹¹, and SĀ³ 2 at T II 493b²².

⁹⁴ MN 56 at MN I 379,¹⁶ and MĀ 133 at T I 630b⁸.

⁹⁵ MĀ 128 at T I 617b¹⁰: “to a fool who knows nothing, who has no wisdom and has learned (literally: “heard”) nothing, giving to him will yield little fruit”, 愚癡無所知，無慧無所聞，施彼得果少。

⁹⁶ MN 142 at MN III 255,⁸ Bajaur Kharoṣṭhī fragment 1 line 20, MĀ 180 at T I 722b¹⁸, and D 4094 *ju* 255b⁶ or Q 5595 *tu* 291a⁷; cf. also Tocharian fragment YQ 1.20 1/2a⁸, Ji et al. 1998: 182, and Uighur fragment folio 9a2700, Geng and Klimkeit 1988: 204, which refer to a seer and thus implicitly to an outsider. A reference to this exposition in EĀ 23.1 at T II 609b¹⁵ also refers to a seer free from lust. Another parallel, T 84 at T I 903c²⁹, does not explicitly qualify the recipient to be an outsider or a seer and thus just speaks of someone free from lust.

ble merit, as long as it is given to the community as a whole.⁹⁷

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse instead just speaks of a gift to a monk who is not energetic.⁹⁸ In the case of the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* the suggestion that an immoral monk is a worthy recipient of gifts stands in contradiction to the remainder of the same discourse, which highlights the importance of the ethical behaviour of the recipient (as well as of the giver) of a gift. This clearly accords better with the position taken in general in the early discourses, making it fair to assume that the incalculable merit accrued by a gift received by an immoral and evil monk is the result of a later change in the Pāli discourse.

23. MĀ 153: Similes out of Context

Moving from gifts to sensual pleasures in general, my next example involves similes, found in the *Māgandiya-sutta* as part of a detailed examination of the drawbacks of sensual pleasures. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Māgandiya-sutta* begins with a simile describing a leper who scratches and cauterizes his wounds over a fire.⁹⁹ Although the leper experiences momentary pleasure, his scratching and cauterizing results in the wounds becoming infected and his condition becoming worse. This illustrates indulgence in sensual pleasures, which likewise yields momentary gratification but results in worsening one's mental condition, as it strengthens the tendency to crave for sensual pleasure.

The next simile describes a king or minister who has easy access to sensual pleasures, yet is unable to experience mental peace if he is not free from desire for sensual pleasures. This expands on the point made above, in that indulgence in sensuality does not lead to true inner peace of mind.

⁹⁷ MN 142 at MN III 256,5.

⁹⁸ MĀ 180 at T I 722b1; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 817.

⁹⁹ MĀ 153 at T I 671b25.

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse next describes how someone healed from leprosy would not find it attractive to see another leper, who is still sick, scratching and cauterizing his wounds. Yet another simile depicts how someone healed from leprosy would resist with all his strength being forcefully dragged close to a fire. This simile provides a contrast to the earlier situation mentioned in the first simile, when he was still sick and therefore attracted to fire in order to cauterize his wounds. The last two similes of seeing another leper and of being dragged close to fire illustrate how one who has overcome sensual desire no longer delights in what earlier, when still under the influence of sensual desire, seemed so attractive. The sequence of the similes in the *Madhyama-āgama* is thus as follows:

- leper scratches and cauterizes wounds,
- king not free from sensual desire,
- healed leper sees other leper scratching and cauterizing wounds,
- healed leper dragged forcefully close to fire.

Whereas the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation follows an inherent logic in its presentation, the *Māgandiya-sutta* has the following sequence:¹⁰⁰

- healed leper sees other leper scratching and cauterizing wounds,
- healed leper dragged forcefully close to fire,
- leper scratches and cauterizes wounds,
- king not free from sensual desire.

This sequence appears jumbled. The point made by the two similes of the healed leper comes out fully only if the situation of the sick leper worsening his own condition by scratching and cauterizing his wounds has already been described. Moreover, the sequence in the *Māgandiya-sutta* lacks the gradual build-up that can be observed on reading the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation, where the culmination point comes with the image of struggling to avoid being dragged to-

¹⁰⁰ MN 75 at MN I 506,6.

wards the fire that earlier was eagerly sought. In contrast, in the Pāli version the simile of the king comes almost as an anticlimax. This makes it possible that the *Māgandīya-sutta* has suffered from a positional alteration of the four similes, which can be corrected with the help of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

24. MĀ 154: Reasons for Pasenadi’s Respect

Shifting from similes to the topic of caste, as part of a discussion of claims to caste superiority by brahmins the *Aggañña-sutta* and its parallels describe the reasons why King Pasenadi pays respect to the Buddha. According to several Pāli editions the king thinks that the Buddha is of superior birth to him, a reading followed by translators of this passage into German and English.¹⁰¹ This reading fails to make sense in its context, since the whole point of the passage is to undermine claims of superiority based on birth.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, as well as several other parallels extant in Chinese and Tibetan, the corresponding passage instead indicates that it is *not* because of superiority of birth that the king pays respect to the Buddha.¹⁰² This fits the context, making it clear that the king’s respect is not related to any birth superiority, but is rather due

¹⁰¹ DN 27 at DN III 84,3: *nanu sujāto samaṇo gotamo, dujjāto ’ham asmi* (same in C^o and S^o). Neumann 1912/2004: 478: “‘ist denn nicht’, sagt er, ‘der Asket Gotamo wohlgeboren? Unwohlgeboren bin ich’”; Franke 1913: 276: “‘der Samaṇa Gotama ist ja doch hochwohlgeboren, ich bin (ihm gegenüber) von niederer Herkunft’”; Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 80: “‘for he thinks: Is not the Samaṇa Gotama well born? Then I am not well born’”; Walshe 1987: 409: “‘thinking: ‘If the ascetic Gotama is well-born, I am ill-born.’”

¹⁰² MĀ 154 at T II 674bs: “the king does not think like this ... ‘The recluse Gotama is from a superior clan, I am from an inferior clan’”, 王不如是意 ... 沙門瞿曇種族極高, 我種族下. Similar statements are found in the parallels DĀ 5 at T I 37b23: “he does not think: ‘The recluse Gotama has gone forth from an excellent clan, my clan is inferior’”, 彼不念言: 沙門瞿曇出於豪族, 我姓卑下, and T 10 at T I 218a20 according to which “it is not because the king thinks that the recluse Gotama is from a superior clan, yet the king does not come from a superior clan”, 其王不以沙門瞿曇是高勝族, 王亦不起高勝族意; cf. also D 4094 *ju* 192a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 219b1. SHT V 1583 V1, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 264, has preserved a reference to being *duvarṇa*.

to regard for the Dharma taught by the Buddha. This concurs with the reading of the Pāli passage found in the Burmese edition.¹⁰³ Thus in this case the Chinese versions help to decide which variant reading is the most appropriate one.

A comparable case can be found in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta*, which in agreement with its parallels reports that King Pasenadi described several reasons why he respected the Buddha. Reasons given in the Pāli version are that they are both from the warrior clan, both from Kosala, and both eighty years old.¹⁰⁴ Besides confirming that the presentation in most editions of the *Aggañña-sutta* even conflicts with other Pāli discourses, where the king and the Buddha are presented as being of the same clan, the present passage is yet another instance where the topic of Pasenadi's respect can be considered from the viewpoint of the relevant *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. The problem with the presentation in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta* is that the mere fact of being from the same clan and country, and of the same age, is not easily conceived as a reason to inspire respect.

Besides mentioning the fact that the two are from the same clan and Kosala country, as well as of the same age, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel highlights that, whereas Pasenadi is the king of the country, the Buddha is the king of Dharma.¹⁰⁵ This marks a difference that would indeed provide a meaningful reason for respect, making it reasonable to assume that some such statement might have been lost in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta*.

25. MĀ 158: Brahmins of Different Types

Continuing from brahminical claims to caste superiority to the theme

¹⁰³ The B^c edition reads: *na naṃ sujāto samaṇo gotamo, dujjāto 'ham asmi*.

¹⁰⁴ MN 89 at MN II 124,16.

¹⁰⁵ MĀ 213 at T I 797b12: 我亦國王, 世尊亦法王. A similar distinction is made in a parallel in the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*; cf. Anālayo 2011b: 518 note 367.

of differences among brahmins, a discourse found in the Fives of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel describe brahmins of different types. In the Pāli version the first type of brahmin, having completed his period of celibacy and study of forty-eight years, goes begging so as to make an offering to his teacher.¹⁰⁶ Then he goes forth, practises the four *brahmavihāras*, and is reborn in the Brahmā world. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel this type of brahmin also completes his period of celibacy and study of forty-eight years, and goes begging so as to make an offering to his teacher. The description continues by just mentioning his cultivation of the four *brahmavihāras*, without any reference to going forth.¹⁰⁷

This squares better with what we know about brahminical practices in ancient India. Perhaps during oral transmission the reference to the forty-eight years of celibacy, *brahmacariya*, and to begging, *bhikkhācariya*, might have led to the interpolation of the standard description of going forth.

Another noteworthy difference can be seen in relation to the next type of brahmin described in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse. After having completed the period of study and made an offering, this type of brahmin gets married, then goes forth, cultivates the four absorptions, and is reborn in a heavenly world.¹⁰⁸ This brahmin is considered in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse to be like a *deva*, in contrast to the previous type who is like a Brahmā. Yet the type of rebirth suiting a brahmin who is like a *deva* would be one of the heavenly realms of the sense-sphere, not the heavenly realms of the form-sphere or Brahmā world to be expected for one who cultivates the four absorptions.

¹⁰⁶ AN 5.192 at AN III 225,3. Bodhi 2012: 1742f note 1185 comments on the impression conveyed by AN 5.192 that it “suggests, contrary to a common assumption, that during the Buddha’s time brahmins were not obliged to marry and adopt the life of a householder ... it seems that in this period some brahmins, after completing their training, chose to renounce secular life even in their youth and maintained their renunciant status throughout their lives.”

¹⁰⁷ MĀ 158 at T I 680c24.

¹⁰⁸ AN 5.192 at AN III 227,1.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in fact does not describe any meditation practice in the case of this type of brahmin (nor any going forth), but just reports that he cultivates good bodily, verbal, and mental conduct, as a result of which he is reborn in a heavenly world.¹⁰⁹ This seems more appropriate for a description of a brahmin who is like a *deva*.

26. MĀ 163: Three *Satipaṭṭhānas*

Turning from brahmins to a form of mindfulness associated specifically with the Buddha, the *Salāyatanavibhaṅga-sutta* describes three *satipaṭṭhānas* practised by the Buddha when teaching disciples. According to its presentation, when the disciples do not listen, the Buddha is not satisfied.¹¹⁰ But when all of them listen, he is satisfied. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the Buddha remains unaffected by the behaviour of his disciples.¹¹¹ This presentation receives support from a range of other sources and may well be closer to the original intention behind the presentation of these three *satipaṭṭhānas*.¹¹²

27. MĀ 164: A Summary without Its Exposition

Continuing with the topic of the Buddha's teaching activities, my next example comes from the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta*. The beginning part of the discourse reports the Buddha's announcement that he will give a summary and its exposition:

Monks, I will teach you a summary and its exposition.¹¹³

Nevertheless, according to the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* the Buddha only taught a summary and then withdrew into his dwelling. This problem

¹⁰⁹ MĀ 158 at T I 681a10.

¹¹⁰ MN 137 at MN III 221,10.

¹¹¹ MĀ 163 at T I 693c29.

¹¹² Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2013b: 240–243.

¹¹³ MN 138 at MN III 223,5: *uddesavibhaṅgaṃ vo, bhikkhave, desissāmi* (B^c: *desessāmi*).

does not arise in the *Madhyama-āgama* version, as here the Buddha does not make such an announcement. Instead he introduces his teaching as follows:

I will teach you the Dharma that is sublime in its beginning, sublime in its middle, and sublime in its end, with its meaning and phrasing.¹¹⁴

Hence in the *Madhyama-āgama* version for the Buddha to teach only in brief and then withdraw does not create a comparable inconsistency.

The problem observable in the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* concords with a pattern for discourses in this chapter of the *Majjhima-nikāya* of referring to a summary and its exposition in ways that do not fit the remainder of the discourse.¹¹⁵ In the present case this is particularly noteworthy, since the initial proclamation about giving a summary, *uddesa*, and its exposition, *vibhaṅga*, corresponds to the title of the Pāli discourse.¹¹⁶ The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse instead has the title “Analytical Contemplation of Dharmas”.¹¹⁷

28. MĀ 179: The Path-factors of an Arahant

Shifting from the Buddha to the arahant, the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* briefly refers to the ten path factors of an arahant at the outset of its exposition, but has the corresponding exposition only at a considerably later point. In this way the standard procedure of following an announcement of a particular topic directly with its exposition is not followed.

Judging from its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the relationship between these two pieces of text has been lost during oral transmission, resulting in a displacing of the introductory statement to its present

¹¹⁴ MĀ 164 at T I 694b16: 我當為汝說法，初妙，中妙，竟亦妙，有義有文。

¹¹⁵ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2008c and 2010e: 48f.

¹¹⁶ The title is found in MN 138 at MN III 229,32.

¹¹⁷ MĀ 164 at T I 694b13: 分別觀法。

position.¹¹⁸ This is one of several aspects of the Pāli discourse that can be clarified with the help of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹¹⁹

29. MĀ 181: Impossibilities for Women

Returning to the Buddha, one of a set of five impossibilities in the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* stipulates that a woman cannot be a Buddha. The whole set of five impossibilities is absent from the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹²⁰ A closer study of the context show this dictum to be probably a later addition to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*.¹²¹

30. MĀ 184: Mahāmoggallāna and Abhidharma

Shifting again from the Buddha to an arahant, my next case concerns Mahāmoggallāna in the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta*. In agreement with its parallels the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta* reports an occasion when several eminent monks extolled their special qualities or abilities in a poetic contest on a moonlit night. In the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta*, after Ānanda, Revata, Anuruddha, and Mahākassapa have expressed themselves in line with the way their personality is depicted elsewhere in the early discourses, Mahāmoggallāna comes out with the following statement that supposedly illustrates his special and characteristic abilities:

Two monks talk Abhidharma talk. They ask each other a question. On asking each other a question, they respond and do not founder, and their

¹¹⁸ MN 78 at MN II 25,¹⁸ (introduction) and 28,³⁴ (exposition), compared to both being found consecutively in MĀ 179 at T I 721c₁₄.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Anālayo 2011b: 424–431 and 2012b: 105–138.

¹²⁰ MN 115 at MN III 65,²⁴ (cf. also T 776 at T XVII 713b₂₀, T 1537 at T XXVI 502b₁₆, D 297 *sha* 300b₁ or Q 963 *lu* 329a₅, and D 4094 *ju* 32a₃ or Q 5595 *tu* 35a₄); the exposition of various impossibilities, which does not include any impossibility for women, can be found in MĀ 181 at T I 723c₂₆.

¹²¹ Cf. Kajiyama 1982: 57 and in more detail Anālayo 2009a.

talk on the Dharma goes forward.¹²²

Instead of such ability at discussing the “higher Dharma” (*abhidharma*),¹²³ the early discourses usually represent it as characteristic of Mahāmogallāna to have supernormal abilities.¹²⁴ This is indeed what the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta* records as his statement on this occasion, which reads as follows:

A monk has great supernormal power, great and mighty virtue, great merit, great and mighty power, mastery of immeasurable supernormal powers.¹²⁵

The *Madhyama-āgama* version of Mahāmogallāna’s statement continues by describing various feats that according to early Buddhist thought can be performed by someone endowed with such supernormal powers, such as walking on water, levitation, etc.¹²⁶ In a similar vein, parallels to the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta* preserved in the form of Sanskrit fragments, in a discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, and in a discourse extant as an individual translation into Chinese consider supernormal powers to be characteristic of Mahāmogallāna.¹²⁷

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also has a statement on Abhidharma

¹²² MN 32 at MN I 214,24: *dve bhikkhū abhidhammakathaṃ kathenti, te aññamaññaṃ pañhaṃ* (S° does not have *pañhaṃ*) *pucchanti, aññamaññaṃ pañhaṃ puṭṭhā visajjenti, no ca saṃsādentī, dhammī ca nesam kathā pavattanī* (B°: *pavattinī*) *hoti*.

¹²³ On the significance of the term *abhidharma* in such contexts cf. Anālayo 2014a: 69–79.

¹²⁴ As already pointed out by Horner 1941: 309, “Moggallāna is chiefly famed for his psychic powers and there is little reason to suppose him to have had gifts of an *abhidhamma* nature or we should have heard more about them.”

¹²⁵ MĀ 184 at T I 727c15: 比丘有大如意足, 有大威德, 有大福祐, 有大威神, 自在無量如意足.

¹²⁶ On levitation cf. in more detail Anālayo 2016c.

¹²⁷ SHT V 1346 V2, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 233, introduces *mahāmau[dga]* (*lyāyan*), and the next line has preserved *bhikṣūr-bhavati mahardhiko ma[h]*, followed by parts of the standard description of the exercise of supernormal abilities in the next lines. In EĀ 37.3 at T II 711a18 Mahāmogallāna similarly refers to a monk endowed with supernormal ability, 比丘有大神足, and then describes various feats. The same is the case for the statement attributed to him in T 154 at T III 81b29: 比丘得大神足.

type of talk, but in its presentation this is instead characteristic of the monk Mahākaccāna. The relevant part proceeds in this way:

Two monks who are Dharma teachers discuss with each other the profound Abhidharma. Whatever matter they ask about, they understand it well and know it completely. They reply without hesitation and expound the Dharma eloquently.¹²⁸

To associate such a statement with Mahākaccāna is clearly more in line with the way the discourses represent him elsewhere than to attribute this statement to Mahāmoggallāna.¹²⁹ This makes it safe to conclude that an error in oral transmission led to a loss of Mahākaccāna in the Pāli version as well as to a statement originally attributed

¹²⁸ MĀ 184 at T I 727b23: 二比丘法師共論甚深阿毘曇。彼所問事善解悉知，答亦無礙，說法辯捷。Already Anesaki 1908: 57 had pointed out that in MĀ 184 “besides the other theras there is Mahākaccāna. He plays the role of Moggallāna in Pāli and the utterances of Moggallāna which we find in Chinese are wanting in Pāli.”

¹²⁹ Minh Chau 1964/1991: 76 concludes that “the Chinese version here is more faithful and more reliable as Mahākaccāna is well known as being expert in Dharma discussion and Moggallāna is well known as being expert in supernatural powers.” This reasonable conclusion is based on the criterion of coherence. The relevance of coherence for assessing early Buddhist discourse material in general has been called into question by Sujato 2011: 213, who argues instead that contradiction is a feature “found in Buddhism, for Sāriputta is the disciple who is ‘like the Teacher’, yet the Buddha is ‘without a counterpart’. The Indic mind is simply less concerned with contradiction than the European ... this is true even in the sphere of logic. For Aristotle, any proposition was either true (A) or false (not-A) ... but the Indians had a four-fold scheme: A; not-A; A & not-A; neither A nor not-A.” Neither examples is a case of actual contradiction. Sāriputta is only qualified as a disciple comparable to the teacher, not as his equal; cf. above note 8. The tetralemma is compatible with the principle of coherence; cf. Anālayo 2011b: xxvii. The early discourses in fact explicitly indicate that consistency was regarded as a criterion of truth. Examples are debate situations, where the Buddha is shown to employ the criterion of consistency when countering incoherent statements made by an opponent; cf. Anālayo 2010d: 49 note 27. Jayatilke 1963/1980: 334 concludes that “in the Nikāyas, consistency is regarded as a criterion of truth.” Vetter 1988: ix notes that the doctrine of “ancient Buddhism ... does not give any reason for proposing ... inconsistency as a characteristic of it”; cf. also Watanabe 1983/1996: 74f. Reat 1996/1998: 34 reasons that “one must assume that the historical Buddha’s teachings were coherent ... when they were given. Therefore any reconstruction of these teachings should reveal a coherent framework of doctrine.” Tilakaratne 2000: 14 points out that the *mahāpadesas* are based on the premise “that what is called Dhamma and Vinaya is characterised by internal consistence and coherence.”

to him becoming instead associated with Mahāmoggallāna.

31. MĀ 187: Loss of One of the Purities of an Arahant

Continuing with the topic of an arahant, the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* expounds five purities of an arahant, even though its title speaks of six.¹³⁰ By having recourse to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the missing sixth purity can be restored.¹³¹ In this case a whole portion of a discourse was apparently lost during the transmission from India to Sri Lanka, as the commentarial tradition preserves a reference to reciters from India who were still aware of the nature of the missing purity.¹³²

32. MĀ 189: Supramundane Path Factors

Turning from textual loss to its addition, a case of substantial addition can be identified in the exposition of the path factors in the *Mahācat-tārīsaka-sutta*, whose presentation of supramundane path factors is without a counterpart in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹³³ The evident addition of the supramundane dimension in the Pāli version reflects the influence of evolving Abhidharma thought.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ The title is found in MN 112 at MN III 37,5.

¹³¹ The missing purity concerns the nutriments, expounded in MĀ 187 at T I 732b18.

¹³² Ps IV 94,23; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2008a.

¹³³ The supramundane exposition in the case of right intention can be found in MN 117 at MN III 73,11; for the treatment of this same path factor cf. MĀ 189 at T I 736a1 and D 4094 *nyu* 44b7 or Q 5595 *thu* 84b2. The absence of the supramundane path treatment from MĀ 189 has already been noted by Meisig 1987: 226; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2010c.

¹³⁴ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014a.

33. MĀ 190: Emptiness and Neither-perception-nor-non-perception

Another apparent addition can be found in the *Cūlasuññata-sutta*, which describes a gradual meditative descent into emptiness that employs the perceptions related to the first three immaterial attainments. Whereas its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel proceeds from the perception of nothingness to signlessness, the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* has as an interim step the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.¹³⁵ This appears to be the result of an error in transmission, where the fact that usually in other contexts a reference to the other three immaterial attainments will be followed by the fourth would have led to its intrusion in the present context.¹³⁶

34. MĀ 192: Loss of a Transition

Returning from textual addition to its loss, the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* reports that the monk Udāyin has just described an event from the past. Udāyin concludes by expressing his appreciation for the rules on restraint with food which the Buddha had promulgated. This then motivates the Buddha to describe foolish people who are not willing to follow his rules on restraint. The transition to this topic in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* takes the form of the Buddha replying to Udāyin's expression of appreciation in the following manner:

In the same way, Udāyin, there are some foolish people ...¹³⁷

The use of the expression “in the same way”, *evam eva*, does not fit the present context well, since the foolish people whom the Buddha is about to describe are the opposite of Udāyin. Therefore it does not

¹³⁵ MĀ 190 at T I 737c3 (emending 無想到 無相) and MN 121 at MN III 107,10.

¹³⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2015a: 134–136.

¹³⁷ MN 66 at MN I 449,10: *evam eva pan' udāyi, idh'ekacce moghapurisā ...*

seem meaningful to introduce them with an expression that conveys similarity. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the corresponding transition to a description of foolish people, who are unwilling to follow the Buddha's injunctions, proceeds as follows:

The Blessed One praised him: "It is well, it is well, Udāyin, you are now not like those foolish people. Those foolish people, on being taught by me ..."¹³⁸

This confirms the impression that some sort of transition might have been lost in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta*. The Pāli passage translated above is not preceded by an indication that a change of speaker has taken place. Only the circumstance that the actual speech is addressed to Udāyin makes it clear that at this point he is no longer the speaker, but rather the one to whom something is being said.

Perhaps an explicit indication of the change of speaker, as found in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, was lost in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* together with an introductory reference by the Buddha to foolish people that stand in contrast to Udāyin. Some such reference seems required to provide a reference point to which the expression "in the same way" could refer.

35. MĀ 198: *Satipaṭṭhāna* and the Second Absorption

Another apparent loss of text involves the *Dantabhūmi-sutta*, which describes a progression of practice where cultivation of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation free from thoughts directly leads to attainment of the second absorption.¹³⁹ Consultation of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel

¹³⁸ MĀ 192 at T I 741b23: 世尊歎曰：善哉，善哉，烏陀夷，汝今不爾如彼癡人。彼愚癡人，我為其說 ...

¹³⁹ MN 125 at MN III 136,26.

shows that here the first absorption is taken into account.¹⁴⁰ This makes it fairly safe to assume that the reference to being free from *vitakka* in the description of the preceding *satipaṭṭhāna* practice accidentally caused a loss of the description of the first absorption during oral transmission by directly continuing with the second absorption, whose standard description refers to being free from *vitakka*.¹⁴¹

36. MĀ 201: The Tathāgata and the Gradual Path

Moving again from loss of text to its addition, my next case comes from the *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya-sutta*. The relevant passage in this discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel begins with a reference to the arising of the Tathāgata in the world. The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse continues by describing detachment towards sensory experience and being established in mindfulness of the body.¹⁴²

The *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya-sutta* similarly refers to detachment towards sensory experience and mindfulness of the body,¹⁴³ with the difference that between this reference and the remark on the arising of a Tathāgata it provides a detailed account of the gradual path of practice.¹⁴⁴ As a result, it deals with the issue of how to handle sensory experience twice, once in the form of sense-restraint as part of the gradual path and again in the passage just mentioned, which is the one

¹⁴⁰ MĀ 198 at T I 758b25, which gives the introductory formula for the first absorption and then abbreviates up to the attainment of the fourth, a standard procedure in the collection to represent attainment of all four absorptions.

¹⁴¹ This is one of several findings that emerge from a comparative study of this discourse; cf. Anālayo 2011b: 717–722 and 2012b: 395–419.

¹⁴² MĀ 201 at T I 769c14. The transition from the arising of a Tathāgata to this exposition is not entirely smooth, however, as the passage just refers to the one who is detached as “he”, 彼, thereby lacking any explicit indication that this should be understood to refer to a disciple of the Tathāgata.

¹⁴³ MN 38 at MN I 270,9.

¹⁴⁴ On the gradual path of practice cf. in more detail Anālayo 2016b.

that is also found in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. The resultant sequence of topics in this part of the *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta* is as follows:

- arising of a Tathāgata,
- going forth,
- moral restraint,
- contentment,
- sense-restraint,
- clear comprehension of bodily activities,
- removal of the five hindrances,
- attainment of the four absorptions,
- detachment and mindfulness of the body.

In this way the last reference to detachment in relation to the senses and mindfulness of the body comes in the *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta* after the gradual path has been completed up to the successful attainment of the four absorptions. This is contrary to the usual sequence of practice depicted in the early discourses, where mindfulness of the body and detachment in relation to sensory experiences are pre-conditions for the attainment of absorption and therefore mentioned earlier. In the scheme above, both should come in the place now occupied by sense-restraint and by clear comprehension of bodily activities.

Taken together these features suggest that a reference to the arising of a Tathāgata has misled the reciters of the Pāli version to insert a full account of the gradual path where this was not originally required. Such an error could happen easily, since the standard description of the arising of a Tathāgata does often function as an introduction to an account of the gradual path.

37. MĀ 204: Brahmā's Intervention

The arising of a Tathāgata was according to tradition due to the famous intervention of Brahmā to convince the recently awakened Buddha to teach his discovery to mankind. This intervention is not mentioned at all in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Ariyapariyesa-*

nā-sutta,¹⁴⁵ which leaves open the possibility that this episode could be a later addition.¹⁴⁶

38. MĀ 207: The Path of Practice

Proceeding from the Buddha's decision to teach to a description of his qualities, the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in listing five qualities of the Buddha. Under the fifth of these, the Pāli version offers a long and detailed survey of various aspects of the path of practice, absent from its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹⁴⁷ Closer inspection of this list and its context makes it fairly probable that this is a case of expansion on the part of the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta*.¹⁴⁸

39. MĀ 208: The Gradual Path Again

Another example related to the description of the path of practice can be observed in the *Cūḷasakuludāyi-sutta*. In this case the Pāli discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in presenting an account of the gradual path, but this account occurs in the two versions at different places within the discourse.

The narrative context is a teaching to a non-Buddhist wanderer on how to reach an entirely pleasant world, which the Buddha shows to be possible through absorption attainment.

¹⁴⁵ Brahmā's intervention is reported in MN 26 at MN I 168,18; the parallel MĀ 204 at T I 777a₁₈ continues directly from the Buddha's awakening to his reflection on whom he might teach first. The absence of this episode in MĀ 204 has already been noted by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 155.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011a.

¹⁴⁷ MN 77 at MN II 11,3 to 22,15 and thus over eleven pages compared to just two lines of text in its parallel MĀ 207 at T I 783b₁₅ to 783b₁₇.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012b: 101–103.

The *Madhyama-āgama* version leads up to a description of the attainment of absorption with an account of the gradual path of training.¹⁴⁹ This is a meaningful placement, since the account serves to indicate to the non-Buddhist wanderer in what manner progress to absorption attainment takes place according to early Buddhist thought.

In the *Cūlasakuludāyi-sutta* the account of the gradual path instead comes after the Buddha has explained to the non-Buddhist wanderer that attainment of the third absorption is the way to reach an entirely pleasant world, and also after he has further made it clear that full realization of an entirely pleasant world requires attainment of the fourth absorption. After this clarification, the Buddha indicates to the non-Buddhist wanderer that Buddhist monks practise for the sake of states that are still superior and more refined. The wanderer then asks:

Venerable sir, what are the superior and more refined states for the sake of realizing which the monks practise the holy life under the Blessed One?¹⁵⁰

It is in reply to this question that in the *Cūlasakuludāyi-sutta* the Buddha delivers the gradual-path account. When he comes to the part of the gradual-path account that describes the successive attainment of the absorptions, the Buddha indicates after each such attainment that this is superior and more refined. This serves to relate each of these aspects of the gradual-path account to the question posed by the non-Buddhist wanderer. In the case of the first absorption, the statement reads:

He dwells having attained the first absorption. Udāyin, this is also a superior and more refined state for the sake of realizing which monks

¹⁴⁹ MĀ 208 at T I 785c24 abbreviates the account, a standard practice in the early discourses. The gradual-path account is usually spelled out in full only on its first occurrence in the collection, subsequent occurrences being abbreviated.

¹⁵⁰ MN 79 at MN II 38,1: *katame pana te, bhante, dhammā uttaritarā ca pañītatārā ca yesaṃ sacchikiriyāhetu bhikkhū bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carantī ti?*

practise the holy life under me.¹⁵¹

In this way, the first absorption becomes a state superior and more refined than the fourth absorption mentioned before. The same inconsistency continues with the other levels of absorption that form part of the gradual-path account. Since the first to third absorptions are obviously inferior and less refined than the fourth, it seems fair to conclude that some shifting in place of the gradual-path account has resulted in the presentation now found in the *Cūlasakuludāyi-sutta*. The placement of the same account in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in contrast is clearly preferable.

40. MĀ 209: The Peak of Sensual Pleasure

Moving from the pleasure of absorption to sensual pleasure, in the *Vekhanassa-sutta* the Buddha makes a somewhat cryptic statement that appears to extol the highest type of sensual pleasure, which the commentary then takes to be a reference to Nirvāṇa.¹⁵² In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel a comparable statement involves merely an acknowledgement that the sense-objects of sensual pleasures appear to provide supreme happiness when contrasted to the sense-objects of undesirable sense-experiences.¹⁵³

Another puzzling aspect of the *Vekhanassa-sutta* is its report that the Buddha agreed with what appears to be an unjustified criticism raised by his visitor, whereas in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the Buddha does not agree with the criticism.¹⁵⁴ The *Madhyama-āgama* version also helps to understand better a simile made in both versions that

¹⁵¹ MN 79 at MN II 38,8: *paṭhamam jhānam* (E^c: *paṭhamajjhānam*) *upasampajja viharati. ayam pi kho, udāyi, dhammo uttaritaro ca paṇītataro ca yassa sacchikiri-yāhetu bhikkhū mayi brahmacariyaṃ caranti.*

¹⁵² MN 80 at MN II 43,4 and Ps III 277,19.

¹⁵³ MĀ 209 at T I 787a21; for a more detailed discussion of this and the next points cf. Anālayo 2011b: 437–440 and 2012b: 139–154.

¹⁵⁴ MN 80 at MN II 44,3 and MĀ 209 at T I 787b28.

illustrates bondage with the example of an infant, and it also provides a more natural conclusion to the discourse. Whereas in the *Vekhanassa-sutta* the wanderer Vekhanassa takes refuge as a lay disciple, in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel he goes forth under the Buddha,¹⁵⁵ a considerably more natural choice for someone who has already been living as a wanderer. In sum, in the case of this discourse several aspects of the Pāli version can be corrected or improved by having recourse to its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

41. MĀ 214: Censure of the Buddha

Turning from going forth under the Buddha to his being censured by others, the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report a meeting between King Pasenadi and Ānanda, in which the former tried to ascertain whether the Buddha would engage in the type of conduct that would be censured by other recluses and brahmins. The editions of the Pāli discourse differ on whether the king qualified these recluses and brahmins as wise, or whether this qualification was only introduced by Ānanda in his reply that the Buddha would not engage in such conduct; according to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel this qualification was only introduced by Ānanda.¹⁵⁶

Since in both versions the king expresses his appreciation for the finer distinction introduced in this way, which implicitly sets aside censure by those who are not wise and only takes up justified types of censure, the reading in the *Madhyama-āgama* version, and those Pāli editions that correspond to it, is clearly the preferable one.

¹⁵⁵ MN 80 at MN II 44,20 and MĀ 209 at T I 788a1.

¹⁵⁶ The king's enquiry in MN 88 at MN II 113,33 and in S^c already qualifies the recluses and brahmins as wise, a qualification not found in his enquiry in B^c and C^c and in the parallel MĀ 214 at T I 798a13; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2011b: 508 and for a translation and study of the whole discourse Anālayo 2012b: 175–194.

42. Conclusion

The selected passages from the *Madhyama-āgama* surveyed above confirm in my view the methodological requirement mentioned at the beginning of this article, namely the need to proceed beyond the Pāli material when studying early Buddhist thought and history.¹⁵⁷ The cases surveyed range from very minor issues to at times significantly different presentations in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourses, which offer indications that help to improve our understanding of the relevant Pāli passage or discourse and thus must be taken into account in any attempt at historical reconstruction of early Buddhist thought.

¹⁵⁷ Regarding the hypothesis by von Hinüber 2008, mentioned above in notes 2 and 3, as far as I am able to see for purposes of historical reconstruction the Pāli discourses in the four *Nikāyas* are better not used on their own, without taking into account their parallels preserved in the Chinese *Āgamas*, etc. (by “parallels” I mean early discourse parallels, not later texts such as, e.g., the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, mentioned by von Hinüber 2015b: 198), as well as whatever other sources of information we can marshal for this purpose. An illustrative example is the *Nandakovāda-sutta*, whose relevance to the topic of the existence of nuns during the Buddha’s lifetime I already mentioned in Anālayo 2008: 117, and which I discussed in more detail in Anālayo 2010a. Comparative study shows that the more negative presentation of the nuns in the Pāli discourse is with high probability the result of later change. Thus when von Hinüber 2008: 24 notes that in this Pāli discourse the Buddha “does not even talk to her ... as if Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī would not exist”, then I contend that this should be treated as historical information about the attitude of the reciters of the Pāli discourse, rather than as a source of historical information about the actual situation on the ground at the time of the Buddha. In sum, in my view it is indeed a ‘methodological problem’ and a ‘methodological shortcoming’ when one relies on the four Pāli *Nikāyas* on their own for purposes of historical reconstruction of what happened on the ground, contrary to the assessment by von Hinüber 2015b: 199 that “this methodological virtue is the only possible way to access the early Buddhist tradition”.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
B ^c	Burmese edition
C ^c	Ceylonese edition
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Tripiṭaka Association
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dirgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
E ^c	PTS edition
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Mp	<i>Manorathapūraṇī</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
PTS	Pali Text Society
Q	Peking edition
S ^c	Siamese edition
SĀ	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
SĀ ³	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 101)
SHT	Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
Sv	<i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA digital edition)
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Vin	<i>Vinayapiṭaka</i>
Vism	<i>Visuddhimagga</i>

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《中阿含經》摘選經文與其《巴利藏》對應經文之比較

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摘要：

本文主要研究從漢譯《中阿含經》摘選的經文，並指出漢譯《阿含經》與《巴利藏》的比較研究有助於更全面的理解《巴利藏》，有時甚至可以幫助修正現有《巴利藏》的內容。

關鍵詞：

比較研究、中阿含、巴利經典

