

Miscellaneous notes on Middle Indic words (2)*

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I have been working on the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts of the Vinaya of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* which presumably had been transmitted originally, if not in pure Middle Indic, then in a Middle Indic-cum-Sanskrit, containing a great many Middle Indic forms, which were later gradually replaced by (Buddhist) Sanskrit ones. Therefore, those texts contain a number of incorrect Sanskritisms which often puzzle us, though, at the same time, such hyperforms can stimulate us into reconsidering the meanings and etymologies of their equivalents found in Pāli literature. Also, there are many cases where obscure Pāli expressions become clearer through consulting their parallels, found in Buddhist Sanskrit texts and vice versa. The following are some such examples:

1. *muñcati* “flees, escapes from”

1. 1. *Dhammapada* 389 and its parallels

Dhammapada 389 reads as follows:

na brāhmaṇassa pabareyya nāssa muñcettha brāhmaṇo
dbī brāhmaṇassa hantāraṃ tato dbī y' assa muñcati

This verse has its parallels in Gāndhārī and Buddhist Sanskrit works:

Gāndhārī Dharmapada 11⁽¹⁾:

na brahmaṇasa pabare'a nasa muje'a brahmaṇi
dbi brahmaṇasa hadara tada vi dbi yo na mujadi⁽²⁾

Patna Dharmapada 46⁽³⁾:

na brāhmaṇassa pabare nāssa mucceya brāhmaṇo
dbi brāhmaṇassa hantāraṃ ya ssa vā su na muccati⁽⁴⁾

* I should like to extend my sincere thanks to my friend, Peter Lait, who took the trouble to check my English.

⁽¹⁾ Brough 1962: 120.

⁽²⁾ *yo na* (< Skt. *enam*; cf. Pāli *na*³) *mujadi* (< Skt. *muñcati*)

⁽³⁾ Cone 1989: 115.

⁽⁴⁾ *ya ssa vā su na muccati* : I assume that it should be read as follows: *y' assa* (< Skt. *asya*) *cā su* (< *ca ssu* < Skt. *ca sma*; cf. Norman 1969: 168) *na* (“indeed?”; cf. PTSD, s.v., *nā*³; BHS, s.v. *nam*) *muccati*. The confusion between the akṣaras *ca* and *va* is quite common, dating from the time of the Aśokan Inscriptions (see Norman 1990: 169, 215; cf. also Norman 1971: 59 [v. 12]; *do.* 1995: 146-147 [v. 38]; *do.*

Udānavarga 33. 63:

na brāhmaṇasya praharen na ca muñceta brāhmaṇaḥ
dbig brāhmaṇasya hantāraṃ dbik taṃ yaś ca pramuñcati⁽⁵⁾

Abhisamācārikā Dharmāḥ (abbr. Abhis.) 35A4 (= Jinananda 1969: 159.2-3)

na brāhmaṇasya prahareya nāsyā muñceya brāhmaṇo
dbig brāhmaṇasya hantāraṃ taṃ pi dbik yo ^ṅ sya muñcati

1. 2. Previous interpretations of √muc

The second and fourth pādas of this verse are problematic and hence they have various interpretations.

For instance, the latest translation of the *Dhammapada* reads as follows:

“A brahman should not strike a brahman, nor should he release (angry words) against him. Woe to the killer of a brahman, and woe to him who releases (angry words) against him.” (Norman 1997: 55).

K. R. Norman translates the phrases *assa muñcetha* and *assa muñcati* in these pādas as “should release (angry words) against him” and “releases (angry words) against him,” respectively, probably based on the interpretation in the Pāli commentary in which the word *veraṃ* (“hatred”) is supplemented in the phrase and interpreted as “One should not release hatred against him. One should not get angry with him.”⁽⁶⁾ Other modern translations of the *Dhammapada* in English, German, French, Japanese *etc.*, read these pādas more or less the same, all presumably also based on the Pāli commentator’s interpretation. However, as these translators admit, such an interpretation as this, is rather awkward.

There have been other interpretations which differ from that in the Pāli commentary. For instance, Albrecht Weber considers that the verb √muc in these

1997: 74 [v. 50]).

⁽⁵⁾ The Chinese and Tibetan translations of the *Udānavarga* read as follows: *Taiśbō*, vol. 4, No. 212, 774c25-26. 不捶梵志 不放梵志 咄捶梵志 放者亦咄 (“One should not strike a Brahman, nor should let a Brahman go. Woe to one who strikes a Brahman, and woe also to one who lets him go.”); *gang zbig bram ze rdeg pa blun / skrod par byed pa de ngan pas // bram ze rnam la brdeg mi bya / bram ze bskrad par mi byao //* (Beckh 1911: 153; *Udānavarga* III, 437). Dharmatrāta’s commentary on this text is preserved in both Chinese and Tibetan: *Taiśbō*, vol. 4, No. 212, 774c25f. “不捶梵志 不放梵志 咄捶梵志 放者亦咄” 所謂“梵志”者，得阿羅漢道。不得以手捲、刀杖加彼真人。“不放梵志”者，此是真人恆當供養衣被服、飯食、床臥具、病瘦醫藥、四事供養，令不減少。“咄捶梵志”，行惡之人。“放者亦咄”，復是惡人，不留供養飲食、床臥具、病瘦醫藥。能具此行，故名為“梵志”。是故說曰：“不捶梵志 不放梵志 咄捶梵志 放者亦咄。” This verse in the *Udānavarga* is quoted and commented upon in Kātyāyanīputra’s **Abhidharmajñānaprasthānasāstra*, which is preserved only in Chinese: *Taiśbō*, vol. 26, No. 1544, 1029b28-29. 不應害梵志 亦復不應捨 若害彼或捨 俱世智所訶; *do.* 1029b28f. “不應害梵志 亦復不應捨 若害彼或捨 俱世智所訶” “不應害梵志”者，“梵志”即阿羅漢，謂不應以手塊、刀杖害阿羅漢。“亦復不應捨”者，謂於阿羅漢應以衣服、飲食、臥具、醫藥及餘資具恭敬供養，不應棄捨。“若害彼或捨 俱世智所訶”者，謂於阿羅漢，若以手塊等害，或復棄捨，而不敬養，俱為世間諸有智者訶責毀譽。

⁽⁶⁾ *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā. The Commentary on the Dhammapada*, ed. by H. C. Norman, London 1914, PTS, vol. IV, p. 148, 1-3. “nāssa muñcethā” ti so pi pabaṭo khīnāsavabrāhmaṇo assa pabaritvā tṭhassa veraṃ na muñcetha tasmīṃ kopam na kareyyā ti attho.

phrases means “losstürzen, angreifen.”⁽⁷⁾ Interpreting \sqrt{muc} as “to utter words,” Brough has translated the first and second pādas as follows: “A (true) Brahman should not strike a Brahman nor revile him.”⁽⁸⁾

Emending the fourth pāda of the parallel verse in *Patna Dharmapada* 46 as *y’ assa cāsuna mu[m]catī*, while at the same time taking *asuna* in this pāda as a Prakrit accusative plural form of Skt. *asu* (“life”), Gustav Roth considers that *asuna* \sqrt{muc} therefore means “to deprive of life, kill” just the same as Skt. *prāṇān* \sqrt{muc} . Thus, he translates the stanza in the above text as follows:

“He should not assail a Brahman, a Brahman should not deprive him of his life. Shame on the slayer of a Brahman, and (on the Brahman) who deprives him (he who is admonished not to kill a Brahman) of his life.”⁽⁹⁾

However, Roth’s explanation is improbable.⁽¹⁰⁾

Based on the above observations of both Brough and Roth as well as that of the Pāli commentary, Carter and Palihawadana write as follows: “When one translates the words as they are in the Pāli version, one gets neither an adequate sense, nor even anything really like the traditional explanation that the commentary gives.”⁽¹¹⁾ However, is it really impossible to obtain “an adequate sense” from this verse as it stands?

1. 3. *muñcati* “flees, escapes from”

All the above-mentioned interpretations present a common difficulty in understanding the phrase *assa* (Skt. *asya*) \sqrt{muc} .

The verb \sqrt{muc} with middle endings, used with ablative, instrumental or genitive forms, sometimes means “to free one’s self, escape from.”⁽¹²⁾ The word Pā. *muñcetba* (Skt. *muñceta*) in the second pāda, which is an optative form with a middle ending, is probably one such example. The form *muñcati*, in the fourth pāda, can be taken as an example of the active form used in a middle sense “flees, escapes from.”⁽¹³⁾ A similar usage of this verb is found in the *Mahāvastu*: *vyādhitā vyādhito muṃcanti* “the sick recover (lit. escape) from sickness.”⁽¹⁴⁾ Hence, Pāli *Dhammapada* 389 may be translated as follows:

“**One should not attack a Brahman. A Brahman should not flee from him. Woe to the killer of a Brahman, and woe to him who flees from**

⁽⁷⁾ Weber 1860: 82, note (3). He translates the verse in question as follows: “Man thu ’nem Brāhmaṇ’ nicht Gewalt, und der stürze nicht los auf ihn! Weh’ dem, der ’nen Brāhmaṇ’ erschlägt. Weh’ diesem, wenn er auf ihn stürzt!”

⁽⁸⁾ Brough 1962: 179-180.

⁽⁹⁾ Roth 1980: 88-89 = 1986: 299-300.

⁽¹⁰⁾ As to the fourth pāda of this stanza, see note (4).

⁽¹¹⁾ Carter/Palihawadana 1987: 507-508.

⁽¹²⁾ Cf. MW, s.v. *muc*.

⁽¹³⁾ The confusion between active and middle forms is widely seen not only in Middle Indic but also in Sanskrit; cf. BHSG §§37.10ff.

⁽¹⁴⁾ *Mahāvastu* I 308. 8-9. Edgerton takes it for an example of an active form in a passive sense and thus, translates the phrase as follows: “the sick are freed from sickness” (BHSG §37.16).

him.”⁽¹⁵⁾

Its parallels in the *Gāndhārī Dharmapada* etc. may be understood also in the same way.⁽¹⁶⁾

In the *Abhisamācārikā Dharmāḥ*, this verse is quoted as a *dharmapada* at the end of a story about a merchant’s son and a leader of a gang of bandits. The story runs as follows: A gang of robbers broke into a rich merchant’s house, in which a seven-year-old son was all alone looking after it, while his parents had gone out with the rest of the family. When the gang asked him where the valuables were, he replied that he did not know and that there was nobody else in the house. After saying that, he told them to take anything they wanted. Then, the robbers searched and collected all the fortune in the house, piling it up in the courtyard. As the leader of the gang felt thirsty, he asked the boy for a drink. After polishing a vessel, the latter washed it and his hands, filled it with water, went to a lamp to make sure that neither a leaf nor an insect was in it and then, gave it to him to drink. Being impressed with his good manners, the leader returned all the booty and left the house with his followers.⁽¹⁷⁾

I assume that the boy, who, instead of escaping from the gang, behaved himself in an appropriate manner, is likened here to a true Brahman, who does not escape from an attacker, as described in the above-cited verse.

2. Pā. *puttabatāya putta* / Pā. *puttamātāya putta* / BHS. *putramoṭikāputra* “foundling, bastard”

In Pāli literature, the set phrases “*puttabatāya putta*” and “*puttamātāya putta*” are used as abusive words, e.g.:

2.1. Pā. *puttabatāya putta*

Jātaka I 355.6-9:

yato viluttā ca batū ca gāvo dadḍhāni gebāni jano ca nīto
athāgamā puttabatāya putto kharassaram deṇḍimam vādayanto
“Having robbed, slain cattle, burnt houses and captured people, the
puttabatāya putta, then, came back, beating a drum loudly.”⁽¹⁸⁾

⁽¹⁵⁾ More than a century ago, Karl Eugen Neumann translated the verse in question in the same way as the present author does.

“Man greife keinen Heiligen an,
Doch, angegriffen, flieh’ er nicht;
Weh’ Dem, der einen Heiligen schlägt,
Und Weh’ auch ihm, der jenen flieht” (Neumann: 1893: 97).

⁽¹⁶⁾ In the Chinese and Tibetan translations of the *Udānavarga* (see note [5]), the Sanskrit word √ *muc* is rendered as 放 (“releases, lets go”), 捨 (“abandons”), *skrod par byed* (“expels”) and *bskrad par ... bya* (*do.*), showing that these translators also did not understand this Indian word correctly.

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Abhis.* 34B1- 35A4. Cf. also Prasad 1984: 157-158.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Cf. “Nachdem geraubt die Kühe und getötet, verbrannt die Häuser, weggeführt die Menschen, da kommt zurück der Sohn zum Tod des Sohnes, indem er laut die Trommel läßt erschallen” (*Dutoit, Jātakam* I 350); “He gave the robbers time to drive and slay the cattle, burn the houses, capture folk; and then with drums a-beating, home he marched, — a son no more, for such a son is dead.” (*Jā[trans.]* I 202).

Sārattha-ppakāsini I 338, 14-15:

Sakko “gaṇbatha putta-batāya putte⁽¹⁹⁾” ti te pādesu gabetvā Sineru-pāde kbipāpesi⁽²⁰⁾

“Saying: ‘Capture the *puttabatāya puttās!*’, Sakka caught them by their feet and threw them down at the foot of Mt. *Sineru*.”

do. I 346, 15-20:

te devehi parājitā palāyantā isīnaṃ assamapadena gacchantā⁽²¹⁾ “Sakko imehi saddhiṃ mantetvā ambe nāseti. gaṇbatha putta-batāya putte⁽²²⁾” ti kupitā assama-pade pāṇīyagbata-caṅkamaṇa-sālādāni⁽²³⁾ viddhaṃsenti⁽²⁴⁾

“As they (*i.e.*, *asuras*), having been defeated by gods and while running away, passed through a hermitage of ascetics, they became angry and said: ‘After consulting with these (ascetics), *Sakka* expelled us. Capture the *puttabatāya puttās*,’ and so they destroyed water pitchers, cloisters, the hall *etc.* in the hermitage.”

2.2. Pā. *puttamātāya putta*

Majjhima-Nikāya I 524, 1-2:

ime paṇ’ ājīvikaṃ puttamātāya puttā attānañ c’ eva ukkaṃsenti pare ca vambhenti

“But these *Ājīvakas*, who are *puttamātāya puttās*, praise themselves and despise others.”⁽²⁵⁾

2.3. Traditional interpretations

Though modern translators have tried to explicate meanings and etymologies of these phrases,⁽²⁶⁾ they remain unclear, which may be partly due to the confusing explanations

⁽¹⁹⁾ I emend the reading *sutta-batāya sutte* in this way on the basis of that in some manuscripts, cited in the footnote of the Pali Text Society edition. For the *p/s* alternation, which arises from the similarity between these two letters in the Brāhmī script, see EV I, p. 134 (*ad* Th 49), EV II, p. 56 (*ad* Thi 6), GD II, p. 214 (*ad* Sn 353).

⁽²⁰⁾ This sentence is quoted in the *Sārasaṅgaha*, p. 326, ll. 25-27. The *Jātaka* contains the same story (I 202), yet the actual expression in question is not found there.

⁽²¹⁾ I emend the reading *gacchanto* — the *Sārasaṅgaha* (*ibid.*) also follows this reading — to *gacchantā* on the basis of that in some manuscripts, cited in the footnote of the PTS edition. The context requires a plural form. The instrumental form *assamapadena*, used with the verb $\sqrt{\text{gam}}$ (“to go”), expresses the route of movement, cf. Sen 1953: § 31 = 1995: 280; von Hinüber 1968: § 125.

⁽²²⁾ I emend the reading *sutta-batāya sutte* of the PTS edition in this way on the basis of that in some manuscripts.

⁽²³⁾ Instead of *sālā* (“a hall”), *paṇṇasālā* (“a hut of leaves”) is used in the *Sārasaṅgaha*, which fits the context better.

⁽²⁴⁾ This sentence is quoted in the *Sārasaṅgaha*, p. 330, ll. 9-13.

⁽²⁵⁾ Ñāṇamoli (1995: 628) translates this sentence as follows: “But these *Ājīvakas*, those mothers’ dead sons, laud themselves and disparage others.” Cf. also *ibid.* p. 1281, n. 760.

⁽²⁶⁾ Cf. “Der sehr unklar gefaßte Ausdruck soll bedeuten: ‘Ein Mensch, der eine solche Tat begeht, verdient nicht den Namen eines Sohnes.’” (Dutoit, *Jātakam* I, p. 350, n. 1); “In a note on transcript D. Mrs. Rhys Davids suggests *sutta-batāya sutte* (‘get spells to destroy their spells’). I had thought of reading *gaṇbatha sutte*, *hanatha sutte*.” (Woodward, *Sārattha-ppakāsini* I 338, n. 3).

by the Pāli commentators on the texts cited above:

Jātaka I 355, 12-14:

“*puttabatāya putto*” *ti bataputtāya putto nillajjo ti attbo.*
cbinnabirottappassa hi mātā nāma n’ attbi iti, so tassā jīvanto pi
bataputtatthāne tiṭṭhatīti “bataputtāya putto” nāma hoti

“*Puttabatāya putto* means a shameless son of a woman whose son was killed. One who lacks shame and fear for sin, does not have a ‘mother.’ For the latter, her son, being still alive, is as good as killed. Therefore, he is called *puttabatāya putto* (a son of a woman whose son was killed).”

Majjhimanikāyaṭṭhakathā III 235, 4-7:

“*puttamatāya puttā*” *ti so kira imaṃ dhammaṃ sutvā ājīvikā⁽²⁷⁾ matā*
nāmāti saññī butvā evaṃ āba. ayaṃ b’ettba attbo — ājīvikā matā nāma
tesaṃ mātā puttamatā hoti iti “ājīvikā puttamatāya puttā” nāma bonti
“On ‘*puttamatāya puttā*.’ Having heard this teaching, the idea occurred to him (i.e., the wanderer, *Sandaka*) that the *Ājīvikas* were dead, and so he uttered thus. This (expression) means as follows: Because the *Ājīvikas* were ‘dead’ and their mother, therefore, had dead sons, they were thus called *puttamatāya puttā* (‘sons of a woman whose sons are dead’).”

2.4. BHS. *putramoṭikāputra*

When we turn our attention to texts in Buddhist Sanskrit, we find an expression parallel to the Pāli phrases cited above.

The *Cīvaravastu* of the so-called *Mūlasarvāstivādīns* tells a story of a servant girl as follows: The famous female lay follower, *Viśākhā*, invited the Buddha and his disciples to her house for a meal. When it was ready, a servant girl was sent to the monastery, *Pūrvārāma*, to fetch them. Arriving there, she saw, through a crack in the door, naked monks bathing. Having seen this, she thought: “The saints must have already set out and this monastery has been seized by *Ājīvikas*, *putramoṭikāputras*.⁽²⁸⁾” (MSV[D] II 83). The expression *putramoṭikāputra*⁽²⁹⁾ is used as an epithet of an *Ājīvika*, just like *puttamatāya putta* in the *Majjhima-Nikāya* cited above.

The *Cūḍāpaksāvādāna* in the *Divyāvādāna* relates a story about *Cūḍāpanthaka*, one of the Buddha’s disciples as follows: The Buddha once appointed *Cūḍāpanthaka* to teach an assembly of nuns. He was well known for his lack of intelligence and could not even memorise one verse in three months. Having heard of his appointment, twelve nuns became angry and planned to humiliate him: “We shall prepare an enormously high lion

⁽²⁷⁾ v.l. *ājīvakā*.

⁽²⁸⁾ MSV(D) II 83, 19. *ebbiḥ putramoṭikāputrair ājīvikair ayaṃ vibāro ’vaṣṭabha iti*.

⁽²⁹⁾ This word occurs also in MSV(D) II 84, 2 and 85, 17. In the parallel part found in the Chinese translation of the so-called *Daśādhyāya-Vinaya* (Chin. Shisonglü 十誦律), the word is translated as 無慚愧人 “shameless people” (*Taishō*, vol. 23, No. 1435, 195c5), while the Tibetan translation of the *Cīvaravastu* reads *nal phrug* “a bastard” (Derge blockprint edition of the bKa’ ’gyur, ’Dul ba gzhi, ga, 85B6).

seat (*siṃhāsana*) for him and also invite many citizens so that this uneducated *putramoṭikāputra* will dare not instruct us.”⁽³⁰⁾ In this story, *Cūḍapanthaka* was disparagingly called *putramoṭikāputra*.⁽³¹⁾

As to this word, F. Edgerton assumes that as *moṭikā* means “basket” or the like⁽³²⁾, its literal meaning should be “child-basket child,” i.e., “foundling” (BHSD, s.v.).

The *Divyāvadāna* tells that *Cūḍapanthaka* was left in a small alley (*panthalikā*) right after his birth and, therefore, was called “Little Wayman,” while his elder brother, who had been left at a big crossroads, was named “Great Wayman.”⁽³³⁾ Hence, Edgerton’s assumption is quite convincing.

2.5. *putra-muṭa + putra > Pā. puttamatāya putta ∋ Pā. puttabatāya putta

Thus, in the case of the story in the *Cīvaravastu*, which we have just mentioned above, the *Ājīvika* ascetics are accused of being *putramoṭikāputra*, meaning “foundlings.” The Pāli expression *puttamātāya puttā*, which is used also in an abusive sense towards the *Ājīvika* ascetics in the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, has most probably the same meaning and origin as *putramoṭikāputra*.

I assume that Pā. *puttamātāya*, like BHS. *putramoṭikā*, is derived from **putra-muṭa* (“child-basket”) and that the word *muṭa* (“basket”) might have been taken wrongly as a Middle Indic form of Skt. *mṛta* (“dead”)⁽³⁴⁾ and replaced by its usual Middle Indic form *mata*. Thus, **putra-muṭa* might have resulted in a new form *putta-mata*, from which, then, *puttamātāya* might have been created, possibly due to its association with Pā.

⁽³⁰⁾ Divy. 493, 12f. Cf. Panglung 1981: 138.

⁽³¹⁾ Divy. 493, 20. This story is found also in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* of the so-called *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, which is preserved only in the Chinese and Tibetan. The word *putramoṭikāputra* is rendered as *bu zan mo’i bu* “a son of a female child-eater” in the latter (*Dul ba rnam par ’byed pa*, Derge bKa’ g’gyur, ja, 69B2). The Chinese translation lacks a parallel word (*Taishō*, vol. 23, No. 1442, 797c3). Stories about *Cūḍapanthaka*’s preaching to nuns are also found in Vin IV 54, *Taishō*, vol. 22, No. 1421, 45c-46a; *do.* No. 1428, 647bc; *do.* vol. 23, No. 1435, 80b *etc.*, but these are quite different from that cited above and thus, there is no parallel to the word *putramoṭikāputra*.

⁽³²⁾ Cf. BHSD, s.vv. *muṭa*, *mūṭa*, *mūḍba*, *moṭa*, *moṭaka*, *moṭikā*; CDIAL, 10233. *mūta*, *mūṭa* “basket.” As these are of Dravidian origin, there are many variant forms (cf. EWAia, s.v. *mūta*).

⁽³³⁾ Divy. 483f. (= *Dul ba rnam par ’byed pa*, Peking, vol. 43, p. 53, 3, 3f = Derge bKa’ g’gyur, ja, 61A4f; *Taishō*, vol. 23, No. 1442, 794c26f.; cf. also Panglung 1981: 137) tells the following story: Once, there was a Brahmana couple in Śrāvastī, who had a baby, after having had newborn children die several times. They left him at a large crossroads (*caturmahāpātha*) in order to let him greet any passing ascetic or monk who might wish him a long life. He survived and was named *Mahāpanthaka* (“Great Wayman”). When they had their next baby, they wanted him to survive in the same way. However, their female servant, being lazy, left him in a small alley (*panthalikā*) instead, but this baby also survived and was called *Cūḍapanthaka* (“Little Wayman”). This story in the *Divyāvadāna* seems to be an adaptation of a legend preserved in Pāli literature (Dhp-a I 239f.; Ja I 114f.), which relates that he was the younger son of the daughter of a rich merchant, who became intimate with a slave and fled with him. She gave birth to their first child by the wayside and some years later their second again in the same situation. These brothers were therefore named *Mahāpanthaka* (“Great Wayman” or “Elder Wayman”) and *Cūḷapanthaka* (“Little Wayman” or “Younger Wayman”) respectively. Cf. Dhp-a(tr.) I 299, fn. 1; DPPN, s.v. *Cūḷapanthaka Thera*; Akanuma, s.v. *Cūḷapanthaka*. Both of these stories show us the brothers’ obscure origins and I suspect that they were actually foundlings.

⁽³⁴⁾ Cf. the Aśokan Inscription from Shāhbāzgarhī *muṭa* < Skt. *mṛta*; Pkt. *mua* < Skt. *mṛta*.

mātāya (“of mother”; a genitive form of *mātar*). Replacing *mata* (“dead”) by its synonym *bata* (“killed”), someone probably changed *puttamātāya* further to *puttabatāya*, which is far from its original form and meaning.

In conclusion, Pā. *puttamātāya putta*, *puttabatāya putta* as well as BHS. *putramoṭikāputra* therefore might have originally meant “foundling” and were used as abusive expressions.

3. Skt. *Vipracitti* > Pā. *Vepacitti* > BHS. *Vemacitrin*

Both the *Samyutta Nikāya* and *Dīgha Nikāya* relate that there was once a battle between the gods and the Asuras, in which the latter’s king, *Vepacitti* by name, was captured.⁽³⁵⁾ In Buddhist Sanskrit literature, the king’s name appears as *Vemacitrin*, *Vemacitra* or *Vaimacitra*.⁽³⁶⁾ The *Mahābhārata* and other Indian epics also depict this battle and here he is called *Vipracitti*, who was killed in the end by Indra, the king of the gods.⁽³⁷⁾

As to the relationship of these various forms of the Asura king’s name, Przyluski has already published an article,⁽³⁸⁾ in which he maintains that they go back to the Iranian **vaēma-čīθra* (“born from rock”). According to him, the developments of these forms are as follows: Iranian **vaēma-čīθra* > BHS. *Vemacitra*, *Vemacitrin* etc. > Pā. *Vepacitti* > Skt. *Vipracitti*. He, thus, thinks that this king is the Indian counterpart of the Iranian god, Mithra, who is thought to have been born from a rock.

The word *Vipracitti* and its corrupted form, *Viprajitti*, are found also as names of preceptors in the *Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* etc. (see PW, s.vv.). It would not be strange if this word, meaning literally “sharp-witted one,” was used also as a name of an Asura.

Contrary to Przyluski’s assumption, I assume that all the Indian forms of the Asura’s name go back to *Vipracitti*: Skt. *Vipracitti* > **Vippacitti* >⁽³⁹⁾ **Vēppacitti* > Pā. *Vepacitti* >⁽⁴⁰⁾ **Vevacitti* >⁽⁴¹⁾ **Vemacitti* ∅ BHS. *Vemacitrin*, *Vemacitra*, *Vaimacitra*^{(42) (43)}.

⁽³⁵⁾ SN I 221; DN II 259, v.12.

⁽³⁶⁾ Cf. BHSD, s.vv.; Lévi 1925: 17-26.

⁽³⁷⁾ *Mahābhārata* 12.99.49; do. 9.30.11 etc. Cf. Hopkins 1915: 48-50.

⁽³⁸⁾ Przyluski: 1931.

⁽³⁹⁾ Cf. Skt. *piṣṭa* > Pkt. *peṭṭha*; Skt. *niṣka* > Pā. *nekkha*; von Hinüber 2001: § 114; Norman 1990: 21f.; do. 1995: 279.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ For *-p-* > *-v-*, cf. von Hinüber 2001: § 181; Oberlies 2001: 76-77, fn.6.

⁽⁴¹⁾ The development *-v-* > *-m-* is probably due to dissimilation, namely: *v_v* > *v_m*. For the Middle Indic development *-v-* > *-m-* in general, see von Hinüber 1981: 66; do. 2001: §§ 208-211. For the sporadic development *-p-* > *-v-* > *-m-* in Middle Indic, see von Hinüber 2001: § 211, Konow 1929: civ; Brough 1962: §§ 36, 71.

⁽⁴²⁾ These three forms are hypersanskritisms.

⁽⁴³⁾ H. Kern seems to have had similar thoughts, as he wrote the following note concerning the form *Vemacitri* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*: “This is a wrong Sanskritisation of a Prākṛit *Vemakitti*, Pāli *Vepakitti*; the proper Sanskrit equivalent is *Viprakitti*.” (Kern 1884: 6, fn. 2).

SYMBOLS

$\alpha < \beta$ = the form α comes from β

$\alpha \in \beta$: α is a scribal error, a corruption, or a hyperform of β

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

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