Miscellaneous notes on Middle Indic words (2)*

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I have been working on the Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts of the Vināya of the Mahāsiddhāgita-Lokottaravaṇīs and the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkavācastra 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 hypercorrections 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 became clearer through consulting their parallels, found in Buddhist Sanskrit texts and vice versa. The following are some such examples:

1. municati "flies, eaves from"

1.1. Dhānmapada 389 and its parallels

Dhānmapada 389 reads as follows:

na brāhmaṇaṁ sa paheṣyati
nāsa muṇicetabha brāhmaṇo
dhi brāhmaṇaṁ sa bantaṁram
tato dhi yā āsa municati

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

Gāndhāri Dhānmapada 132:

na brāhmaṇaṁ sa phabarekat
nasa maheḷa bramanī
dhi bramanāna huvare
tadā vi dhi yo na muṇidatu

Pānā Dhānmapada 46:

na brāhmaṇaṁ sa phabare
nāsa muṇceyabha brāhmaṇo
dhi brāhmaṇaṁ sa bantaṁram
ya saḥ sa ṣa na muṇcatu

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

133 yo na (c. Skt. cahe, cf. Pāli mna) meṣadhat (c. Skt. mutati)
135 yo saḥ saḥ na muṇcatu: I assume that it should be read as follows: yā āsa (c. Skt. anā) sa ṣa (c. sa naḥ) ca saḥ ca saḥ caḥ (c. Skt. ca saḥ caḥ; cf. Norman 1969: 160 sa ("indeed"); cf. PTSM, s. v., no. 34), BHSO, s. v. nāmuṣa muṇcatu. The confusion between the adjectives sa naḥ saḥ is quite common, dating from the time of the Aśokan Inscriptions (see Norman 1990: 169, 215; also Norman 1971: 39 [v. 12]; dh. 1995: 146-147 [v. 38]; ah.
1.2. Previous interpretations of ज्युति

The second and fourth pādās 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 आचा मुक्तेप्रव आचा मुक्तिकाल in these pādās 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 वरम ("hated") is supplemented in the phrase and interpreted as "should not release hatred against him. One should not get angry with him.” (Other modern translations of the Dhammapada in English, German, French, Japanese etc., read these pādās 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 ज्युति in these
phrases means "loses its meaning,angeiren."(7) Interpreting √ 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)

Extending the fourth pāda of the parallel verse in Pārma Dhammapāda 46 as y' aṣa cāsāna mucūṭāci, while at the same time taking anna in this pāda as a Prakrit accusative plural form of Skt. anna ("life"), Gustav Roth considers that anna √ muc therefore means "to deprive of life, kill" just the same as Skt. prāṇām √ 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 (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. mucuita "flies, escapes from"

All the above-mentioned interpretations present a common difficulty in understanding the phrase aṣa (Skt. aṣa) √ muc.

The verb √ muc with middle endings, used with ablative, instrumental or genitive forms, sometimes means "to free one's self, escape from."(12) The word Pā. mucūṭa (Skt. mucūṭa) in the second pāda, which is an optative form with a middle ending, is probably one such example. The form mucuita, in the fourth pāda, can be taken as an example of the active form used in a middle sense "flies, escapes from."(13) A similar usage of this verb is found in the Mahābhārata 128:5 (yādātātya yādāttātya mucīciceti "the sick recover [lit. escape] from sickness") and in the Dhammapāda 385 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 ."

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(7) Weber 1860: 82, note (3). He translates the verse in question as follows: "Man den 'nem Brahman' nicht Gewalt, und der 'nem nicht los auf ihn!' Weh' dem, der 'nem Brahman' erzählt. Weh' diesem, wenn er auf ihn stürzt!"


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


(12) cf. MW, i.e., muc.

(13) The confusion between active and middle forms is widely seen not only in Middle Indic but also in Sanskrit; cf. BHS 3.7.108.

(14) Mahābhārata 3:508, 6-9. Elderton 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" (BHS §37.16).

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Its parallels in the Čandāraṇī Dhammapada etc. may be understood also in the same way.\(^{18}\)

In the Akāśānukāra Sūtra, this verse is quoted as a dharme-pada 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.\(^{107}\)

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. putthakāṇya putta / Pā. puttakāṇya putta / BHS, puttamaṇiṣṭāputra “foul-smelling, bastard”

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

2.1. Pā. putthakāṇya putta

[Jataka I 335.6-9:]

yato viluttā ca hatā ca gāvo daddāhi ni ghehue jano ca nito

ātrhābāyaṃ putthakāṇya putta khoruvaraṃ dependence vedayanto

“Having robbed, slain castle, burnt houses and captured people, the putthakāṇya putta, then, came back, boasting a drum loudly.”\(^{108}\)

\(^{107}\) More than a century ago, Karl Eugen Neumann translated the verse in question in the same way as the present author does.

“Man greift keinen Heiligen an, / Doch, angegriffen, flieht er nicht; / Weh! Dem, der einen Heiligen schlägt, / Und Weh! auch ihm, der jenen flieht" (Neumann: 1893: 97).

\(^{108}\) In the Chinese and Tibetan translations of the Udānaṃga (see note [1]), the Sanskrit word सुवर्ण्यतां puttaṇamaṇिः suvaṇṇatāṃ puttaṇamaṇiḥ is rendered as बल ("vulture, less go"). IB "chandrami", वदेष पर्वत ("chapel") and वदेष परु... पुरु (ib), showing that these translators also did not understand this Indian word correctly.


\(^{110}\) Cf. "Nachdem geraubt die Kühe und gejagt, verbrannt die Häuser, weggeführt die Menschen, de komme zurück den Sohn zum Tod des Sohnes, indem er laut die Tore und tief erstehlos" (Darm, Jatakan I 350). "He gave the robbers time to drive and slay the castle, burn the houses, capture the king, and then with drums a-beating, home he marched, — a son no more, for such a son is dead." (Joshua I 202).
Sāvatthī-pañcikāni 133, 14-15:
Sakkho "gantabha purta-batāya purte"(119) ti te pādesu gāhetvā Sineru-pāde khippace(120)
("Saying: 'Capture the pattabhatya pure,' Sakkho caught them by their feet
and threw them down at the foot of Mt. Sineru.")
dh. I 146, 15-20:
te deveti parijitā palajjanta isamam assampadana gacchantā(121) "Sakkho imbei saddhiṃ muñcthetvā ambe nāseti. gantabha purta-batāya purte ti(122) kuptat assama-pāde pātisāyaha-cakkanama-sāilletā(123) vaddhamacchante(124)
"As they (i.e., anurā), 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),
Sakkho expelled us. Capture the pattabhatya pure,' and so they destroyed water pitchers, cloisters, the hall etc. in the
hermitage."

2.2. Pa. pattamattaya purta
Maghibhā-Nākaya 1524, 1-2:
ime pan' ajirikā pattamattaya purata attanāna c' eva ukkamanseti pare ca
vambhentāi
"But these Ajirikas, who are pattamattaya puras, praise themselves and despise
others."(125)

2.3. Traditional interpretations
Though modern translators have tried to explain meanings and etymologies of these
phrases,(126) they remain unclear, which may be partly due to the confusing explanations.

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(119) I emended the reading sata-batāya note in this way on the basis of that in some manuscripts, cited in the footnote of the Pali Text Society edition. For the pt. alternation, which attests from the similarity between these two letters in the Brāhmi script, see EV I, p. 134 (at Th 60), EV II, p. 56 (at Th 61), GD II, p. 214 (at Sn 355).

(120) This sentence is quoted in the Śrīvatāgaha, p. 326, II, 25-27. The Jātaka contains the same story (5, 202), yet the actual expression in question is not found there.

(121) I emended the reading gacchantā — the Śrīvatāgaha (ākā) 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 anumaddhāna, used with the verb c' yante ("go, go"), expresses the route of movement, cf. Sen 1953: §21 = 1995: 280, von Hahn 1968: §125.

(122) I emended the reading sata-batāya note of the PTS edition in this way on the basis of that in some manuscripts.

(123) Instead of sāilletā ("sāilletā"), purasattā ("a hut of leaves") is used in the Śrīvatāgaha, which fits the context better.

(124) This sentence is quoted in the Śrīvatāgaha, p. 330, II, 9-13.

(125) Nāyakari (1995: 628) translates this sentence as follows: "But those Ajirikas, those mothers’ dead sons, lead themselves and disparage others." Cf. loc.cit., p. 1201, n. 708.

by the Pāli commentators on the texts cited above.

†祇陀 I 355, 12-14:
"puttabhatāya putto" ti hetuputtāya putto nīlājato ti attbo.
chiṇnavibhīsappassā bhātā māma u nāthi iti, so tassā jīvantu pi
puttabhatāya putto māma hoti
"Puttabhatāya 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 puttabhatāya putto (a son of a woman whose son was killed)."

Maghīmaṇukāyasāhagāthikā III 235, 4-7:
"puttamattaya puttā" ti so kira imam bhūvanām metā añi jīvikā[257] matā
nāmātī saṁhāti bātā evam ábhā. ayam b'ettha attbo — añi jīvikā matā nāma
teva matā puttamattaya hoti iti "añi jīvikā puttamattaya puttā" nāma b'asti
"On 'puttamattaya putta.' Having heard this teaching, the idea occurred to him (i.e., the wanderer, Sanākha) that the añi jīvikas were dead, and so he uttered thus. This (expression) means as follows: Because the añi jīvikas were 'dead' and their mother, therefore, had dead sons, they were thus called puttamattaya puttā ('sons of a woman whose sons are dead')."

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

The Četasavatata of the so-called Mahāsāṃśāntivadāna tells a story of a servant girl as follows: The famous female lay follower, Vīśākhā, invited the Buddha and his disciples to her house for a meal. When it was ready, a servant girl was sent to the monastery, Pāṇārāma, to fetch them. Arriving there, she saw, through a crack in the door, naked monks baring. Having seen this, she thought: "The saints must have already set out and this monastery has been seized by Jīvikas, putramukhikāpurta"[258] (MSV[D] II 83). The expression putramukhikāpurta[259] is used as an epithet of an Añi jīvika, just like puttamattaya putta in the Mahīma-Nikāya cited above.

The Čādāpakṣavadāna in the Dīrghāvatadāna relates a story about Čādāpanabhak, one of the Buddha’s disciples as follows: The Buddha once appointed Čādāpanabhak 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

[257] 1.L. añi jīvikā
[259] 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. Sūsinjōu 十誦經), the word is translated as 'kārma-rivika people' (Zanbī, vol. 23, No. 1435, 1956), while the Tibetan translation of the Četasavatata reads 'sāntaputra' "a hunter" (Derge blockprint edition of the lla's "Dal ba goh, ga, 85B).
座位(basker) for him and also invite many chieks so that this uneducated parameskipiperu will dare not instruct us.\(^{10}\) In this story, Cidapanaka was disparagingly called "parameskipiperu."\(^{11}\)

As to this word, F. Edgerton assumes that it means "basket" or the like\(^ {12}\) its literal meaning should be "child-baskets, child," i.e., "foundling." (BHSID, s.v.)

The Diyaviadana tells that Cidapanaka was left in a small alley (pantakki) 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."\(^ {13}\) Hence, Edgerton's assumption is quite convincing.

2.5. *putra-mata* + *putra > Pa. putramatayā putta > Pā. puttatabhāyiya putta

Thus, in the case of the story in the Cevavavata, which we have just mentioned above, the *Ajivika* sectaries are accused of being *parameskipiperu* meaning "foundlings." The Pali expressions *putramatayā putta*, which is used also in an abusive sense towards the *Ahīvaka* sectaries in the Majjhima-Nikaya, has most probably the same meaning and origin as *parameskipiperu*.

I assume that *Pā. puttatabhāyiya*, like BHS, *parameskipi*, is derived from *putra-mata* ("child-basket") and that the word *mata* ("basket") might have been taken wrongly as a Middle Indic form of Skt. *mata* ("deed")\(^ {14}\) and replaced by its usual Middle Indic form *mata*. Thus, *putra-mata* might have resulted in a new form *putra-mata*, from which, then, *putramatayā* might have been created, possibly due to its association with Pā.

\(^{10}\) Dīvyā. 493, 12f. Cf. Pānpīla 1811. 118.

\(^{11}\) Dīvyā. 493, 20. This story is found also in the *Vineyard of the Soul* of the so-called Mādāsūravattīhisī, which is preserved only in the Chinese and Tibetan. The word *parameskipiperu* is rendered as *he han ma tē hu o a of a female child-baster* in the later (Daśa bā rāmu par yeel pa, Derge: blu' kha' gyur, je, 6982). The Chinese translation lacks a parallel word (Tangla, vol. 23, No. 1442, 795c3). Stories about Cidapanaka's preaching to monks are also found in Yīn IV 54: 5a; Tanla, vol. 22, No. 1421, 4542a, 465c, 46b. Cf. de la Rue, 1845, 467b, 5b. de vol. 23, No. 1435, 80c et al., etc., but these are quite different from that cited above and, therefore, there is no parallel to the word *parameskipiperu*.

\(^{12}\) Cf. BHSID, s.v. māta, mata, mātā, māte, mātā, mātaka, mātāhā, CDBAL, 10233, mātā, māta "basket."

As these are of Dravidian origin, there are many various forms (cf. EWALa, s.v. māta).

\(^{13}\) Dīvyā. 494f. (= Daśa bā rāmu par yeel pa, Peking, vol. 43, p. 33, 3, 36) Derge ble' kha' gyur, je, 61469, Tänla, vol. 23, No. 1442, 794a62f; cf. also Pānpīla 1811: 117) tells the following story: Once, there was a Sṛhasana couple in Śravasti, who had a baby, after having had newborn children several times. They left him at a large crossing (kṣāyadikājātaka) in order to let him grow any posing ascetic or monk who might have him a long life. He survived and was named Mākṣipamaka ("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 (pantakki) instead, but this baby also survived and was called Cidapanaka ("Little Wayman"). This story in the Diṇāviadana seems to be an adaptation of a legend preserved in Pāli literature (Dīya 2 199f, Ja 1 194f), which relates that he was the youngest son of the daughter of a rich merchant, who became intimate with a slave and fell in love with him. She gave birth to their first child by way of the same years later their second again in the same situation. These brothers were therefore named Mākṣipamaka ("Great Wayman") or "Elēa Wayman") and Cidapanaka ("Little Wayman" or "Younger Wayman") respectively. Cf. Dīya 1 299, fl. 1 154, s.v. Cidapanaka Tārakā, Amāru, s.v. Cidapanaka. Both of these stories show us the brothers' obscure origins and I suspect that they are actually foundlings.

\(^{14}\) Cf. the Aṅkāsaman Inscription from Śrāvastīgarhimaṣa < Skt. *mata*; Pā. *mata* < Skt. *mata*.
matayā ("of mother"); a genitive form of mātār). Replacing mātār ("dead") by its synonym hama ("killed"), someone probably changed pattammatayā further to pattabhātayā, which is as far from its original form and meaning.

In conclusion, Pa. pattammatayā pattu, pattabhātayā pattu as well as "2HS. paramuktipūra therefore might have originally meant "foundling" and were used as abusive expressions.


Both the Samañña Nikāya and Dīgha Nikāya relate that there was once a battle between the gods and the Auras, in which the latter’s king, Viśrapti, by name, was captured. In Buddhist Sanskrit literature, the king’s name appears as Vamacirti, Vamacirta or Vaimacirta. The Mahābhārata and other Indian epics also depict this battle and here he is called Vepacati, who was killed in the end by Indra, the king of the gods.

As to the relationship of these various forms of the Aura’s king’s name, Prayūkṣi has already published an article, in which he mainests that they go back to the Iranian *astma-čītra ("born from rock"). According to him, the developments of these forms are as follows: Iranian *astma-čītra > BHS. Vamacirta, Vamaciret etc. > Pā. Vepacati > Skt. Viśrapti. He, thus, thinks that this king is the Indian counterpart of the Iranian god, Mitra, who is thought to have been born from a rock.

The word Viśrapti and its corrupted form, Vepacati, are found also as names of preceptors in the Bhadārayanāya Upaniṣad, Sūgapaṇa Brāhmaṇa etc. (see PW, s.v.v.). It would not be strange if this word, meaning literally "sharp-witted one," was used also as a name of an Aura.

Contrary to Prayūkṣi’s assumption, I assure that all the Indian forms of the Aura’s name go back to Viśrapti: Skt. Viśrapti > "Vepacati" > Pā. Vepacati > BHS. Vamacirta, Vamaciret etc.

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[SN I.231; DN II.299, v.12.]


[5] These three forms are hyperasamkrt.

[5] E. Kern seems to have had similar thoughts, as he wrote the following note concerning the form Visrapti in the Siddhārthapadavartaśāstra. "This is a strong Sanskritization of a Prākrit Visrākti, Pā. Vepacati, the proper Sanskrit equivalent is Viṣrapti." (Kern 1884: 6, fn.2.)

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