SOME REFLECTIONS ON TRANSLATING THE PALI TEXTS: LITERARY CONVENTIONS, BUDDHIST THOUGHT, CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND TEXTUAL HISTORY

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For over a century many Buddhist texts in Pali have been translated into English, the four main Nikāyas at least twice. Significant improvements have been made in regard to English translations of Pali texts. This paper provides five case studies that illustrate the problems and complexities involved in translating Pali texts. Examples are taken from four sutras of the Aṅguttara Nikāya. Various issues are addressed using textual and contextualised analyses. I attempt to offer solutions to some problems related to translating the Pali through different approaches, including style, philology, history, Buddhist thought and inter-religious relation.

Key words: Buddhist literature, early Buddhism, Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, translation.

1. Introduction

For over a century many Buddhist texts in Pali have been translated into English. The four main Nikāyas have been translated into English at least twice. Significant improvements have been made in regard to English translations of Pali texts. The aim of this study is to deal with some issues connected to the existing translations of the Aṅguttara Nikāya. There are two complete English translations of this collection:

1. The Book of the Gradual Sayings, 5 vols., translated by F. L. Woodward (I, II, V) and E. M. Hare (III, IV), published by the Pali Text Society from 1932 to 1936.

There are two partial English translations of the Aṅguttara Nikāya:

The five case studies provided below draw on four suttas in the first two volumes of the Aṅguttara Nikāya published by the Pali Text Society (Ee I, II). Neither of the two partial translations includes any of these four suttas. Therefore, I will only mention the translations by F. L. Woodward (1932, 1933) and Bhikkhu Bodhi (2012). As many would agree, however excellent a translation may be, there is always room for improvement. In this paper various issues are addressed using textual and contextualised analyses. I attempt to offer solutions to some problems related to translating the Pali through different approaches, including style, philology, history, Buddhist thought and inter-religious relation.

2. Literary Conventions of Pali Suttas

2.1. Vocative in Direct Speech

Sutta 80 in the Book of the Threes in the Aṅguttara Nikāya (AN 3:80, I 228) has the following sentence with variant readings:

Ee I 228, 19–21:
Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando [āyasmantaṃ Udāyim] etad avoca: ‘Lābhā vata me, suladdhāṃ vata me, yassa me satthā evaṃ mahiddhiko evaṃ mahānubhāvo’ ti.

Be I 229, 13–15:
Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando (āyasmantaṃ Udāyim) etad avoca: ‘Lābhā vata me, suladdhāṃ vata me, yassa me satthā evaṃ mahiddhiko evaṃ mahānubhāvo’ ti.

Se I 297, 4–6:
Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando etad avoca: ‘Lābhā vata me, suladdhāṃ vata me, yassa me satthā evaṃ mahiddhiko evaṃ mahānubhāvo’ ti.

Ce I 404, 13–14:
Evaṃ vutte āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantaṃ etad avoca: ‘Lābhā vata me, suladdhāṃ vata me, yassa me satthā evaṃ mahiddhiko evaṃ mahānubhāvo’ ti.

In this sentence, Ce has Bhagavantaṃ. Ee and Be have āyasmantaṃ Udāyim and both put it in brackets, thereby indicating both editors’ uncertainty. By contrast, Se is the shortest and has neither Bhagavantaṃ nor āyasmantaṃ Udāyim. Woodward (1932: 208) presumably follows the Ee reading, but ignores the brackets, thus he translates:
‘... the venerable Ānanda exclaimed to the venerable Udāyin: ...’. Bodhi (2012: 314) reads with Ce and renders the above whole sentence as follows:

When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One [Bhagavantam]: ‘It is my good fortune! I am very fortunate that my Teacher is so powerful and mighty.’ (The Pali word in square brackets is mine.)

According to the literary conventions of Pali suttas, when person A speaks to person B, person A normally addresses person B in the vocative near the beginning of person A’s direct speech. If Woodward’s translation is right, Ānanda would address Udāyin as ‘āvuso Udāyi’ (friend Udāyin, e.g. AN III 322, where Ānanda talks to Udāyin). If Bodhi’s translation is right, Ānanda would address the Blessed One (Bhagavat) as ‘bhante’ (venerable sir, e.g. AN I 223–228). Such vocatives, however, are absent from the words uttered by Ānanda. This fact indicates that Ānanda is addressing no one. Therefore, Se has the correct reading; the correct translation would be something like:

When this was said, the Venerable Ānanda said: ‘It is my good fortune! I am very fortunate that my Teacher is so powerful and mighty.’

The Japanese translation by Wogihara (1935: 372), ‘是の如く語られたる時に具壽阿難は唱へて曰く——鳴呼我に利あり……’, which renders neither āyasmannam Udāyī nor Bhagavantam, is the first translation to be based on the correct reading as far as I am aware.¹ As Wogihara points out in the prefatory note (凡例) to his translation of the Āṅguttara Nikāya, his translation is based on the Pali Text Society edition (Ee) by Richard Morris, but he also consults the Siamese edition (Se).

2.2. Waxing Syllable Principle

Sutta 63 in the Book of the Threes in the Āṅguttara Nikāya (AN 3:63) contains an exposition of three kinds of ‘high and big beds’. Of the three, the ‘brahmic high and big bed’ is explained using the formula of the four ‘brahma abodes’ (brahma-vihāra), which reads (trans. Bodhi 2012: 275):

… I dwell pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, likewise the second quarter, the third quarter, and the fourth quarter. Thus above, below, across, and everywhere, and to all as to myself [sabbattāya], I dwell pervading the entire world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, vast, exalted, measureless, without enmity, without ill will. [The same is said of compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity.]²

¹ I can only read English, Japanese and Chinese translations. My ignorance of German, French, Italian, Thai, Sinhalese, Burmese and so on has prevented me from referring to the possibly existing translations in these languages.

² AN I 183: so mettāsahagatena cetasa ekaṃ disam pharirvā viharāmi tathā dutiyaṃ tathā tatiyaṃ tathā catutthaṃ. Iti uddham adha tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbavantāṃ lokam.
Here is a problematic word, sabbattatāya. Bodhi (2012: 275) renders it as ‘to all as to myself’ based on the commentarial tradition (see Section 3). Woodward (1932: 166) translates it as ‘for all sorts and conditions’.

As Wang (2008: 17) points out, according to Edgerton’s Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary, sabbattatāya corresponds to sarvatratāye in the Mahāvastu,3 a Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit text. Edgerton states that sarvatratāye means ‘altogether, in every way’ and is apparently the instrumental of sarvatra-tā,4 a noun formed by attaching the abstract suffix -tā to sarvatra, which is an adverb meaning ‘everywhere’ (MW 1189 s.v. sarvatra). In his translation of the Mahāvastu, Jones (1956: 209) renders sarvatratāye as ‘everywhere’. In other words, adding the abstract suffix -tā reflected in the instrumental case, -āye, does not change the meaning of sarvatra.

That sabbattatāya means ‘everywhere’ can be reinforced in view of a stylistic feature of Pali sutta literature. As Allon (1997: 364) observes, the authors of Pali canonical sutta texts ‘tended to expand the wording and create strings or sequences of similar word elements and units of meaning wherever possible’. The Pali phrase sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantam lokāṃ, which can be rendered literally as ‘everywhere,5 everywhere, the entire world’, is a sequence of synonymous word elements typical of Pali canonical texts. This case also conforms to the waxing syllable principle suggested by Allon (1997: 191): ‘as the sequence progresses the syllable length of each subsequent element may be equal to or greater than what precedes it.’ In accord with this principle, our phrase consists of a string of three adverbial expressions: sabbadhi has 3 syllables, sabbattatāya has 5 syllables, and sabbāvantam lokāṃ has 6 syllables.

3. How Closely Should We Follow the Commentarial Tradition?
Sanskrit and Chinese Parallels as Alternative Solutions

When we encounter difficulties in translating the Pali suttas, it is often useful to consult the commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) on the canonical texts by Buddhaghosa (5th century CE) and his Visuddhimagga which is closely connected to the Nikāya commentaries and ‘seems to quote from the old Aṭṭhakathā much more extensively than the extant commentaries do’ as von Hinüber (1997: 125) remarks. While affirming the values of the commentaries, Norman (2004: 69–72) suggests that the commentarial tradition sometimes does not agree with philology and is not always correct in interpreting the Nikāyas. T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede (PED 620 s.v. vitakka)

3 Mvu III 213: yad ihākātyo karunāpāreṇa cetasā ekān diśām svarātvasampadāyā viharati ... tathā dvitiyāṃ tathā tṛtiyāṃ tathā caturthāṃ. iti ārthāvam abhi tīryak sarvehi sarvatratāye svarāvantaṃ lokāṃ svarātvasampadāyā viharati.
4 BHSD 584 s.v. sarvatratāye, adv. (app. instr. of *sarvatra-tā; = Pali sabbattatāya or sabbatthatāya ...), altogether, in every way. For the instrumental ending -āye, see BHSG p. 64, § 9.37.
5 Sabbadhi also means ‘everywhere’. See PED 680 s.v. sabba.
also caution us: ‘The explanations of Commentators are mostly of an edifying nature and based more on popular etymology than on natural psychological grounds.’

Moreover, the Pali commentaries and subcommentaries are separated from the *sutta* texts by more than seven or eight centuries. They are even later than many Chinese translations of the Indic texts. The four *Āgamas* in Chinese translation from various traditions (see Section 6.3 below) correspond to the four main *Nikāyas* of the Theravāda tradition. They were translated from Prakrit languages or Sanskṛtas into Chinese in the 4th and 5th centuries CE. Sharf (2002: 12) says:

> Our appraisal of the accuracy of Chinese translations and interpretations is, therefore, compromised by our own distance from the Indic originals. Indeed, we are at a far greater temporal and geographic remove from the Indian sources than were the Chinese of the Six Dynasties and the T’ang.

It is not sensible to confine our research to the Pali sources, which just belong to a single tradition of the Theravāda school. The (Hybrid) Sanskrit and Chinese sources from different traditions may cast valuable light on the issues of translating Pali texts into English. This paper (above and below) provides several examples of how to better translate the Pali words by taking Sanskrit and Chinese versions into account without simply relying on the Pali commentarial literature.

In Section 2.2 we have discussed the meaning of *sabbattatāya* in AN 3:63 (I 183). Bodhi (2012: 275) renders it as ‘to all as to myself’, presumably following the interpretation in the *Visuddhimagga* (cf. Wang 2008: 20), which is also found in Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Vibhanga*, an Abhidhamma text:

> Equally (*sabbattatāya*): to all [sabbesu] classed as inferior, medium, superior, friendly, hostile, neutral, etc., just as to oneself [attatāya]; equality with oneself (atta-samatā) without making the distinction ‘This is another being’, is what is meant.7 (Trans. Nāṇamoli 1975: 334; Pali words in square brackets are mine – TK.)

Accordingly, the word *sabbattatāya* is construed as a compound in the locative case, comprising sabbesu (to all) and attatāya (to oneself); the combination of the two words would yield a new meaning: ‘equality between all and oneself’. This interpretation sounds somewhat far-fetched in terms of etymology, although it is positive in terms of edification.8 In the *Visuddhimagga* this is not the only case in which edifi-

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6 von Hinüber (1997: 151) suggests that Buddhaghosa could be the initiator rather than the composer of the Abhidhamma commentaries.

7 Vism IX.47 and Vibh-a 377: *Sabbattatāya* ti sabbesu hīna-majjhimukkhattha-mitta-sapatta-majjhattādi-puphadesu attatāya; ayam parasatto ti vibhāgaṃ akatvā atta-samatāyā ti vuttaṃ hoti.

8 For example, Heim (2017: 181) says: ‘This is an image of likeness or sameness with the other that counters our usual tendencies to classify and rank others … a resource for cultivating the affective conditions helpful for constructing an ethic of social equality and justice.’ She does not notice the fallacy of the commentarial gloss.
ing concerns override philology, and recourse is made to folk etymology. In his discussion of the word nirvāṇa/nibbāna, Hwang (2006: 12) notes:

Buddhaghosa also ignored the original etymological meaning of the word, the extinction of the triple fires of passion, hatred and delusion, and presented a different explanation of nirvāṇa based on vāṇa… derived from √vā (to weave) in his Visuddhimagga: It is called nibbāna (extinction) because it has gone away from (nikkhanta), has escaped from (nissata), is dissociated from, craving, which has acquired in common usage the name ‘fastening (vāṇa)’…

As mentioned above, the Pali phrase sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantam lokaṃ can be rendered literally as ‘everywhere, everywhere, the entire world’. The Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit counterpart sarvehī9 sarvatratāye sarvāvantam lokaṃ in the Mahāvastu also means the same and Jones (1956: 209) translates it as ‘everywhere, the whole wide world’ without repeating ‘everywhere’. Similarly, Dānapāla (Shihu 施護, 10th century CE) translates a corresponding phrase in the *Mahā-saṃgīti Sūtra (T 12, Da jifamen jing 大集法門經) as ‘in all places, all the world’,10 which was probably translated from a (classical) Sanskrit equivalent for sarvehī sarvatratāye sarvāvantam lokaṃ.

The interpretation of sabbattatāya in the Visuddhimagga can distinguish this word from sabbadhi and therefore avoid the awkward repetition of ‘everywhere’, but this is unlikely to be what the original text intends to express. A better strategy of translating sabbadhi sabbattatāya is to render these two words as one word ‘everywhere’, just as Jones and Dānapāla did. Or alternatively, we can use two synonyms to translate sabbadhi sabbattatāya, for example, ‘everywhere, in all places’.

4. Rivalry between Buddhism and Other Religions

The foregoing AN 3:63 (I 180–185) records the Buddha’s visit to a village called Venāgapura as follows. When he had just arrived, a good report about him was circulated, so the brahmin householders went to see him. A brahmin of the Vaccha clan, or Vacchagotta, praised the Buddha thus (in brief):

It is amazing how Master Gotama’s faculties are tranquil and the colour of his skin is pure and bright. … Whatever high and big beds there are—that is, a sofa, a divan … with a canopy above and red bolsters at both ends—Master Gotama surely gains at will, without trouble or difficulty. (Translation mostly follows Bodhi 2012: 273–274.)

Then the Buddha said that for those who have gone forth, it is difficult to obtain such high and big beds (uccā-sayana-mahā-sayana), and if such beds are obtained, they are

9 BHSD 586 s.v. sarvehī, adv. (app. instr. pl. of sarva, but corresp. to Pali sabbadhi, of obscure ending), altogether.
10 T I 228c: 於一切處、一切世界。
not allowed. As a witty riposte to the brahmin’s backhanded compliment, the Buddha declares in a metaphorical way that he has access at will to three kinds of ‘high and big beds’:

\[ \text{dibba} \text{ṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ, brahma} \text{ṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ, ariya} \text{ṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ (AN I 182).} \]

Woodward (1932: 165) translates: ‘They are the high, broad couch celestial, that which is sublime, and the high, broad couch of the Ariyans.’ Bodhi (2012: 274) translates: ‘The celestial high and luxurious bed, the divine high and luxurious bed, and the noble high and luxurious bed.’ Neither of these translations conveys the meaning that the Buddha wants to express in a particular religious context. The Buddha lists the three kinds of ‘high and big beds’ in such a hierarchy that whereas Brahmā trumps the gods, he is however trumped by the Buddhist noble ones according to Gombrich (2009: 192).

This sutta presents the Buddha’s denial of brahmins’ claim to hierarchical superiority and hence the supremacy of their religion, Brahmanism. In the early Upaniṣads, Brahman has a variety of meanings, including ‘the ultimate and basic essence of the cosmos’ (Olivelle 1998: 26–27). At a later stage the abstract Brahman, a neuter word, came to be personified as the deity Brahmā, a masculine word, seen as the creator of the universe (Brockington 1996: 54–55). Along with this theistic trend, as Gombrich (2001: 96) observes, in the early Buddhist texts, the gods borrowed from the Indian cultural background are all called deva and inhabit heavens called devaloka, which form part of the sensual-desire realm (kāma-dhātu). In contrast to the ‘devas proper’ (as Harvey 2013: 34 puts it) of the sensual-desire realm, Brahmā is above this realm and inhabits the fine-material realm (rūpa-dhātu). Gombrich (2001: 96) points out that the early Buddhist texts follow the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (6.2.15–16) in putting Brahmā in a special category, above the gods (deva).

When the Buddha refers to the first two kinds of ‘high and big beds’, i.e. dibbaṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ and brahmaṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ, the adjectives dibba and brahma allude respectively to gods (deva) and Brahmā, with the latter higher than the former, according to Buddhist cosmology based on the Upaniṣad mentioned above. As to the third kind of ‘high and big bed’, ariyaṃ uccā-sayana-mahā-sayanaṃ, the adjective ariya, usually rendered as ‘noble’, means almost the same as ‘Buddhist’ (DOP I 235). When ariya is used as a noun, as Buswell and Lopez (2014: 64) say, it is a ‘term appropriated by the Buddhists from earlier Indian culture to refer to its saints and used technically to denote a person who has directly perceived reality and has become a “noble one”’. The Buddha clearly talks about the three kinds of ‘high and big beds’ in a sequence that denotes a hierarchy: gods (deva, adjective dibba) are subordinate to Brahmā (adjective brahma), while Brahmā is subordinate to Buddhist saints or noble ones. In other words, Buddhism is superior to Brahmanism and other religions. The following table shows the three adjectives in sequence expressed by the Buddha as religions in rank order and how the three adjectives are translated by Woodward and Bodhi mentioned above.
Adjectives | dibba | brahma | ariya
---|---|---|---
Buddha | of gods (deva) | of Brahmā | of Buddhist noble ones
Woodward | celestial | sublime | of the Aryan
Bhikkhu Bodhi | celestial | divine | noble

Neither of the two English translations captures the metaphorical implications of the Buddha’s discourse. A better translation could be what is suggested by Gombrich (2009: 192): ‘divine’ for dibba, ‘brahmic’ for brahma, and ‘noble’ for ariya.

In the Buddha’s exposition, (1) the divine ‘high and big bed’ is associated with the four jhānas, (2) the brahmic ‘high and big bed’ is associated with loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity, referred to as brahma-vihāras in other texts (e.g. AN I 243, Sn 151), and (3) the noble ‘high and big bed’ is associated with the knowledge of liberation from greed, hatred and delusion. Anālayo (2015: 19) points out:

The early Buddhist texts in fact recurrently refer to the practice of the jhānas and of the brahmavihāras as pre-Buddhist forms of practice. This stands in contrast to the development of liberating insight, which the same texts clearly consider the specific discovery of a Buddha.

This echoes the rationale behind the exposition of the three kinds of ‘high and big beds’. The Buddha appropriates the terminology and conception of Brahmanism, and sets them within a new framework that fits into Buddhist doctrines. An ideal translation should be able to accommodate this multi-religious phenomenon.

5. Translation Considered within a Broader Context of Buddhist Thought

A passage in sutta 29 of the Book of the Fours in the Aṅguttara Nikāya (AN 4:29) reads:

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\text{Cattāri imāni bhikkhave dhāmmapādāni aggaṃnāni rattaṃnāni vam-
saṃnāni porānāni asankheṣṇāni asankheṣṇapubbāni, na saṅkipravanti na saṅ-
kipravissantī, appaṭṭikuṭṭhāni samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhi. Katamāni cattāri? Anabhijjhā bhikkhave dhāmmapādām aggaṃnām rattaṃnām vamsaṃnām porānām ... Ayyāpādo ... Sammāsati ... Sammāsamādhi ... (AN II 29)}
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Bhikkhu Bodhi (2012: 416) translates this passage as follows:

I read with Be I 337, 24, Se II 37, 16 and Ce II 58, 19. Ec II 29, 7–8 reads samaṇehi vā brāhmaṇehi vā.

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Bhikkhus, there are these four Dhamma factors, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which are not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, which are not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. What four? (1) Non-longing [anabhijjhā, non-covetousness] is a Dhamma factor, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient … (2) Good will [avyāpāda, ‘non-malice’] … (3) Right mindfulness … (4) Right concentration …

Here Bhikkhu Bodhi renders dhamma-padaṁi as ‘Dhamma factors’. Similarly, Woodward (1933: 32) translates this compound as ‘factors of Dhamma’. Bodhi (2012: 1684 note 683) implies that his translation is in accordance with the commentary’s explanation of this compound as ‘portions of Dhamma’ (Mp III 61: dhammakotṭhāsā).

‘Dhamma-pada’ is the title of a famous Buddhist text and is translated by Norman (2000: 1) as ‘The Word of the Doctrine’ and by Tin (1990:1) as ‘Path of the Buddha’s Teaching’.

Besides ‘factor’, ‘word’ and ‘path’, pada has many other meanings, one of which is ‘track’ or ‘footprint’. The foregoing sutta passage is partly quoted in an Abhidharma text of the Sarvāstivādins, the Saṃgītiparāya (T 1536, Ji yimen zu lun 集異門足論), preserved in Chinese translation. This Abhidharma text was translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 (602?–664), an eminent scholar monk who studied in India for 12 years in the 7th century CE, when the Sanskritisation of Buddhist texts had been completed (Norman 2006: 124). Here Xuanzang translates the Sanskrit equivalent for dhamma-pada as fa ji 法跡 ‘Dhamma footprint’ (T XXVI 395a). In my opinion, this rendering makes better sense on the following grounds.

According to some suttas, the Buddha did use the simile or metaphor of ‘ footprint’ (pada) to describe the Dhamma that he discovered and preached. For example, the Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya states:

Friends, just as the footprints of all living beings that walk fit into the footprint of the elephant, and the elephant’s footprint is declared to be their chief by reason of its size, so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths. (Translation mostly follows Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 2001: 278.)

As Rahula (1959: 16) points out, the heart of the Dhamma lies in the Four Noble Truths, which the Buddha expounded in his very first sermon, namely the Dhamma-cakkappavattana Sutta, the Discourse on ‘Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma’...
ma’ (SN V 420–424). In the Mahāsattipadopama Sutta cited above, the Four Noble Truths, i.e. the Dhamma, is compared to the elephant’s footprint (pada).

Using the same simile, sutta 48:54 of the Saṃyutta Nikāya states:

Bhikkhus, just as the footprints of all living beings that walk fit into the footprint of the elephant, and the elephant’s footprint is declared to be their chief by reason of its size, so too, among the steps [padāni] that lead to enlightenment, the faculty of wisdom is declared to be their chief.16 (Trans. Bodhi 2000: 1697–1698.)

This sutta enumerates the five faculties—faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom—as the steps that lead to enlightenment. Here Bhikkhu Bodhi translates padāni as ‘steps’ rather than ‘factors’. The commentary (Spk III 248) rephrases dhamma-padāni as dhamma-padāni, which Bodhi (2000: 1938, note 239) renders as ‘Dhamma-steps’ instead of ‘Dhamma factors’ mentioned above. This way of understanding and translating dhamma-padāni suits the case of AN 4:29 better. AN 4:29 expounds cattāri dhamma-padāni, which may well be rendered as ‘four Dhamma footprints’.

This is possibly a metaphorical expression involving ‘four-footed animals’.17 Moreover, according to sūtra 287 of the Saṃyukta Āgama (SĀ) extant in Chinese translation, the Buddha says the following to the monks:

Then it occurred to me: ‘I have discovered (lit. obtained) the path of the ancient seers, the road of the ancient seers, the ancient seers’ footprints (ji 跡) on the path; the ancient seers left behind (lit. left front) these footprints, which I now follow.’ Suppose someone would travel in a wilderness … So now I have discovered the path of the ancient seers, the road of the ancient seers, the ancient seers’ footprints … which I have discovered and followed, that is, the Noble Eightfold Path.18

It is noteworthy that in the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta the Buddha refers to the Noble Eightfold Path as what he has awakened to. Since this Eightfold Path is the last truth of the Four Noble Truths, i.e. the Dhamma, and this sutta is the Buddha’s first sermon called ‘Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma’, the Noble Eightfold Path also represents the Dhamma. In sūtra 287 of SĀ cited above, the Dhamma is metaphorically referred to as the footprints which were left and followed by the ancient seers and then discovered by the Buddha who also followed them. Another version of this sūtra entitled the *Pratītyasamutpāda-āryamārga Sūtra (T 714, Yuanqi shengdao jing 緣起聖道經) contains the following passage:

16 SN V 231: Seyyathāpi bhikkhave yāni kānicī jaṅgamānaṃ pānaṇaṃ padajātiṇī sabbāni tāni hathipade samodhānaṃ gacchanti, hathipadām tesām aggam akkhāyati, yad idaṃ mahatat-tena; evam eva kho bhikkhave yāni kānicī padāṇi bodhāya saṃvattanti, paññindriyām tesām aggam akkhāyati.

17 I am grateful to the second reviewer for this suggestion.

18 T II 80c: 我時作是念：「我得古仙人道、古仙人道、古仙人道跡，古仙人從此跡去，我今隨去。」譬如有隼於曠野…今我如是得古仙人道、古仙人道、古仙人跡…我得隨去，謂八聖道。“
Suppose someone would travel in a wilderness ... So too, I have now realised the ancient path, the ancient road, the ancient footprints (ji 跡) walked, travelled upon by the ancient seers. What is the ancient path, the ancient road, the ancient footprints walked, travelled upon by the ancient seers? It should be understood to be the Noble Eightfold Path.19

This passage resembles part of the passage quoted above from sūtra 287 of SĀ. Both versions mention ji 跡, footprint, which also appears in the foregoing Saṃgītaryāya translated by Xuanzang. Since the ji 跡 that appears in the Saṃgītaryāya is in a quotation from a Sarvāstivādin sūtra parallel to AN 4:29, this Chinese character was no doubt translated from pada in dharma-pada, the Sanskrit equivalent for dhamma-pada in Pali. The Chinese SĀ was translated by Gunabhadra 求那跋陀羅 between 435 and 443 CE (Bingenheimer 2011: 1) from a Sanskrit original (de Jong 1981: 108). The *Pratītyasamutpāda-āryamārga Sūtra was translated by Xuanzang in the 7th century when the Sanskritisation of Buddhist texts had been completed (see above). In these two texts, ji 跡 is also likely to be a rendering of pada, ‘footprint’, in Sanskrit.20

Sūtra 287 of SĀ has a Pali counterpart in the Samyutta Nikāya (SN II 104–107). It makes no mention of pada, ‘footprint’, in the following account:

Suppose, bhikkhus, a man wandering through a forest would see an ancient path, an ancient road travelled upon by people in the past ... So too, bhikkhus, I saw the ancient path, the ancient road travelled by the Perfectly Enlightened Ones of the past. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path.21 (Trans. Bodhi 2000: 603.)

Here we have three versions of a sutta passage. The Pali version belongs to the Theravāda. The Samyukta Agama (SĀ) in Chinese translation is ascribed to the Sarvāstivāda (Kumoi 1963: 248; Uí 1965: 136; Yinshun 1994: 97; Hiraoka 2000: 501) or more specifically the Mulasarvāstivāda (Lù 1963: 242; Enomoto 1984a: 1071; Enomoto 1984b: 99; Mizuno 1996: 373–375; Hiraoka 2003; Dhammadinnā 2012: 68). The school affiliation of the *Pratītyasamutpāda-āryamārga Sūtra is unknown. Two out of the three versions allegorise the Noble Eightfold Path as the footprints left behind and followed by the ancient seers (仙, *ṛṣi),22 whereas one version does not. It is hard to assert which version is closer to the original. But it seems plausible to liken the Noble Path, or the Dhamma, to the footprints left behind by the former Buddhas when we take AN 4:29 into account.

19 T XVI 828c: 譬如有人遊行曠野…我亦如是，今已證得舊道、舊徑、舊所行跡，古昔諸仙所遊履。何等名為舊道、舊徑、舊所行跡，古昔諸仙所遊履？當知即是八支聖道。
20 Cf. SJD 732 s.v. pada.
21 SN II 105–106: Seyyathāpi bhikkhhave puriso araññe pavane caramāno passeyya purīnam maggam purāṇālījasaṃ pubbakehi manussehi anuyātaṃ ... Katamo ca so bhikkhhave purīna-maggo purāṇa-jasaso pubbakehi samīsamabhuddhehi anuyāto? Ayam eva arīyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo.
22 A ṛṣi (Pali isi) can refer to a Buddha. See DOP I 379.
First, this *sutta* enumerates four *dhamma-padas*: (1) non-covetousness, (2) non-malice, (3) right mindfulness, and (4) right concentration. The last two *dhamma-padas* are exactly the last two divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path. The first two *dhamma-padas* constitute ‘right intention’, the second division of the Noble Eightfold Path, according to the *Saccavibhaṅga Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.\(^{23}\) Therefore, what the four *dhamma-padas* refer to is the Noble Path, so *padas* can be rendered as ‘footprints’ according to the above discussion. At first glance, translating *pada* as ‘path’ seems also to fit in with this context, but it would follow that *cattāri dhamma-padāni* should be rendered as ‘four Dhamma paths’. Early Buddhism, however, only talks about one path to nirvana/enlightenment,\(^{24}\) albeit in different expressions such as ‘Noble Eightfold Path’ (*ariyo atthaṅko maggo*, singular), rather than ‘four paths’ or ‘eight paths’ and so forth.\(^{25}\)

Second, in the *sutta* AN 4:29, the compound *dhamma-padāni* is qualified by the phrase ‘primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient’ (*aggaññāni rattaññāni vamsaṅgāni porāññāni*), which resonates with the metaphor of footprints (*pada*) left behind by the ancient seers, namely the former Buddhas in ancient times. The Buddha who delivered this discourse (*sutta*) had found those footprints and followed them, thereby reaching the goal of nirvana.

Consequently, it is advisable to imitate Xuanzang’s rendering ‘*fa ji*’ and translate *dhamma-pada* as ‘Dhamma footprint’, with the Pali seen as a *kamma-dhāraya* compound. The expression ‘Dhamma footprints that are primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient’ can be understood to mean that the Dhamma, i.e. the Path, is ancient and long-standing, and has been rediscovered and followed again and again by many Buddhas, just as the ancient and long-standing footprints have been left by one person and followed by another repeatedly.

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**6. Philological, Cultural and Historical Approaches**

*Sutta* 37 in the Book of the Threes in the *Anguttara Nikāya* (AN 3:37) contains a puzzling word. It appears seven times in similar contexts such as the following:

> On the eighth of the fortnight, the ministers and assembly members of the four great kings wander over this world, [thinking]: ‘Are there many people who behave properly towards their mother and father, behave

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\(^{24}\) E.g. MN 1 73: *nibbāna-gāmiṇi ca maggam*; MN III 6: *nibbāna-gāmiṇi-maggo*; SN IV 371: *nibbāna-gāmiṇi ca maggam*. These occurrences of *magga* (path) are all in singular.

\(^{25}\) Anālayo (2016) also argues for one path to liberation and refutes the ‘two paths’ theory advocated by some scholars.

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properly towards ascetics and brahmins, honour the elders of the family, observe the uposatha, patijāgar[е/o/а]nti, and make merits?26

This unclear word, patijāgar[е/o/а]nti, seems to be used in this sutta only, and not to be found in other texts (by searching CST). It has different readings in different editions:

1. patijāgareti in Ee I 142, 26–143, 25
2. patijāgaronti in Be I 141, 13–142, 9 and Se I 182, 9–183, 8
3. patijāgaranti in Ce I 260, 13–37

Here we have 3 variant readings, none of which is found in the dictionaries27 available to me, except that the Ee reading preceded by a question mark is included as an entry in Edgerton’s *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary, Volume II: Dictionary*:

BHSD 316 s.v. ? *patijāgareti* = *pratijāgarati*, q.v., read by Senart by em. for (agnihotram) patipākaroti … Mv iii.148.20; 156.8, *attends to, cares for*, and amātyehi yathāṇattaṃ sarvāṃ paṭiyākṛtaṃ (mss., Senart patijāgrtaṃ) …

[patipākaroti, so mss. for patijāgareti, q.v.; or in Mv iii.161.7 mss. paṭiyākṛtaṃ (y could be graphic error for p).

Accordingly, the manuscripts have patipākaroti, which was amended by Senart as patijāgareti in the context of ‘attending to the sacred fire’ (*agnihotram* patijāgareti), which is irrelevant to the context of our sutta.

Bodhi (2012: 1641 note 385) reads with Ce patijāganti and translates it as ‘keep the extra observance days’ (*ibid. p. 237*) following the commentary by Buddhaghosa. Bodhi (2012: 1641 note 385) translates the commentary (Mp II 233) thus:

Keeping the extra observance days (patijāgaranti) [my note: the commentary reads patijāgaronti, see below], in a single fortnight they do so by anticipating and following up (*paccuggamanānuvgamana*) the four uposatha days. Anticipating the uposatha of the fifth, they undertake the uposatha on the fourth; and following up, on the sixth … the uposatha of the eighth … seventh … ninth … Anticipating the uposatha of the fourteenth, they observe it on the thirteenth; and following up the uposatha of the fifteenth, they observe the uposatha at the beginning [of the next fortnight].

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27 Even though patijāgaronti appears in CST based on Be, i.e. the digital version 4.0 of Chaṭṭha Saṅgīyana Tipiṭaka, its built-in dictionary does not include an entry for patijāgaronti or for the other two variants.
This means that in each fortnight one may observe the uposatha on up to nine days, i.e. the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 13th, 14th and 15th. According to our sutta, the uposatha days refer to the 8th, 14th and 15th days of each fortnight, so a month contains six uposatha days. Yinsun (1994: 113–114) points out that the ancient rule of six uposatha days per month gradually evolved into four uposatha days per month, presumably because observing the uposatha on two consecutive days, i.e. the 14th and 15th, would cause inconvenience to laymen’s secular duties. It would conceivably cause even more trouble to laymen if they observed the uposatha on nine days each fortnight. In summary, the commentary’s explanation sounds unconvincing. Furthermore, there is no etymological support for construing *paṭijāgāronti* or the other variants as ‘keeping the extra observance days’.

Woodward (1932: 126) says in a footnote that the Text reads *paṭijāgārant* while the Commentary reads *paṭijāgāronti* and glosses: *paṭijāgāronti* *ti paṭijāgara-uposatha-kammaṃ nāma karonti* (Mp II 233), which may be rendered as ‘paṭijāgāranti means: They really do the uposatha activity with watchfulness’. This seems to gloss *paṭijāgārant* in such a way that the latter half of the word *karonti* is seen as the verb *karoti* (do, make), plural form of *karoti* (does, makes). Analysing *paṭijāgārant* into *paṭijāgara* and *karonti* appears to be an instance of folk etymology (see Section 3). The subcommentary on AN also reads *paṭijāgāronti*, apparently duplicating the commentary’s reading. Regarding *paṭijāgar[e/o/a]nti*, Dr. Margaret Cone told me in an e-mail dated 27th June 2016: ‘The word is listed in my dictionary as *paṭijāgari*. I think the PTS reading with ~enti is wrong. I have given a definition of “is awake, is watchful; keeps a vigil,” but with a question mark!’ The said dictionary is not yet published. Dr. Roderick S. Bucknell told me in an e-mail dated 16th June 2016: ‘The German, however, is an early translation (by Nyanatiloka, decades earlier than Bhikkhu Bodhi’s). It amounts to this: “… observe the fasting day, and do meritorious deeds.” That is, it leaves *paṭijāgārenti* untranslated.’

28 In an e-mail dated 11th March 2018 Dr. William Pruitt suggested: ‘I think the idea is that a person can add on extra days—but it doesn’t mean they have to all be added on.’

29 The phrase ‘six uposatha days’ (六齋日, lit. six fasting days) appears in many texts in Chinese translation, e.g. the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra (摩訶般若波羅蜜經, T 223) at T VIII 310c and the Five-Part Vinaya of the Mahāsākā school (彌沙塞部和醯五分律, T 1421) at T XXII 106a. For the Theravāda, see PED 150–151 s.v. *uposatha*: ‘1 st, 8 th, 15th, 23 d (sic!)’. See also Nyanatiloka 1970: 187. For Northern Buddhism, see the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (根本說一切有部毘奈耶毘奈耶, T 1442, 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T XXIII 842c–843a: 月八日、十五日、二十三日、月盡日…四齋日 (four fasting days)…

30 The word *paṭijāgāra* is not found in the dictionaries available to me. I tentatively translate it as ‘watchfulness’ because it looks like an (artificial) derivative of the Sanskrit verb *prati-jāgarti*, °jāgari, meaning ‘stay watchful’ (see Section 6.2 below).

31 Aṅguttara-nikāya-ṭīkā (CST II 108): *paṭijāgāronti* *ti paṭi paṭi jāgaranti* (They constantly [lit. again and again] stay awake). I thank an anonymous reader for this reference. Here jāgaranti, plural form of *jāgaroti*, is treated as a variant of the verb *jāgarati*, which means ‘is awake; is watchful’ (DOP II 220).
To sum up, it seems that modern translators are not sure about which of the three readings is correct, nor can they provide a cogent reason for their renderings of this word, or the word is simply left untranslated.

6.1. Similar Phrases in Sanskrit Texts

Since this puzzling word is not found in any Pali text except the *sutta* passage of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* quoted above, the best way to solve the puzzle is probably to search Sanskrit texts for counterparts of this *sutta* passage. Unfortunately, even with the help of several scholars, no such passage has been found, but there are some Sanskrit phrases similar to ‘*uposatham upavasanti paṭijāgaraṇ[ė/o/a]nti*’ (observe the *uposatha, paṭijāgaraṇ[ė/o/a]nti*) in our Pali passage. Below are two examples kindly provided by Dr. Ligeia Lugli:

1. The *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya* of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin: 

   nāsti bhagīṇīyo bhikṣuṇī-ovādako aprāmādena āpattiṇ ca *posadhaṃ pratijāgra-tha* sa-gaurāvā ca bhavatha sthavirehi bhikṣūhi madhyehi navakehiṇi | (Roth 1970: 281)

   Translation: Sisters, there is no bhikṣuṇī instructor. You should strive diligently, keep the *uposatha*, and show respect for elder, middle-standing and junior bhikṣus.33

2. The *Poṣadhavastu* of the *Vinayavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivādin: 

   tasmād anujānāmi bhiksubhir adyāgreṇa niṣadyā kriyā *poṣadhaḥ ca pratijāgartaṇyavah* | (Poṣ-v 4, Hu-von Hinüber 1994)

   Translation: Therefore, I prescribe that from this day onward the [meditative] sitting, [legal] procedures and *uposatha should be kept* by bhikṣus.

The Sanskrit word *poṣadha* is equivalent to the Pali *uposatha*. In these two Sanskrit texts, *poṣadha* is governed by the transitive verb *pratijāgrati/pratijāgari*, which derives from *prati-vjāgr* and probably means ‘to keep’,34 and thus *poṣadha* together with *pratijāgrati/pratijāgari* may be rendered as ‘to keep the *uposatha*’. Now let us return to the phrase ‘*uposatham upavasanti paṭijāgaraṇ[ė/o/a]nti*’ in the Pali *sutta*. Of the three readings, *paṭijāgaraṇti* (plural form of *paṭijāgari*) seems the closest to *pratijāgari* in Sanskrit.35 It could be that both *upavasanti* and *paṭijāgaraṇti* govern the noun *uposatham*, and *paṭijāgaraṇti* appears to be a synonym for the preceding verb *upavasanti*. Therefore, *uposatham upavasanti paṭijāgaraṇti* may be translated as ‘[they] observe and keep the *uposatha*’.

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33 A noun in the accusative, āpattiṇ (happening, entering into a state, offence, etc.; see BHSD 97, MW 142, SJD 197), does not seem to fit here and is left untranslated.

34 BHSD 362 s.v. pratiţāgrati, ‘ţāgrati, ‘ţāgrati … (2) watches = guards. MW 665 s.v. prati-vţāgr, P.-ţāgrati, to watch beside … to keep (?).

35 The third person plural form of pratiţāgrati is pratiţāgrati. See Kale (1972: 264).
6.2. Cultural Background

Professor Richard Gombrich suggests that we should give due weight to the reference to keeping the uposatha, and that this gives us a clue that the whole little story is one which is rooted in the cultural background. Note that the uposatha was a pre-Buddhist custom. He explains:

The pre-Buddhist ceremony (which probably continued for many centuries after the Buddha) was theistic, and began on the day/evening before the main ritual. After some initial purificatory rites, the participants took a vow very much like the 8 precepts, which involved fasting, chastity, and abstention from entertainments and luxuries. They then spent the night awake in the shrine of the god who would preside over the central ritual (e.g., a dīkṣā) the next day. Abstention from sleep was thus part of the regime—and fitted in nicely after the abstention from comfortable beds. It is thus no coincidence that it is gods who are said to be making this inspection of the human world (Gombrich’s e-mail, 4 July 2016).

In view of the historical and cultural background of the *sutta* passage in question, *paṭijāgar[ē/o/a]nti* probably derives from the Sanskrit verb *jāgarti* (MW 417 s.v. *ṣjāgr*: to be awake or watchful), and may mean ‘stay watchful’, or ‘keep the vigil’ as translated by Woodward (1932: 126). If this is the case, the puzzling word might be a variation of *patijāggati* (PED 394 s.v. *patijāggati* [... cp. BSk. *pratijāgarī* ...]), which is equivalent or closely related to the Sanskrit word *pratijāgarī* discussed above, but here in the sense of an intransitive verb ‘to stay awake or watchful’. Then *patijāgaranti* (BHSD 362 s.v. *pratijāgarī*, ‘jāgarīti’) is possibly the correct reading among the three variants in AN 3:37 and could be rendered as ‘stay watchful’, but not as ‘stay awake’. This is because, unlike the pre-Buddhist ceremony quoted above, observance of the uposatha in Buddhism does not require staying awake all day and night. As the Buddha prescribes in AN 3:70, on an uposatha day the laity, following the example of arahants, keep eight precepts for one day and night. The eighth precept is: ‘… Today, for this night and day, I too shall abandon and abstain from the use of high and big beds; I shall lie down on a low resting place, either a small bed or a straw mat …’ (translation mostly follows Bodhi 2012: 300). Therefore, observance of the uposatha allows people to sleep without having to stay awake all the time.

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36 I am grateful to Dr. William Pruitt for this suggestion.

37 Cf. PED 277 s.v. *jāgati* [= jāgarīti ...]. The simplex Sanskrit *jāgarīti/jāgrati* could develop into Pali in two ways, either by assimilation *jāgrati > jaggati*, or by insertion of a thema vowel *jāgarti > jāgar-a-ti*. I thank an anonymous reader for this explanation.

38 BHSD 362 s.v. *pratijāgarī*, ‘jāgarīti’, ‘jāgrati ... Pali *patijāggati ...* (1) watches = stays awake (opp. sleeps).
6.3. A Perspective from Textual History

This *sutta* passage in AN 3:37 has at least seven Chinese parallels. Among these parallels, SĀ2 46 (T II 389a) is too different from the Pali to be compared. The other six versions have words equivalent (or similar) to ‘behave properly towards their mother and father, behave properly towards ascetics and brahmans, honour the elders of the family, observe the uposatha, *patijāgar[e/o/a]nti*, and make merits’ in the Pali version. Below are the six parallel versions extant in Chinese translations (phrases in italics are not found in the Pali):

(1) Sūtra 1117 of the *Samyukta Āgama* (T 99) translated by Guṇabhadra (between 435 and 443 CE, see Section 5):

mak offerings to their father and mother, to ascetics and brahmans, respect their clansmen, make various merits, see faults in this world, fear suffering in the world beyond, practise giving, make merits, observe the uposatha (lit. observe fasting and precepts).

T II 295c：供養父母、沙門、婆羅門，宗親尊重，作諸福德，見今世惡，畏後世罪，行施，作福，受持齋戒。

(2) Sūtra 30 of the *Dīrgha Āgama* (T 1) translated by Buddhayaśas and Zhu Fonian (413 CE) (Lü 1963: 242):

pay reverence to their father and mother, respect ascetics and brahmans, honour the elders, observe the uposatha (lit. keep precepts and observe fasting), give to the poor.

T I 134b：孝順父母，宗敬沙門、婆羅門，恭順長老，持戒守齋，布施窮乏。

(3) Sūtra 6 in Chapter 24 of the *Ekottarika Āgama* (T 125) translated by Dhamanandi and Zhu Fonian (358 CE):

pay reverence to their father and mother, to ascetics and brahmans, respect the elders, like giving, observe the uposatha (lit. observe the eight precepts and fasting).

T II 624c–625a：孝順父母、沙門、婆羅門，及尊長者，好喜布施，持八關齋。

(4) The Loutan jing 樓炭經 (T 23) translated by Fali and Faju (who worked together during 290–311) (FD 3343):

pay reverence to their father and mother, to ascetics and religious practitioners, respect the elders, observe the uposatha (lit. fasting and precepts), give, believe in this world and the world beyond.

T I 298b：孝順父母、沙門、道人，敬長老，齋戒，布施，信今世、後世。

(5, 6) The Qishi jing 起世經 (T 24) translated by Jñānagupta (523–600) (FD 6530) and the Qishi yinben jing 起世因本經 (T 25) translated by Dharmagupta (5670) have almost identical wording:

For the translators and translation date, see the Preface to the translation of the *Ekottarika Āgama* by Dao’an 道安 (T II 549a). The Taishō edition wrongly attributes it to Gautama Saṃghadeva 龍鳴僧伽提婆. Cf. Palumbo (2013: 38–84).
Are there people in the world who practise paying reverence and offerings to their father and mother, respect ascetics and brahmans? Honour the elders?

We should not play down the importance and authenticity of these Chinese translations from the Indic originals in that five out of the six were translated by different Indian individuals who could not have misunderstood their own culture, while one was translated by two Chinese monks. All the six Chinese versions have ‘observe the uposatha’ and ‘[practise] giving’, which are preceded by a passage like ‘behave properly towards their mother and father, behave properly towards ascetics and brahmans, honour the elders of the family’ as found in the Pali version. This is not a mere coincidence, since these texts come from different traditions, which trace their origins back to a common source. The Śamyuṭa Āgama in Chinese translation is ascribed to the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition (see above). The Chinese Dīrgha Āgama is widely attributed to the Dhamagupta (Lü 1963: 242; Kumoi 1963: 248; Ui 1965: 135; Waldschmidt 1980: 136; Akanuma 1981: 34f.; Mayeda 1985: 97; Salomon 1999: 173f.; Karashima 2014). Many scholars ascribe the Chinese Ekottarika Āgama to the Mahāsāṃghika (Ui 1965: 137f.; Akanuma 1981: 37–39; Bronkhorst 1985: 312–314; Pāsādika 2010: 88–90). I have also argued that this text is most likely to be of Mahāsāṃghika provenance (Kuan 2013a; 2013b). As for the Loutan jing (T 23), Willemen (2008: 61) says: ‘Loutan is a Prākrit form of Lokasthāna’. This is attested in a passage in Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Upadeśa (Dazhidu lun 大智度論, T 1509) and a note (small words in brackets) inserted into it: ‘… among the six-division Abhidharma, the third division with eight chapters entitled *Loka-sthāna-prajñapti Division [this is the Loutan jing, being the third division of the six divisions] was composed by Maudgalyāyana.’

The canonical Abhidharma of the Sarvāstivāda comprises seven texts, namely the Jñānaprabhasthāna known as the ‘body’ and the other six texts called the ‘six feet’ (Hirakawa 1990: 131). The Jñānaprabhasthāna, the ‘body’, is mentioned in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Upadeśa just before the passage quoted above, while the foregoing ‘six-division Abhidharma’ evidently refers to the ‘six feet’. Frauwallner (1995: 36) also confirms that the paragraph containing this passage deals with the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. Therefore, the Loutan jing is affiliated with the Sarvāstivāda according to the note inserted in this passage of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Upadeśa.

In summary, among the six Chinese versions, the Śamyuṭa Āgama version belongs to the Mūlasarvāstivāda, the Dīrgha Āgama version belongs to the Dharma-
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guptaka, the Loutan jing version belongs to the Sarvāstivāda, and the Ekottarika Āgama version probably belongs to the Mahāsāṃghika. The Qishi jing and Qishi yinben jing versions are unclear regarding their school affiliations. Just like the present Theravāda school (using Pali), the Dharmaguptaka, the Sarvāstivāda and the Mūlasarvāstivāda were all descended from the Sthaviras, opposed to the Mahāsāṃghikas at the first schism, according to the sources of various schools. It is reasonable to assume a common ‘ancestral’ text from which these four versions of Sthavira origin are derived. Since the three Sthavira versions, i.e. those of the Dharmaguptaka, the Sarvāstivāda and the Mūlasarvāstivāda, all have ‘observe the uposatha’ alongside ‘[practise] giving’, it is most likely that the Theravāda’s version (AN 3:37) also had the same. If the Ekottarika Āgama version really belongs to the Mahāsāṃghika, then the pre-schism text surely had a string of phrases containing ‘observe the uposatha’ and ‘[practise] giving’. Therefore, the Pali version ‘observe the uposatha, paṭijāgar[ē/o/a]nti’ must come from the same phrases. In either case mentioned above, the word paṭijāgar[ē/o/a]nti corresponds to ‘[practise] giving’. I venture to speculate that paṭijāgaronti, paṭijāgaranti and paṭijāgaranti could be corruptions of pariccāgaṃ karonti, which sounds like paṭijāgaronti and may mean ‘[they] practise giving’. Even the Pali commentary associates -garonti with karonti (see above). An original *pariccāgaṃ karonti could be the source of the otherwise quite unexplainable o in the variant paṭijāgaronti, which could become the regular paṭijāgaranti through normalisation. The Sanskrit counterpart of pariccāgaṃ karoti, namely parityāgaṇkṛt, is attested in several Buddhist texts such as the Mahāvastu, the Saddharmapuṇḍarika Sūtra and the Divyāvadāna.

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41 For the references, see Kuan (2013b: 614 note 35).
42 Such corruptions or confusions are not unusual in the Pali texts. Here are two examples. While Ee I 142, 20 and Se I 181, 20 read khemappattā, Ce I 260, 7 reads khoppamattā, and Be I 141, 7 reads appamattā. While Ee I 254, 8 and Se I 330, 3 read nihitaṃ ninniṇkakāsāvāṃ, Ce I 452, 17 reads nihitam nikkhittakasāvāṃ, and Be I 255, 17 reads niddhantakasāvāṃ. Different editions have divergent readings that even vary in the number of syllables.
43 PED 425 s.v. pariccāga: giving (to the poor), liberality.
44 I am grateful to the first reviewer for this suggestion.
45 E.g. Mvu II 112: pariccāgaṃ kṛtvā; SPS 240: āmabhāva-pariccāgaṃ ca karoti; Divy 104.030: pariccāgaḥ kriyatām.
Abbreviations

References to Pali texts are to the Pali Text Society editions, unless otherwise stated.

AN = Aṅguttara Nikāya.


BSk. = Buddhist Sanskrit.


Divy = Divyavadāna. An electronic version based on the edition by L. Vaidya, Mithila, 1959, input by Kensuke Okamoto, Ryukoku University. (http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/4_rellit/buddh/divyav_u.htm, last access: 9 May 2018.)


Ee = European edition, i.e. Pali Text Society edition, of the Aṅguttara Nikāya.


MN = Majjhima Nikāya.

Mp = Manorathapūrani (Commentary on the Aṅguttara Nikāya).

MV = Mahāvastu. An electronic version of the Mahāvastu-Avadāna based on the edition by Émile Senart, 3 vols., Paris 1882–1897, input by Emmanuel Faure (formerly Université Marc Bloch, Strasbourg), under the supervision of Prof. Boris Ogubèène. Data conversion in cooperation with Stefan Baums, Seattle. (http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretil/1_sanskr/4_rellit/buddh/mhavastuu.htm, last access: 9 May 2018.)


SĀ = Sāmyukta Āgama (Za ahanjing 難阿含經).

SA2 = Other Translation of the Sāmyukta Āgama (Bieyi Za ahanjing 別譯難阿含經).

Sn = Sutta-nipāta (by verse).

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Spk = Sāratthappakāsīni (Commentary on the Samyutta Nikāya).


Vibh-a = Sammohavinodanī (Vibhāṅgaṭṭhakathā).

References


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