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CONTENTS

1 ABHIDHAMMA STUDIES II: Sanskrit *abhidharma* literature of the Mahāvihāravāsins
L.S. Cousins

63 The first Siamese manuscripts in France at the King's Library during the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV
Jacqueline Filliozat

97 The Dog-Duty Ascetic: Action in the Pali Canon with Reference to the Politics of Action in Modern Burma
Paul Fuller

117 Ubhato-bhāga-vimutta: Liberated from Both Parts or Through Both Ways?
G. A. Somaratne

135 A Preliminary Report on the Critical Edition of the Pāli Canon being prepared at Wat Phra Dhammakāya
Alexander Wynne

171 A Book Review: The *Jambūpati-sūtra* A Synoptic Romanised Edition By Santi Pakdeekham (ศานติ ภักดีคำ)
Pathompong Bodhiprasiddhinand

A Preliminary Report on the Critical Edition of the Pāli Canon being prepared at Wat Phra Dhammakāya

Alexander Wynne[1]

Ever since Viggo Fausbøll's edition of the Dhammapada was published in 1855,[2] canonical Pāli texts have been printed in both the East and West. In Asia the modern era of Tipiṭaka production was inaugurated by King Mindon, with the inscription of the entire Tipiṭaka onto 729 stone slabs at the Kuthodaw Pagoda, Mandalay, in 1871. On the basis of this a further Burmese edition of the Tipiṭaka was prepared at the 'Sixth Council' of Rangoon, completed in 1954, and published between 1954 and 1961.[3] Even before this a Thai version of the Tipiṭaka was printed in 1893 (the Chulachomklao edition),[4] sponsored by King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), an edition which has been followed by a number of other Thai editions, including the Syāmaraṭṭhassa Tepiṭikam (1926-1928)[5] and Mahācūḷatepiṭakam (1960-1990).[6]

In roughly the same period two Sinhalese editions of the Tipiṭaka were printed: the Simon Hewavitarne Bequest (1916-1918),[7] and the more widely available Buddha Jayanti Series (1957-1989).[8] Two further editions were also published in South East Asia: one in Laos (Lāvaraṭṭhassa, 1957-1989),[9] and one in Cambodia (1958-1961).[10] An Indian edition appeared in the form of the Nālandā Devanāgarī Series (1956-1961),[11] although as a reprint of the Burmese Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana,

[1] This is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented in Bangkok on August 1st, 2013.
[2] Copenhagen: Reitzell.
[3] Yangon: The Religion Affairs Dept. Press.
[4] Bangkok: King Rama V.
[5] The most recent publication of the Syāmaraṭṭhassa edition appeared in 2009 (Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University).
[6] Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University;
[7] Colombo: The Tripitaka Publication Press.
[8] Second Printing 2006, Dehiwala: Buddhist Cultural Centre.
[9] Most recent printing 2013: Laos Tipitaka Development Project.
[10] Most recent printing 1994, Phnom Penh: Buddhist Institue.
[11] Bihar Government: Pāli Publication Board; Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

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Back to Contents

in the Devanāgarī alphabet of northern India, this cannot count as an entirely separate edition of the Tipiṭaka. Last but not least, the entire Pāli canon was published in the United Kingdom by the Pali Text Society between 1881 and 1925; this edition has been most widely used in the West.

There is little to distinguish these different editions of the Tipiṭaka. In general the South East Asian editions agree closely, but as a group differ from the Sinhalese and European editions, which are also in fairly close agreement, but none could be said to constitute an entirely different recension of the canon. In recent times this small degree of variation has become even less significant, for it can now be identified and studied by electronic means. Since variation is minimal, can be easily identified and does not impede understanding, one might conclude that the text of the Tipiṭaka, and its presentation in printed form, is more or less settled.

A recent initiative has shown that this conclusion is premature, however. In the period 1999-2005, the Dhamma Society of Thailand, under the patronage of the Supreme Patriarch, His Holiness Somdet Phra Ñāṇasaṃvara, printed a new version of the Tipiṭaka: 'Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2,500' (or the 'World Tipiṭaka Edition').[12] Although only a revised version of the Burmese Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana in roman script, this printing of the Tipiṭaka suggests at least one way in which editions of the Pāli Tipiṭaka could be improved. For it includes the variant readings from other printed editions in a critical apparatus, and so simplifies the work of Tipiṭaka comparison. Of course a critical apparatus is not absent from the other printed editions, in particular the volumes of the PTS, which often give the variant readings of the different manuscripts used in their preparation, and sometimes the readings of certain printed editions as well. But the PTS editions do not use this tool very widely, or consistently, and an edition of the Tipiṭaka containing variant readings from other printed editions is certainly useful.

Even if the World Tipiṭaka Edition is to be welcomed, its critical apparatus does not refer to the manuscript tradition. This means

[12] Bangkok: The M.L. Maniratana Bunnag Dhamma Society Fund under the Patronage of His Holiness Somdet Phra Ñāṇasaṃvara.

that Theravāda Buddhism and the field of Pali studies lacks a truly comparative edition of the Tipiṭaka, one based on a wide variety of primary sources. Depending on the quality and number of manuscript sources, such a project could plausibly aim to reconstruct the text from which all extant manuscripts could be theoretically derived, and thus claim to be a critical edition, that is to say the version of the Tipiṭaka known to Buddhaghosa, the South Indian scholar-monk who in the fifth century travelled to the Mahāvihāra of Anurādhapura and there translated its Sinhalese commentaries into Pāli.

A major problem for any such project is that most extant Pāli manuscripts postdate Buddhaghosa by almost 1,500 years. This significant temporal gap raises the problem that rather than yielding genuinely old forms, a comparative study of the manuscripts will instead rehash readings produced in the long history of Pāli since Buddhaghosa. Thus the problem of antiquity is inseparable from that of conflation: in comparing regional traditions of Pāli, the end result could be a hybrid text that has never existed in any single tradition, rather than a close approximation of the text known to Buddhaghosa.

Both of these problems are overstated, however. The problem of conflation overlooks the fact that regional differences are marginal (all manuscripts agree so closely that regional traditions cannot be considered properly distinct recensions): all manuscripts belong to a single recension, even if minor variations allow different groupings (or families) to be identified.[13] Indeed, any comparison of the different regional versions of the same canonical text clearly shows that manuscripts have been shared between regional traditions; apparently scribes believed or assumed that Pāli manuscripts from other regions belong to the same redaction of the Tipiṭaka as their own. Apart from the occasional circulation and copying of entire texts into new scripts, the general model for Tipiṭaka sharing across the Theravāda world seems to have been that where a manuscript from one tradition was available to a scribe from another, that scribe would only occasionally

[13] The differences between the extant manuscripts of the Pāli canon are nowhere near that between different manuscripts of many Sanskrit Buddhist texts from India. A good example is the *Mahāpratisarā-mahāvidyārājñī*, the manuscripts of which have recently been arranged edited by Hidas (**2012**) into two different critical editions, which he nevertheless not believe constitute separate recensions (p.90).

introduce new readings into his own source where he believed it could be improved.

The more or less verbatim agreement that exists beneath such borrowing must therefore be very old, and rooted in a single recension of the Pāli canon. If so, it makes no sense to consider the different Tipiṭaka traditions in isolation: why make a critical edition of Khom manuscripts from central Thailand, for example, or of the Sinhalese tradition, manuscripts from one traditions could be used to correct mistakes in the other, and vice versa? The notion of conflating different manuscript traditions is thus based on an exaggeration of the differences between them. Similarly overstated is the problem of antiquity, as for example in a recent article by Margaret Cone:

> We can make no confident assumption that what we have is anyway near the actual Buddhavacana (or indeed Buddhaghosavacana); what we have is the product of centuries of careful copying, careless copying, knowledge, incompetence, inspired emendation and bungling ...'[14]

The situation is not nearly as bleak as this sceptical appraisal suggests, for a number of early medieval Pāli inscriptions have survived in mainland South East Asia,[15] and these sometimes contain citations from the Pāli canon. Two of these canonical citations are fairly extensive and agree more or less exactly with modern printed editions. The oldest is the so-called 'Golden Pāli Text', recovered from the Pyu site of Śrī Kṣetra in Burma (modern Prome), and dated to the early fifth century AD (but occasionally in a script with direct parallels to Indian epigraphy of the fourth century).[16] Extracts from six canonical texts are cited in this 'manuscript', as well as an allusion to the *Paṭisambhidhāmagga* and other extracts probably based on it.

Further support for a remarkable level of textual consistency is found in another medieval Pāli manuscript, which contains a section of the Vinaya (*Cullavagga* IV: *Samathakkhandhakaṃ*) in a northern Indian script of the ninth century AD, and preserved in Nepal. Although a

[14] Cone (2007: 96).
[15] Skilling (1997, 2002).
[16] Stargardt (1995), Falk (1997).

number of centuries older than the Golden Pāli Text, the Nepalese Vinaya fragment shows signs that it is a copy of an original which probably dates to the late Gupta period.[17] If this manuscript is a copy of an exemplar dating to perhaps the sixth century AD, its evidence for written Pāli is almost as old as that contained in the Golden Pāli Text, both of which are very close to the time of Buddhaghosa.

The more or less exact correspondence between the Nepalese manuscript and modern printed editions, in particular the extent of text omitted through abbreviation in the same sections, is especially significant. This can be seen by comparing the following lines of the Vinaya *Cullavagga* in the Burmese and PTS editions with its Nepalese counterpart:[18]

Vin II.10319*ff* Ee, IV.235.16*ff* Be:

kiñ ca tattha sammukhāvinayasmiṃ. saṃghasaṃmukhatā dhammasammukhatā vinayasammukhatā puggalasammukhatā ... ***pa ...*** *evaṃ vūpasantaṃ ce bhikkhave adhikaraṇaṃ paṭiggāhako ukkoṭeti ukkoṭanakaṃ pācittiyaṃ.*

Nepal ed, 106b, l.2a-2b:

kiṃ ca tattha saṃmukhāvinayasmiṃ. saṃghasaṃmukhatā dhammasaṃmukhatā vinayasaṃmukhatā pudgalasaṃmukhatā **|| *pe* ||** *evaṃ vūpasanta[ṃ] ce bhikkhave adhikaraṇaṃ paṭiggāhako ukoṭeti ukkoṭanakaṃ pācattiyaṃ.*

While the marking of the *peyyāla* does not always coincide in this way, the extent of the text surrounding the abbreviated sections (whether marked or not in either) is more or less exactly the same in the Burmese edition and Nepalese manuscript (excluding obvious mistakes such as repetition or omission from consideration).[19] Both must thus be versions of a single recension, a fact suggested by many other correspondences between the different sources, for example the distribution of *tattha* and *tatra*. In the Nepalese folio the word *tattha*

[17] von Hinüber (1991: 25-26).
[18] von Hinüber (1991: 30). Ee differs from Be only in reading *la* rather than *pa*.
[19] The extent of the PTS edition is unclear due to the introduction of abbreviation into the text by the PTS editor (Hermann Oldenberg).

occurs thirteen times (106a: 4b, 4c, 5b; 106b: 2a; 107b: 1b, 1c, 2a = twice, 2b, 2c, 3a = twice, 3b) and the word *tatra* occurs once (106a: 3c). Exactly the same distribution is found in the parallel sections of the Burmese edition of the Cullavagga: *tattha* occurs in the same thirteen place (Be IV: 234.27, 234.28, 235.3, 235.16, 237.24, 237.26, 237.28, 238.1, 238.3, 238.4, 238.5, 238.6, 238.7), just as *tatra* occurs once (Be IV.235.25).[20] This comparison is striking, for the Middle Indic word *tattha* and its Sanskrit counterpart *tatra* occur throughout the Pāli canon with an apparently random distribution: it is remarkable that a very old manuscript shows that at least in one portion of the canon this distribution is not random at all, but was fixed long ago and transmitted faithfully ever since. We must therefore agree with von Hinüber that the Nepalese Vinaya folios are 'so very close to the well known Theravāda Vinaya of the Mahāvihārin tradition that it is tempting to ascribe this fragment to this very tradition'.[21]

Similar remarks can be made about apparently random patterns of variation in the printed editions and modern manuscripts of the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*. Read in isolation, it does not seem odd that this discourse sometimes reads *evaṃ santaṃ* and sometimes *evaṃ sante*, forms of the accusative and locative absolute which are grammatically equivalent.[22] On the basis of the PTS edition alone, one would probably attribute this distribution to the random variation of the Sinhalese manuscript used by T. W. Rhys Davids. But when the different printed editions are compared exactly the same pattern can be observed in all,[23] a correspondence that cannot be attributed to the recent influence of the PTS editions, for the same pattern can also be observed in modern manuscripts of the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*: in a comparison of the same eighteen occurrences (*evaṃ santaṃ* three times, *evaṃ sante* fifteen

[20] The passages of the Burmese edition parallel to the Nepalese mss include the word *tattha* in five other places (234.12, 234.13, 234.15, 235.1 = twice), but at these points the Nepalese mss is illegible (106a: 1a = twice, 1b, 4c, 5a).

[21] von Hinüber (1991: 25).

[22] *evaṃ santaṃ*, DN I, Ee: 186.4, 186.16, 187.4; *evaṃ sante*, DN I, Ee: 193.2, 193.18, 193.20, 194.14, 194.16, 194.27, 194.29, 195.17, 195.19, 198.17, 198.19, 198.29, 198.32, 199.17, 199.19.

[23] *evaṃ santaṃ*, DN I, Be: 172.26, 173.9, 173.17; *evaṃ sante*, DN I, Be: 178.9, 178.23, 178.24, 179.15, 179.16, 179.26, 179.27, 180.18, 180.19, 183.6, 183.7, 183.17, 183.18, 104.3, 104.4. Be reads *evaṃ sante* at I.178.10, but this text is omitted in Ee (after I.193.3).

times)[24] across eighteen manuscripts from four regional traditions – in other words a total of 324 individual readings – there is only one variant.[25]

Such an extensive agreement can hardly be the result of a later circulation of an authoritative manuscript, for the general pattern for this (noted above) is for scribes to insert readings from outside their tradition for difficult words, rather than this sort of inconsequential variation. If so, the variation can only be explained as a result of agreement which was settled in the beginning, that is to say, before the time of Buddhaghosa. We can therefore suppose, as a working hypothesis but with considerable confidence, that the redaction to which all these ancient fragments and modern editions belong, is the *mūla*-text fixed in Sri Lanka in the first few centuries AD, following the writing down of the Tipiṭaka in the Ālu-vihāra in the first century BC.[26] A corrected version of this recension, i.e. a reconstruction of the text known to Buddhaghosa in the fifth century AD, should therefore be possible.

It was for the purpose of reproducing this version of the Tipiṭaka that in 2010 the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project was inaugurated at Wat Phra Dhammakāya, Thailand. The project first set about collecting and digitizing a sufficiently large number of palm-leaf manuscripts from across the Theravāda world. This is no small task: apart from a few initiatives,[27] very little has been done to preserve and document the literary heritage of Theravāda Buddhism. But now that the scribal tradition has all but died out, within a few hundred years most manuscripts will crumble into dust, and the Theravāda tradition will

[24] *evaṃ santaṃ*, DN I, De: DN I, De: 168.2, 169.2, 169.9; *evaṃ sante*, DN I, De: 175.3, 175.16, 175.18, 176.15, 176.17, 176.25, 176.27, 177.12, 177.14, 180.8, 180.10, 180.16, 180.18, 181.5, 181.6. De reads *evaṃ sante* at at DN I.175.5, which is omitted in Ee.

[25] At DN I.176.15 De, a Khom manuscript of the Long Chat edition of the Tipiṭaka from Wat Hongrattanaram, Bangkok, reads *santaṃ* not *sante*.

[26] It is to be noted that neither *Dīpavaṃsa* XX.20-21 nor *Mahāvaṃsa* XXXIII.100-01 state the location at which the Tipiṭaka was written down; in both cases the verses look like interpolations. On the possible implications of this, see Cousins (2013: 108ff).

[27] For example, the Fragile Palm-leaf Manuscripts Project, the online Digitial Lao Library, and the various libraries in Theravāda countries which have made digital images of manuscripts available.

lose almost all trace of its remarkable manuscript history. Digitization, often preceded by cleaning and restoration, is therefore of the utmost importance. This work is ongoing at the Dhammakāya temple, and so far a digital library of almost 5000 manuscripts, of both canonical and non-canonical texts, has been amassed.

Once a sufficient number of manuscripts have been digitized, a selection of the best examples of them can be made to prepare a critical edition of it. For any single volume of the Tipiṭaka this requires, roughly, that as many as five manuscripts are chosen from a total to twenty, thirty or even forty manuscripts from each scribal tradition. With manuscripts available from five such traditions – Burmese, Sinhalese, Khom, Tham and Mon – this means that the critical edition of any volume from the Pāli Canon will be based on no more than twenty-five manuscripts, these being (hopefully) the best available examples of the text as preserved in the different traditions.

There is no foolproof way of selecting manuscripts: no matter how rigorous the research, constraints of time require that decisions are made without reading every single page of every single manuscript. But a method has been employed which will hopefully minimise the possibility that a valuable manuscript will be overlooked. This method involves separating the manuscripts into different families, based on an evaluation of the following data: the pattern of readings from a designated portion of text; the pattern of *peyyāla* repetition; the titles of individual texts within a volume; and the colophon data. The study of this data usually shows up certain family resemblances, and with this information it is possible to select the oldest, most accurate and best preserved manuscripts among the different groupings. This research does not have to be precice: there is no need to prepare a stemma showing where each manuscripts fits on a family tree. Although in theory this should be possible, a critical edition requires only that general groupings are identified so that a broad selection of manuscripts can be made.

Following their selection all manuscripts must be converted into electronic form, a time-consuming process in which there is great risk of human error. It is almost impossible to read a few pages of a palm-

leaf manuscript and type them into a computer without making at least one mistake, especially since the readings are not always clear, and there are many thousands of pages which must be read and converted into electronic form. In order to minimise such errors the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project has developed software which highlights differences between the data-entry of two individuals, which can then be checked and corrected. This process of data-entry requires the work of three people for each manuscript: two to read the manuscript, convert it into electronic form and finally correct any mistakes; and another researcher to check the final result of the data-entry against the original manuscript.

The first volume of the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Series prepared through this approach is a Pilot Edition of the *Sīlakkhandhavagga*, first book of the Dīgha Nikāya, which utilised a total of nineteen manuscripts from the Burmese, Sri Lankan, Khom and Tham traditions. It is hoped that the critical edition of the entire Dīgha Nikāya, based on a total of forty-six manuscripts, will be published in 2015. In preparing the pilot version of Dīgha Nikāya I,[28] various practical problems were naturally encountered. The most important of these is the large degree of relatively minor manuscript variation, consisting of obvious mistakes and grammatically insignificant orthographic differences. Since it is practically impossible to record all such variants in a printed edition, it was decided that the critical apparatus should be confined to readings deemed historically valuable, or else to readings which offer a plausible version of the Pāli text, or to those readings where a very high level of variation indicates some confusion in the tradition.

While this approach is a practical necessity it is also somewhat problematic, and not merely because any printed volume will not give a true representation of the scribal tradition. A more important issue is that errors contain valuable information which can be used to reconstruct the historical transmission of the text. Partly in order to offset this problem, and partly for the sake of recording the Pāli manuscript tradition completely, the printed editions of the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Series will be accompanied by an electronic

[28] DN I, De: the Dhammachai Edition of the Dīgha Nikāya I, *Sīlakkhandhavagga*. Pathum Thani: The Dhammakāya Foundation.

version, containing a full transcription and digital images of all manuscripts. The two versions of the text can thus be used in tandem when detailed research is required: the printed version contains the critically established text, including the most important variants, whereas the electronic version contains all manuscript readings which may be important in researching some of the more obscure problems in the text's transmission.

These practical concerns cannot be entirely separated from more advanced philological analysis, for a basic problem of textual editing is that of random variation in the Pāli language. As a mixture of Middle Indic dialects spoken in the early Buddhist period, which were then combined into a literary language which developed over time, Pāli allows significant variation, both in its phonetics and morphology. This means that a method must be devised to choose from equally valid readings (which occur in almost every sentence). With regard to the problem of phonetic variation, especially those encountered in *sandhi*, it is difficult to decide if the variation is genuinely grammatical (reflecting the actual pronunciation of Pāli at different times and places in its history) or merely orthographic (i.e. a representation of different scribal habits). The editorial principles devised to determine the readings in such places are explained in the introduction to the pilot edition of the *Sīlakkhandhavagga* (pp.xi-xvi), alongside a list of preferences for frequently occurring words where the pattern of variation is generally consistent.

It could be objected that the editorial principles, as well as the list of preferred readings, lends the volume a consistency lacking in any manuscript. But the editorial principles have been devised to allow some degree of philological variation. It is not easy to establish, for example, if the extensive variation between class nasal and *anusvāra* in adjacent words is genuinely grammatical or merely scribal. But since this phenomenon deviates from the rules of Sanskrit grammar and is found in old inscriptions in Pāli and related Middle Indic dialects,[29]

[29] E.g. *eva**m me**, saṃbhava**n ti**, ima**n ta*** at Devnimori lines 1, 4, 9 (von Hinüber 1985: 188-89); *bhāvetavva**ñ ca**, pahīna**m me**, ariya**ñ caṭṭhaṅgikaṃ***, Nakhon Chaisi inscription lines C1, C2, D1 (Skilling 1997: 124); *pariññeyya**n ti*** etc., line 5 of *dhammacakka* inscription from Chai Nat (Skilling 1997: 134); *yaṅ **kiṃ[ci]***, line 3.1 of the *Ratana Sutta* citation from Śrī Kṣetra/Prome (Skilling 1997: 153); *tesa**ñ ca,*** line 1 of the

and because the occurrence of class nasals rather *anusvāra* is normal for consonant conjuncts within Pāli words, it can probably be regarded as an old practice within Middle Indic phonetics. Class nasal is therefore preferred before short particles and closely associated words if there manuscript evidence for it (e.g. *idam pi* rather than *idaṃ pi*); if not, *anusvāra* is retained (e.g. *idaṃ pi* rather than *idam pi*).[30]

Flexibility in Pāli grammar and orthography, as well as the fact that Buddhaghosa's commentary cites different readings, suggests there has been some degree of variation since the earliest scribal period. A critical edition of a canonical Pāli text cannot, therefore, attempt to reproduce Buddhaghosa's archetype letter for letter (or even word for word). The basic aim of the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project must rather be to produce a coherent body of texts, an eclectic set of volumes which deal with Pāli variation consistently and as accurately as possible, without discarding the natural flexibility of the Pāli language.

Beyond these rather basic editorial principles, the Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project has devised a number of methods to deal with philological problems of a more difficult nature. In such cases the general aim is to select the original readings, or at least that from which all other manuscript readings can most plausibly be derived. The four principle methods are as follows:

1. The correction of obvious mistakes

All printed editions contain obvious mistakes which can be easily identified when a broad selection of manuscripts is compared. A simple example is the following passage from the beginning of the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*:

DN I.160.11*ff* De, I.178.15*ff* Ee, I.167.13*ff* Be:

tena kho pana samayena poṭṭhapādo paribbājako mahatiyā paribbājaka-parisāya saddhiṃ nisinno hoti unnādiniyā uccā-sadda-mahā-saddāya aneka-vihitaṃ tiracchāna-kathaṃ kathentiyā, seyyathīdaṃ rāja-kathaṃ cora-kathaṃ

gold-plate inscription from Go Xoai (Skilling 2002: 168). Similar forms are found throughout texts in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit: these can be assumed to be Middle Indic forms which were retained rather than fully Sanskritized.

[30] See the introduction to DN I, De, p.xi*ff*.

> *mahā-matta-kathaṃ senā-kathaṃ bhaya-kathaṃ yuddha-kathaṃ anna-kathaṃ pāna-kathaṃ vattha-kathaṃ sayana-kathaṃ mālā-kathaṃ gandha-kathaṃ ñāti-kathaṃ yāna-kathaṃ gāma-kathaṃ nigama-kathaṃ nagara-kathaṃ janapada-kathaṃ itthī-kathaṃ sūra-kathaṃ visikhā-kathaṃ kumbha-ṭṭhāna-kathaṃ pubba-peta-kathaṃ nānatta-kathaṃ lokakkhāyikaṃ samuddakkhāyikaṃ iti-bhavābhava-kathaṃ* ***iti vā/iti vā iti***

The problem here is the variation between *iti vā* and *iti vā iti* at the conclusion of the different topics under discussion among Poṭṭhapāda's assembly of ascetics. The pattern of variation in the manuscripts and printed editions is as follows:

- *iti vā* – 4 Burmese mss, 4 Khom mss, 3 Tham mss, plus Be, Ke, Se
- *iti vā iti* – all 5 Sinhalese mss, plus Ce, Ee
- *iti iti vā* – 1 Khom ms
- *iti vā iti kathaṃ* - 1 Burmese ms

In this case *iti iti vā* and *iti vā iti kathaṃ* are obviously mistakes, whereas it is difficult to find a grammatical explanation for *iti vā iti*. The most likely reading is therefore *iti vā*, as a sort of emphatic particle of disconjunction similar to *iti pi* (a fairly common emphatic form of *pi* with a similar disconjunctive sense).[31] A similar construction in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* suggests how this mistake came about. At the beginning of the *Majjhima-sīla* section of the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, the Buddha lists five sorts of seeds and plants which he avoids harming:

> **DN I.5.12*ff* De, I.5.30*ff* Ee, I.6.13*ff* Be:**
>
> *seyyathīdaṃ mūla-bījaṃ khandha-bījaṃ phaḷu-bījaṃ agga-bījaṃ bīja-bījam eva pañcamaṃ,* ***iti eva-rūpā*** *bījagāma-bhūtagāma-samārambhā paṭivirato samaṇo gotamo ti*

In this sentence the term *iti* is connected to *eva-rūpā* and points forward rather than backward, the previous construction concluding with the ordinal *pañcamaṃ*, indicating the fifth and final term in the sequence of seeds and plants. But in the next aspect of the Buddha's virtue –

[31] E.g. D I.21 (Ee): ... *cakkhuṃ iti pi, sotaṃ iti pi, ghānaṃ iti pi, jivhā iti pi, kāyo iti pi* ...

restraint from using various sorts of 'things stored up' (*sannidhi*) – the construction concludes not with an ordinal but with *iti vā*, in the emphatic disconjunctive sense noted above:

DN I.5.17*ff* De, I.6.3*ff* Ee, I.6.10*ff* Be:

seyyathīdaṃ anna-sannidhiṃ pāna-sannidhiṃ vattha-sannidhiṃ yāna-sannidhiṃ sayana-sannidhiṃ gandha-sannidhiṃ āmisa-sannidhiṃ ***iti vā, iti eva-rūpā*** *sannidhi-kāra-paribhogā paṭivirato samaṇo gotamo ti*

A comparison between this and the previous citation from the *Brahmajāla Sutta* shows that *iti vā* must again be connected with *eva-rūpā* and point forward, with the preceding clause ending in *iti vā*. However, given the general lack of punctuation in Asian manuscripts and editions,[32] a quick reading of the sentence could easily give the impression that *iti vā iti* is a valid Pāli expression, as some scribes of the past no doubt believed when they copied the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*. The *Brahmajāla Sutta* contains further proof for this scenario, in a later passage of the same section which lists another aspect of the Buddha's virtue:

DN I.7.13*ff* De, I.7.19*ff* Ee, I.7.22*ff* Be:

seyyathīdaṃ rāja-kathaṃ cora-kathaṃ mahāmatta-kathaṃ senā-kathaṃ bhaya-kathaṃ yuddha-kathaṃ anna-kathaṃ pāna-kathaṃ vattha-kathaṃ sayana-kathaṃ mālā-kathaṃ gandha-kathaṃ ñāti-kathaṃ yāna-kathaṃ gāma-kathaṃ nigama-kathaṃ nagara-kathaṃ janapada-kathaṃ itthī-kathaṃ sūra-kathaṃ visikhā-kathaṃ kumbha-ṭṭhāna-kathaṃ pubba-peta-kathaṃ nānatta-kathaṃ lokakkhāyikaṃ samuddakkhāyikaṃ iti-bhavābhava-kathaṃ ***iti vā, iti*** *eva-rūpāya tiracchāna-kathāya paṭivirato samaṇo gotamo ti*

It seems clear that the expression *iti vā iti*, although grammatically impossible, has emerged from a misunderstanding of the grammar of certain sentences in the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, where sub-clauses

[32] Although in this case the Burmese and Thai editions punctuate correctly: ဣတိ ဝါ၊ ဣတိ / อิติ วา ฯ อิติ.

containing *iti vā* and *iti* are juxtaposed; this misunderstanding then influenced the reading of the similar construction in the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*. Much of the work involved in preparing a critical edition is based on the identification and correction of such mistakes.

2. The comparison of parallels

In the previous example the identification of *iti vā* rather than *iti vā iti* was helped by drawing on parallel occurrences in the *Sīlakkhandhavagga*. Since canonical Pāli is highly repetitive, with numerous parallels to most passage spread throughout the different books, the same principle of comparison can be applied extensively to help determine the critical reading. A simple example of this can be seen in the variation between *ucchedaṃ* and *uccheda-vādaṃ* in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*. This occurs in the following statement of king Ajātasattu on the doctrine taught by the ascetic Ajita Keskambala:

DN I.48.8*f* De, I.55.32*ff* Ee, I.6.11*f* Be:

itthaṃ kho me bhante ajito kesakambalo sandiṭṭhikaṃ sāmaññaphalaṃ puṭṭho samāno ***ucchedaṃ/uccheda-vādaṃ*** *vyākāsi.*

- *ucchedaṃ* - all 13 SEA mss, plus Be, Ce, Ke, Se
- *ucchedavādaṃ* - all 5 Sinhalese mss, plus Ee

In this case an electronic search shows that *uccheda-vāda* is normally a *bahuvrīhi* compound ('one whose doctrine is annihilation'), and never a simple *tatpuruṣa* compound ('the doctrine of annihilation').[33] A comparison with similar constructions in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* also suggest that *ucchedaṃ* is grammatically preferable: Purāṇa Kassapa is said to have 'explained non-action' (*akiriyaṃ vyākāsi*),[34] not the 'doctrine of non-action', Makkhali Gosāla is said to have 'explained purification through transmigration' (*saṃsāra-suddhiṃ vyākāsi*),[35] and Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta is said to have 'explained control through the fourfold method of restraint' (*cātuyāma-saṃvaraṃ vyākāsi*).[36] There

[33] E.g. *uccheda-vādā*: DN I.28.5 De, I.34.1 Ee, I.30.27 Be.
[34] DN I.45.6 De, I.53.4 Ee, I.49.24 Be.
[35] DN I.47.6 De, I.54.23*f* Ee, I.51.8 Be.
[36] DN I.50.12 De, I.58.2*f* Ee, I.54.10 Be

is no trace of a variant including the term 'doctrine' in the manuscript readings for any of these parallels (e.g. *akiriya-vādaṃ*).

The reason for this variation is easy to explain, for *uccheda-vāda* occurs throughout the canon, including a number of times in the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, albeit as a *bahu-vrīhi* compound.[37] The lingering presence of *uccheda-vādā* in the minds of certain scribes after copying the *Brahmajāla Sutta* no doubt influenced their unwitting transformation of *ucchedaṃ* to *uccheda-vādaṃ* in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*. Although the English expression 'Ajita Kesakambali explained the doctrine of annihilation' is more natural than 'Ajita Kesakambali explained annihilation', parallels such as *akiriyaṃ vyākāsi* and *saṃsāra-suddhiṃ vyākāsi* show that in this case the preferred Pāli syntax differs from what seems natural in English.

A more complex case of comparing parallels concerns the variation between *brahmānaṃ* and *brahmuno in* the *Tevijja Sutta*. In this discourse both terms are connected with either the word *sahabyatāya* or the compound *sahabyūpaga*, although the occurrence with *brahmānaṃ* is far more common, e.g.:

D I.245.4*f* Ee, I.230.19 Be:

kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā ***brahmāna****ṃ sahabyūpagā bhavissantī ti*

D I.248.20*f* Ee, I.233.11*f*. Be:

samaṇo gotamo ***brahmāna****ṃ sahabyatāya maggaṃ jānātī ti*

Whether occurring with *sahabyatā* or *sahabyūpaga*, when all manuscripts and editions read *brahmānaṃ* or forms of it with simple variations or mistakes,[38] they are in unanimous agreement. This complete agreement of manuscripts and editions might suggest that *brahmānaṃ*

[37] See the references to the *uccheda-vāda* portion of the *Brahmajāla Sutta* cited in n.33.

[38] In the mss which correspond to the portions of text at D I.245.4 (Ee)/I.230.19 (Be), *brahmāṇaṃ* occurs in a single Sinhalese manuscript and *brāhmānaṃ* in a single Burmese manuscript.In the mss which correspond to the portions of text at D I.248.20 (Ee)/I.233.11 (Be), *brāhmānaṃ in one Burmese and one Khom manuscript, brāhmaṇānaṃ* in two Sinhalese manuscripts, and *brāhmaṇā* in another Sinhalese manuscript.

is the correct reading, but in a few similar places there is the same pattern of almost complete agreement, in the manuscripts and printed editions, in reading *brahmuno*, e.g.:[39]

DN I.252.6*f* Ee, I.235.14*f* Be:

kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā apariggahassa ***brahmuno*** *sahabyūpago bhavissatī ti*

DN I.252.16*f* Ee, I.235.21*f* Be:

kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā vasa-vattissa ***brahmuno*** *sahabyūpago bhavissatī ti*

The manuscripts are therefore in complete agreement in offering inconsistent readings: in more or less the same grammatical constructions, they agree in reading either *brahmānaṃ* or *brahmuno*. This pattern of variation is similar to that between *evaṃ santaṃ* and *evaṃ sante* in the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*, and most probably reflects the form of the text fixed long ago. But in this case one of the readings must be a solecism, and can be emended on the basis of whichever reading is found to be grammatically correct. This reading can be established by consulting the internal and external parallels. The former favour a genitive form, e.g. *tassa sahabyatāya maggaṃ desema*,[40] *pahonti candima-suriyānaṃ sahabyatāya maggaṃ desetuṃ*,[41] and *tassa sahabyatāya maggaṃ desessanti*.[42] External parallels supports this, e.g. *tassa sattassa sahabyataṃ*,[43] *vessavaṇassa mahārājassa sahabyataṃ upapajjāmi*,[44] *parinimitta-vasavattīnaṃ devānaṃ sahabyataṃ upapajjanti*,[45] *devānaṃ tāvatiṃsānaṃ sahabyataṃ*.[46]

If a genitive is required the term *brahmānaṃ* could thus be taken as a genitive plural, but this is also impossible since the subject

[39] Mss variation on these constructions is minimal: in the first, three Sinhalese mss read *brahmuṇo*; in the second construction, one Sinhalese mss reads *brahmuṇo*, and one Khom mss reads *brahmuṇā*.
[40] E.g. DN I.230.1 De, I.239.12*f* Ee, I.225.14 Be.
[41] E.g. DN I.231.6*f* De, I.240.18*f* Ee, I.226.11*f* Be.
[42] E.g. DN I.232.4 De, I.241.22*f* Ee, I.227.11 Be.
[43] DN I.16.23*f* De, I.18.2 Ee, I.17.6 Be.
[44] DN II 206.7 Ee, II.167.3 Be.
[45] DN II 212.9*f* Ee, II.171.23 Be.
[46] DN II 272.6*f* Ee, II.216.25 Be.

of discourse in *Tevijja Sutta* is the god Brahma, not the Brahma gods, for example: *yena brahmā sakkhi-diṭṭho*,[47] *yattha vā brahmā yena vā brahmā yahiṃ vā brahmā ti*,[48] *sapariggaho vā brahmā apariggaho vā ti*,[49] *apariggahena brahmunā*,[50] *avera-citto brahmā*.[51] The parallels thus point towards a correct form in the genitive singular, and if so *brahmāṇaṃ* should be emended to *brahmuno* where necessary. The use of parallels in this way can be used to correct mistakes which had probably come into existence by the time of Buddhaghosa.

3. The application of Middle Indic philology

Correcting mistakes and identifying superior readings through parallels is relatively straightforward. But in many other cases the grammar is not so clear, especially when the readings include rare or unusual Middle Indic forms. One such example occurs in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, when the Buddha asks king Ajātasattu the following question:

> **DN I.43.9 De, I.51.21*f* Ee, I.48.16*f* Be**
>
> *abhijānāsi no tvaṃ mahā-rāja imaṃ pañhaṃ aññe samaṇa-brāhmaṇe* ***pucchitā/pucchittā*** *ti*?
>
> 'Do you not recall having ever asked (or 'that you asked') this question to other ascetics and Brahmins?'

- *pucchittā* – all 5 Sinhalese mss
- *pucchitā* – all 13 SEA mss, plus Be, Ce, Se, Ke
- *pucchittho* – Ee

The grammatical decision is here between a form of the agent noun (*pucchitā*), apparently with the sense of a past tense, and the form *pucchittā*, apparently an old form of the absolutive (in –*ttā* rather than the normal Pāli –*tvā*). The different printed editions of the commentary are not much help in this case:

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[47] E.g. DN I.228.14*f* De, 238.2 Ee, I.22.4.12 Be.
[48] E.g. DN I.229.9*f* I.238.24*f* Ee, I.224.26*f* Be.
[49] E.g. DN I.237.16*f* De, I.237.5*f* Ee, I.232.7*f* Be.
[50] E.g. DN I.238.19 De, I.247.29 Ee, I.232.20*f* Be.
[51] E.g. DN I.238.24 De, I.248.4 Ee, I.232.25*f* Be.

Sv I.158.26*ff* Ee:

*tattha **abhijānāsi no tva**n ti abhijānāsi nu tvaṃ… idaṃ hi vuttaṃ hoti: mahārāja tvaṃ imaṃ pañhaṃ aññe samaṇabrāhmaṇe **pucchittha** nu, abhijānāsi ca naṃ puṭṭhabhāvaṃ, na te pamuṭṭhan ti*

Sv I.111.22*ff* Ce:

*tattha **abhijānāsi no tva**n ti abhijānāsi nu tvaṃ… idaṃ hi vuttaṃ hoti: mahārāja tvaṃ imaṃ pañhaṃ aññe samaṇabrāhmaṇe **pucchittha** nu, abhijānāsi ca naṃ puṭṭhabhāvaṃ, na te pammuṭṭhan ti*

Sv I.144.6*ff* Be:

*tattha **abhijānāsi no tva**n ti abhijānāsi nu tvaṃ… idañ hi vuttaṃ hoti: mahārāja tvaṃ imaṃ pañhaṃ aññe samaṇabrāhmaṇe **pucchitā** nu, abhijānāsi ca naṃ puṭṭhabhāvaṃ, na te sammuṭṭhan ti*

Sv I.234.19*ff* Se:

*tattha **abhijānāsi no tva**n ti abhijānāsi nu tvaṃ… idaṃ hi vuttaṃ hoti: mahārāja tvaṃ imaṃ pañhaṃ aññe samaṇabrāhmaṇe **pucchitā** nu, abhijānāsi ca naṃ puṭṭhabhāvaṃ, na te pammuṭṭhan ti*

The four printed editions fall into two groups: the PTS and Sinhalese editions read the aorist *pucchittha*, whereas the Burmese and Thai editions read the agent noun *pucchitā*. Only in the Sinhalese edition is there a difference between the different printed editions of canon and commentary, although this is probably because these readings belong to separate editions: the Buddha Jayantī edition of the canon, and the Simon Hewavitarne Bequest edition of the commentary.[52] Indeed, the commentary merely rephrases the question asked in the canonical text, and hence repeats rather than explains the form. A similar failure to explain the correct form occurs when Buddhaghosa restates the canonical text, and its reading *āpajjitā*, in a section of the commentary on the Vinaya *Cullavagga*. But this part of the commentary also records

[52] The Simon Hewavitarne Bequest edition of the canon is not available to me.

the absolutive reading *āpajjitvā* as a secondary reading (*āpajjitvā vā pāṭho*),[53] and so suggests that the agent noun is the primary form. Further support for a form in –*itā* is contained in a similar construction in the *Kūṭadanta Sutta*:

DN I.131.5*f* De, I.143.21*f* Ee, I.136.18*f* Be

abhijānāti pana bhavaṃ gotamo eva-rūpaṃ yaññaṃ yajitvā vā yājetvā vā kāyassa bhedā param maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapajjitā ti?

Does the venerable Gotama recall [that] he arose in the blissful heavenly world after death, after offering this sort of sacrifice, or after having it offered (on his behalf)?

- *upapajjitā* – all 5 Burmese mss, all 5 Khom mss, plus all printed editions
- *uppajjitā* – all 5 Sinhalese mss
- *upappajitā* – all 3 Tham mss

The manuscript readings for these two sentences from the *Sāmaññaphala* and *Kūṭadanta Sutta*s, along with the commentarial evidence, thus suggest that the agent noun is superior to the absolutive: this is the majority reading, is the only reading in one place, and was apparently preferred by Buddhaghosa (albeit in a commentary on a different text). But before accepting this conclusion we must ask whether the agent noun as a past tense is a correct grammatical form. In other words, we must determine if the problem is grammatical or orthographic: whether the ending –*itā* can best be explained as a genuine grammatical form (the agent noun with the sense of a past tense) or as a scribal form of –*ittā*, is possible in an early period of transmission before generally being transformed into the correct Pāli ending –*itvā*. If the grammatical explanation is correct no further comment is required, bur if the orthographic explanation is preferred, the reason for the general failure to transform it into the absolutive (apart from the occasional Sinhalese readings in -*ttā*) in constructions with *abhi-ñña* (and sometimes *sar*) must be due to confusion over the correct form,

[53] Sp (IV) 1192.15*ff* Ee, IV.37.3*ff* Be, (IV) 882.24*ff* Ce, III.354.17-18 Se. On this passage see Pind (2005: 500, 513).

followed by the commentators' mistake in preferring *-itā*.

While the orthographic explanation is preferred by von Hinüber (1982), Pind (2005) has argued in favour of the grammatical explanation. This argument depends first on a Pāṇinian rule which allows for a past-tense use of the future tense (*lṛt*): Pind believes the same understanding explains the fucntioning of the agent noun as a form of the periphrastic future (but lacking the verb *as*).[54] Pind also notes that the occurrence of either *detā* or *dātā* (M III.126.27 Ee; M III.167.21 Be) in the same construction with *abhi-ññā* must be an agent noun, since the absolutive of the verb *dā* is quite different (*datvā*),[55] and that the use of the absolutive at the end of a sentence is irregular in Pāli grammar.[56]

The orthographic argument is simpler. It states that in the early period of scribal transmission (as in the Aśokan inscriptions and for some time afterwards), geminated consonants were represented by a single consonant. Many such simplified geminated consonants have indeed survived in the extant manuscripts, a phenomenon which has inevitably been corrected by those who put together the printed editions. No doubt in the early period of Pāli transmission prior to Buddhaghosa, such mistakes were much more common.[57] In support of this it could be argued that the Pāṇinian rule cited by Pind refers to a quite different grammatical form (*lṛt* rather than *luṭ*), and was in any case not known in the Pāli tradition. Furthermore, the forms *detā/dātā*, can be explained differently, as redactions of an old scribal form of the absolutive in **datā* (= **dattā*) → *dātā* → *detā*.

These arguments are finely balanced. But it is surely important that the grammatical argument presupposes the formation in Pāli of agent nouns from the present stem: Pind notes such forms as *apassayitā, āpajjitā*, *uddisitā*, *upapajjitā*, *chinditā*, *nahāyitā*, *nisīditā*, *passitā*, *bhuñjitā* etc. But in Sanskrit, Pāli and other forms of Middle Indic,[58] the agent

[54] *Aṣṭādhyāyī* III.2.112: *abhijñāvacane lṛt*, on which see Pind (2005: 498).
[55] Pind (2005: 504, 509).
[56] Pind (2005: 511*ff*).
[57] See Norman (1997: 83). For an old example see the reading *ukoṭeti* for *ukkoṭeti* in the Nepalese mss cited above (p.5).
[58] For the Pāli formation see Geiger (1994: 82*ff*) and Oberlies (2001: 172*ff*); for analogous Prakrit forms see Pischel (1981: 319-20).

noun is always formed directly from the verbal root, usually in a strengthened form (*guṇa or vṛddhi*), e.g. the Pāli noun *satthar* or even *dātar/detar*. Indeed, correct agent nouns from *ā-pad* (*āpādetar*), *chid* (*chettar*) and *dṛś* (*dassetar*) are found in other places in the Pāli canon,[59] alongside many other regular forms based directly on the verbal root. Moreover, virtually all what Pind claims are agent nouns in *-itā* have no occurrences as agent nouns apart from the disputed constructions with *abhi-ññā* and *sar*, whereas almost all these *–itā* forms cited by Pind have direct parallels with absolutives in *–itvā,* and absolutives formed from the present stem are quite normal in Pali and Middle Indic.

Given the number of disputed forms in *–itā* based on the present stem, the general absence of all these forms as agent nouns in constructions apart from *abhi-ññā* and *sar*, as well as the regular occurrence of absolutives *–itvā* parallel to all the apparent forms in *–itā*, the orthographic explanation would seem more likely. If so, the Pāṇinian rule cited by Pind can be regarded as just a coincidence, and the preservation of absolutive forms in *–itā* must therefore be explained as the result of grammatical confusion: in the scholastic tradition to which Buddhaghosa belonged, the forms in *–itā* in conjunction with *abhi-ññā* and *sar* were interpreted as a sort of past tense, rather than a scribal form of the absolutive in *–ittā*.

In this example comparative philology allows us to correct what appears to be a a mistaken commentarial understanding. But such corrections are only valid in cases where at least some manuscripts support what is believed to be a correct old form (in this case *pucchittā*). Where there is no such manuscript evidence, for example the reading *upapajjitā* in the sentence from the *Kūṭadanta Sutta* cited above, the actual manuscript readings, especially if generally supported by the commentarial tradition, must be respected. Although this approach means that a critical edition will not be entirely consistent, this is perhaps a fitting reflection of the fact that Pāli is a highly variable language: complete regularisation, through emendation where required, would misrepresent the tradition.

The variation between *–ttā* and *–tā*, and the regular Pāli form

[59] DOP, s.v.

–*tvā* involves the historical forms of Middle Indic inherited by Pāli, the old scribal forms in which such forms were written (beginning with Aśokan Brāhmī), and the partial Sanskritization of the Pāli language (most probably in the period between the writing down of the canon and Buddhaghosa). Because a fundamental editorial principle of critical editing is to select older forms (those from which all others derive), older Middle Indic forms are therefore preferable to their more Sanskritized counterparts. Thus the terms *tattha* and *amhi* are preferred to their Sanskritized counterparts *tatra* and *asmi*, in any case of clear variation; for the same reason, the form *sineha-* is preferrable to forms of *sneha-* in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*,[60] and the same reading can be applied to an exact parallel in the same volume, even if the manuscripts for the parallel do not contain it (hence *sineha* is preferred as an emendation in the *Subha Sutta* parallel to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*).[61]

The preference for non-Sanskritized Middle Indic forms means that readings which preserve the law of morae are superior to those that do not. Thus *gavassa-* is preferable to *gavāssa*,[62] *sakkhara-* to *sākkhara-*,[63] *vak-karaṇo* to *vāk-karaṇo*,[64] *anvassaveyyuṃ* to *anvāssaveyyuṃ*,[65] and *n' assa* to *nāssa*.[66] Some of these forms at first seem unusual, but this is simply an illusion created by the regularisation of the printed editions: such forms occur regularly enough in the manuscripts to establish that they are genuine, rather than orthographic peculiarities, and so are probably older readings which were gradually minimised in the scribal tradition without being completely lost.

Indeed, the restoration of double consonants or long vowels originally lost through the operation of the law of morae is an old phenomenon: the occurrence of forms such as *esā ññatti* (107a, 5c; compare 106a. 3b *bhikkhu ññāpetavvā*) and *nahayamānā tthambhe* (108a, 1b) in the Nepalese Vinaya fragment shows that the practice is at

[60] DN I.66.15 De, I.74.4 Ee, I.70.6 Be.
[61] DN I.193.11 De, I.195.20 Be (omitted between I.208.18 Ee, due to editorial rather than mss abbreviation).
[62] DN I.56.15 De, I.64.26 Ee, I.61.1 Be.
[63] DN I.78.21 De, I.88.6 Ee, I.82.24 Be.
[64] DN I.84.10 De, I.93.21 Ee, I.88.6 Be.
[65] DN I.63.13 De, I.70.11 Ee, I.66.20 Be.
[66] DN I.194.4 De, I.207.15 Ee, I.195.28 Be.

least as old as the early medieval period. The seventh century reliquary containing the Golden Pali Text also contains a Sanskritised form which violates the law of morae: ***svākhyāto*** *bhagavata dhammo* is more advanced than the normal Pāli form ***svākkhāto*** *bhagavatā dhammo*. All this suggests that Buddhaghosa was familiar with a variety of forms, and if so a critical edition must allow for flexibility while preferring the forms which are older and in closer agreement with Pāli norms (such as the law of morae, which is followed extensively throughout the manuscripts and printed editions).

A similar problem concerns variation on the term *sakya*, the name of the Buddha's tribe. In the Nepalese Vinaya fragment this appears twice in forms that violate the law of morae: *(śā?)kyaputtiyā* (107b, 5a) and *sākyaputtiyā* (108a, 1c) occur alongside *sakyaputtiyā* (108a, 3b). A more extensive range of forms is contained in the Pāli manuscripts of the *Sīlakkhandhavagga*: the regular *sakya* occurs alongside the more Sanskritised form *sākya* and the Middle Indic form *sakka*. It is possible that all these forms are extremely old: in a few places the Aśokan edicts read the Sanskrit word *śakya-* ('possible, capable') in the forms *saka-*,[67] *śaka-*[68] and *sakiya-*.[69] The Aśokan edicts also use the assimilated forms *saka-* and *śaka-* to refer to the Buddha's clan,[70] whereas the Piprāhwa reliquary inscription, probably of Mauryan and possibly even Aśokan heritage, refers to the Buddha's clan in the form *sakiya-*.[71]

The form *sakya-* also goes back to the Mauryan period, in the citation of a version of the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* in Aśōka's Rummindei Pillar Edict: line four of the inscription states *hida bhagavaṃ jāte* ti,[72] which can be compared with the Sanskrit (*iha*) *bhagavāñ jātaḥ*[73] and the Pāli *idha tathāgato jāto ti*.[74] However, another citation (*ti*) clause just before this explains the reason for Aśoka's visit

[67] Mas 5; Brah 4/5; Śidd 9/10 (Hultzsch, 991: 175; 176; 179).
[68] Shāh XIII.7 (Hultzsch, 1991: 67).
[69] Jau IX.6; Jau Sep ed. II.7; Rūp 3 (Hultzsch, 1991: 110, 116, 167).
[70] Rūp 1; Mas 2 (Hultzsch, 1991: 166; 174).
[71] Srivastava (1980: 103): *sukiti bhatinam sa-puta-dalanam iyam salila-nidhane budhasa bhagavate* ***sakiyānam***.
[72] Rum 4 (Hultzsch, 1991: 164).
[73] *Mahāparnirvāṇa Sūtra*, section 41.6 (Waldschmidt, 1951: 388). On the understanding of this passage as a citation see Wynne (2005: 44).
[74] D II.140.20 Ee, II.116.10 Be.

to Lumbinī as follows: *hida budhe jāte sakyamunī ti*.[75] This seems to elaborate the citation from the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* which follows, probably as a personalised reformulation of the canonical text. The term *sakya-*, unusual by Aśokan standards since it displays neither *svarabhakti* nor consonant assimilation, could possibly be the form of the term contained in the Buddhist texts known to Aśoka. But even if not the form is sufficiently old to be considered normative in a critical edition of the Pāli canon, and so is preferred, on the basis that this was probably the form preferred among the variants in the early scribal tradition. Thus *sakya-* is preferered to the forms of *sakka-*[76] found in the Sinhalese manuscripts of the *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*, although this assimilated form is included in places where all other readings are grammatically incorrect, as in the following sentence from the *Ambaṭṭha Sutta*:

> **DN I.82.21*f* De, I.92.6*ff* Ee, I.87.2*f* Be**
>
> *atibāḷhaṃ kho ayaṃ ambaṭṭho māṇavo sakke ibbha-vādena nimmādeti*.
>
> This young Brahmin Ambaṭṭha harshly insults the Sakyas with the term 'menial'.

- *sakke* – all 5 Sinhalese ms
- *sakyesu* – 4 Burmese mss, 4 Khom mss, plus Be, Ke, Se
- *sakyasu* – 1 Tham ms
- *sākyesu* – 1 Burmese mss, 2 Tham mss
- *sakkesu* – Ce, Ee

Only *sakke* is grammatically correct in this construction, for the direct object of the verb *nimmādeti* should be in the accusative rather than the locative case. But the locative reading is easily explained, for the expression *sakyesu ibbhavādaṃ nipātesi* occurs three times in

[75] Rum 2 (Hultzsch, 1991: 164). The assimilation of consonant clusters is a feature the Aśokan inscription at Girnar, and if so *sakka* might be taken as a form inherited from the Buddhists of Western India. On this see Oberlies (2003: 166).

[76] Rhys Davids reads *sakkesu* alongside *sakya-*, no doubt accepting the form in his Sinhalese source without question: see DN I.91.9/24, I.92.5/7.

the preceding passage.[77] It is easy to see how these earlier occurrences of *sakyesu*, where the locative is correct as the indirect object of the verb *nipātesi*, influenced the form of the similar *sakke ibbha-vādena nimmādeti* in most manuscripts.

In its preference for older readings the Dhammachai Critical Edition thus applies a knowledge of Middle Indic grammar, but not to the exclusion of Sanskritised forms, which can be assumed to have been part of the Pāli canon by the time of Buddhaghosa, and so are generally retained where the manuscripts are in complete agreement on them.

4. The use of the commentarial readings and glosses

If a critical edition is an attempt to reproduce the text on which the commentaries of the Mahāvihāra are based, attempts must be made to relate it as closely as possible to the printed editions of the commentaries. In theory this task should be fairly simple, for the commentaries have been preserved alongside the canon, and can be easily consulted to check the correct form. But in practice the matter is not so straightforward. The printed editions of the commentaries vary as much as the printed editions of the canon, and do not comment on every word in the text, or even most of them. The different editions of the commentaries must therefore be used with great care; only in very rare cases of complete agreement can they be trusted.

A simple example of this is one of the lists of 'low arts' (*tiracchāna-vijjā*) outlined in the *mahā-sīla* section of the *Brahmajāla Sutta*. Out of the eighteen manuscripts and five printed editions used for the Pilot Critical Edition of the *Sīlakkhandhavagga*, only the five Burmese manuscripts and the Burmese printed edition include the term *hanujappanaṃ* ('jaw-incantation') in the list which begins *āvāhanaṃ* ('marriage') and ends *sirivhāyanaṃ* ('invoking fortune/wealth').[78] All the printed editions of the commentary support the assessment that *hanujappanaṃ* is a Burmese interpolation, for they gloss every word in this section apart from this term, and so indicate that this term was not found in the text read by Buddhaghosa. In such cases the

[77] DN I.81.20, I.82.9, I.82.19 De; I.86.5, I.86.17, I.86.28 Be. For the Ee references see the previous note.
[78] DN I.11.8, I.11.20 Ee, I.11.3 Be.

argument from silence is strong. It can be assumed that an addition was made in the Burmese tradition, but at the same time no aattempt was made to modify the commentary.

The commentary can also be used to help resolve more difficult problems. A good example is occurs in the commentary on the following statement of Jīvaka Komārabhacca in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*:

> ***DN I.41.9f De, I.49.15ff Ee, I.46.10 Be***
>
> *taṃ kho pana* ***bhagavantaṃ/bhagavantaṃ gotamaṃ/ bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ*** *evaṃ kalyāṇo kitti-saddo abbhuggato*
>
> 'About that Blessed One (or: Blessed Gotama/respected Gotama) a good and glorious report has been voiced thus ...'

- *bhagavantaṃ* - 5 Khom ms, 2 Tham mss, plus Be, Ke, Se
- *bhagavantaṃ gotamaṃ* - 4 Burmese ms, 5 Sinhalese mss, 1 Tham mass, plus Ce, Ee
- *bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ* - 1 Burmese ms

Commentary*: tassa kho pana bhagavato ti attho.*[79]

Although the majority of manuscripts, support by two printed editions, read *bhagavantaṃ gotamaṃ,* the commentarial reading *bhagavato does* not support this. The printed editions of the commentary instead support the reading *bhagavantaṃ*, and suggest that the conjunction of the terms *bhagavant* and *gotama* is irregular, a fact confirmed by canonical Pāli prose, in which the term *bhavant* usually precedes *gotama* whereas the term *bhagavant* is normally found alone, e.g. either *bhagavā* or *bhavaṃ gotamo*,[80] either *bhagavantaṃ* or *bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ*,[81] either *bhagavatā* or *bhotā gotamena*,[82] and either *bhante* or

[79] Sv I.146 Ee, I.133 Be, I.103 Ce, I.130 Se.

[80] *bhagavā*: DN I.77.3 De, I.85.14, I.80.20 Be; *bhavaṃ gotamo*: DN I.100.6, I.100.26 Ee, I.103.8 Be.

[81] *bhagavantaṃ*: DN I.77.2 De, DN I.85.13 Ee, I.80.19 Be; *bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ*: DN I.100.5 De, I.110.24 Ee, I.103.7 Be.

[82] *bhagavatā*: DN I.77.1 De, I.85.11, I.80.18 Be; *bhotā gotamena*: DN I.100.3, I.110.22 Ee, I.103.5 Be.

bho gotama.[83] Further support for the reading *bhagavantaṃ* is contained in the commentary on a parallel passage in the *Sāleyyaka Sutta*:

> MN I.285.7*f* Ee, I.354.6 Be
>
> *taṃ kho pana bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ evaṃ kalyāṇo kittisaddo abbhuggato*
>
> ***Commentary:*** *tassa kho pana bhoto gotamassā ti attho*[84]

In this case all printed editions of the canonical text read *bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ*, a fact supported by the commentarial gloss *bhoto gotamassā ti*. The difference between the *Sāmaññaphala* and *Sāleyyaka Sutta*s, and between Buddhaghosa's commentary on both, is easy to explain: the reading *bhagavantaṃ* makes sense in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* and its commentary because the person speaking is Jīvaka Komārabhacca, a lay-disciple of the Buddha, whereas in the *Sāleyyaka Sutta* the same text is attributed to the Brahmins of Sāleyyaka, who are not lay-disciples and visit the Buddha out of curiosity. In both cases Buddhaghosa's commentary can be used alongside the manuscripts to help establish the critical reading.

A more difficult example is the variation between *piṇḍa-dāvikā*, *piṇḍa-dāyikā* and *piṇḍi-dāyakā* in the list of various occupations contained in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*:

> **DN I.42.23*f* De, I.51.8*f* Ee, I.48.7*f* Be**
>
> *... hatthārohā assārohā rathikā dhanu-ggahā celakā calakā piṇḍa-**dāvikā/dāyikā/dāyakā** ...*

- *piṇḍadāvikā* – all 5 Sinhalese ms, plus Ee
- *piṇḍadāyikā* – 4 Burmese, 5 Khom and 1 Tham mss, plus Ke, Se
- *piṇḍidāyakā* –2 Tham ms
- *piṇḍapāyikā* – 1 Burmese ms

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[83] *bhante*: DN I.76.25 De, I.85.7 Ee, I.80.15 Be; *bho gotama*: DN I.99.30 De, I.110.18 Ee, I.103.2 Be.

[84] Ps II.327.35 Ee, II.228.12 Be, II.273.15*f* Ce.

- *piṇḍadāyakā* –Be.Ce

Leaving aside the Tham reading *piṇḍi*, and the aberrant Burmese reading *pāyikā*, the principle disagreement here is between *dāvikā*, *dāyikā* and *dāyakā*. In Part II of *A Dictionary of Pāli* (g-n), Margaret Cone defines *dāyika* as the adjective 'giving, producing' and *dāyaka* as the noun, one 'who gives, bestows, a donor, benefactor', the feminine form of which is recorded in –*ikā*; the reading *dāvikā* is not listed, perhaps because it will be included under the term *piṇḍa*. The meaning of the compound would thus seem to be 'giver of food, donor of food'; PED defines it as 'one who deals out food (as occupation of a certain class of soldiers)'. Regardless of the meaning, the form *dāvikā* can be understood as a Middle Indic variant on *dāyikā/dāyakā*, one which depends on the common phonetic change y > v, and seen in Pāli words such as *āvuso*, *āvudha*, *kāsāva*, *tāvatiṃsa* etc.[85] As a Middle Indic rather than a Sanskritic form (MMW contains the form *dāyaka*), the term *dāvikā* is preferable to *dāyakā/dāyikā*, but the decision is marginal. The different printed versions of the commentary are not very helpful, for they all explain different lemmata in different ways:

Sv I.156.25*ff* Ee:[86]

piṇḍa-dāvikā *ti sāhasika-mahāyodhā. te kira parasenaṃ pavisitvā* ***piṇḍam iva chetvā chetvā davayanti,*** *uppatitvā uppatitvā nigacchantī ti attho. ye vā saṅgāma-majjhe yodhānaṃ bhattapānīyaṃ gahetvā pavisanti, tesaṃ p' etaṃ nāmaṃ.*

Sv I.110.18ff Ce:[87]

piṇḍa-dāyikā *ti sāhasika-mahāyodhā. te kira parasenaṃ pavisitvā* ***piṇḍam iva chetvā chetvā davayanti,*** *uppatitvā uppatitvā nigacchantī ti attho. ye vā saṅgāma-majjhe yodhānaṃ bhattapānīyaṃ gahetvā pavisanti, tesaṃ p' etaṃ nāmaṃ.*

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[85] See Geiger §46.1 (1994: 37), Oberlies §14.8 (2001: 82-3).

[86] The Ee parallel at Mp IV.54.14 reads *dāyikā* for *dāvikā*, *dassanti* for *davayanti*, *uppatitvā* for *uppatitvā uppatitvā* and *niggacchantī* for *nigacchantī*.

[87] The Ce parallel at Mp III.137.17*ff dassanti* for *davayanti, uppatitvā* for *uppatitvā uppatitvā* and *niggacchantī* for *nigacchantī*.

piṇḍa-dāyikā/dāvikā: violent, great warriors. They apparently engage another army, repeatedly severing (it) just like a lump of food (*piṇḍam iva*), making [it] flee (*davayanti*). Springing up again and again, they enter (battle): this is the meaning. Alternatively, this is a name for those who enter into the middle of a battle taking food and water for the warriors.

Sv I.142.22ff Be:[88]

piṇḍa-dāyakā *ti sāhasika-mahāyodhā. te kira parasenaṃ pavisitvā* ***parasīsaṃ piṇḍam iva chetvā chetvā dayanti,*** *uppatitvā uppatitvā niggacchantī ti attho. ye vā saṅgāma-majjhe yodhānaṃ bhattapātiṃ gahetvā parivisanti, tesam p' etaṃ nāmaṃ.*

Sv I.232.14ff Se:[89]

piṇḍa-dāyikā *ti sāhasika-mahāyodhā. te kira parasenaṃ pavisitvā* ***parasīsaṃ piṇḍam iva chetvā nayanti,*** *uppatitvā uppatitvā nigacchantī ti attho. ye vā saṅgāma-majjhe yodhānaṃ bhattapātiṃ gahetvā pavisanti, tesaṃ c' etaṃ nāmaṃ.*

piṇḍa-dāyakā/dāyikā: violent, great warriors. They apparently engage another army, and having severed (repeatedly) the head of the other [army] just like a lump of food (*piṇḍam iva*), they harm (*dayanti*, or 'lead away': Se *nayanti*). Springing up again and again, they go out [to battle]: this is the meaning. Alternatively, this is a name for those who enter into the middle of a battle taking a bowl of food for the warriors.

The different texts of the commentary form two groups: the PTS and Sinhalese editions, which explain *dāvikā/dāyikā* by *davayanti*; and the Burmese and Thai editions, which explain *dāyakā/dāyikā* by *dayanti/nayanti*. Of these the Sinhalese and Thai editions do not correspond:

[88] The Be parallel at Mp III.182.10*ff* reads *piṇḍapiṇḍam* for *parasīsaṃ piṇḍaṃ* and *uppatitvā* for *uppatitvā uppatitvā*.
[89] The Se parallel at Mp III.295.13*ff* reads *dāyakā* for *dāyikā*.

Buddhaghosa's explanation of *dāvikā/dāyakā/dāyikā* is obviously meant to be a 'folk' etymology (*nirukti*), but *davayanti* explains *dāvikā* (not the Sinhalese *dāyikā*), and *nayanti* does not explain *dāyikā* in the Thai edition. This leaves two options: *dāvikā* explained by *davayanti*, and *dāyakā* explained by *dayanti*. Both verbs are unusual and appear only in commentarial prose: *davayanti* is apparently a causative form of the verb *dav-* ('to run', Skt. *dru-*),[90] whereas the only suitable sense of *dayanti* is 'harm', a meaning noted only in the *Saddanīti*.[91] Of these the former makes marginally better sense, since the term *davayanti* adds a subsequent layer of meaning after *chetvā chetvā*, whereas *dayanti* does not. The commentarial syntax here suggests that Buddhaghosa read and attempted to explain *dāvikā*, but the variation between the different printed editions of the commentaries mean that this judgement is not beyond doubt. The work of textual editing demands no equivocation, however: one of the options must be chosen, or else good reasons found to emend the text.

Conclusion

The preceding has hopefully shown that a critical edition of the Pāli Tipiṭaka is possible, and that suitable methods for preparing it have been devised, and are being implemented, at Wat Phra Dhammakāya. A different point concerns whether or not a critical edition is necessary, or even desirable. According to K. R. Norman it is:

> There is a tendency in modem scholarship to look always for the new – scholars entering the field are not content to tread the paths well-worn by their predecessors, even when it is clear that the work of their predecessors needs reworking. The cry is to find something new, something which has not been done before. I am confronted with this tendency all the time. Prospective research students visit me or write to me and ask what they can do for their doctoral thesis in the field of Pāli studies. I say: "What has not been done needs to be done, and what has been done needs to be done again". Of these the second is the more important ...

[90] DOP, *davati* s.v.
[91] DOP, *dayati* s.v.

> Unfortunately, the enquirers all want to do something new, so the study of the fundamentals is abandoned while they go after trendy trivia which they hope will have an earthshaking effect upon the world of Pāli and Buddhist studies when the result of their research appears.[92]

In a similar vein Margaret Cone has pointed out that most Pali Text Society publications were

> already there when I began to learn about Pāli forty years ago. This means that much of what I have on those shelves of mine is the product of pioneering work, rather a first draft than the culmination of centuries' study (as are my Oxford Classical Texts).[93]

Cone further notes that 'the PTS editions have a large number of, at best questionable, at worst, plain wrong, readings',[94] and that in extreme cases (such as the *Peṭakopadesa*) it is 'hard to make sense of any of the editions'.[95] The fact that 'every one' of the PTS editions is fallible'[96] can be generalised to all printed editions of the Tipiṭaka: although Cone notes that other regional editions are often superior to the PTS ('more convincing, because more subtle, more elegant, more Pāli'), she goes on to add that 'one finds in all traditions inconsistencies, incomprehensibility, more problems'.[97] The same critique can be generalised to the entire field of Pāli studies, since most grammars, dictionaries, translations and associated studies are based on the PTS editions, and hence are fallible and must be redone:

> I believe we should be prepared also to re-do everything. First we must re-edit the texts of the Canon and the commentaries ...[98] On the basis of these new editions, we must then produce a new, accurate, thorough grammar; then, I am afraid, someone will have to re-write my

[92] Norman (1997: 2).
[93] Cone (2007: 95).
[94] Cone (2007: 96).
[95] Cone (2007: 97).
[96] Cone (2007: 98).
[97] Cone (2007: 98).
[98] Cone (2007: 102).

> dictionary. And finally we can produce good readable, trustworthy translations.[99]

Setting the foundations of Pāli learning in order – the Pāli canon and aids to study it, such as grammars and improved translations – is required before research into other aspects of the Pāli tradition, such as the innumerable para-canonical texts that remain either unedited or are still unknown, can be undertaken. This does not necessarily mean that a work of critical edition will only introduce minor philological corrections into the Tipiṭaka, without changing our understanding of the Pāli canon and early Buddhist history. Fot it is also possible that a subtly different reading could change our understanding of the early Buddhist period in significant ways. A good example of this can be seen in thePilot Critical Edition of the *Tevijja Sutta*.

In the passage on a gathering of Brahmins at Manasākaṭa, a village in the kingdom of Kosala, the printed editions have widely different readings for the last group: the options are *bavhirivā* (Ce), *bavharidhā* (Ke.Se), *bavhārijjā* (Be) and *chandavā brāhmaṇā brahmacariyā* (Ee).[100] The PTS reading is derived from the Sinhalese manuscript tradition, and is dubious, perhaps derived from a scribal note; the referent of the Sinhalese reading is also unclear. But the readings in the SEA editions are close, as are the readings in the 13 SEA mss (Burmese, Khom and Tham) used to prepare the Pilot version of the critical edition. Some of these contain the reading *bavharijā*, which seems to be a Middle Indic form of the Sanskrit term *bahvṛca*, which denotes a class of Ṛgvedic priests, and is most likely the original from which all others can be derived. This reading thus affords us a better understanding of the speculative world from which the Buddha emerged.

Even if this were not the case, a critical edition of the Tipiṭaka is important simply because its manuscript heritage allows it to be done. Critical editions of Middle Indic and Sanskrit manuscripts from India and Central Asia, on the other hand, are impossible, since a sufficient number of manuscripts do not exist for any single text (in most cases only a single manuscript has survived). If, say, perhaps ten monastic libraries were to be discovered in the region of Pakistan, Afghanistan

[99] Cone (2007: 104).
[100] DN I.228.1/6 De, I.237.11/19 Ee, I.223.29/224.5 Be.

and Central Asia, each containing a complete Gāndhārī Tipiṭaka, only then could a critical edition of this canon be prepared. But more or less exactly this situation prevails today in the Theravāda world, albeit on a much vaster scale, even if the scribal tradition is no longer a functioning aspect of Theravāda Buddhism. The Dhammachai Tipiṭaka Project is thus committed to document, preserve and edit the Pāli Tipiṭaka before it is too late and the material basis of the tradition disappears once and for all.

ABBREVIATIONS

B	Burmese manuscripts
Be	Burmese edition of the Tipiṭaka (see n.4)
C	Sinhalese manuscripts
Ce	Sinhalese edition of the Tipiṭaka (see n.8-9)
De	Dhammachai edition of the Tipiṭaka (see n.26)
DN	Dīgha Nikāya
DOP	*A Dictionary of Pāli, Parts I-II, by Margaret Cone. 2001-2010, Oxford: The Pali Text Society*
Ee	PTS edition
K	Khom manuscripts
Ke	Cambodian edition of the Tipiṭaka (see n.11)
L	Tham manuscripts
MN	Majjhima Nikāya
Mp	Manorathapūraṇī (Aṅguttara Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā)
PED	*The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary (1921-25)*. Reprinted 2004, Oxford: The Pali Text Society.

Ps	Papañcasūdanī (Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā)
Se	Siamese/Thai edition of the Tipiṭaka: for references to the Thai edition of the Tipiṭaka, see n.6; references to the Thai edition of the commentary use the edition published by Mahamakut Buddhist University in 1992.
SEA	mainland South East Asia(n)
Sp	Samantapāsādikā
Sv	Sumaṅgalavilāsinī (Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā)

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