

Madhyama-āgama Studies

Anālayo

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Dharma Drum Buddhist College Series

In 1994, Master Sheng Yen (1931–2009), the founder of Dharma Drum Buddhist College, began publishing the Series of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. The purposes of publishing this series were: to provide a venue for academic research in Buddhist Studies supported by scholarships from the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies; to encourage top-quality Buddhist research; and to cultivate an interest in Buddhist research among the readership of the series. Moreover, by encouraging cooperation with international research institutions, he hoped to promote the domestic status of the academic study of Buddhism.

In keeping with Master Sheng Yen's vision, in order to promote different aspects of exchange in academic research, we at Dharma Drum Buddhist College have begun to publish three educational series:

Dharma Drum Buddhist College Research Series
(DDBC-RS),

Dharma Drum Buddhist College Translation Series
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The Research Series (DDBC-RS) is primarily intended as a venue for academic research in the field of Buddhist Studies in general and of Chinese Buddhism in particular. The Translation Series (DDBC-TS) will present English renditions of Chinese canonical works as well as other important works, or else Chinese translations of academic publications on Buddhism that have appeared in European languages or Japanese, etc. The Special Series (DDBC-SS) will accommodate works which require special publication formats.

Among our future goals is the extensive development of Buddhist digital publishing and information to adapt to the interactive and hyper-connective environment of the Web 2.0 age. This will allow research outcomes to be quickly shared and evaluated through the participation of individual users, through such media as blogs, shared tagging, wikis, social networks and so on. Our hope is to work towards developing an open environment for academic studies (perhaps called Science 2.0) on Buddhist culture that will be more collaborative and efficient than traditional academic studies. In this way, Dharma Drum Buddhist College will continue to help foster the availability of digital resources for Buddhist Studies.

Huimin Bhikṣu, President
Dharma Drum Buddhist College
July 26, 2010

Foreword

Once the great indologist and eminent writer Govind Chandra Pande remarked that in a way Buddhism can be considered the most universal of all the historical forms of spiritual culture. In the long history of Buddhism its followers did not hesitate to adopt the linguistic and material modes of culture prevalent in the societies where it happened to spread. Thus Buddhist literature was readily created, for instance, in Central and East Asia and was considered fully authoritative. The historical Buddha himself did not favour the notion of any originally authentic language or of an absolutely sacrosanct canon of Holy Scripture. He wanted his disciples to accept his words only after duly testing and critically examining them.

On the strength of this rational message, says G.C. Pande, "even Buddhist mysticism depends on the scientific analysis of psychic and parapsychic phenomena and a system of moral and mental training depending on this analysis and testable by personal experience".

Borne out by G.C. Pande's observations it can certainly be maintained that also scholarly Buddhists by confession and likewise such members of Buddhist monastic orders can be expected – in a strictly scientific sense – to do solid research on the canonical and paracanonical texts of their various *dharma* traditions.

For over a decade now a good example of admirable scholarship on the part of *saṅgha* members is set by Bhikkhu Anālayo. In 2007 he successfully defended his D.Litt. dissertation at Philipp's University Marburg and published the same in 2011 (Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, Taipei), entitled *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya* in two vols. In this comprehensive textual study the author compares the Pāli discourses of the *Majjhima-nikāya* with their parallels preserved in Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan. As he has shown con-

vincingly, a meticulous comparative study together with judiciously handling the material dealt with does indeed go a long way towards clarifying many obscure places occurring in the canonical texts of Early Buddhism. When employing working hypotheses – indispensable, of course, in view of the numerous knotty textual and hermeneutical problems the buddhologist frequently is confronted with – Bhikkhu Anālayo always is circumspect and does not 'zoom' to conclusions. In the case of textual discrepancies between *nikāya* and *āgama* accounts, for instance, there is no need always to reconsider a given school affiliation; such discrepancies, as Bhikkhu Anālayo argues, are, more often than not, due to the "fluctuating nature of oral transmission".

As evidenced by quite a few articles that have appeared in various learned journals and by some monographs, alongside undertaking his D.Litt. dissertation and preparing it for publication Bhikkhu Anālayo has indefatigably been continuing his comparative studies, either focusing anew on topics already treated in his Habilitationsschrift or undertaking altogether new tasks of *nikāya-āgama* comparison by breaking fresh ground for the benefit of both the specialist and the cultured reader interested in early Buddhist canonical texts. I am very glad to see that nineteen out of his postdoctoral research papers have been singled out for a republication in one volume which will surely facilitate considerably accessibility to all those who are working or will be working in the respective area of Buddhist Studies and hopefully also to the general reader.

Bhikkhu Pāsādika
3rd May, 2012

Introduction

The *Madhyama-āgama* was, according to the information that has come down to us, translated into Chinese during the period 397–398 C.E. under the leadership of the Kashmirian monk Gautama Saṅghadeva.¹ According to what appears to be a general consensus among most scholars so far, the *Madhyama-āgama* collection would have been transmitted by reciters belonging to the Sarvāstivāda tradition.²

This *Madhyama-āgama* collection contains 222 discourses, assigned to 18 chapters, while the *Majjhima-nikāya* contains 152 discourses in 15 chapters. Regarding the chapter division in the two collections, 4 chapters in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya* share the same headings and also have several dis-

¹ T I 809b26 reports that Saṅghadeva's translation was based on an original read out to him by the Kashmirian Saṅgharakṣa, the scribe was Dào cí (道慈), who was assisted by Lǐ bǎo (李寶) and Kānghuà (康化). Having studied this translation for several years, I am under the impression that, in spite of several translation errors, in general terms Gautama Saṅghadeva and his team have to a remarkable degree remained faithful to the original. Thus, for example, they do not seem to have introduced variations when rendering stereotyped expressions in the Indic original in order to accommodate the preferences of the Chinese reader, something quite common with other *Āgama* translators. Zürcher 1991: 288 describes this penchant of Chinese translators as follows: "there is a strong tendency to avoid the monotonous effect of ... verbatim repetition ... by introducing a certain amount of diversification and irregularity", as a result of which "in the same translated scripture we often find various alternative forms and longer or shorter versions of the same cliché". Regarding the *Madhyama-āgama*, Chung 2011: 16 note 19 comments that its discourses "seem to reflect an Indic original passed down in good condition".

² Cf. the discussion below page 516.

courses in common.³ Of the discourses in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, 95 have counterparts in the *Madhyama-āgama*, which, as a single *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse has two *Madhyama-āgama* parallels,⁴ count up to 96 discourses shared by the two collections.⁵ Most of the remaining *Madhyama-āgama* discourses have parallels in other Pāli *Nikāyas*, although a few discourses are unknown to the Pāli canon.⁶ The distribution of parallels over the two collections differs to such an extent that the allocation of discourses within each collection clearly is the outcome of a process specific to the respective reciter traditions.⁷

The impact of the prolonged period of oral transmission shows itself not only in differences in the distribution of discourses, but also in relation to the content of the discourses found in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya*. Detecting errors that would have occurred at some point during the transmission of the discourses through a comparative study is thus a recurrent theme in the collected papers assembled in the present monograph. Here my emphasis is mainly on the rectification of errors in the much better known Pāli version of a discourse. Obviously, the same potential applies to an even greater degree to using Pāli discourses as a means to correct errors in their Chinese parallels, which were affected not only by problems in transmission, but also by translation errors. Readers of the Chinese *Āgamas*, however, appear to be well aware of this potential,⁸ whereas such potential seems to

³ Cf. below page 441f and Anālayo 2009k: 828.

⁴ MĀ 107 and MĀ 108 are both parallels to MN 17.

⁵ Cf. Anālayo 2011a: 9 note 69.

⁶ A survey of *Madhyama-āgama* discourse that do not have a Pāli parallel can be found in Minh Chau 1991: 348–355; for a study of indications given in two such discourses regarding *jhāna* practice cf. Anālayo 2012b.

⁷ Cf. table 2 in Anālayo 2007a: 36.

⁸ Cf., e.g., the extensive footnoting based on the Pāli parallels found in the 佛光

be less known among those who study the Pāli discourses. To draw attention to this potential is therefore a central aim of the papers collected here.

Contents

The studies in the following chapters are revised versions of articles published previously. Each study is based on partial or complete translations of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse in question – one exception being the parallel to the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta*, where I instead translate the Tibetan parallel – followed by an examination of some aspects that I felt to be of further interest.⁹ In relation to the first discourse taken up for study, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* (MN 26), I investigate the role of Brahmā in early Buddhism and in particular the episode according to which Brahmā Sahampati invites the Buddha to teach. The next discourse taken up is the Tibetan parallel to the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* (MN 44), where my study explores the portrayal in the parallel versions of the *bhikkhunī* Dhammadinnā as an eloquent teacher. The *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* (MN 47) and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, taken up next, demonstrate the importance given to investigation in early Buddhism, where the Buddha is on record for encouraging a thorough scrutiny of his own claim to being fully awakened by a prospective disciple.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallels to the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* (MN 77), the *Samaṇamañḍikā-sutta* (MN 78) and the *Vekhanassa-sutta* (MN 80) illustrate how a comparative study can rectify what appear to be errors of transmission on the side of the Pāli version; in the case of the *Samaṇamañḍikā-sutta* (MN 78) I also

Fóguāng edition (publ. 1983) of the *Āgamas*.

⁹ A discourse not included in the present selection is my translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (MN 10), which will be published in Anālayo 2013b.

survey the notion of a *samaṇa* in the early Buddhist discourses.

The *Ghaṭṭikāra-sutta* (MN 81) and its parallel pertain to the genre of canonical *jātakas*, reflecting the interest that tradition developed in past life accounts of the Buddha. The *Bāhitika-sutta* (MN 88) and its parallel exemplify the influence of the reciters on formulations employed in each of the two discourses, in this particular case apparently due to the discomfort caused by the discourse's portrayal of the Buddha's ethical integrity being scrutinized by a contemporary king.

The relationship between meditative tranquillity and insight is a central theme in my exploration of the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* (MN 106) and its parallels. The *Chabbisodhana-sutta* (MN 112) provides yet another example for the potential of comparative studies, as even though the discourse's title refers to six types of purities, the actual discourse lists only five. The missing sixth purity can then be found in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. In the case of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* (MN 115), my comparative study takes up the dictum that a woman cannot be a Buddha, etc., for closer examination.

The *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* (MN 117), when compared to its parallels, affords us a glimpse of the beginnings of Abhidharma thought. With the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* (MN 121), taken up together with the first part of the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* (MN 122), I study a gradual meditative approach to the realization of emptiness. In the case of the *Bakkula-sutta* (MN 124), the arahant ideal is a central theme of my examination.

The *Dantabhūmi-sutta* (MN 125) and its parallel provide yet another example of how the presentation in a Pāli discourse can be improved by consulting its *Āgama* parallel. The *Mahākaccāna-bhaddekaratta-sutta* (MN 133) and its parallels then testify to the influence of notions held by the reciters on the present shape of the discourse.

The final two discourses taken up have parallels in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. In the case of the *Gotamī-sutta* (AN 8.51), based on a comparative study I develop a new perspective on the canonical account of the foundation of the order of nuns. With the *Karajakāya-sutta* (AN 10.208), I examine the relationship between karma and liberation.

In an appendix to the present collection I critically examine the conclusions by Chung (2011) and Fukita regarding the question of the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, a suggestion made concerning the appropriate way of translating the concluding phrase of *Āgama* discourses by Bingenheimer (2011), and some points raised by Minh Chau (1991) in his comparative study of the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

Conventions

Since a considerable part of my target audience would be familiar with the Pāli canon only, in what follows I employ Pāli terminology, except for anglicised terms like "Dharma" or "Nirvāṇa", without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourses or on Pāli language being in principle preferable. I am of course aware of the fact that in academic circles Sanskrit is the preferred language, since it best represents the pan-Buddhist literary traditions. But I hope that my colleagues will bear with me for what I believe to be a decision that will greatly facilitate access to my studies by those who are only familiar with Pāli terms.¹⁰ For the same reason, I

¹⁰ Gómez 1995: 187 points out that there is a tendency for "scholars [to be] dedicated to a professional discourse of recondite jargon and *érudition pure*, with no sense of an audience outside the limited circle of the professional", followed by noting several "forgotten communities of readers that we often neglect". While the use of Sanskrit as such is certainly not a question of being dedicated to recondite jargon, it seems to me that having a sense for the prob-

have arranged my studies in the sequence in which the respective discourses are found in the Pāli canon. The original order of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourses translated and studied in the present monograph can be seen in table 1 below.

In the case of those *Madhyama-āgama* discourses that have their parallel in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, I adopt the paragraph numbering used in the English translation of these discourses by Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli (1995/2005) in order to facilitate comparison, even though in several cases this results in irregular numbering. In the notes to the translations, I focus on selected differences in relation to the Pāli parallel.¹¹ Abbreviations in the translation are usually found as such in the original.

In the translated text, I use square brackets [] to indicate supplementation and angle brackets < > to mark emendation. In order to facilitate cross-referencing, I have also used square brackets to provide the pagination of the original Chinese text on which the translation is based, and to indicate the pagination and footnote or endnote numbering of the original paper, whenever these differ from the present annotation.¹² When quoting various text editions,

able audience of my writings makes it advisable to avoid the unfamiliar Sanskrit in order to make my writings easily accessible to a readership that to a great part can be expected to have so far had exposure mainly to Pāli terminology.

¹¹ A comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourses covered in the present monograph in the light of their parallels has recently appeared in Anālayo 2011a. Unavoidably there is some degree of overlap between that publication and the present collection of papers, especially as nearly all of the articles were published earlier. Nevertheless, since in Anālayo 2011a I do not provide translations and given that the present set of studies often focuses on specific issues in detail, I hope to be excused for occasional reduplication.

¹² My placing of square bracket is usually after a comma or full stop, and in case a new page starts with a table after the first section of the ensuing text, to avoid disturbing the textual flow or detracting from the table.

I have occasionally standardized or adjusted the punctuation.

Translation Terminology

When translating the discourses of the *Madhyama-āgama*, I have attempted to stay close to the terminology adopted by Bhikkhu Bodhi in his renderings of the Pāli equivalents, to facilitate comparison. In the case of 苦, equivalent to *dukkha*, however, I simply keep the Pāli term, which at times does stand for outright "pain", but on many an occasion refers to "unsatisfactoriness", where translations like "suffering" or "pain" fail to adequately convey the sense of the passage in question. The standard rendering of *bhagavant* in the *Madhyama-āgama* is 世尊, literally "World Honoured One", where I follow Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of the corresponding Pāli term and adopt the rendering "Blessed One".

In the case of 念處, literally "mindfulness sphere", an expression that corresponds to *satipaṭṭhāna*, I opt for "establishing of mindfulness".¹³ For 慈, equivalent to *mettā*, I use the translation "benevolence"; with 漏, corresponding to *āsava*, I employ the rendering "influx";¹⁴ and for 覺, counterpart to *bodhi*, I use "awakening".¹⁵

¹³ On the inadequacy of the rendering "foundation of mindfulness" cf. Anālayo 2003c: 29f.

¹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the significance of the term *āsava* cf. Anālayo 2011c.

¹⁵ On the significance of the term *bodhi* cf. Anālayo 2011a: xxiii and on the use of the philologically less apt rendering "enlightenment" as an aspect of Buddhist modernism Cohen 2010: 101.

Table 1: Translated *Madhyama-āgama* Discourses

MĀ no.:	Pāli no.:	Pāli title:
MĀ 15	AN 10.208	<i>Karajakāya-sutta</i>
MĀ 34	MN 124	<i>Bakkula-sutta</i>
MĀ 63	MN 81	<i>Ghaṭikāra-sutta</i>
MĀ 75	MN 106	<i>Āneñjasappāya-sutta</i>
MĀ 116	AN 8.51	<i>Gotamī-sutta</i>
MĀ 165	MN 133	<i>Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta</i>
MĀ 179	MN 78	<i>Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta</i>
MĀ 181	MN 115	<i>Bahudhātuka-sutta</i>
MĀ 186	MN 47	<i>Vīmaṃsaka-sutta</i>
MĀ 187	MN 112	<i>Chabbisodhana-sutta</i>
MĀ 189	MN 117	<i>Mahācattārīsaka-sutta</i>
MĀ 190	MN 121	<i>Cūlasuññata-sutta</i>
MĀ 198	MN 125	<i>Dantabhūmi-sutta</i>
MĀ 204	MN 26	<i>Ariyapariyesanā-sutta</i>
MĀ 207	MN 77	<i>Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta</i>
MĀ 209	MN 80	<i>Vekhanassa-sutta</i>
MĀ 214	MN 88	<i>Bāhitika-sutta</i>

Titles of Original Publications:

The *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its Parallels on Imperturbability and on the Contribution of Insight to the Development of Tranquillity; cf. below page 195.

The Arahant Ideal in Early Buddhism – The Case of Bakkula; cf. below page 365.

The *Bahudhātuka-sutta* and its Parallels on Women’s Inabilities; cf. below page 249.

The Bodhisattva and Kassapa Buddha – A Study Based on the *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel to the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta*; cf. below

- page 155.
- Brahmā's Invitation, The *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* in the Light of its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 11.
- The Buddha's Truly Praiseworthy Qualities – According to the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* and its Chinese Parallel; cf. below page 81.
- The Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* and the Pāli *Majjhima-nikāya* – In the Footsteps of Thich Minh Chau; cf. below page 515.
- The Chinese Version of the *Dantabhūmi Sutta*; cf. below page 395.
- Chos sbyin gyi mdo*, Bhikṣuṇī Dharmadinnā Proves Her Wisdom; cf. below page 39.
- A Gradual Entry into Emptiness, Depicted in the Early Buddhist Discourses; cf. below 325.
- Karma and Liberation – The *Karajakāya-sutta* (AN 10.208) in the Light of its Parallels; cf. below page 489.
- The *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* in the Light of its Parallels – Tracing the Beginnings of Abhidharmic Thought; cf. below page 289.
- Mahāpajāpati's Going Forth in the *Madhyama-āgama*; cf. below page 449.
- Qualities of a True Recluse (*Samaṇa*) – According to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 105.
- The Scope of Free Inquiry – According to the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 67.
- The Sixfold Purity of an Arahant, According to the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* and its Parallel; cf. below page 223.
- The *Vekhanassa-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel – A Case Study in the Transmission of the Pāli Discourses; cf. below page 139.
- The Verses on an Auspicious Night, Explained by *Mahākaccāna* – A Study and Translation of the Chinese Version; cf. below

page 421.

What the Buddha would not do, According to the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel; cf. below page 175.

Acknowledgement and Dedication

I am indebted to Bhikkhu Bodhi, Bhikkhu Brahmāli, Rod Bucknell, Jin-il Chung, Alice Collett, Jake Davis, Mitsuyo Demoto, Sean Fargo, Guo Gu, Peter Harvey, Christian Luczanits, William Magee, Jan Nattier, Giuliana Martini, Shi Kongmu, Ken Su, Bhikkhunī Tathālokā, Vincent Tournier and Monika Zin for comments and suggestions made in regard to one or more of the articles collected in this volume, and to the editors of the respective journals and books for their kind permission to reprint the material.

I would like to dedicate this book to the memory of the Vietnamese scholar monk Thich Minh Chau (1918–2012). His groundbreaking comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and the *Madhyama-āgama* was what originally inspired me to learn Chinese and engage in comparative studies of the *Āgamas* myself.