

Bauddhavadana Notes on Buddhist Vocabulary

Jonathan A. SILK

For Akira Yuyama, word collector and much else

This is the first of a projected occasional series of notes on Buddhist vocabulary. The first two items here concern suggested corrections to Edgerton's monumental *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, the third a Sanskrit word unknown to dictionaries, while the remaining two items concern Chinese Buddhist translation vocabulary.

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I. *Vemātrī* / *vemātrī*

In the *editio princeps* of the *Mahāvastu* we find the following sentence:¹ *tehi dāni kumārehi mā mo jāti-saṃdoṣaṃ bhaviṣyatīti jāti-saṃdoṣa-bhayena svakasokā yeva mātrīyo bhaginīyo parasparasya vivāhitā*. Edgerton suggested that the manuscript reading *mātrīyo* should be kept, and proposed translating the final portion of the sentence “(the princes) gave to each other in marriage each their own sisters by the same mother (thus avoiding the marriage of any with his own co-uterine sister).”² Other interpretations had already been offered by Senart and Jones. Senart suggested:³ “dans la crainte de compromettre la pureté de leur race, ils épousèrent leurs propres soeurs, chacun en choisissant une d’une autre mère que lui.” Jones translated:⁴ “Those young princes said to themselves: ‘There

¹ Senart 1882-1897: i.351.2-4, reprised on 8-9.

² Edgerton 1953 s.v. *mātrī*. What Edgerton means by “co-uterine” here is “full sister,” that is, having both parents in common, but see below.

³ Senart 1882-1897: 1.625.

must be no corruption in our race.’ And from fear of such a corruption they each married a half-sister born of a different mother.”

The palm-leaf manuscript recently published by Yuyama may assist us here. It reads in this passage and its reprise a few lines below not *svakasokā yeva mātryo* but *svakasokā vemātriyo / vemātryo*.⁵ The expression is attested in both Pāli and Sanskrit. In the former we find *vemātika bhāginī* in the *Jātaka*, when the prince Udayabhadda is forced to wed his half-sister Udayabhaddā.⁶

udayabhaddam alānkāretvā¹ tassa santike ṭhapesum | sā tam suvaṇṇarūpakam²
abhibhavitvā aṭṭhāsi | atha nesam³ anicchamānānam ñeva vemātikam bhaginim⁴
udayabhaddakumārim aggamahesim katvā bodhisattam rajjam abhisinimsu | te pana
dve pi brahmacariyavāsam eva vasimsu | ... ubho ekagabbhe vasamānā⁵ pi lobhasena
indriyāni bhinditvā aññamaññam na olokesum |

1) PTS: alānkaritvā 2) PTS: suvaṇṇarūpam 3) PTS: tesam 4) PTS: vemātikabhaginim 5) PTS
vasamanā

Adorning Udayabhaddā, they set her in his presence, and she stood there outshining that golden image. Then even against the couple’s wishes they made his agnatic half-sister the princess Udayabhaddā his principal consort, and anointed the bodhisatta [that is, Prince Udayabhadda] in the rulership. But the two of them lived together in perfect celibacy. ... Even though both were living in a single chamber, mastering their senses they did not look upon each other with desire.

In Sanskrit, in the same story as that in the *Mahāvastu*, the tale of the origins of the Śākya clan,⁷ we find the sage Kapila instructing the sons of King Virūdhaka Īkṣvāku, *svakasokā bhāginīs tyaktvā vaimātrkābbhir bhāginībhiḥ sārddham vāsam kalpayata*, “Avoiding your full sisters, cohabit with your agnatic half-sisters.”⁸

In light of the new manuscript evidence, we obtain an understandable text which, moreover, has the virtue of presenting a vocabulary item attested also in Pāli and Sanskrit. I therefore believe that the passage should be understood as follows: “Those princes said: ‘There must be no corruption of our lineage.’ And out of fear of corruption of the lineage, they gave to each other in marriage their own agnatic half-sisters.”⁹ With the

⁴ Jones 1949-1956: 1.296, with n. 3.

⁵ Yuyama 2001: 55, plate of folio 108b3, 4.

⁶ *Jātaka* 458 (Udaya). Fausbøll 1877-1896: iv.105,9-16 = Burmese Sixth Council edition (Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 73 [Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1998]): 94.9-14.

⁷ See Silk Forthcoming.

⁸ *Samghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, edited in Gnoli 1977: 29.28-29.

⁹ Perhaps the *yeva* of Senart’s edition represents a scribal attempt to compensate for a mis-understood *ve*, or even *va*, which stood here in some archetype.

exception of the fact that they seem to gloss over the causative nature of the participle *vivāhita*, the translations of both Senart and Jones appear to be quite correct, grasping the true meaning in spite of the corrupt readings before them.

I do not, I confess, entirely understand Edgerton’s rendering, but he too may be after the same thing. Based, however, on his wrong assumption concerning **mātrī*, his “by the same mother” cannot be accepted. The correct meaning of *vemātrī/vemātr* is “agnatic half-sister,” that is half-sister with a common father but different mothers. The entry for “mātrī” in Edgerton’s dictionary should, correspondingly, be deleted, and a new lemma for **vemātrī / vemātr* entered, with reference to the standard Sanskrit and Pāli forms of the word.

II. **Parikarati*: A ghost word

The *Pūrṇāvadāna* of the *Divyāvadāna* contains the following:¹⁰

āyusmān mahāmaudgalyāyanaḥ saṃlakṣayati | pūrvam uktaṃ bhagavatā
duṣkarakāraḥ hi bhikṣavaḥ putrasya mātāpitarāv āpyāyakaḥ poṣakaḥ saṃvardhakaḥ
stanyasya dātārau citrasya jambudvīpasya darśayitārau | ekenāmsena putro mātaram
dvitīyena pitarām pūrṇavarṣaṣaṭam parikared yad vāsyām mahāpṛthivyām maṇayo
muktā vaidūryasaṅkhaśīlāpravādam rajatām jātārūpam āsmagarbho musāragalvo
lohitikā dakṣiṇāvarta ity evamrūpe vā vividhaiśvaryādhipatyē pratiṣṭhāpayan neyatā
putreṇa mātāpitaroḥ kṛtam vā syād upakṛtam vā | yas tv asāv aśrāddham mātāpitarām
śraddhāsaṃpadi samādāpayati vinayati niveśayati pratiṣṭhāpayati duḥśīlam śīlasaṃpadi
matsariṇam tyāgasāṃpadi duṣprajñam prajñāsaṃpadi samādāpayati vinayati niveśayati
pratiṣṭhāpayati iyatā putreṇa mātāpitaroḥ kṛtam vā syād upakṛtam veti |

The verb printed in the *editio princeps* as *parikaret* is discussed by Edgerton.¹¹ Under the lemma “parikarati” he took the word as “possibly denom. to Skt. parikara,” and identified it with Pāli *parikarati*, saying “cited °karoti by PTSD, but all its citations fit the stem in -a-.” He then offered the definition “aids, serves, waits upon.” I suggest rather that we conjecturally emend very slightly to **parikarset*, as a form of *parikarṣati* (or *parikarṣayati*), “carry around.” This suggestion is supported by Chinese *dān* 担, and probably, although less certainly, by Tibetan *bzhag*, the terms we find in the corresponding passages in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya from which the *Divyāvadāna* drew its account. Interestingly, this understanding was already adopted by Burnouf,¹² who translated from

¹⁰ Cowell and Neil 1886: 51.18-52.3. The text is found in Tibetan (Derge Kanjur 1, ’dul ba, kha, 5b1ff) and Chinese (T. 1448 [XXIV] 16a18ff [juan 4]) as well. The text was translated by Burnouf 1844: 270f; compare also Tatelman 2000: 77ff. The Chinese translation was translated into Japanese by Iwamoto 1968: 172ff.

¹¹ Edgerton 1953 s.v. parikarati.

manuscripts, working decades before the publication of the first edition. Burnouf's manuscripts were not made use of by the editors, however, and we cannot know precisely how he read the word. There are, however, some complications.

In a passage in the *Āṅguttara-Nikāya* we find the duty a child owes his parents expressed as follows: *ekena bhikkhave amsena mātaram parihareyya ekena amsena pitaram parihareyya* ..., “if, monks, one were to carry his mother around on one shoulder and his father around on the other ...,” the text going on to say that even centuries of this and other sorts of good treatment would not repay the debt.¹³ The verb here, *parihareyya*, is, of course, the optative of *pariharati*, which also exists as such in Buddhist Sanskrit. Although Edgerton defines it (s.v.) as “protects, guards, looks after,” he in fact cites a passage perfectly parallel to the Pāli *Āṅguttara-Nikāya* example, this from the *Avadānaśataka*: *ya ekenāmsena putro mātaram dvitīyena pitaram pūrṇam varṣasatam parihareyyad vā*¹⁴ The Pāli commentary to the *Āṅguttara-Nikāya*, the *Manorathapūraṇī*,¹⁵ explains the usage as follows: *ekena bhikkhave amsena mātaram parihareyyā ti ekasmim amsakūṭe thapetvā mātaram paṭijaggeyya*, “the expression ‘if, monks, one were to carry his mother around on one shoulder’ means ‘if one were to carry his mother having placed her on his shoulder.’” Here the verb *parihareyyā* is glossed as *paṭijaggeyya*, the present indicative of which is *paṭijagati*, Buddhist Sanskrit *pratijāgati*.¹⁶

From another point of view, regarding the Tibetan equivalent of the postulated **parikarṣet*, in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* the expression *cailoṇḍukam iva sīrasā parikarṣeḥ* (“should carry him around on his head like a turban”) is rendered in Tibetan with *mgo la thod bzhin du thogs shing*, in which *thogs* rather than *bzhag* is found.¹⁷ (The meaning is confirmed by the commentary, which glosses *dhārayeḥ*.¹⁸) In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, *parikarṣaṇa* is translated *yongs su brungs ba*,¹⁹ in which the idea of protection is emphasized. While there is no necessary reason we should expect consistency in the Tibetan translations of the Indic word, the term may well benefit from further study.

In sum, I propose as a translation of the *Pūrṇāvadāna* passage the following:

The Reverend Mahā-Maudgalyāyana thought to himself: “Previously the Blessed

¹² Burnouf 1844: 270: “Supposons, d’un côté, un fils qui passe cent années entières à porter sa mère sur ses épaules. ...”

¹³ Morris and Hardy 1885–1900: i.61,30–62,1 (II.4.2).

¹⁴ Speyer 1906–1909: 1.205, 1–2 (Maitrakanyaka).

¹⁵ Burmese Sixth Council edition, Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā 42 (Dhammagiri, Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1995) 20.7–8.

¹⁶ Noriyuki Kudo, in preparing this paper for the press, kindly brought to my attention the following expression in the *Karmavibhaṅga* (Kudo 2004: 122.2 = 123.2): *yo bhikkhavo mātāpitaram/pitarau skandhena grhya* ..., as well as his note 39 (pp. 264–265), which also provides examples of parallels in Chinese to the expression “carrying one’s parents on one’s shoulders.”

¹⁷ Wogihara 1932–1935: 943.15–16 = Derge Kanjur 12, *shes phyin brgyad stong pa, ka*, 267b7.

¹⁸ Wogihara 1932–1935: 961.7.

¹⁹ Hirakawa et al. 1973: 226.

One said: ‘Mother and father, monks, do what is difficult for a son, they are nurturers, nourishers, fosterers, givers of milk, teachers of multifarious ways of the world. Should a son carry his mother on one shoulder and his father on the other for a full hundred years, or were he to establish them in any variety of wealth or sovereignty [giving them] all the jewels, pearls, lapis lazuli, coral, conches, gems, gold, silver, emerald, sapphire, ruby, and right spiral conch of the whole earth,²⁰ such a son would not do anything for his parents nor would he benefit them. But one who instigates, guides, directs to and establishes his unbelieving parents in the wealth of faith, or instigates, guides, directs to and establishes [parents] who are ill-behaved in the wealth of good behavior, selfish [parents] in the wealth of renunciation, ignorant [parents] in the wealth of wisdom, such a son would do something for his parents, he would benefit them.’

III. *Vajrāgni*

The word *vajrāgni* is not defined in Sanskrit dictionaries known to me,²¹ but occurs twice in the *Ratnagotravibhāga*.²² However, the word is far from unknown, appearing already in the *Mahābhārata*.²³ A number of other Sanskrit examples were brought to my attention by Harunaga Isaacson, whose note I quote here, before going on to discuss a passage in which an alternative interpretation seems more likely.

In the *Saundarananda* of Aśvaghōṣa, in describing Nanda’s wife Sundarī when Nanda has left to follow the Buddha and has not returned as promised, the poet says of her *sā sundarī śvāsacalodarī hi vajrāgnisambhinnadarī guheva*, which Johnston translates “For Sundarī, with her bosom straining with sobs like a cave whose opening has been split by the fiery thunderbolt.”²⁴ In the ‘Ur’-*Skandapurāṇa*, concerning a member of Śiva’s army, Viṭpati, releasing an arrow against Vṛtra, we find (141.3cd): *mumoca vajrāgnisamam ripukṣayakarām śaram*. A verse from the *Mokṣopāya* (*vairāgyaprakaraṇa* 16.47) reads:

nāsidhārā na vajrāgnir na taptāyaḥkaṇārciṣaḥ |

tathā tīkṣṇā yathā brahmaṇs tṛṣṇeyam bṛdi samsthitā |

Finally, in Bhavabhūti’s *Mahāvīracarita* 3.21d we find *vajrāgnir drumam iva bhasmasātkaromi* (where the object of *bhasmasātkaromi* is *ātatāyīnam* in pāda b).

In the context of an email discussion of this word, which prompted Isaacson’s kind contribution, Arlo Griffiths pointed to a passage in the *Divyāvadāna*’s *Kuṇālāvadāna*,²⁵ in

²⁰ My translation of the list of precious substances here makes no attempt to determine the exact identification of each item, if indeed this is even possible.

²¹ See however Turner 1966: 653b, who cites the Old Awadhī word *bajāgi*, “fire caused by lightning.” It is also listed but not defined by Wogihara 1964–1974: *69b.

²² Johnston 1950: 118.18, 106.3.

²³ Critical edition 8.12.52c. I owe my knowledge of this to Arthur Karp (email 11 Mar. 2004).

²⁴ *Saundarananda* 6.33ab, Johnston 1928: 40, 1932: 33–34.

which we have the half-verse: *na śastravajrāgnivīṣāṇi pannagāḥ kurvanti pīḍām nabhaso 'vikāriṇaḥ*.²⁶ Although in all the examples cited above *vajrāgni* appears to be a single word, it is questionable whether that is the case here. Hertel took it as two words,²⁷ which is also the understanding of a Chinese version of the same text (非刀劍害、亦非金剛、非火、非毒、非怨惡惡蛇),²⁸ translated by Przulski:²⁹ “Ce n’est pas le glaive qui blesse; ce n’est pas non plus la foudre ni le feu, ni le poison, ni le serpent hostile et cruel.” The Tibetan translation of the *Kuṇḍālavadāna* has something different:³⁰ *mtshon dang rdo rje dug dang sbrul rnams kyis || nam mkha' 'gyur zhing gnod byed mi nus so ||*. Here *mtshon* = *śastra*, *rdo rje* = *varja* (*agni*) and *dug* = *viṣa*. The translators appear to have skipped *agni*, unless they considered the compound identical in meaning with *varja* alone. In this *Kuṇḍālavadāna* passage, then, *vajrāgni* seems to be a *dvandva*. Any future dictionary should, therefore, list both possibilities, giving both the meanings “thunderbolt” and “cudgel and fire” (or some such).

IV. *Rānbui* 染穢 and associated vocabulary

We find a striking sentence in the **Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā*, narrating the story of Mahādeva:³¹ 其子長大、染穢於母, “The son had grown up and defiled his mother.” Here the verb *rānbui* 染穢, to defile, has mother, *mū* 母, as its direct object, a relation which is clearly marked by *yú* 於. The word *rānbui* 染穢 is relatively rare (as is its inversion, *huirān* 穢染). When *rānbui* 染穢 is used in the Chinese *Dirghāgama*, the expression *yóu bǐ rānbuixiǎng* 由彼染穢想 is equivalent to *apariyositasamkappa* in the Pāli version,³² a word which the *Critical Pāli Dictionary* defines as “whose aspirations are unsatisfied.”³³ Okayama,³⁴ however, suggests that the Chinese means simply “defiled” (*kegare*), and he translates the line “*kano kegareshi omoi ni yorite*,”³⁵ “through that defiled thought.” The latter sense is to be noticed more in the equivalence in Narendrayāśas’s translation of the *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, where in verse 10 of the first chapter we find 無染穢心趣佛道 for what in Sanskrit reads *asamkliṣṭena cittena buddhajñānam gavesate*,³⁶ “to

²⁵ Via email 12 Mar. 2004.

²⁶ Cowell & Neil 1886: 416.20 = Mukhopadhyaya 1963: 121.3. The same verse with the same reading is also found in the *Aśokāvadānamālā*, Bongard-Levin and Volkova 1965, verse 261. There is no equivalent in chapter 59 of Kṣemendra’s *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*.

²⁷ Hertel 1908: 263.

²⁸ T. 2042 (L) 109c23-24 (*juan* 3).

²⁹ Przulski 1923: 292.

³⁰ Derge Tanjur 4145, 'dul ba, su 237b2.

³¹ T. 1545 (XXVII) 510c27 (*juan* 99).

³² T. 1 (14) (I) 65b11 (*juan* 10), Rhys Davids and Carpenter 1890-1911: ii.287,7 (21.2.9).

³³ Trenckner et al. 1924- s.v.

³⁴ Okayama et al. 2000: 300, n. 140.

³⁵ Okayama et al. 2000: 147.

strive after the wisdom of a buddha with undefiled mind.” A sense of disgust is more strongly brought out in a verse from the same *Samādhirāja-sūtra*, *kāmānaṃ kāraṇaṃ bālāḥ striyaṃ sevanti pūtikām | pūtikām gati gacchanti patante [te]na durgatim ||*,³⁷ “Fools driven by lusts attend on putrid women. They go on the path of those putrid [women], and through that fall into evil destinies [after death].” This is quoted in the *Sūtrasamuccaya* as follows:³⁸ 愚者耽著諸欲事 親近女人染穢身 還當向彼染穢中 隨業墮在諸惡趣. We might conclude from this that, first, we cannot with any confidence suggest a good Sanskrit equivalent for *rānbui* 染穢, and second, that it certainly appears to be used euphemistically, in perhaps something close to the same sense that is conveyed in English by the expression “he defiled her.” It is interesting that it is only the example from the **Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā* which uses *rānbui* 染穢 as a verb.

Although no direct connection between the words can be established, we should note that Sanskrit *dūṣaṇa* appears in something very much like the same meaning.³⁹ In addition to Buddhist examples, see for instance the *Mahābhārata* verse (1.57.61-62): *tvasamyogāc ca duṣyeta kanyābhāvo || kanyātve dūṣite cāpi katham śakṣye dvijottama |*, where the reference is to the violation of virginity.

V. Two Chinese Kinship Terms Unknown to Dictionaries: *qīnmèi* 親妹 and *qīnzi* 親姊

The term *qīnmèi* 親妹 is not recorded in the *Hanyu Dacidian*, and taken by Morohashi as a modern word, defined as “elder sister.”⁴⁰ However, the word is used several times by the Zhou-Tang period translator Yijing, in contexts in which it seems to mean only sister(s) in general, either specifically full sister, or generically sister. In a *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya Vinayakṣudrakavastu* passage the expression *de dag gis der rang rang gi sring mo btang ste | mas dben gyi sring mo rnams dang lhan cig 'tsho gnas 'khod do* is paralleled in Chinese with 遂捨親妹取異母者.⁴¹ Here *qīnmèi* 親妹 clearly corresponds to *rang rang gi sring mo*, an established translation of Sanskrit *svakasvakā bhaginīḥ*. The correspondence, however, need not always be so strict. In the *Pravrajyāvastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* we find the expression *'di ni kbo bo'i chung ma ma yin gyi | 'di ni kbo bo'i sring mo yin no ||*, to which corresponds Chinese 此非我妻、是親妹也.⁴² Here *qīnmèi* 親妹

³⁶ T. 639 (XV) 549b10 (*juan* 1); Matsunami 1975: 229.1 = Dutt 1939-1959: ii.1.13,8.

³⁷ Dutt 1939-1959: ii.2.414,1-2.

³⁸ T. 1635 (XXXII) 58a4-5 (*juan* 4).

³⁹ On the verb $\sqrt{duṣ}$ in legal literature, which sometimes plays on the dual sense of defiling and defaming, see Hopkins 1925: 41-42 (e.g., *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 1.66cd: *aduṣṭām ca tyajan kanyām dūṣayāṃs tu mṛṣā satam*). Note, incidentally, the Latin usage of *stuprare*, “to debauch or ravish,” in descriptions of incest, mentioned by Archibald 2001: xiii.

⁴⁰ Morohashi 1955-1960: 10.334d (34918.88).

⁴¹ Derge Kanjur, 'dul ba, da 202a6-7 = T. 1451 (XXIV) 379a23-24 (*juan* 34).

⁴² Derge Kanjur 1, 'dul ba, ka 41a7, critically edited in Eimer 1983: 108.17-18 = T. 1444 (XXIII) 1029a7 (*juan* 2).

corresponds simply to *sring mo*, sister.

The certainly related *qīnzi* 親妹, as far as I know not recorded at all in dictionaries, appears to be equally rare, if not rarer. I have found it only in a tenth century translation of Faxian,⁴³ and in an eighth-century translation of Bodhiruci.⁴⁴ In the latter case, the correspondence of the expression as a whole, however, is not clear to me.⁴⁵

Both kinship terms should be entered in future comprehensive dictionaries of Chinese.

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⁴³ T. 191 (III) 937b1 (*juan* 2).

⁴⁴ T. 1092 (XX) 252c14 (*juan* 5).

⁴⁵ Derge Kanjur 686, *rgyud 'bum, ma*, 39b6-7: *sring mo zbes bgyi bas ni dgos pa'i yo byad thams cad tshang bar stobs par 'gyur zhing yan lag sbong bar bgyid do* ||, T. 1092 (XX) 252c14-15 (*juan* 5): 若乞龍女為親姉者。宮中寶具衣服甘露飲食亦盡賞賜。

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