

Qualities of a True Recluse (*Samaṇa*) — According to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel

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Qui vero mala sedat,
parva magnaque omni ex parte,
a sedatione malorum,
samanas appellatur.¹

Introduction

With the present article, I explore the notion of a true recluse (*samaṇa*) in early Buddhist discourse. My study begins with a survey of selected occurrences of the term *samaṇa* in the Pāli discourses (I). Then I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta*,² a discourse that contrasts the early Buddhist conception of a true recluse to the implications of the same notion from the perspective of a contemporary wanderer (II). Subsequently, I compare the Pāli and Chinese versions with each other, with particular emphasis on those aspects of the Chinese discourse that help to clarify passages in the Pāli version (III).

I. *Samaṇa* in the Pāli Discourses

In the Pāli discourses, the term *samaṇa* stands for religious practitioners of various affiliations. As such, the term is also used by the monastic disciples of the Buddha to designate themselves. According to the *Aggañña-sutta*, on being asked who they are, the Buddhist monks should proclaim themselves to be *samaṇas* who are followers of the Sakyan.³ Similarly, the term *samaṇa* can function as an epithet for the Tathāgata,⁴ who at times is referred to as “the great *samaṇa*”.⁵

As a group, the *samaṇas* are part of a standard listing in the early discourses that distinguishes assemblies into eight types. Four of these eight assemblies consist of human beings, which cover assemblies of *samaṇas*, Brahmins, warriors, and householders.⁶ In what follows,

I will briefly survey the way the discourses describe the relationship between *samaṇas* and these other three human assemblies, before turning to the normative usage of the term *samaṇa*.

Some degree of tension between the Brahmins and the *samaṇas* is reflected in several passages that portray a disdainful and even hostile attitude of the former towards the latter. In the *Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, a young Brahmin explains that his impolite behaviour towards the Buddha is the way he generally treats those “baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā’s foot”.⁷ His attitude was apparently based on his teacher’s opinion that these “baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā’s foot” are not fit to converse with Brahmins possessing the threefold knowledge (i.e., knowledge of the three Vedas).⁸ Other discourses similarly report that Brahmins held those “baldpated petty recluses ... (etc.)” to be incapable of coming to know the Dharma,⁹ or to be ignorant regarding proper etiquette.¹⁰

The *Aggañña-sutta* records Brahmins reviling those of their own caste who go forth as Buddhist monks and thus relinquish their Brahmanical status and become *samaṇas*. This description provides further background to the notion of “menials” that are “swarthy” and the “offspring from Brahmā’s foot” mentioned above: in contrast to *samaṇas*, Brahmins lay claim to being the “highest” caste, which is “fair” and “purified” in contrast to the darkness and lack of purity of other castes; in fact Brahmins maintain that they are “born from Brahmā’s mouth”, unlike members of other castes.¹¹

Other passages depict Brahmins expressing a hostile or even aggressive attitude towards *samaṇas*. Thus, a Brahmin engaged in a fire sacrifice tells the Buddha in quite forceful terms to stay off, calling him an outcaste.¹² Again, on seeing one of those “baldpated petty recluses” seated in meditation — in this case the Buddhist monk Mahākaccāna — young Brahmins make noise close by and abuse him.¹³ A rather stark example occurs in a passage in the *Udāna*, according to which Brahmins fill up a well with chaff in order to prevent those “baldpated recluses” from drinking any water — an action directed at the Buddha and a company of monks who are journeying by.¹⁴

An entertaining perspective on Brahmanical denigration of *samaṇas* emerges from the *Māratajjanīya-sutta*. This discourse reports Brahmins pouring abuse on the monk disciples of the former Buddha Kakusandha as “baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā’s foot” and deriding their meditation practice.¹⁵ The same discourse reveals that the Brahmins had acted in this way because they had been incited by Māra to do so. That is, from an early Buddhist perspective such abuse is skilfully interpreted as an attempt by Māra to upset one’s inner balance, a perspective that must have been of considerable assistance for developing an attitude of patience in such situations. According to the instructions given by the Buddha Kakusandha to his monks, such attacks by Māra are best faced by developing loving kindness (*mettā*).

Another mode of contesting Brahmanical prejudice might underlie the sequence of listing the two main types of religieuses in ancient India as *samaṇas* and Brahmins,¹⁶ where the circumstance that the Brahmins are put in second position could be on purpose to counter their claim to superiority.¹⁷ Dutt (1962: 49) explains that while Buddhist and Jaina texts use the expression “*Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇa*, in Asoka’s edicts it appears as *Brāhmaṇa-samaṇa*, a plausible explanation of which is that ... those who themselves belong to the *Samaṇa* class ... wished to give it precedence [in their texts], while the *Brāhmaṇa* is put first in the edicts”.

Yet, a closer inspection of the edicts shows a considerable degree of variation, where at times even within the same edict both sequences manifest.¹⁸ Though the sequence of the two terms employed in the early Buddhist discourses may indeed be reflecting a reevaluation of the *samaṇa* vis-à-vis the Brahmin,¹⁹ similar to the tendency in the same discourses to mention the warriors (*khattiya/kṣatriya*) before Brahmins,²⁰ Asoka’s edicts suggest that the sequence of such listings may not always have been invested with as much importance as nowadays assumed.

Judging from the picture painted in the early discourses, interrelations between *samaṇas* and members of the warrior caste were less problematic than between *samaṇas* and Brahmins. Respect for recluses was apparently so deeply entrenched in ancient Indian society that even a king felt that he should not openly contradict the teachings of a *samaṇa* living in his realm.²¹ It also seems to have been customary for kings to visit a *samaṇa* in order to receive religious instruction.²²

Nevertheless, a king has the power to banish a *samaṇa* from his realm.²³ This ambivalence between respect and control could underlie the famous inquiry of King Ajātasattu in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* regarding the purpose and benefits of being a *samaṇa*.²⁴ Macqueen (1988: 206) comments: “Ajātaśatru was king and overseer of a region apparently much frequented by śramaṇas, and it may be that he was interested in having the status of this sizeable group of people clarified”.²⁵

For the householder in general, to see a *samaṇa* could be considered a blessing,²⁶ as it affords an occasion for religious instruction. A male or female householder who approaches *samaṇas* and inquires about proper moral conduct will be endowed with wisdom even in the next life.²⁷ The function of *samaṇas* as teachers would have been quite widespread, since a standard listing of sources for knowledge mentions respect for a particular *samaṇa* as a basis for holding a particular opinion or view.²⁸

While a *samaṇa* is expected to provide instruction and religious inspiration to laity, a householder should be respectful towards *samaṇas* and supply them with their daily needs.²⁹ The need to behave respectfully extends even to family members, as a *samaṇa* can expect worship from his mother, father or brother.³⁰

This nuance of respect leads me over to the more normative use of the term, where *samaṇa* as a honorific epithet stands representative for some degree of accomplishment. An important requirement for living up to the status of a *samaṇa* was, according to ancient Indian standards, harmlessness. A recluse should never retaliate when being abused,³¹ and should quite literally put away the rod in regard to all living beings.³² A true *samaṇa* is intent on patience and gentleness,³³ hence one who harms others is not a true *samaṇa*.³⁴

Other aspects of a true *samaṇa*'s mode of conduct can be deduced from a listing of the types of happiness associated with the lifestyle of a *samaṇa*, which are contentment with any requisite and delight in a life of celibacy.³⁵ Another element in the proper conduct of a *samaṇa* is truthfulness. Hence one who utters falsehood cannot claim to be a *samaṇa*, even if he has a shaven head.³⁶ Those who are not true to the basic requirements of the *samaṇa* ideal are therefore a “corruption of a recluse”, the “chaff of a recluse”, not worthy of associating with true *samaṇas*.³⁷

While these requirements of moral conduct would have been commonly accepted standards among *samaṇas* in ancient India, other qualities of a true *samaṇa* acquire a more distinctly Buddhist flavour. Thus according to the two *Assapura-suttas* in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, in addition to adherence to the basics of ethical conduct, other qualities more closely related to mental cultivation and the growth of wisdom are required for living up to being a true *samaṇa*.

The recommendations given in the first of these two discourses, the *Mahāassapura-sutta*, proceed from purity of conduct — via restraint of the senses, moderation in regard to food, wakefulness, the development of mindfulness, and the attainment of deep stages of concentration — to the realization of the three higher knowledges (*tevijjā*).³⁸ The *Cūlaassapura-sutta* builds on the same theme by specifying that one who is under the influence of defilements is not a true *samaṇa*, in spite of having adopted external modes of conduct or forms of asceticism in vogue among ancient Indian *samaṇas*.³⁹ In sum, what makes one a true *samaṇa* from an early Buddhist perspective is, besides higher virtue, training in the higher mind and in higher wisdom.⁴⁰

The training in higher wisdom for becoming a true *samaṇa* could be undertaken by developing various aspects of wisdom, such as insight into:

- impermanence,⁴¹
- honours and gains,⁴²
- the world,⁴³
- feelings,⁴⁴
- the four elements,⁴⁵
- the five aggregates,⁴⁶
- the five faculties,⁴⁷
- the six senses and their objects,⁴⁸
- the links of dependent arising,⁴⁹
- the four noble truths.⁵⁰

From the perspective of developing insight into the four noble truths, then, only a teaching that contains the noble eightfold path can produce the four types of true *samaṇas*.⁵¹ These four represent the four stages of awakening,⁵² which are elsewhere also reckoned as the true fruits of recluseship.⁵³ Whereas here the notion of a true *samaṇa* stands for all levels of awakening, in other passages the same term represents

the highest stage of full awakening alone.⁵⁴ In sum, once all evil states have been pacified, *samīta*, a monk becomes a true *samaṇa*,⁵⁵ who has gone beyond birth and death.⁵⁶

These passages indicate that, in spite of a general code of moral conduct shared among most ancient Indian *samaṇas*, the notion of what makes one a true recluse was invested in early Buddhism with a specific set of values. This becomes particularly evident in some discourses that portray how contemporary practitioners, who believe themselves to be accomplished *samaṇas* already, encounter the Buddha, go forth under him and eventually reach full liberation. According to these discourses, such converts thereon proclaim that they had earlier been deluding themselves, since only now have they really become true *samaṇas*.⁵⁷ The underlying contrast in these passages between the notion of a true *samaṇa* held among contemporary practitioners and its implications in early Buddhist circles forms the central theme of the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

The *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* has a parallel in the *Madhyama-āgama* translated by the Kashmiri Gautama Saṅghadeva during the period 397-398 AD.⁵⁸ The original used for translation appears to have been in Prākṛit and with considerable probability stems from a Sarvāstivāda reciter tradition.⁵⁹ In what follows, I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* version, followed by surveying relevant differences in regard to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta*.

II. Translation⁶⁰

Discourse to the Carpenter Pañcakaṅga⁶¹

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattḥī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's park.

2. At that time, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga had left Sāvattḥī at dawn and was approaching the place where the Buddha was staying, with the intention to see and pay respect to the Blessed One. Then the carpenter Pañcakaṅga had the following thought: “For the time being [it would be better] to put off going to see the Buddha, [as] the Blessed One and the venerable monks would probably [still] be sitting in meditation. I might now rather visit Mallikā's single-hall park of heterodox practitioners.⁶²

Thereon the carpenter Pañcakaṅga, to entertain and amuse [himself],⁶³ took the path to Tinduka plantation,⁶⁴ in order to visit Mallikā's single-hall park of heterodox practitioners.

3. At that time, in Mallikā's single-hall park of heterodox practitioners there was the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta,⁶⁵ a great leader, teacher of a congregation, esteemed by the people, a teacher who was presiding over a great community of five-hundred heterodox practitioners.⁶⁶

He was with a tumultuous company that was creating a great clamour, being very noisy and discussing various types of irrelevant talk,⁶⁷ namely talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about battles and quarrels, talk about drinks and food, talk about robes and blankets, talk about married women, talk about girls, talk about adulterous women, talk about the world, talk about wrong practice, talk about what is in the ocean, having gathered in this way to talk various types of irrelevant talk.⁶⁸

Seeing from afar the carpenter Pañcakaṅga coming, the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta admonished his own congregation:

“Remain silent! Be silent and do not speak another word! It is proper for you to collect and control yourselves. There is a disciple of the recluse Gotama coming, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga. Of those who are householder disciples of the recluse Gotama living in Sāvattḥī, none surpasses the carpenter Pañcakaṅga.⁶⁹ Why is it that [you should be silent]? [Because] he delights in silence and praises silence. If he sees that this congregation is silent, he will probably come forward. ”

At that time, after the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta had stopped [the talking of] his congregation, he remained silent himself.

4. Then the carpenter Pañcakaṅga approached the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta, exchanged greetings with him and sat back at one side. The heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta said:

5. “Carpenter, if [someone] is endowed with four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.

What are the four? With the body he does not do evil deeds, with the mouth he does not speak evil words, he does not engage in wrong livelihood, and does not think evil thoughts.⁷⁰

Carpenter, if [someone] is endowed with these four qualities I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.”

6. On hearing the proposition made by the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga neither agreed nor disagreed. [Instead], he rose from his seat and left, [thinking]: “I shall personally approach the Buddha and inquire about the meaning of what has been said like this [by Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta].”

7. He approached the Buddha, bowed down with his head to pay respect and sat back at one side. Then he reported the entire conversation with the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta to the Buddha. Having heard it, the Blessed One said:

8. “Carpenter, if what the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta proposes were indeed the case, then a small infant with tender limbs, lying on his back asleep,⁷¹ would also be accomplished in wholesomeness, foremost in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.

Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of [his] body, what to say of him engaging in evil bodily deeds, [when he] is only able to move [his] body [a little]?

Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of [his] mouth, what to say of him speaking evil words, [when he] is only able to cry?

Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of livelihood, what to say of him engaging in wrong livelihood, [when he] is only moaning?⁷²

Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of thoughts, what to say of him engaging in evil thoughts, [when he] only thinks of [his] mother's milk?⁷³

Carpenter, if it were as the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta proposes, then a small infant would be accomplished in wholesomeness, foremost in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.

9. Carpenter, if someone is endowed with four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, but he is not yet an unsurpassable person, has not attained the supreme essence, does not have the nature of a genuine recluse.⁷⁴

What are the four? With the body he does not do evil deeds, with the mouth he does not speak evil words, he does not engage in wrong livelihood, and does not think evil thoughts.

Carpenter, if someone is endowed with these four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, but he is not yet an unsurpassable person, has not attained the supreme essence, does not have the nature of a genuine recluse.⁷⁵

Carpenter, bodily deeds and verbal deeds I designate as conduct (*sīla*). Carpenter, thoughts I designate as belonging to the mind and being related to the mind's characteristics.⁷⁶

Carpenter, I say one should know unwholesome conduct, one should know from where unwholesome conduct arises, one should know where unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, where it is destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome conduct?'

Carpenter, I say one should know wholesome conduct, one should know from where wholesome conduct arises, one should know where wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, where it is destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome conduct?'

Carpenter, I say one should know unwholesome thoughts, one should know from where unwholesome thoughts arise, one should know where unwholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, where they are destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome thoughts?'

Carpenter, I say one should know wholesome thoughts, one should know from where wholesome thoughts arise, one should know where wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, where they are destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome thoughts?'

10. Carpenter, what is unwholesome conduct? Unwholesome bodily conduct, unwholesome verbal [conduct], [unwholesome] mental conduct — this is reckoned to be unwholesome conduct.⁷⁷

Carpenter, from where does this unwholesome conduct arise? I declare the place from which it arises: One should know that it arises from the mind. What kind of mind? ⁷⁸ A mind with sensual desire, with ill-will [or] with delusion — one should know that unwholesome conduct arises from this kind of mind.

Carpenter where is unwholesome conduct eradicated without remainder, where is it destroyed without remainder? [When] a learned noble disciple abandons unwholesome bodily conduct and develops wholesome bodily conduct, abandons unwholesome verbal and mental conduct and develops wholesome verbal and mental conduct,⁷⁹ this is where unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome conduct? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (up to) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to *dhammas* contemplates [internal] *dhammas* — practising like this a noble disciple eradicates unwholesome conduct.⁸⁰

11. Carpenter, what is wholesome conduct? Wholesome bodily conduct, wholesome verbal [conduct], [wholesome] mental conduct — this is reckoned to be wholesome conduct.⁸¹

Carpenter, from where does this wholesome conduct arise? I declare the place from which it arises: One should know that it arises from the mind. What kind of mind? ⁸² A mind free from sensual desire, free from ill-will [and] free from delusion — one should know that wholesome conduct arises from this kind of mind.⁸³

Carpenter, where is wholesome conduct eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple practises virtue without being attached to this virtue,⁸⁴ this is where wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome conduct? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (up to) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to *dhammas* contemplates [internal] *dhammas* — practising like this a noble disciple eradicates wholesome conduct.⁸⁵

12. Carpenter, what are unwholesome thoughts? Thoughts of sensuality, thoughts of ill-will, and thoughts of harming — these are reckoned to be unwholesome thoughts.

Carpenter, from where do unwholesome thoughts arise? I declare the place from which they arise: One should know that they arise from perception. What kind of perception? I say, perceptions are of many kinds, of numberless kinds, with several kinds of volitional formations, which could be perceptions of sensuality, perceptions of ill-will, and perceptions of harming.

Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the element of sensual desire in living beings unwholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the element of sensual desire. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions unwholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the element of sensual desire. Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the elements of ill-will and harming in living beings unwholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the elements of ill-will and harming. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions unwholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the elements of ill-will and harming. This is [how] unwholesome thoughts arise from this kind of perception.⁸⁶

Carpenter, where are unwholesome thoughts eradicated without remainder, where are they destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple, secluded from sensual desires and from evil and unwholesome qualities, with initial and sustained application of the mind,⁸⁷ with joy and happiness born of seclusion, dwells having attained the first absorption. This is [how] unwholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome thoughts? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (up to) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to *dhammas* contemplates [internal] *dhammas* — practising like this a noble disciple eradicates unwholesome thoughts.⁸⁸

13. Carpenter, what are wholesome thoughts? Thoughts free from sensuality, thoughts free from ill-will, and thoughts free from harming — these are reckoned to be wholesome thoughts.

Carpenter, from where do wholesome thoughts arise? I declare the place from which they arise: One should know that they arise from perception. What kind of perception? I say, perceptions are of many kinds, of numberless kinds, with several kinds of volitional formations, which could be perceptions free from sensuality, perceptions free from ill-will, and perceptions free from harming.

Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the element of absence of sensual desire in living beings wholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the element of absence of sensual desire. If there are [such] perceptions, because of those perceptions wholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the element of absence of sensual desires.

Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the elements of non-ill-will and non-harming in living beings wholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the elements of non-ill-will and non-harming. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions wholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the elements of non-ill-will and non-harming. This is [how] wholesome thoughts arise from this kind of perception.⁸⁹

Carpenter, where are wholesome thoughts eradicated without remainder, where are they destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple, with the cessation of pleasure and pain, and with the earlier cessation of joy and displeasure, with neither-pain-nor-pleasure, equanimity, mindfulness and purity, dwells having attained the fourth absorption.⁹⁰ This is [how] wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome thoughts? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (up to) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to *dhammas* contemplates [internal] *dhammas* — practising like this a noble disciple eradicates wholesome thoughts.⁹¹

Carpenter, by wisely contemplating a learned noble disciple knows unwholesome conduct as it really is, knows as it really is from where unwholesome conduct arises, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how this unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of unwholesome conduct as it really is.

By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows wholesome conduct as it really is, knows as it really is from where wholesome conduct arises, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how this wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of wholesome conduct as it really is.

By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows unwholesome thoughts as they really are, knows as it really is from where unwholesome thoughts arise, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how these unwholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, are destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of unwholesome thoughts as it really is.

By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows wholesome thoughts as they really are, knows as it really is from where wholesome thoughts arise, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how these wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, are destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of wholesome thoughts as it really is.

Why is that? Based on right view arises right intention, based on right intention arises right speech, based on right speech arises right action, based on right action arises right livelihood, based on right livelihood arises right effort, based on right effort arises right mindfulness, based on right mindfulness arises right concentration.⁹² With a mind concentrated like this, a noble disciple attains liberation from all sexual desire, anger and delusion.

Carpenter, a noble disciple with a mind that has been rightly liberated like this comes to know that all [forms of] births have been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, and [for him] there is no more becoming hereafter — he knows this as it really is.

One who is reckoned to be training and to have acquired vision is endowed with eight factors, while an *arahant* who has destroyed the influxes is endowed with ten factors.

Carpenter, what are the eight factors with which one who is training and who has acquired vision is endowed? To wit, the right view of one in training ... (up to) ... the right concentration of one in training — these are reckoned the eight factors with which one who is training and who has acquired vision is endowed.⁹³

14. Carpenter, what are the ten factors with which an *arahant* who has destroyed the influxes is endowed? To wit, the right view of one beyond training ... (up to) ... the right knowledge of one beyond training — these are reckoned the ten factors with which an arahant who has destroyed the influxes is endowed.

Carpenter, when someone possesses these ten factors, I reckon him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.”

The Buddha spoke like this. The carpenter Pañcakaṅga and the monks heard what the Buddha said, were delighted and kept bearing it [in mind].⁹⁴

III. Comparison

A comparison of the above translated *Madhyama-āgama* discourse with the *Samaṇamañḍika-sutta* brings to light several differences that point to the vicissitudes of oral transmissions. In what follows, only selected differences will be taken up for discussion, in particular those that have a direct bearing on the notion of a true *samaṇa*.⁹⁵

In the early discourses in general, the effects of oral transmission can be seen particularly well in regard to the sequence of listings which, unless a particular list is so much standardized that it has become thoroughly fixed, may easily change. An example is the presentation of the four qualities that according to the Buddha’s critique do not suffice to make one a true recluse. The Pāli and Chinese versions differ in as much as they turn to the themes of thoughts and livelihood in the opposite sequence. Nevertheless, when illustrating these themes through the simile of the infant they present the respective manifestations of thoughts and livelihood in the same sequence, in that both mention the infant sulking or moaning as their third, and the mother’s milk as the fourth, as can be seen in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Sequences of Listing the 3rd and 4th Qualities

	MN 78	MA 179
3 rd	thoughts: sulking	livelihood: moaning
4 th	livelihood: mother’s milk	thoughts: mother’s milk

The net result of this is a somewhat different presentation, as in the Pāli version the infant's thoughts express themselves by sulking, while in the Chinese version the infant's thoughts are concerned with the mother's milk. Conversely, in the Pāli version the child's livelihood is [to drink] the mother's milk, while in the Chinese version its livelihood is to moan [as a way of demanding nourishment]. Since both presentations make sense, it remains open to conjecture which of the two versions has preserved the original order of exposition.

A somewhat more important difference manifests in regard to the Buddha's assessment of the notion of a true recluse proposed by *Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta*. According to the Pāli version, the Buddha rejected the entire proposal. This is not the case in the *Madhyama-āgama* version, where he instead makes the finer distinction that someone endowed with purity of bodily and verbal activities and pure livelihood is indeed “accomplished in wholesomeness”, though such a one nevertheless fails to be a true recluse in the highest sense.⁹⁶

In this way, the *Madhyama-āgama* version gives proper place to the importance of ethical conduct by avoiding evil deeds, which is somewhat lost sight of with the Pāli version's sweeping dismissal. Elsewhere the Pāli discourses regularly emphasize the importance of ethical purity of conduct,⁹⁷ passages that would support the *Madhyama-āgama* version's presentation that someone who has achieved such purity is indeed “accomplished in wholesomeness”. Yet, more is required to become a ‘true recluse’ in the Buddhist sense, since ethical purity is only a means to an end — at least in early Buddhist thought — and this end, according to both versions of the present discourse, is reached when a *samaṇa* becomes fully liberated.

Another instance of sequential variation can be found in regard to the depiction of the qualities that do suffice to make one a true *samaṇa*: the ten path factors of an arahant. The Pāli version briefly mentions these ten at the outset of its exposition, right after the Buddha has rejected *Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta*'s proposal with the help of the simile of the infant. The passage reads:

“Carpenter, [on] possessing ten qualities I designate a person as endowed with wholesomeness and foremost in wholesomeness, as one who has reached the supreme and is an invincible recluse”.⁹⁸

The Pāli discourse does not continue with this theme at this point, but instead takes up the subject of unwholesome conduct. The transition to this topic is somewhat abrupt in the original, so much so that in his translation Bhikkhu Bodhi in *Ñāṇamoli* (1995/2005: 650) adds “[But first of all]” in order to provide a lead-over from the announcement of the ten qualities to the treatment of unwholesome conduct.

An exposition of these ten qualities occurs only at the end of the Pāli discourse, where the corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is found as well. In the Pāli version, this exposition begins with:

“Carpenter, [on] possessing what ten qualities do I designate a person as endowed with wholesomeness and foremost in wholesomeness, as one who has reached the supreme and is an invincible recluse?”⁹⁹

In other Pāli discourses, it is a standard procedure that a first announcement (such as “possessing ten qualities I designate a person as ...”) is immediately followed by a question worded in the same terms (such as “possessing what ten qualities do I designate a person as ...”). This then leads over to a detailed exposition of the qualities mentioned in the first announcement.

In view of this standard pattern, the fact that in the present case the first announcement of the ten qualities is separated by most of the actual discourse from the corresponding inquiry and exposition gives the impression that a textual error may have occurred during transmission. This impression is further strengthened by the circumstance that the inquiry and exposition of the ten qualities in the Pāli version sets in somewhat abruptly, just as its earlier announcement of the ten qualities ends in a somewhat abrupt manner.

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse provides instead a gradual build-up to the theme of the ten qualities (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Sequence of the exposition in MN 78 and MĀ 179

MN 78	MĀ 179
<p style="text-align: center;">simile of infant</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">examination of 4 qualities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">announcement of 10 qualities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">unwholesome conduct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">wholesome conduct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">unwholesome thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">wholesome thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 qualities of an <i>arahant</i> = true recluse</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">simile of infant</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">examination of 4 qualities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">unwholesome conduct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">wholesome conduct</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">unwholesome thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">wholesome thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">understanding conduct & thought</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">development of 8 path factors</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">liberation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8 qualities of a <i>sekha</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 qualities of an <i>arahant</i> = true recluse</p>

This gradual build-up begins by indicating that a noble disciple through wise contemplation acquires knowledge of conduct and thoughts in all their aspects as described in the body of the discourse. Such wise contemplation then leads to a development of the eight factors of the path of one in training. This in turn issues in full liberation, at which point a recapitulation of the eight path factors of a disciple in higher training (*sekha*) and of the ten path factors of an *arahant* fall naturally into place. This gradual build-up is not found at all in the Pāli version. In view of the abrupt and somewhat disconnected way of the Pāli version's exposition of the ten qualities, it seems quite probable that the *Madhyama-āgama*

discourse has preserved a presentation closer to the original exposition in this respect. That is, an error during the oral transmission of the Pāli version may have caused a loss of the exposition on understanding conduct and thoughts, of the eight path factors leading to liberation, and of the recapitulation of the eight qualities of a *sekha*. Possibly the same error may also be responsible for the disruption of the exposition on the ten qualities of a true recluse, with the introductory statement shifted to an earlier part of the discourse.

The gradual build-up in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse provides a better conclusion to the main theme of the true recluse, by at first turning to an understanding of conduct and thoughts in their wholesome and unwholesome manifestations, followed by indicating that based on such an understanding a noble disciple practices the noble eightfold path and eventually reaches liberation.

In this way, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* offers some significant perspectives on the Pāli version's presentation, perspectives that accord well with the range of implications of the term *samaṇa* in other Pāli discourses.

In sum, then, becoming a true *samaṇa* from an early Buddhist perspective requires a basis in ethical purity and progress through the four stages of awakening until complete liberation is reached.

*Yo ca sameti pāpāni,
anuṃ thūlāni sabbaso
samitattā hi pāpānaṃ
samaṇo 'ti pavuccati.*¹⁰⁰

“One who pacifies evil [states]
altogether, be they small or great,
because of having pacified evil [states]
is reckoned a [true] recluse.”

ABBREVIATIONS

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
Dhp	<i>Dhammapada</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
E ^e	PTS edition
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
S ^e	Siamese edition
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
SN ² I	<i>Sagāthavagga</i> (of SN), new ed. by Somaratne (1998)
Sn	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i>
Spk	<i>Sāratthappakāsinī</i>
T	Taishō (CBETA)
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>
Vin	<i>Vinaya</i>

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NOTES

- ¹ Dhṛ 265, rendered into Latin by Fausböll (1855/1974: 47). The Pāli verse with an English translation and a listing of parallel versions can be found at the end of the article.
- ² B^o and S^o have the title *Samaṇamuṇḍika-sutta*.
- ³ DN 27 at DN III 84,16: *samaṇā sakyaputtiyā*; cf. also AN 8.19 at AN IV 202,13 (= AN 8.20 at AN IV 206,27; Ud 5.5 at Ud 55,25; Vin II 239,20). Bodhi (1989: 4) notes that the Buddha's monk disciples were as “*samaṇas* distinguished from others with a similar demeanour and lifestyle as ‘the recluses who follow the son of the Sakyan clan’.” According to Chakraborti (1973: 428), in inscriptions the term *ṣamaṇa-śramaṇa* appears to be used in a comparable manner to distinguish Digambara monks from other *samaṇas*.
- ⁴ AN 8.85 at AN IV 340,1: *samaṇo ‘ti... tathāgatass’ etaṃ adhvacaṇaṃ*. Jains (1970/2001: 48) notes that “in the Jaina texts also, Mahāvīra ... is called a *śramaṇa*”. Wagle (1966: 56) points out, however, that when used as a mode of direct address the term *samaṇa* “denotes a certain indifference”, unlike the more respectful address *bhadanta* (usually found in the vocative form *bha nte*) or the honorific epithet *bhagavant*.
- ⁵ The address *mahāsamaṇa* is used e.g. by Uruvelakassapa at Vin I 24,21ff. Ray (1994: 65) sums up that “Gautama was himself a *śramaṇa* and was known as the Mahāśramaṇa (the great *śramaṇa*); his disciples were known as *śramaṇas*, and many of the features of early Buddhism reflect elements held in common by the various *śramaṇas* and *śramaṇa* groups”.
- ⁶ Cf. e.g. DN 16 at DN II 109,6, DN 33 at DN III 260,3, MN 12 at MN I 72,18 and AN 8.69 at AN IV 307,11 (with the four assemblies of gods comprising the four heavenly great kings, the gods of the Tavatimsa realm, Māras and Brahmas). On the significance of the eight assemblies as a structural element underlying the *Sagāthavagga* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* cf. the study by Bucknell (2007).
- ⁷ DN 3 at DN I 90,14: *ye ca kho te, bho Gotama, muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṇhā bandhupādāpaccā, tehi pi me saddhiṃ evaṃ kathāsallāpo hoti, yathariva bhotā Gotamena* (B^o, C^o and S^o: *kaṇhā*; S^o omits *te* and reads: *bandhupādapaccā*); on the term *muṇḍa* cf. the study by Tedesco (1945).
- ⁸ DN 3 at DN I 103,16: *ke ca muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṇhā bandhupādāpaccā, kā ca tevijjānaṃ brāhmaṇānaṃ sākacchā* (S^o: *keci*; B^o, C^o and S^o: *kaṇhā*; B^o and C^o: *bandhupādāpaccā*, S^o: *bandhupādapaccā*).
- ⁹ MN 95 at MN II 177,8: *ke ca dhammassa aññātāro*.
- ¹⁰ SN 7.22 at SN I 184,11 or SN² I 396,4: *ke ca sabhādhammaṃ jānissanti*. Spk I 267,1 explains that this remark was aimed at the Buddha, who had entered a public meeting from the front instead of entering from the side, as etiquette would have demanded.
- ¹¹ DN 27 at DN III 81,10: *brāhmaṇo va seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīno añño vaṇṇo, brāhmaṇo va sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇho añño vaṇṇo, brāhmaṇā va sujjhanti no abrahmaṇā, brāhmaṇā va brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā* (B^o, C^o and S^o: *hīnā aññe vaṇṇā* and *kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā*; S^o omits *va* before *brahmuno*). As noted by Gombrich (1990: 13) and Norman (1991/1993: 272), the notion of being born from Brahmā's mouth is found in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *R̥gveda* 10.90.12.
- ¹² Sn I 21,11 (in the prose section before verse 116), Shiraishi (1996: 146) comments that “these words” clearly express “contempt of Śākyamuni Buddha”.

- ¹³ SN 35.132 at SN IV 117,5. Besides the apparent tension between some Brahmins and *samaṇas*, several discourses indicate that *samaṇas* could also be quite quarrelsome amongst themselves; which according to AN 2.4.6 at AN I 66,16 is due to attachment to their respective views.
- ¹⁴ Ud 7.9 at Ud 78,10.
- ¹⁵ MN 50 at M I 334,16; on this passage from a comparative perspective cf. Anālayo (2005: 12-13).
- ¹⁶ The distinction between these two types of ancient Indian religieus was apparently evident enough to be noticed by Megasthenes, cf. McCrindle (1877: 98). According to Patañjali's *Vvyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya* in Kielhorn (1880/1962: 476,9) (2.4.12.2), these two groups are opposed to each other, *yeṣaṃ ca virodha ityasyāvakāśaḥ: śramaṇabrāhmaṇam*. Foucher (1955: 260) highlights that these two sections of ancient Indian society were not only opposed to each other on ideological grounds, but were also in direct competition for the material support they required for their sustenance from the population. (Gräfe (1974: 37) notes that the support to be given to Brahmins is reflected in references to the *brāhmaṇabhojana* at Vin I 44,22 and 60,25). Olivelle (1974: 6) explains that "according to the *Viṣṇu-smṛti* a householder must turn back if he has seen ... a recluse, and a punishment of 100 *paṇas* is ordained 'for hospitably entertaining ... a religious ascetic at an oblation to the gods or to the manes' ... the sight itself of ... [a recluse] was considered by many as inauspicious. There was also a corresponding hostility towards the *brāhmaṇas* on the part of the recluses. In heterodox literature the *brāhmaṇas* are depicted as greedy social parasites living on the superstitious generosity of the common people". Nevertheless, as pointed out by Ruegg (2008: 5 note 3), "whether ... the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* are in fact opposed depends of course on the circumstance in each case". Ruegg remarks that it also needs to be taken into account that quite a number of *bhikkhus* were of Brahmin descent (cf. the survey in Chakravarti (1996: 198-220) and Nakamura (2000: 360-362), and the figures given in Gokhale (1980: 74)). According to Vin I 71,25 *jaṭilas* were allowed to join the order without having to observe the usual probationary period; cf. also Bronkhorst (1998: 84). Bailey (2003: 112) explains that "the jostling for status between brahmins and Buddhists ... should not necessarily be taken as antagonism. But it is competition". On the not invariably hostile relationships between Brahmins and early Buddhists cf. also Tsuchida (1991).
- ¹⁷ Warder (1963/1991: 97), however, takes *samaṇa-brāhmaṇa* to be an example for *dvanda* compounds where "the important or leading object ... occupies the second position, which is normally the dominant position in Pali". Another example of the same type provided by him is the expression *Sāriputta-moggallāna*. Yet, Sn 557 designates Sāriputta as the one who keeps rolling the wheel of Dharma set in motion by the Buddha; and Ud 2.8 at Ud 17,29 and Th 1083 refer to him as the "general of the Dharma", *dhammasenāpati* (cf. also the *Divyāvadāna* in Cowell 1886: 394,22, which presents Sāriputra as the second teacher and the general of the Dharma who keeps the wheel of the Dharma in motion, *dvitīyaśāstā dharmasenādhipatir dharmacakrapravartanaḥ*; the last quality has a counterpart in Sn 557). Hence, if a hierarchical distinction between the two needs to be made, Sāriputta would take precedence over Mahāmoggallāna. From this it would follow that the position of honour in a *dvanda* — if there is to be a distinction between its two members — would be the first place. In the case of the compound *samaṇa-brāhmaṇa*, then, the first position accorded to the *samaṇas* would express precedence given to them over the Brahmins. In fact,

according to *vārttika* 3 on Pāṇini 2.2.34 in Vasu (1891/1997: 273) the first member in *dvandva* compounds holds the place of honour, *abhyarhitam ca pūrvaṃ nipatati*.

- ¹⁸ This can be seen in the figure below, which shows references to “Brahmins and *samaṇas*” (B) or else to “*samaṇas* and Brahmins” (S) in Aśoka’s Rock Edicts 3, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 13, listed according to their locations Gīrnār, Kālsī, Śāhbāzgarhī, Mānsehrā, Dhaulī, Jaugāḍa and Supārā. As this survey shows, though the Gīrnār edicts invariably mention the Brahmins in first place (B), other locations show a considerable degree of variation and often put the *samaṇas* first (S) Particularly revealing is the fourth Rock Edict at Kālsī, Śāhbāzgarhī and Mānsehrā, where within the same edict from the same location the sequence changes.

	Gir.	Kāl.	Śāh.	Mān.	Dhau.	Jaug.	Sup.
3	B	B	B	B	B	B	
4	B	S	S	S	S		
	B	B	B	B	S		
8	B	S	S	S	S	S	B
9	B	S	S	S	S	S	
11	B	S	S	S			
13	B	B	B				

Cf. Rock Edict 3 in Woolner (1924/1993: 4,20 and 5,21); Rock Edict 4 in *ibid.*, (6,4 and 7,4 and again 6,14 and 7,14); Rock Edict 8 in *ibid.*, (16,1 and 17,1); Rock Edict 9 in *ibid.*, (18,3 and 19,3); Rock Edict 11 in *ibid.*, (20,22 and 21,22); and Rock Edict 13 in *ibid.*, (26,7 and 27,7). An occurrence not included in the above survey is the Delhi-Toprā Edict 7 in *ibid.*, (50,10 3rd col.), where Brahmins stand in the first place.

- ¹⁹ Deo (1956: 45) notes that Jaina texts also tend to “raise the position of the *Samaṇa* equal to that of the Brāhmaṇa, if not superior to him”. A defiant attitude towards the Brahmanical claim to superiority can be seen in the Śvetāmbara tale of how the embryo of Mahāvīra was transferred by Śakra from the womb of the Brahmin lady Devānandā to that of the warrior lady Triśalā, because according to *Jinacaritra* § 17 in Jacobi (1879/1966: 38,9): *na eyaṃ bhaviṣṣaṃ jaṇ ṇaṃ arahaṃtā ... aṃta-kulesu vā ... māhaṇa-kulesu vā ... āyāissaṃti*, “it shall not come to be that [future] arhats will take birth in a lowly womb ... or a Brahmanical womb”. Deleu (1996: 163) notes that in *Viyāhapannatti* 9.33 Mahāvīra admits that Devānandā is his real mother, *Devānandā māhaṇī mama amṃā*; cf. Lalwani (1985: 71,29). Von Glasenapp (1925/1999: 324) explains that according to tradition Mahāvīra originally took birth in a Brahmin womb “as a consequence of the Karma ... of his arrogance” in a former life. Jaini (1979/2001: 7) comments that this tale reflects an attitude “contrary to the ordinary caste hierarchy which places *brahmans* at the apex”. Schubring (1962/2000: 32) sums up that “tradition gave great importance to Mahāvīra’s Kshatriya and not Brahman descent”.
- ²⁰ Bucknell (2007: 21 note 59) notes that though in general listings of castes in the discourses begin with the warrior caste, an exception can be found in MN 96 at MN II 177,22 (and in its parallel MĀ 150 at T I 661a7) where such a listing begins with the Brahmins. This departure from the usual sequence reflects the particular circumstances of this discourse, where the speaker is a Brahmin, who naturally puts his own caste in first position. According to Fick (1897: 55-56), the precedence given to the *khattiya*s in this way could be reflecting an actual hierarchy of power prevalent in north-eastern India of that time. In support of his suggestion he quotes DN 3 at DN I 91,11, where the Brahmin Ambaṭṭha complains about the lack of respect with which the Sakyan *khattiya*s

- treated him on a former occasion; and DN 3 at DN I 103,21, according to which King Pasenadi did not allow the eminent Brahmin Pokkharasādi a direct audience face to face, but would converse with him only through a curtain.
- ²¹ DN 2 at DN I 53,8: *kathaṃ hi nāma mādiso samaṇaṃ ... vijite vasantaṃ apaśādetabbaṃ maññeyya?* Thapar (1984/2001: 154) explains that “śramaṇas ... had large followings. Their popularity would lead those in power to treat them with respect”.
- ²² E.g. SN 44.1 at SN IV 374,11, where the teacher approached by the king of the country is the Buddhist nun Khemā.
- ²³ MN 90 at MN II 131,5.
- ²⁴ DN 2 at DN I 51,19 reports the king’s inquiry about a “fruit of recluse-ship visible here and now”, *diṭṭhe va dhamme sandiṭṭhikaṃ sāmāññaphalaṃ*.
- ²⁵ Macqueen (1988: 206, 207 and 209) further comments that “it may in fact be the case that, like others of his time, he [the king] was annoyed at their [the śramaṇas’] pretensions ... so he presents the Buddha with a dilemma. If, on the one hand, the śramaṇas work brings him concrete, present and visible results, then his occupation is like those of ordinary folk and ... he would not in this case be exempt from the duties that kings felt free to impose upon people in secular occupations. If, on the other hand, the śramaṇa does not win such fruits ... one may question his right to receive the donations (concrete and visible) of the populace”. Given that “criticism of the śramaṇas’ parasitical mode of life is well attested in the literature of this period”, “Ajātaśatru puts the śramaṇa on the same level as the ordinary man and asks him to stand up and give account of himself”. Thapar (1976/1978: 86) explains that “the authoritarian trends in the states emerging in the mid-first millennium B.C. were not always sympathetic to wanderers. They were often seen as people escaping social responsibility or socio-political demands. Their survival as free thinkers was dependent on their being able to assert the right to an alternative life”. Cf. also Warder (1956: 55), who notes that the *śramaṇa* lifestyle was “threatened by political changes in the Ganges region”.
- ²⁶ Sn 266: *samañānañ ca dassanaṃ ... etaṃ mañgalaṃ uttamaṃ*.
- ²⁷ MN 135 at MN III 206,1.
- ²⁸ E.g., AN 3.65 at AN I 190,17: *samaṇo no garu*. According to Bhagat (1976: 328), “the Buddhist and Jaina literature assign an important part to the *śramaṇa* ... whose function was intellectual guidance and spiritual instruction”. Dutt (1957: 30) explains that “the position of a *samaṇa* ... was equally that of a preceptor, preacher and religious leader”.
- ²⁹ E.g., SN 3.21 at SN I 96,12 or SN² I 216,2. Jain (1947: 192) indicates that *samaṇas* “were highly respected ... the common people paid them respects, called on them ... put them their queries, offered them food, provided them with shelter ... and other necessities of life.” On lay support of *samaṇas*, especially in the case of Buddhist monks, cf. e.g., Freiberger (2000: 168-195), Spiro (1970/1982: 103-111), Strenski (1983: 471-476).
- ³⁰ SN 1.81 at SN I 45,6 or SN² I 103,7. Jain (1990: 346) notes that in Buddhist and Jaina circles *samaṇas* “are accorded high honour both within their circles and without”. Dutt (1924/1996: 55) explains that the *samaṇa* “is honoured as much as a Brāhmaṇa because his function is the same, namely, intellectual guidance and spiritual instruction”. Karunaratna (2006: 660) adds that it was also “by the practice of austerities [that] the *samaṇas* came to be a highly respected category on a par with the mainstream brāhmaṇa religieus”.

- ³¹ AN 6.54 at AN III 371,10: *samaṇo akkosantaṃ na paccakkosati, rosantaṃ na paṭīrosati, bhaṇḍantaṃ na paṭibhaṇḍati, evaṃ ... samaṇo samaṇadhamme ṭhito hoti* (C^c: *rosantaṃ and paṭīroseti*).
- ³² Dh 142: *sabbesu bhūtesu nidhāya daṇḍaṃ ... so samaṇo*.
- ³³ AN 6.52 at AN III 363,24: *samaṇā ... khantisoraccādhippāyā*, adding as other qualities of *samaṇas* that they apply themselves to wisdom, are determined on [maintaining] moral conduct, adhere to ‘nothing’ and have Nibbāna as their goal.
- ³⁴ Dh 184: *na ... samaṇo hoti paraṃ viheṭṭhayaṃto*.
- ³⁵ AN 5.128 at AN III 146,18. Another related aspect is taken up in AN 10.101 at AN V 210,8, according to which as a *samaṇa* one should repeatedly reflect on one’s status as an outcast (on the *samaṇa* vis-à-vis the four castes cf. also DN 27 at DN III 95,22), on one’s livelihood depending on others, and on the need to behave differently [compared to earlier, when still being a householder]. For a survey of qualities that are appropriate for a *samaṇa* cf. also Th 587-596.
- ³⁶ Dh 264: *na muṇḍakena samaṇo ... alikaṃ bhaṇaṃ ... samaṇo kiṃ bhavissati?*; cf. also Ud 3.6 at Ud 294: *yamhi na māyā ... so samaṇo* (B^c: *yamhī*). That shaving alone does not suffice for becoming a true *samaṇa* is similarly stated in the *Uttarādhyaṇa-sūtra* 25.31 in Charpentier (1922: 184).
- ³⁷ AN 8.10 at AN IV 169,9: *samaṇadūsī* and *samaṇapalāpo*; on the idea of not being worthy to associate with true *samaṇas* cf. the event described in AN 8.20 at AN IV 206,4 (= Ud 5.5 at Ud 52,26 and Vin II 237,8). The notion of “corruption” recurs in a listing of four types of *samaṇas* at Sn 84, one of which is a corrupter of the path, *maggadūsī*. On the expression *asamaṇa*, “not a true recluse”, cf. Horner (1982: LII).
- ³⁸ MN 39 at MN I 271-280. Chaudhary (1994: 127) explains that “in order to be a real *samaṇa*, one has to have inner qualities, one has to be pure in respect of all actions mental, vocal and physical”.
- ³⁹ MN 40 at MN I 281-284.
- ⁴⁰ AN 3.81 at AN I 229,3: *adhīsīlasikkhāsamādānaṃ adhicittasikkhāsamādānaṃ adhipaññāsikkhāsamādānaṃ*. Wiltshire (1990: 295) relates the threefold training to the concept of harmlessness so central to the notion of a *samaṇa*, suggesting that “in its proper articulation, avihimsā entailed discipline of the triple faculties of ‘body’, ‘mind’ and ‘speech’.”
- ⁴¹ AN 6.102 at AN III 443,12.
- ⁴² SN 17.25 at SN II 237,4, SN 17.26 at SN II 237,11 and SN 17.27 at SN II 237,21 (here and elsewhere, the relevant section is abbreviated in E^c).
- ⁴³ AN 3.102 at AN I 260,26.
- ⁴⁴ SN 36.26 at SN IV 234,29, SN 36.27 at SN IV 235,7 and SN 36.28 at SN IV 235,13. Cf. also SN 48.34 at SN V 208,16 and SN 48.35 at SN V 209,3, where insight is directed to the five faculties of *sukha*, *dukkha*, *somanassa*, *domanassa* and *upekkhā*.
- ⁴⁵ SN 14.37 at SN II 176,6, SN 14.38 at SN II 176,21 and SN 14.39 at SN II 177,10.
- ⁴⁶ SN 22.50 at SN III 50,18, SN 23.5 at SN III 192,8 and SN 23.6 at SN III 192,25.
- ⁴⁷ SN 48.6 at SN V 195,4 and SN 48.7 at SN V 195,25.
- ⁴⁸ SN 48.29 at SN V 206,15 and SN 48.30 at SN V 207,1.
- ⁴⁹ SN 12.13 at SN II 15,6, SN 12.29 at SN II 45,25 and SN 12.71 at SN II 129,13.

- ⁵⁰ SN 56.22 at SN V 432,23 and It 4.4 at It 105,10.
- ⁵¹ DN 16 at DN II 151,10; a statement also made in MN 11 at MN I 63,26, on which cf. also Anālayo (2009) and Freiberger (2000: 89-92).
- ⁵² AN 4.239 at AN II 238,11. Another set of four types of *samaṇa* is mentioned in DN 33 at DN III 233,11, distinguishing between those who are “unshakeable”, *acala*, “blue lotus”, *paduma*, “white lotus”, *puṇḍarīka*, and “refined”, *sukhumāla*. According to AN 4.88 at AN II 88,ult., these four correspond to the four levels of awakening and would thus be illustrating the same division as in AN 4.239. Other modes of understanding these four can be found in AN 4.87 at AN II 86,30 and AN 4.89 at AN II 89,27, where the first of the four stands for a disciple in higher training, *sekha*, while the other three represent different types of *arahants*; a distinction that appears to also be implicit in AN 4.90 at AN II 90,20, though here the second and third are not explicitly designated as *arahants*.
- ⁵³ SN 45.35 at SN V 257.
- ⁵⁴ E.g., MN 40 at MN I 284,19, which makes a point of proclaiming that this status can be reached by members of any of the four castes. Pande (1978: 60) notes that “if we turn to the Jaina canon, we discover an anticaste attitude similar to that of the Buddhist texts”. Another instance would be SN 45.36 at SN V 25,16, which indicates that the destruction of *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha* is the essence of being a *samaṇa*.
- ⁵⁵ MN 39 at MN I 280,12: *samitāssa honti pāpaka akusalā dhammā saṅkilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkhavipākā āyatim jātijarāmarāṇiyā, evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu samaṇo hoti* (B^e and S^e: *ponobbhavikā*, C^e and S^e: *jātijarāmarāṇiyā*); cf. also Dh 265 (quoted at the outset and end of the present article); and AN 7.82 at AN IV 144,22 which, after listing seven types of defilements – among them the root defilements of *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha* – indicates that pacifying them makes one a recluse, *samitattā samaṇo hoti*. According to Franke (1913: 305 and note 2), the term *samaṇa*/*śramaṇa* derives from √*śam*, “to endeavour”, hence the relation to √*śam*, “to pacify” (alluded at in the present passages) is only a playful etymology of the type often employed in the discourse.
- ⁵⁶ Sn 520: *jātimaraṇaṃ upātivatto samaṇo tādi pavuccate tathattā*.
- ⁵⁷ E.g., MN 27 at MN I 177,20 or MN 89 at MN II 123,19; cf. also DN 8 at DN I 167,14, where the Buddhist notion of being a true *samaṇa* is contrasted to the qualities associated with this concept among contemporary ascetics.
- ⁵⁸ T I 809b26.
- ⁵⁹ On the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama* cf. Bapat (1969: 5); Enomoto (1986: 20) and von Hinüber (1982: 250). On its school affiliation cf. Enomoto (1984); Lü (1963: 242); Mayeda (1985: 98); Minh Chau (1991: 27); Waldschmidt (1980: 136) and Yinshun (1962/1983: 703).
- ⁶⁰ MĀ 179 at T I 720a-721c. In order to facilitate comparison between this discourse and its Pāli counterpart, MN 78 at MN II 22-29, in my translation of MĀ 179 I adopt the paragraph numbering used in Nāṇamoli (1995/2005: 648-653). For the same reason, I employ Pāli terminology throughout, without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama*.
- ⁶¹ MĀ 179 at T I 720a28: 五支物主, literally “Master Five-limb”, where 物主 would render **thapati*, which according to the Pāli commentary on MN 59, Ps III 114,5, qualifies Pañcakaṅga as a “foremost carpenter”, *vaḍḍhakijettḥhaka*. A reference to the present

- discourse in the *Vyākhyāyukti* in Lee (2001: 14,12) gives the title as *yan lag lnga pa'i phyā mkhan gvi mdo*, which Skilling (2000: 342) reconstructs as *Pañcāngashapati-sūtra*.
- ⁶² MĀ 179 at T I 720b5: 一娑邏末利異學園, which would correspond to the *ekasālaka Mallikāya ārama* mentioned in MN 78 at MN II 23,8. A reference to this location in the Sanskrit fragments of the *Prṣṭhapāla-sūtra*, folio 416r4 in Melzer (2006: 244) reads *yenaikasālamālikānyatīrthikaparivrājakānām ārama*; cf. also the unnumbered Hoernle fragment (photo 179), no. 132 in Hartmann (1991: 236) V2: *[li]kā any(a)[t](īr)[th](ikaparivrājakāḥ)* and V3: *ekasālam [ā](rāmam)*.
- ⁶³ MĀ 179 at T I 720b6: 遊戲歡樂; the Pāli counterpart does not mention that he had the intention to amuse himself.
- ⁶⁴ MĀ 179 at T I 720b6: 巾頭阿梨, which has its counterpart in the *tindukācīra* in MN 78 at MN II 23,7.
- ⁶⁵ MĀ 179 at T I 720b8: 沙門文禰子, literally “recluse *mun gi*’s son”, (cf. the Early Middle Chinese pronunciation given in Pulleyblank (1991: 323 and 244) for 文 and 禰). This is closer to the name given in B° and S° as *Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta*, as against *Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta* in C° and E°.
- ⁶⁶ B° and S° agree with MĀ 179 on the count of disciples, whereas C° counts seven hundred and E° (MN II 23,1) only three hundred disciples.
- ⁶⁷ MĀ 179 at T I 720b11: 畜生之論, literally “animal talk”, equivalent to *tiracchānakathā* in MN 78 at MN II 23,14. Bodhi in *Ñānamoli* (1995/ 2005: 1282 note 748) explains that “*tiracchāna* means literally ‘going horizontally’, and though this term is used as a designation for animals ... [according to the commentary] in the present context it means talk that goes ‘horizontally’ or ‘perpendicularly’ to the path leading to heaven and liberation”. Norman (1993/1994: 91) comments that “*tiracchāna-kathā* was at one time one example of ... gossip, ‘talk about animals’, on the same lines as ‘talk about kings’, etc., and it then became used in a generic sense, to stand for all such talk”.
- ⁶⁸ The listings in the two versions differ. Both mention talk about: kings, thieves, battles, food, drink, clothes, women, the world and the ocean. MĀ 179 at T I 720b12 treats the theme of ‘women’ in more detail by distinguishing between “talk about married women”, “talk about girls”, and “talk about adulterous women”, 論婦人, 論童女, 論姪女. Besides these, MĀ 179 at T I 720b13 also mentions “talk about wrong practice” or perhaps “talk about [those who] practice wrongly”, 論邪道 (which may correspond to the expression *micchāpaṭipanna* found in other contexts in the Pāli discourses). MN 78 at MN II 23,15 additionally lists “talk about great ministers”, *mahāmatkathā*, “talk about armies”, *senākathā*, “talk about fears”, *bhaya-kathā*, “talk about beds”, *sayanakathā*, “talk about garlands”, *mālākathā*, “talk about perfumes”, *gandhakathā*, “talk about relatives”, *nātikathā*, “talk about vehicles”, *yānakathā*, “talk about villages”, *gāmakathā*, “talk about towns”, *niḡamakathā*, “talk about cities”, *nagarakathā*, “talk about countries”, *janapadakathā*, “talk about heroes”, *sūrakathā*, “talk about streets”, *visikhākathā*, “talk about wells”, *kumbhaṭṭhānakathā*, “talk about the dead”, *pubbapetakathā*, “talk about miscellanies”, *nānattakathā*, and “talk about becoming or not becoming thus”, *itibhavābhavakathā*. For a study of the listings of such talks in DN 2 in comparison with the *Saṅghabhedavastu* version cf. Ramers (1996: 238-253).
- ⁶⁹ MN 78 at MN II 23,27 indicates only that *Pañcakaṅga* is one of the Buddha’s disciples at *Sāvattihī*, not that he is foremost among them.

- ⁷⁰ A difference in the sequence of listing these four is that MN 78 at MN II 24,8 mentions thoughts before livelihood.
- ⁷¹ MN 78 at MN II 24,23 does not specify that the child is asleep.
- ⁷² MN 78 at MN II 25,1 instead refers to the mother's milk, *mātuthañña*, as 'livelihood'.
- ⁷³ MN 78 at MN II 24,33 instead mentions merely sulking, *vikujjitamatta* (B^c: *vikūjita*^o, C^c: *vikujita*^o) as 'intention'.
- ⁷⁴ According to MN 78 at MN II 25,7, someone endowed with these four qualities is not accomplished in wholesomeness, not supreme in wholesomeness, *na c'eva sampannakusalaṃ na paramakusalaṃ*.
- ⁷⁵ At this juncture, MN 78 at MN II 25,18 announces that one endowed with ten qualities is a true recluse, an announcement taken up again at the end of the discourse, MN 78 at MN II 28,34.
- ⁷⁶ This paragraph has no counterpart in MN 78.
- ⁷⁷ MN 78 at MN II 26,10 instead defines unwholesome conduct as covering unwholesome bodily action, unwholesome verbal action and evil forms of livelihood.
- ⁷⁸ MN 78 at MN II 26,14 precedes its listing of a mind with sensual desire etc., by indicating that the mind can be of many kinds, of various kinds and of different aspects, *cittam pi hi bahu anekavidhaṃ nānappakāraṃ* (B^c and C^c: *bahuṃ*).
- ⁷⁹ MN 78 at MN II 26,21 also mentions the need to abandon wrong livelihood.
- ⁸⁰ MN 78 at MN II 26,24 instead recommends the four right efforts for eradicating unwholesome conduct; for a discussion of their relevance to the present discourse cf. Gethin 1992: 76-78.
- ⁸¹ MN 78 at MN II 27,3 instead defines wholesome conduct in terms of wholesome bodily action, wholesome verbal action and purified livelihood.
- ⁸² MN 78 at MN II 27,8 precedes its listing of a mind free from sensual desire etc., by indicating that the mind can be of many kinds, of various kinds and of different aspects.
- ⁸³ Skilling (2000: 342) notes that a counterpart to this passage is preserved as a *sūtra* quotation in the *Vyākhyāyukti*, cf. Lee (2001: 14,13): *dge ba'i tshul khrims 'di dag ni sems kyis kun nas bslang ba dag ste, sems de gang zhe na, 'dod chags dang bral ba dang zhe sdang dang bral ba dang, gti mug dang bral ba yin no*.
- ⁸⁴ MN 78 at MN II 27,12 adds that the noble disciple understands as it really is the liberation of the mind and liberation by wisdom where wholesome conduct ceases, *tañ ca cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, yatthi assa te kusalasīlā aparisesā nirujjhanti*.
- ⁸⁵ MN 78 at MN II 27,15 instead recommends the four right efforts for eradicating wholesome conduct.
- ⁸⁶ This paragraph, relating unwholesome thoughts to the corresponding 'elements', is without a counterpart in the Pāli version.
- ⁸⁷ MĀ 179 at T I 721b2: 有覺, 有觀, which thus employs two characters that elsewhere in the *Madhyama-āgama* render "awareness" and "contemplation", but in the present context are counterparts to *vitakka* and *vicāra* in the standard description of the first *jhāna* in Pāli discourses, cf. e.g., DN 1 at DN I 37,2 (MN 78 at MN II 28,1 abbreviates this part).
- ⁸⁸ MN 78 at MN II 28,4 instead recommends the four right efforts for eradicating unwholesome thoughts.

- ⁸⁹ This paragraph, relating wholesome thoughts to the corresponding ‘elements’, is without a counterpart in the Pāli version.
- ⁹⁰ According to MN 78 at MN II 28,22, the cessation of wholesome thoughts takes place already with the second *jhāna*, a position probably taken with reference to the cessation of *vitakka* and *vicāra* that is characteristic of this level of absorption.
- ⁹¹ MN 78 at MN II 28,25 instead recommends the four right efforts for eradicating wholesome thoughts.
- ⁹² A similar sequential linking of the path factors can be found in MN 117 at MN III 76,1, where it covers all ten path factors.
- ⁹³ This whole part of MĀ 179, beginning with “Carpenter, a learned noble disciples by wise contemplation knows unwholesome conduct as it really is”, up to the present juncture is without a counterpart in MN 78.
- ⁹⁴ MN 78 at MN II 29,13 does not mention the presence of monks listening to the Buddha’s exposition.
- ⁹⁵ A discussion of other differences will be part of my forthcoming comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, hopefully to be published in 2011.
- ⁹⁶ See paragraph 9 of the translation and footnote 74.
- ⁹⁷ Cf. e.g., AN 4.116 at AN II 119,30, a whole discourse dedicated to the importance of developing wholesome bodily, verbal, and mental conduct, together with right view.
- ⁹⁸ MN 78 at MN II 25,18: *dasahi kho, ahaṃ, thapati, dhammehi samannāgataṃ purisapuggalaṃ paññāpemi sampannakusalaṃ paramakusalaṃ uttamapattipattaṃ samaṇaṃ ayojjhaṃ* (B^c: *paññāpemi*).
- ⁹⁹ MN 78 at MN II 28,34: *katamehi cāhaṃ, thapati, dasahi dhammehi samannāgataṃ purisapuggalaṃ paññāpemi sampannakusalaṃ paramakusalaṃ uttamapattipattaṃ samaṇaṃ ayojjhaṃ?* (B^c: *paññāpemi*; S^c does not have *cāhaṃ*).
- ¹⁰⁰ Dhp 265; with a partial counterpart in Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* verse 189 in Brough (1962/2001: 149): *śamadhare va pa[va]ṇi, śramaṇo di pravucadī*; and full counterparts in the Patna *Dharmapada* verse 236 in Cone (1989: 164) or Roth (1980: 118): *yo tu śameti pāpāni, aṇutthūlāni sabbaśo, śamaṇā eva pāpānāṃ, śamaṇo ti pravuccati*; and in *Udāna(-varga)* verse 11.14c-f in Bernhard (1965: 190): *śamitaṃ yena pāpaṃ syād, aṇusthūlaṃ hi sarvaśaḥ, śamitatvāt tu pāpānāṃ, śramaṇo hi nirucyate* (on this edition cf. the study by Schmithausen (1970)), trsl. by Hahn (2007: 46). The corresponding verse 11.15 in the Tibetan *Udāna(-varga)* in Beckh (1911: 39) or Zongtse (1990: 127) reads similarly: *gang dag sdig pa che phra dag, kun la brtags nas byed pa dang, sdig pa zhi ba de dag ni, dge sbyong nyid ces brjod par bya*, trsl. by Iyer (1986: 269), Rockhill (1883/1975: 48) and Sparham (1983/1986: 75). In the Chinese *Dharmapadas* and *Udāna(-varga)*s the second part of the verse can be found, cf. T 210 at T IV 569a4: 謂能止惡 ... 是為沙門, trsl. by Dhammajoti (1995: 208), verse 27.10a+d; T 211 at T IV 597b2: 謂能止惡 ... 是謂沙門, trsl. by Willemen (1999: 152), verse 27.8a+d; T 212 at T IV 681a19: 謂能捨惡, 是謂沙門; T 213 at T IV 783a5: 所言沙門者 ... 穢垢盡消除, trsl. by Willemen (1978: 47), verse 11.17 a+c (though the verse relates the eradication of defilements to being reckoned one who has “gone forth”, 出家/*pravrajya*, whereas the notion of a ‘*śramaṇa*’ stands only for pacifying the mind).