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and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel

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Abstract

The *Bāhitika-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* presents an inquiry into the ethical conduct of the Buddha. Based on a translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Bāhitika-sutta*, this inquiry will be examined, taking into account differences found between the Chinese and Pāli versions.

Introduction

The present paper comes as the second in a series of altogether three articles dedicated to a study of early Buddhist ethics, based on comparing versions of the same discourse transmitted by different Buddhist schools. The first article in this trilogy, published last year in the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, examines the ten courses of action (*kammaṭṭhā*). These ten courses of action set out the basics of early Buddhist ethical conduct by contrasting

wholesome to unwholesome forms of activity undertaken by body, speech and mind.

The *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel take up the closely related theme of defining wholesome ethical conduct and its unwholesome counterpart. The two discourses explore this theme in relation to the Buddha, delineating what type of action the Buddha would undertake and what he would not do.

The final article in this trilogy will examine mental purity as the source of ethical conduct, an examination based on the description of the six-fold purity of an *arahant* given in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

In the thought world of early Buddhism, the Buddha embodies the ideal of ethical perfection. A living example for his early disciples and an inspiring memory for later generations, the Buddha's conduct exemplified and still exemplifies the ethical standards aspired to and emulated by his disciples.

The *Bāhitika-sutta* takes up this theme in a rather direct manner, as its main topic is to scrutinize if the Buddha was indeed an embodiment of ethical perfection. According to the information provided in the Pāli commentary, the *Bāhitika-sutta* takes its occasion from an inquiry by King Pasenadi into rather serious allegations against the Buddha's ethical purity, allegations related to an incident that involved the female wanderer Sundarī.¹

A discourse in the *Udāna* treats this incident in detail, reporting that in order to discredit the Buddha other wanderers had asked the female wanderer Sundarī to frequently visit Jeta's Grove. When her visits had become public knowledge, these wanderers killed Sundarī and buried her in Jeta's Grove. Once her body was discovered, the wanderers went around

town accusing the Buddhist monks of having taken their pleasure with Sundarī and then killed her.² People believed this defaming report and started to revile the monks. The Buddha thereon instructed the monks to react to such abuse with a verse on the evil destiny of those who make false allegations or deny a misdeed they have done. This served its purpose and convinced people of the innocence of the Buddhist monks.

An account of the same incident in the commentary to the *Dhammapada* differs in so far as here the attempt at defamation is more directly aimed at the Buddha.³ According to the *Dhammapada* commentary, on coming from Jeta's Grove Sundarī had told people that she had spent the night with the Buddha. Thus the rumor spread by the wanderers was that the Buddha's disciples murdered her in order to cover up the Buddha's misconduct. This account fits the *Bāhitika-sutta* better, as its inquiry is concerned with the moral integrity of the Buddha himself.⁴

Whether the defamation was directed against the Buddha or against his monk disciples, the Sundarī incident appears to have been famous among generations of Buddhists and the Chinese pilgrim Fa-xian (法顯), who traveled to India in the early fifth century, even refers to the place where she had been buried.⁵

The *Bāhitika-sutta*'s examination of the moral integrity of the Buddha has a parallel in the *Madhyama-āgama*, translated into Chinese by Gautama Saṅghadeva toward the end of the fourth century.⁶ This translation appears to have been based on a Prākṛit original transmitted within the Sarvāstivāda tradition(s).⁷ In what follows, a translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* version will be given, followed by a comparison with the Pāli version.

Translation⁸

Discourse on the Bāhitikā Cloth⁹

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

2. At that time, venerable Ānanda was [also] staying in Sāvattthī and [had to go to] the Eastern Park, the Hall of Migāra's mother, for some small matter. At that time venerable Ānanda, who had left Sāvattthī together with another monk and gone to the Eastern Park, the Hall of Migāra's mother, after settling that matter was returning with that monk toward Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.¹⁰

3. At that time Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, who was riding the elephant Ekapuṇḍarika,¹¹ had gone out of Sāvattthī together with the minister Sirivaḍḍha.¹² [When] venerable Ānanda saw from afar that Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, was coming, he asked his monk companion: "Is that Pasenadi, the king of Kosala?" [The other monk] answered: "That is so." Venerable Ānanda then went down from the path to the foot of a tree. [When] Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, saw from afar venerable Ānanda among the trees, he asked: "Sirivaḍḍha, is that the recluse Ānanda?" Sirivaḍḍha replied: "That is so."

4-5. [Then] Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, told the minister Sirivaḍḍha: "Drive this elephant toward the recluse Ānanda!" Having received the king's instruction, Sirivaḍḍha drove the elephant toward venerable Ānanda.

6. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, where are you coming from and where do you intend to go?" Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, I am coming from the Eastern Park, the Hall of Migāra's mother, and I intend to go to Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park." Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, if you have no urgent business in Jeta's Grove, we could go together to the river Aciravatī,¹³ out of compassion."

7. Venerable Ānanda silently accepted [the invitation] by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, letting venerable Ānanda [walk] in front, approached the bank of the river Aciravatī together [with venerable Ānanda]. Having arrived he dismounted, took the elephant's rug, folded it in four, placed it on the ground and invited venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, you may sit on this seat." Venerable Ānanda replied: "Stop, stop, great king, just [your] intention suffices [to put me] at ease."

Three times Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, invited venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, you may sit on this seat." Three times venerable Ānanda said: "Stop, stop, great king, just [your] intention suffices [to put me] at ease. I have my own sitting mat, I shall now sit on it." [Then] venerable Ānanda placed [his] sitting mat [on the ground] and sat down cross-legged.

8. After exchanging greetings with venerable Ānanda, Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, stepped back, sat down on one side and said: "Ānanda, I would like to ask a question, will you listen to my question?" Venerable Ānanda said: "Great king, ask what you wish. Having heard it, I will reflect on it."¹⁴

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and Brahmins?"

Venerable Ānanda answered: "Great king, the Tathāgata does not undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and Brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise].

9. Having heard this, Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda. [What] my [question] did not touch on, namely if [they] are intelligent and wise, as well as if others in the world [who are intelligent and wise will similarly detest it], Ānanda has touched on."¹⁵

Ānanda, if there are unworthy ones who thoroughly criticize or praise, we do not see that as truth. Ānanda, if there are worthy ones who thoroughly criticize or praise, we see that as truth."¹⁶

Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake such a type of bodily conduct that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and Brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, the Tathāgata does not at all undertake a bodily conduct of such a type that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and Brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]."

10-12. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what [kind of] bodily conduct is [that]?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, unwholesome bodily conduct!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is unwholesome bodily conduct?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, bodily conduct that constitutes an offence!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is bodily conduct that constitutes an offence?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that is detested by the wise!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what do the wise detest?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that harms oneself, harms others, harms both; that destroys wisdom and fosters evil; that does not [lead to] attaining Nibbāna, does not lead to knowledge, does not lead to awakening, and does not lead to Nibbāna.

Those [who undertake such conduct] do not know according to reality what things can be undertaken and do not know according to reality what things cannot be undertaken. Not knowing according to reality what things can be undertaken and not knowing according to reality what things cannot be undertaken, [they] do not know according to reality what things can be accepted and do not know according to reality what things cannot be accepted. Not knowing according to reality what things can be accepted and not knowing according to reality what things cannot be accepted, [they] do not know according to reality what things should be eliminated and do not know according to reality what things should not be eliminated. Not knowing according to reality what things should be eliminated and not knowing according to reality what things should not be eliminated, [they] do not know according to reality what things should be accomplished and do not know according to reality what things should not be accomplished.

Not knowing according to reality what things should be accomplished and not knowing according to reality what things should not be accomplished, they do not undertake things that should be undertaken and undertake things that should not be undertaken. Not undertaking things that should be undertaken and undertaking things that should not be undertaken, they do not accept things that should be accepted and accept things that should not be accepted. Not accepting things that should be accepted and accepting things that should not be accepted, they do not eliminate things that should be eliminated and eliminate things that should not be eliminated. Not eliminating things that should be eliminated and eliminating things that should not be eliminated, they do not accomplish things that should be accomplished and accomplish things that should not be accomplished. Not accomplishing things that should be accomplished and accomplishing things that should not be accomplished, unwholesome things increase, wholesome things decrease. For this reason the Tathāgata does not undertake such things at all.

13. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, for what reason does the Tathāgata not undertake such things at all?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, free from sensual desire, sensual desire being extinguished, free from hate, hate being extinguished, free from delusion, delusion being extinguished, the Tathāgata has eliminated all unwholesome things and accomplished all wholesome things. He is the edifying teacher, the sublime teacher, the skilful and well-disposed teacher, the leading charioteer, the well-disposed charioteer, [who uses] skilful words, sublime words, skilful and well-disposed words.¹⁷ For this reason the Tathāgata does not undertake such things at all."

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda, the Tathāgata does not at all undertake things that should not be undertaken. Why is that so? Because he is a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly and totally awakened. Ānanda, you are that teacher's disciple practicing the path with the wish to attain the unsurpassable peace of Nibbāna. Even you would not undertake such things, how then could the Tathāgata undertake such things?"¹⁸

14-16. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct will not be detested by recluses and Brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, the Tathāgata certainly undertakes a bodily conduct of such type that this bodily conduct will not be detested by recluses and Brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]."

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what [kind of] bodily conduct is [that]?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, wholesome bodily conduct!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is wholesome bodily conduct?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, bodily conduct that constitutes no offence!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is bodily conduct that constitutes no offence?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that is not detested by the wise!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what do the wise not detest?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that does not harm oneself, does not harm others, does not harm both; that [leads to] awakening wisdom and does not foster evil; that [leads to] attaining Nibbāna, leads to knowledge, leads to awakening, and leads to Nibbāna.

Those [who undertake such conduct] know according to reality what things can be undertaken and know according to reality what things cannot be undertaken. Knowing according to reality what things can be undertaken and knowing according to reality what things cannot be undertaken, [they] know according to reality what things can be accepted and know according to reality what things cannot be accepted. Knowing according to reality what things can be accepted and knowing according to reality what things cannot be accepted, [they] know according to reality what things should be eliminated and know according to reality what things should not be eliminated. Knowing according to reality what things should be eliminated and knowing according to reality what things should not be eliminated, [they] know according to reality what things should be accomplished and know according to reality what things should not be accomplished.

Knowing according to reality what things should be accomplished and knowing according to reality what things should not be accomplished, they undertake things that should be undertaken and do not undertake things that should not be undertaken. Undertaking things that should be undertaken and not undertaking things that should not be undertaken, they

accept things that should be accepted and do not accept things that should not be accepted. Accepting things that should be accepted and not accepting things that should not be accepted, they eliminate things that should be eliminated and do not eliminate things that should not be eliminated. Eliminating things that should be eliminated and not eliminating things that should not be eliminated, they accomplish things that should be accomplished and do not accomplish things that should not be accomplished. Accomplishing things that should be accomplished and not accomplishing things that should not be accomplished, unwholesome things decrease, wholesome things increase. For this reason the Tathāgata certainly undertakes such things.

17. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, for what reason does the Tathāgata certainly undertake such things?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, free from sensual desire, sensual desire being extinguished, free from hate, hate being extinguished, free from delusion, delusion being extinguished, the Tathāgata has accomplished all wholesome things and eliminated all unwholesome things. He is the edifying teacher, the sublime teacher, the skilful and well-disposed teacher, the leading charioteer, the well-disposed charioteer, [who uses] skilful words, sublime words, skilful and well-disposed words. For that reason the Tathāgata certainly undertakes such things."

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda, the Tathāgata certainly undertakes things that should be undertaken. Why is that so? Because he is a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly and totally awakened. Ānanda, you are that teacher's disciple, practicing the path with the wish to attain the unsurpassable peace

of Nibbāna. Even you will undertake such things, how then could the Tathāgata not undertake such things?

18. Ānanda has spoken well and now I am pleased, Ānanda has spoken aptly and I am extremely pleased. If Ānanda [for his] teaching could accept the income of a village, I would give [him] the income of a village as a gift for [his] teaching. Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept an elephant, a horse, an ox, a sheep, I would give [him] an elephant, a horse, an ox, a sheep as a gift for [his] teaching.¹⁹ Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept a woman or a girl, I would give [him] a woman or a girl as a gift for [his] teaching. Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept money or treasures, I would give [him] money or treasures as a gift [for his] teaching. [Yet], Ānanda, all such things Ānanda cannot accept.

There is one cloth in my Kosala clan called *bāhitikā*, that is supreme. A king sent it [to me] contained within the shaft of a parasol as a token of trust.²⁰ Ānanda, out of all cotton cloths in the Kosala clan, this *bāhitikā* is the supreme of all those cloths.²¹ Why is that? This *bāhitikā* cloth is sixteen span long and eight wide. This *bāhitikā* cloth I now give as a gift to Ānanda for [his] teaching. Ānanda can make a triple robe [out of it]. [If Ānanda] accepts it, the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit.

Venerable Ānanda said: "Stop, stop, great king, just [your] intention suffices [to put me] at ease. I myself have a triple robe, that has been accepted by me."

19. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, let me deliver a simile, wise ones on hearing a simile will understand the meaning.²² Just as at the time of a great rain this river Aciravatī is full of water, overflowing both banks. Has Ānanda seen this?"

Venerable Ānanda replied: "I have seen it."²³

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "In the same way, Ānanda, the three robes [you] have, [you] may give to [another] monk or nun, or to a male or female novice in training. Therefore, Ānanda, with this *bāhitikā* cloth make a triple robe, so that the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit."

20. Venerable Ānanda silently accepted [the invitation] by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, knowing that venerable Ānanda had accepted [by remaining] silent, gave the *bāhitikā* cloth to venerable Ānanda as a gift for the teaching, rose from his seat, circumambulated [Ānanda] three times and left.²⁴

21. Not long after [the king] had left, venerable Ānanda took the *bāhitikā* cloth and went to the Buddha, paid his respects and, stepping back to sit at one side, said: "Blessed One, this *bāhitikā* cloth was given to me today by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, as a gift for [my] teachings. May the Blessed One place his two feet on the *bāhitikā* cloth, so that the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit."²⁵

Then the Blessed One placed his two feet on the *bāhitikā* cloth and said: "Ānanda, you may now tell me the whole conversation you had with Pasenadi, the king of Kosala.

Then venerable Ānanda told the Buddha the entire conversation he had with Pasenadi, the king of Kosala. Placing his hands together [in respect] he said: "In speaking like this, did I not misrepresent the Blessed One? [Did I] speak truly in accordance with the *Dhamma*, [did I] teach the *Dhamma* in accordance with the *Dhamma*, so that there is no censure in accordance with the *Dhamma*?"

21. The Blessed One answered: "Speaking like this you did not misrepresent me, you spoke truly in accordance with the *Dhamma*, you taught the *Dhamma* in accordance with the *Dhamma*, and there is no censure in accordance with the *Dhamma*. Ānanda, if Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, had come to ask me in these words, phrases and sentences, I would have answered Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, in these words, phrases and sentences.²⁶ Ānanda, you should keep in mind these words, [just] as you spoke them. Why is that so? This exposition [by you] is exactly [the way to reply] to those words [of the king]."

The Buddha spoke like this. Venerable Ānanda and the other monks heard what the Buddha said, were delighted, [reverentially] received it and put it into practice.

Comparison

The introductory narration found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version differs in several respects from the Pāli version of the *Bāhitika-sutta*. In both versions King Pasenadi asks his minister if the monk they see in the distance is Ānanda. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version, Ānanda in a similar way inquires from his companion monk if the person they see riding an elephant is the king of the country, an inquiry not found in the Pāli version. When evaluating this difference, it seems that whereas someone not well acquainted with the Buddhist monastic community might indeed be in doubt if the monk he sees at a distance is Ānanda, it is difficult to imagine that anyone could be uncertain of the identity of the king of the country. Even if Ānanda had never seen King Pasenadi, the very fact that the person he sees is riding an elephant and would be wearing the emblems of a king

(such as a turban, chauri, royal umbrella etc.) should make it self-evident that this is the king of the country.²⁷ Hence the additional inquiry found in the *Madhyama-āgama* does not fit the situation well and could be an attempt to counterbalance the loss of status incurred by Ānanda through not being immediately recognized by Pasenadi.

The two versions' description of events does in fact exhibit a recurring tendency to enhance Ānanda's status. Thus according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account King Pasenadi simply rides on his elephant close to Ānanda and in polite terms requests a meeting on the bank of the nearby river. In doing so, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he directly addresses Ānanda by his name, without using the respectful address *bhante* he employs in the Pāli version. According to the Pāli version, however, he first sends an envoy to convey the message to Ānanda that Pasenadi pays homage to him and asks him to wait a moment.²⁸ Then Pasenadi comes close on his elephant, dismounts and approaches Ānanda on foot, pays homage and politely asks for a meeting on the bank of the river nearby. Then Pasenadi remounts his elephant to approach the riverbank, where he gets down again from the elephant and again pays homage to Ānanda. This procedure seems rather complicated for the simple task of meeting a monk and may also be an attempt to enhance the status of Ānanda by showing the complicated etiquette employed by the king of the country. The way Pasenadi acts in the *Madhyama-āgama* account appears more realistic in comparison.

The two versions agree that on reaching the riverbank Pasenadi offers his elephant rug to Ānanda, which the latter declines to use. According to the *Madhyama-āgama* version, Pasenadi repeats this offer three times and Ānanda consequently refuses three times. Although in the Pāli version King

Pasenadi simply puts his question, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he first asks permission to pose a question. Though the last is a standard pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses, the tendency to enhance the respectful behavior shown by King Pasenadi toward Ānanda seems to have influenced the introductory narration in both versions, albeit in different ways.

This tendency may well be related to the nature of the inquiry King Pasenadi is about to make. This inquiry stands in direct contrast to an indication given in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its Sanskrit parallel, according to which the Buddha's ethical purity was such that he had no need to hide any of his actions out of fear that others might come to know about them.²⁹ It is perhaps not surprising that the reciters were uncomfortable with the king of the country inquiring whether the Buddha had indeed no need to hide anything. This would explain why they are at pains to show that King Pasenadi did not exhibit any disrespect to Ānanda, even though his mission was to inquire into the moral integrity of Ānanda's teacher, the Buddha.

In both versions, King Pasenadi carries out his inquiry in a quite straightforward manner, as he keeps putting into question all the indications given by Ānanda until they reach the basic definition of what makes a deed unwholesome. As illustrated in figure 1 below, in the Pāli version this line of inquiry proceeds from qualifying conduct as unwholesome – via its nature of being blameworthy, afflictive, and having painful results – to the basic definition that such conduct causes affliction either to oneself, or to others, or to both, and thus leads to increase in unwholesomeness and a decrease in what is wholesome. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version this inquiry proceeds from the qualifying conduct as unwholesome – via it being an offence and detested by the wise – to the

definition that it harms oneself, or others, or both, and thus obstructs wisdom.

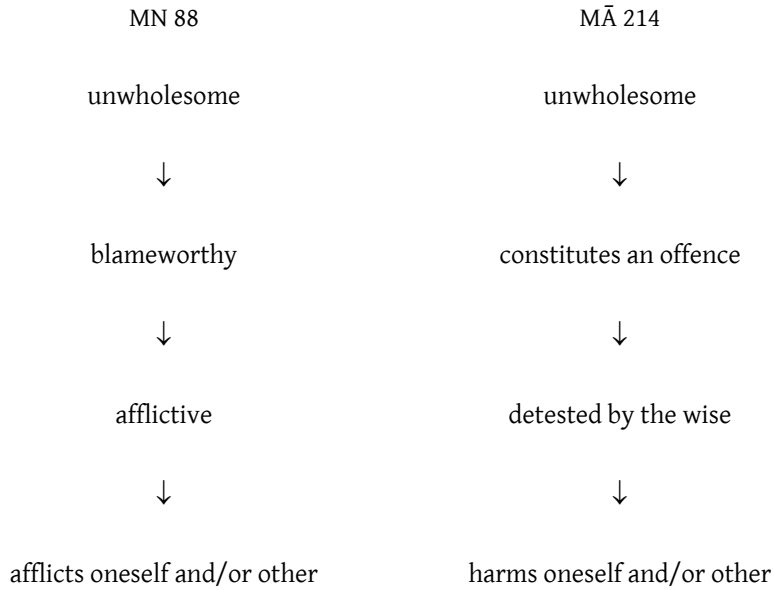


Figure 1: The definition of unwholesomeness in MN 88 and MĀ 214

The agreement between the Pāli and Chinese versions on this definition of the nature of unwholesomeness throws into relief a basic principle of early Buddhist ethics. This agreement is noteworthy because otherwise the two versions show considerable variations. While the *Madhyama-āgama* version inquires only into bodily conduct, the Pāli version also undertakes a similar inquiry into verbal and mental conduct. The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also differs from the Pāli account in that it has a more detailed treatment of the results of unwholesome deeds. Where the Pāli version briefly refers to an increase in unwholesomeness and a decrease in wholesomeness, the *Madhyama-āgama* version brings up the topic of attaining *Nibbāna* and then continues with a long exposition on not knowing according to reality what things should be undertaken and what things should not be undertaken etc.³⁰ In spite of such differences, the basic principle underlying the

definition of what constitutes an unwholesome deed is the same in the two versions and thus constitutes common ground between them, in that an unwholesome deed involves affliction or harm to oneself, to others, or to both.

The theme of causing affliction to oneself or others comes up again in the detailed instructions given in the *Ambalaṭṭhikārahulovāda-sutta* and its Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan parallels on proper conduct by way of body, speech or mind. The different versions agree that, just as if one were to look into a mirror, one should reflect before, during, and after any activity on whether this activity will lead to affliction for oneself or others.³¹ The importance of these practical instructions on how to implement the ethical principle of avoiding harm to oneself or others is reflected in the circumstance that it features among those discourses whose study was explicitly recommended by King Asoka.³²

A closely related type of reflection was, according to the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* and its Chinese parallel, undertaken by the Buddha prior to his awakening. The two discourses report that, during the time of his quest for liberation, he developed a clear distinction between those types of thoughts that lead to affliction for oneself or others and those that do not have such a result.³³ The former type are thoughts related to sensuality, ill-will and harming, while thoughts of renunciation, non ill-will and harmlessness are the type of thought that will not afflict oneself or others. As a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallel point out, once lust, hatred and delusion are removed, one will no longer think in ways that lead to affliction for oneself or others.³⁴

This, then, leads us to the chief message of the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, namely the reason why the Buddha would not

perform any unwholesome deed. The two versions differ in the way they introduce this conclusion, as in the Pāli version King Pasenadi asks if the Buddha recommends the abandoning of all unwholesome states,³⁵ while in the *Madhyama-āgama* version he asks why the Buddha does not undertake unwholesome conduct. But the conclusion is the same in the two versions, in that the Buddha's ethical perfection is based on his successful eradication of all unwholesome mental states.

In this way, early Buddhist ethics lead up to, culminate in, and are an expression of purity of the mind. The purity that results from the eradication of all unwholesome tendencies through full awakening will be the theme of the third article in this series, examining the six-fold purity of an *arahant* described in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

Notes

* I am indebted to Rod Bucknell and Ken Su for constructive comments on an earlier draft of this article

1. Ps III 346: *Sundarivatthusmiṃ uppannam idaṃ sutam.*

2. Ud 4:8 at Ud 43-45.

3. Dhp-a III 474; cf. also Jā II 415.

4. A version of this incident found in the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (as the introductory narration to its version of the *Duṭṭhaṭṭhaka-sutta*, Sn 780-787, whose Pāli commentary Pj II 518 also narrates the Sundarī tale) agrees with the *Dhammapada* commentary that the purpose of the plot was to bring the Buddha into disrepute, cf. T 198 at T IV 176c3, translated in Bapat (1945:156-158).

5. T 2085 at T I 860c17, for further references cf. Deeg (2005:307-308).
6. MĀ 214 at T I 797c-799b.
7. On the language of the *Madhyama-āgama* manuscript 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 Yin-shun (1962:703).
8. To facilitate comparing my translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse with the English translation of the *Bāhitika-sutta* in Ñāṇamoli (2005:723-727), I adopt the same paragraph numbering as used by Ñāṇamoli. For the same reason, I also use Pāli terminology, without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama* manuscript.
9. MĀ 214 at T I 797c7: 鞞訶提經, which according to the Taishō edition corresponds to the Pāli title *Bāhitika-sutta* (the Siamese edition reads *Bāhitiya-sutta*). The title is taken from the cloth that Pasenadi offers Ānanda at the end of the discourse, which according to the Pāli commentary, Ps III 347, was called *bāhitikā* because it came from a foreign country, *bāhitiratṭha*. Rhys Davids (1993:486) s.v. *bāhitikā* instead derives *bāhitikā* from *bāheti*, "to ward off," and suggests it to refer to a mantle or wrapper that "keeps out" the cold or the wind. Yet, in both discourses the *bāhitikā* is of considerable size, measuring sixteen spans by eight. A cloth of such a size would be too large to serve as a mantle or wrapper. The same size would, however, be suitable for making three robes, for which purpose according to both versions Pasenadi presented it to Ānanda. Therefore, the commentarial explanation seems preferable in the sense that *bāhitikā* stands for a "foreign cloth."
10. In the Pāli version, MN 88 at MN II 112,12, Ānanda appears to be alone, has just finished his meal and is on his way to the Eastern Park for his daily abiding [in meditation].
11. MĀ 214 at T I 797c14: 一奔陀利, which according to the Taishō edition corresponds to *Ekaṇḍarīka*. The same elephant recurs in two Chinese parallels to the *Piyajātika-sutta*, MĀ 216 at T I 801c19 and T 91 at T I 915c25 (according to

the Taishō edition the latter was translated by An Shi-gao, 安世高). The *Piyajātika-sutta* itself (MN 87 at MN II 111), however, does not mention the elephant.

12. MĀ 214 at T I 797c14: 尸利阿荼, which according to the Taishō edition corresponds to Sirivaḍḍha. In this case, too, the *Piyajātika-sutta* parallel MĀ 216 at T I 801c19 refers to him, whereas he is not mentioned in the *Piyajātika-sutta* itself. The other *Piyajātika-sutta* parallel, T 91 at T I 915c25, refers to this minister with the different rendering 賢首. In the four Pāli *Nikāyas*, the name Sirivaḍḍha recurs in SN 47:29 at SN V 176,14 as the name of a sick householder visited by Ānanda.

13. MĀ 214 at T I 797c27: 阿夷羅婆提, which according to the Taishō edition corresponds to Aciravatī. Malalasekera (1995:24) explains that the river Aciravatī was one of "the five great rivers flowing from the Himālaya eastwards (*pācīnaninnā*) into the sea."

14. Following the 宋, 元, 明 and 聖 variant reading 聞 instead of 問.

15. The king's appreciation appears to be due to the finer distinction introduced by Ānanda at this point, in that he speaks of censure by "intelligent and wise" recluses and Brahmins, thereby making it clear that the point at stake is justified criticism, not the type of unjustified criticism that might be levied at the Buddha by recluses and Brahmins who are not intelligent and wise. This finer distinction is also reflected in the Burmese and Ceylonese editions (B^e-MN II 316,6 and C^e-MN II 542,10), where the king's inquiry similarly speaks only of censure by "recluses and Brahmins," whereas Ānanda replies by speaking of "wise recluses and Brahmins," *samaṇehi brāhmanehi viññūhi*. In the PTS and Siamese editions (MN II 113,33 and S^e-MN II 500,8), however, the king uses the qualification *viññūhi* already in his question, so that in these versions the reply given by Ānanda does not introduce anything new. This may be due to an error in transmission, because otherwise there would be no reason for the king to express his appreciation for Ānanda's ability to accomplish something

with his answer that the king had not accomplished with his question, *yaṃ hi mayaṃ, bhante, nāsakkhimha pañhena paripūretuṃ taṃ, bhante, āyasmatā Ānandena pañhassa veyyākaraṇena paripūritaṃ* (MN II 114,7).

16. My rendering of this somewhat cryptic passage is oriented on the corresponding passage in MN 88 at MN II 114,10, where King Pasenadi contrasts praise and blame spoken by fools without prior investigation to that of the wise, who will properly investigate a matter before forming an opinion.

17. Such a listing of the Buddha's qualities is not found in the Pāli version.

18. This line of reasoning of the king is not reported in the Pāli version.

19. In MN 88 at MN II 116,22, King Pasenadi speaks of offering Ānanda an elephant-treasure, *hatthiratana*, or a horse-treasure, *assaratana*, in addition to referring to the gift of a village.

20. The corresponding passage in MN 88 at MN II 116,29 indicates that King Ajātasattu had sent the cloth packed in the shaft of a parasol, *rañño Māgadhena Ajātasattunā Vedehiputtana chattanāliyā pakkhipitvā pahitā*.

21. A comparable statement that the *bāhitikā* is supreme is not found in the Pāli version.

22. This introductory statement on the purpose of a simile being to lead the wise to an understanding, though not found in MN 88, is a recurrent pericope in the Pāli discourses, where it is mostly employed by monks to introduce a simile. In SN 41:1 at SN IV 282,30, however, the same introductory statement is also used by a householder who is about to deliver a simile to a group of monks. In this particular case, such a type of statement is absent from the corresponding Chinese parallel SĀ 572 at T II 152a14.

23. The overflowing of the Aciravatī river appears to have been proverbial; cf. e.g., its occurrence in a simile in DN 13 at DN I 244,13 and its parallel DĀ 26 at T I 106a5. According to the *Dhammapada* commentary, Dh-p-a I 360, after a great rain a whole army that had camped on the banks of the Aciravatī was swept away by this river.

24. The threefold circumambulation is a recurrent pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses. In the Pāli *Nikāyas*, the only instance appears to be in DN 16 at DN II 163,27, where Mahākassapa performs three circumambulations of the Buddha's funeral pyre.

25. In MN 88 at MN II 117,22, Ānanda offers the cloth to the Buddha, *bāhitikaṃ Bhagavato pādāsi*.

26. In the corresponding section in MN 88 at MN II 117,24, the question of a possible misrepresentation of the Buddha does not arise. Instead, the Buddha highlights the great gain of the king, as he had been able to meet and pay his respects to Ānanda.

27. According to the report given by Megasthenes, in ancient India "a private person is not allowed to keep...an elephant. These animals are held to be the special property of the king," cf. McCrindle (1877:90). A relief on a pillar of the Bharhut Stūpa, reproduced in plate 13 of Cunningham (187:9), shows Pasenadi in a chariot attended by three servants, one of whom holds an umbrella over the king while the other holds a chauri (fly whisk). Though in this instance Pasenadi rides a chariot and not an elephant, this relief gives some idea of the pomp with which an ancient Indian king like Pasenadi would set out. Thus for someone who meets Pasenadi out on the road it should be easy to realize that the person he sees is the king of the country.

28. MN 88 at MN II 112,20.

29. DN 33 at DN III 217,8 and the parallel Sanskrit fragments in Stache-Rosen (1968:78); cf. also the *Saṅgītiparyāya*, T 1536 at T XXVI 381c19; and the *Mahāvīyutpatti* § 12 in Sakaki (1926:17).

30. This part of the exposition in MĀ 214 has some similarity to the four ways of undertaking things described in the *Mahādhammasamādāna-sutta*, MN 46 at MN I 310,10.

31. MN 61 at MN I 415,25; which has a parallel in MĀ 14 at T I 436c9; in Sanskrit fragment SHT V 117 in Sander (1985:111-112); and in the (Mūla-)sarvāstivāda Vinaya preserved in Chinese and Tibetan, T 1442 at T XXIII 761a8 and Q 'dul ba je

201a6. The same presentation is also reflected in *sūtra* quotations from this exposition found in the *Vyākhyāyukti-tīkā*, Q *sems tsam* i 71a5, and in the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, T 1579 at T XXX 405b4 and Shukla (1973:55,16).

32. This recommendation refers to the *Lāghulovāda* that was "spoken by the Blessed One, the Buddha, concerning falsehood," *musā-vādaṃ adhiḡichya bhagavatā Budhena bhāsite*, cf. Hultzsch (1925:173).

33. MN 19 at MN I 115,2 and MĀ 102 at T I 589a19.

34. SN 42:12 at SN IV 339,19 and SĀ 912 at T II 229b17.

35. MN 88 at MN II 116,13: *kiṃ pana, bhante Ānanda, so Bhagavā sabbesaṃ yeva kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ upasampadaṃ vaṇṇeti?*

Abbreviations

B^e	Burmese edition
C^e	Ceylonese edition
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Pj	<i>Paramatthajotikā</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
Q	Peking edition
SĀ	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
S^e	Siamese edition
SHT	Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>

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