
*A comparison of the Pāli and Chinese versions of the
Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta, a collection of early Buddhist
discourses on the priestly Brāhmaṇas*

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Abstract

This article first briefly examines the textual structure of the Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta of the Pāli Saṃyutta-nikāya in conjunction with two other versions preserved in Chinese translation in Taishō vol. 2, nos 99 and 100. Then it compares the main teachings contained in the three versions. These three versions of this collection on the subject of the Brāhmaṇas represent three different early Buddhist schools within the Sthavira branch. This comparative study of these three different versions focuses on three major topics: the outcaste, the dharmas that are good for a layperson, and alms. It reveals similarities and significant differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the historical/critical study of early Buddhist doctrine in this area.

Introduction

The *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (abbreviated SN) is represented in Chinese by two versions, one in the *Za Ahan Jing* 雜阿含經 (*Saṃyuktāgama*, abbreviated SA, Taishō vol. 2, no. 99), the other in the *Bieyi Za Ahan Jing* 別譯雜阿含經 (Additional Translation of *Saṃyuktāgama*, abbreviated ASA, Taishō vol. 2, no. 100). This *saṃyutta/xiangying* 相應 is a collection of miscellaneous discourses on the subject of the *Brāhmaṇas* (usually termed Brahmins/Brahmans in English). The *Brāhmaṇas* are the traditional Indian sacrificial priests, having their own blood-lineage and regarding themselves as the highest social class. They contrast with the *Śramaṇas* (P. *Samaṇa*), renunciants, such as the Buddhist *bhikkhus* (P. *bhikkhu*), who are homeless wanderers living on alms. The discourses comprised in the Pāli and Chinese versions of the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* are an early textual record of how the Buddha responded to the religious tradition, position, practice, and faith of the priestly social class, the *Brāhmaṇas*.

In this paper I first briefly examine the textual structure of the three versions. Then I compare the main teachings contained in them, making use of new editions of SA: Yin Shun's *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 [Combined Edition of *Sūtra* and *Śāstra* of the *Saṃyuktāgama*] (abbreviated CSA) and the Foguang *Tripitaka Za Ahan Jing* (abbreviated FSA). This will reveal similarities and significant differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the study of early Buddhist teachings in this area.¹

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¹This article is one in a series of comparative studies, of which the previous articles were, *Kosala Saṃyutta* (2006) in *The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, and on *Bhikkhu Saṃyutta* (2006) and *Vāṅṡa Saṃyutta* (2007) in *Buddhist Studies Review*.

I. Textual structure

The Pāli *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* is the seventh of the eleven *saṃyuttas* comprised in the *Saḡātha Vāgga* of SN. The two corresponding Chinese versions, contained in SA and ASA, were translated from now lost Indic-language originals. In the CSA edition the SA version bears the title *Poluomen Xiangying* 婆羅門相應 (*Brāhmaṇa Saṃyukta*, Connected with *Brāhmaṇas*), supplied by the editor, Yin Shun. In earlier editions of SA and ASA, *saṃyukta/xiangying* titles are lacking and the beginning and end of each *saṃyukta* have to be inferred from the *sūtra* contents. The SA counterpart, *Poluomen Xiangying*, of the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta*, is also located in the *Saḡātha Vāgga* of SA, which is titled *Bazhong*² *Song* 八眾誦 (Eight Assemblies Section) in the SA tradition (Choong 2006, p. 62, n. 5). It is the fifth of the eleven *xiangyings* in this *Vāgga* (Choong 2000, pp. 20, 247). The same location – the fifth of the eleven *xiangyings* – applies also to the reconstructed ASA versions.³

The Pāli *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* belongs to the Tāmraśāṭīya school (often called Theravāda), whereas the SA version belongs to the Sarvāstivāda school, and the ASA version may belong to the Kāśyapīya school.⁴ Thus, these three texts represent three different early Buddhist schools, three different versions of the same collection of discourses on *Brāhmaṇas*.

The *Saḡātha Vāgga/Bazhong Song* pertains to the *Geya-aṅga* (P. *Geyya-aṅga*) portion of SN/SA. *Geya* is one of the three *aṅgas* represented in the structure of SN/SA: *Sūtra* (P. *Sutta*) ‘discourse’ (short, simple prose), *Geya* (P. *Geyya*) ‘Stanza’ (verse mixed with prose), and *Vyākaraṇa* (P. *Vēyyākaraṇa*) ‘Exposition’. These three *aṅgas* are the first three of nine types of early Buddhist text (*navaṅga*) classified according to their style and form.⁵ They are regarded by some scholars as historically the earliest ones to have appeared, in sequence, in the formation of the early Buddhist texts (Choong 2000, pp. 9–11, 20, 247–249).⁶

The Pāli *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* comprises twenty-two discourses (SN 7.1–22). Of its Chinese counterparts, SA has thirty-eight discourses (SA 1151–1163, 88–102, 1178–1187) and ASA has thirty-seven (ASA 74–91, 258–268, 92–100). The Pāli *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta*, therefore, has fewer discourses than either of the two Chinese versions.

Two discourses in the Chinese SA and ASA versions (SA 1162, 100 = ASA 85, 266) have no Pāli counterparts. Fourteen discourses in SA and fifteen in ASA (SA 1159, 1163, 89–91, 93–95, 99, 101–102, 1178, 1184–1185 = ASA 82, 86–87, 89–91, 259–261, 265, 267–268, 92, 99, 98) have Pāli counterparts found not in the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* but in other Pāli collections. On the other hand, two of the twenty-two SN discourses (SN 7. 8, 21) have

²Skt. *aṣṭau pariśadaḥ*, P. *aṭṭha parisā*.

³Yin Shun (1971), pp. 670, 672; CSA i, 23, n. 10 (in ‘Za Ahan Jing Bulei zhi Zhengbian 雜阿含經部類之整編 [Re-edition of the Grouped Structure of SA]’).

⁴Choong (2000), pp. 6–7; (2006), p. 62, n. 3.

⁵The remaining six are *Gāthā* ‘Verse’, *Udāna* ‘Exclamation’, *Itiyuktaka* ‘Saying’ (P. *Itivuttaka*), *Jātaka* ‘Birth Stories’, *Adbhūtaḍḍharma* ‘Marvels’ (P. *Abbhutadhamma*) and *Vāidalya* ‘Answers to Questions’ (P. *Vedalla*) (Cf. Choong 2007), p. 36, n. 7.

⁶Recently, Nagasaki Hōjun and Kaji Yōichi in their ‘new Japanese translation of the Chinese SA (Taisho 99)’ (2004), pp. 49–61 indicate clearly that they have no disagreement with Mizuno Kōgen’s highly regarded comments (1988) on Yin Shun’s three-*aṅga* structure of SA (and SN) and thus follow the rearrangement of its fascicles in their translation. Also, MN 122: III 115 and its Chinese counterpart, MA 191: T 1, 739c, mention only these three *aṅgas*. This suggests the possibility that only these three *aṅgas* existed in the period of Early Buddhism, though the original earliest structure and content of the collection are uncertain. For a more conservative interpretation of the *aṅgas* see von Hinüber 1994.

Table 1. Chinese-Pāli correspondences of the *Poluomen Xiangying* (Brāhmaṇa Saṃyukta)

SA (Chinese) (<i>Sarvāstivāda</i>)	ASA (Chinese) (<i>Kāśyapīya</i>)	SN (Pāli) (<i>Tāmasāṭīya</i>)
1151	74 (cf. SA-u 25)	7.3 (1998, I 350) (1884, I 163)
1152	75	7.2 (I 347) (I 161)
1153	76	7.2 (I 347) (I 161)
1154	77	7.4 (I 351) (I 164)
1155	78 (cf. SA-u 7) ⁷	7.16 (I 385) (I 179)
1156	79	7.5 (I 352) (I 164)
1157	80	7.12 (I 373) (I 173)
1158	81	7.1 (I 344) (I 160)
1159	82	None (cf. Sn 3.5 <i>Māgha-sutta</i>)
1160	83	7.7 (I 354) (I 165)
1161	84	7.8 (I 356) (I 166)
1162	85	None
1163	86–87	None (cf. AN 3.51–2 (I 155–6))
88	88	7.19 (I 390) (I 181)
89	89	None (cf. AN 4.39 (II 42))
90	90	None (cf. AN 4.40 (II 43))
91	91	None (cf. AN 8.55 (IV 285–9))
92	258	7.15 (I 381) (I 177)
93	259	None (cf. AN 7.44 (IV 41–6))
94 (cf. MA 148 (latter part); EA 17.8)	260 (cf. SA-u 3)	None (cf. AN 5.31 (III 32–4))
95	261 (cf. SA-u 2)	None (cf. AN 3.57 (I 160–2))
96	262	7.14 (I 377) (I 175)
97	263	7.20 (I 392) (I 182)
98	264 (cf. SA-u 1)	7.11 (I 369) (I 172)
99	265	None (cf. SN 6.3, in <i>Brahma Saṃyutta</i> (1998, I 306–10; 1884, I 140–2))
100	266	None
101	267	None (cf. AN 4.36 (II 37–9))
102	268	None (cf. Sn 1.7 <i>Vāsala-sutta</i>)
1178	92	None (cf. <i>Therī-gāthā</i> 133–8 <i>Vāsīṭṭhī</i>)
1179	93	7.10 (I 365) (I 170)
1180	94	7.22 (I 395) (I 184)
1181	95	7.13 (I 375) (I 174)
1182	96	7.17 (I 386) (I 179)
1183	97	7.18 (I 388) (I 180)
1184	99	7.9 (Sn 3.4 <i>Sundarakabhāradvājā-sutta</i>)
1185 (cf. MA 93 (latter part); EA 13.5 (latter part))	98	None (cf. MN 7 (latter part) (I 39))
1186	100	7.6 (I 353) (I 165)
1187	100	7.6 (I 353) (I 165)

no Chinese counterparts, and the rest have their Chinese counterparts in the *Poluomen Xiangying* of SA and ASA. The full set of Chinese-Pāli and Pāli-Chinese counterparts is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The identification of the Chinese-Pāli and Pāli-Chinese counterparts shown in these tables is open to discussion. As is evident in Table 1, the discourses of SA and ASA are out

⁷Harrison (2002, p. 9).

Table 2. Pāli-Chinese correspondences of the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta*

SN (Pāli) (<i>Tāmrāsāṭīya</i>)	SA (Chinese) (<i>Sarvāstivāda</i>)	ASA (Chinese) (<i>Kāśyapīya</i>)
7.1 (I 1998, I 344) (I 1884, I 160)	1158	81
7.2 (I 347) (I 161)	1152–3	75–6
7.3 (I 350) (I 163)	1151	74 (cf. SA–u 25)
7.4 (I 351) (I 164)	1154	77
7.5 (I 352) (I 164)	1156	79 (cf. SA–u 26)
7.6 (I 353) (I 165)	1186–7	100
7.7 (I 354) (I 165)	1160	83
7.8 (I 356) (I 166)	None	None
7.9 (I 358) (I 167)	1184	99
7.10 (I 365) (I 170)	1179	93
7.11 (I 369) (I 172)	98	264 (cf. SA–u 1)
7.12 (I 373) (I 173)	1157	80
7.13 (I 375) (I 174)	1181	95
7.14 (I 377) (I 175)	96	262
7.15 (I 381) (I 177)	92	258
7.16 (I 385) (I 179)	1155	78 (cf. SA–u 7)
7.17 (I 386) (I 179)	1182	96
7.18 (I 388) (I 180)	1183	97
7.19 (I 390) (I 181)	88	88
7.20 (I 392) (I 182)	97	263
7.21 (I 393) (I 182)	None	None
7.22 (I 395) (I 184)	1180	94

of order with regard to the structural arrangement. The rearrangement of the discourses indicated in Table 1 is according to the CSA version.⁸ As can be seen, the discourses in the two Chinese versions match up with each other very closely as regards both sequence and total number, while matching up only loosely with the discourses of the Pāli version. Thus, the SA and ASA versions are structurally much closer to each other than to the SN version.

Fragmentary Sanskrit counterparts of segments of the Chinese SA version (and the ASA version) have been published by Fumio Enomoto (1994). The published Sanskrit counterparts of the discourses on the subject of *Brāhmaṇas* consist of altogether twenty fragments, corresponding to SA 89, 95, 97–98, 100; 1151–1154, 1157–1158, 1161–1163; 1178, 1180–1181, 1184–1185, and 1187 (= ASA 89, 261, 263–264, 266; 74–77, 80–81, 84–86; 92, 94–95, 99–98, and 100). These fragmentary Sanskrit texts are useful for confirming certain Chinese technical terms.

2. Principal differences in teachings on *Brāhmaṇas*

Most of the discourses are similar in content in the three versions. Here I will discuss only the principal differences regarding teachings, under three topics: (1) the outcaste, (2) the *dharma*s that are good for a layperson, and (3) alms.

⁸Cf. also Yin Shun (1971, pp. 668–672); CSA, vol. 1, pp. 4–5, 23.

(1) The outcaste (SA 102 = ASA 268 = Sn 1.7 *Vasala-sutta*)

SA 102, ASA 268 and their Pāli counterpart Sn 1.7 *Vasala-sutta* record a shared teaching about what an outcaste is, or what things (*fa* 法 *dharmas/dhammas*) make an outcaste (*lingqunte* 領群特 *vasala/vasala-ka* (wicked outcaste) in SA and Sn; *Zhantuolo* 旃陀羅 *caṇḍāla* in ASA). They describe in common how a *Brāhmaṇa*, while performing the fire ritual with a food offering in his house, sees the Buddha coming at a distance, and says to him, “You are an outcaste, do not approach”.⁹ The Buddha, hearing this, asks the *Brāhmaṇa* whether he knows what an outcaste is, or what things make an outcaste. The *Brāhmaṇa* replies that he does not know this, and asks the Buddha to teach him. The Buddha then tells him. The three versions record, in verses uttered by the Buddha, details of conduct that make a person an outcaste. The main point of this teaching, shared in common by the three versions, can be represented by this statement: “Not by birth does one become an outcaste, not by birth does one become a *Brāhmaṇa*; by conduct (evil conduct in ASA) one becomes an outcaste, by conduct (pure conduct in ASA) one becomes a *Brāhmaṇa*”.¹⁰ These words clearly present a core teaching on the topic of *Brāhmaṇas*. However, there are in the three versions two issues that need to be addressed here: 1. conduct regarding prostitution, and 2. an abnormal/magical food offering.

On 1. prostitution, SA 102 states:

He abandons his wife [regarding sexual intercourse], and also does not go to a **brothel** (*yinshe* 姪舍) [for his sexual pleasure]; [instead] he [sexually] assaults those who are loved by others [i.e., their wives and daughters]. He should be known as an outcaste.¹¹

Its counterpart ASA 268 has:

He abandons his wife and **prostitute** (*Yinmyu* 姪女); [instead] he does not avoid sexual misconduct with others' women/girls. He also is regarded as an outcaste.¹²

The corresponding Pāli Sn 1.7 reads:

Whosoever is seen [misbehaving] with the wives of relatives or of friends, either by force or with their consent, he should be known as an outcaste.¹³

Here the SA and ASA versions use the terms brothel (姪舍) and prostitute (姪女) respectively. They clearly include the concept of sexual behaviour associated with sex workers, whereas the Pāli version does not contain such references.

Both the SA and ASA versions do not mean to encourage a layperson to find a prostitute for sex. They only indicate that if the person sexually brings harm to others, instead of

⁹SA: ‘住。住。領群特。慎勿近我門。’ (CSA iii, 147; FSA 3, 1880; T 2, 28b). ASA: ‘住住旃陀羅。莫來至此。’ (T2, 467c). Sn: ‘“*tatr’ eva samaṇaka, tatr’ eva vasalaka tiṭṭhāhi*” ti.’ (Sn 21). To the *Brāhmaṇa* the Buddha was an ‘outcaste’ because, as a *Sramaṇa*, he accepted food from anyone.

¹⁰SA: ‘不以所生故。名為領群特。不以所生故。名為婆羅門。業為領群特。業為婆羅門。’ (CSA iii, 149; FSA 3, 1885; T 2, 29a). ASA: ‘種姓不是婆羅門。種姓不是旃陀羅。淨業得作婆羅門。惡行得為旃陀羅。’ (T 2, 468a). Sn: ‘*Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo; kammanā vasalo hoti, kammanā hoti brāhmaṇo.*’ (Sn 23–4).

¹¹自棄薄其妻。又不入姪舍。侵陵他所愛。當知領群特。’ (CSA iii, 148; FSA 3, 1882; T 2, 28c).

¹²捨自己妻及姪女。邪姦他婦無所避。如是亦名旃陀羅。’ (T 2, 467c).

¹³‘*Yo nātmaṇi sakhānaṃ vā dāreṣu patidissati sahasā sampiyena vā, taṃ jaṇṇā ‘vasalo’ iti.*’ (Sn 22. Cf. Fausböll 1881, p. 21; Norman 1992, p. 14)

lawfully having sex with his spouse or a prostitute – in this case, he is regarded as an outcaste. Nevertheless, the two Chinese versions seem to be more tolerant of this kind of sexual conduct for a layperson than the Pāli version – i.e. going to have sex with a sex worker, rather than sexually misbehaving with others who are not in a legitimate sexual relationship with him. Because this content is not shared in common with the corresponding Pāli version, one may conclude that it represents a sectarian view – or perhaps a Chinese view superimposed by the translator.

Regarding 2. an abnormal food offering, ASA 268 records that a *Brāhmaṇa*, after having heard the Buddha's teaching on outcastes, is delighted and wishes to offer food to the Buddha; but the Buddha rejects his offering, saying: "I see no-one in the world, *deva*, *Māra*, *Brahmā*, *Śramaṇa*, or *Brāhmaṇa*, who could eat and digest it properly. Dispose of it in water where there are no living beings". The *Brāhmaṇa* then disposes of the food in water. As he does so, the water seethes and hisses, giving off steam and smoke. Seeing this manifestation of supernatural power, the *Brāhmaṇa* is very surprised. He subsequently becomes a follower of the Buddha. A similar story is found in the corresponding SA 102, but not in the Pāli counterpart, Sn 1.7.

A similar story is also found in other discourses in SA and ASA, some of which have the Buddha tell the *Brāhmaṇa* to dispose of the food in water where there are no living beings/insects or to throw it away in a place where there is little/no grass.¹⁴

In contrast, only one Pāli discourse has a similar story, namely SN 7.9 *Sundarika-sutta* in the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta*, which is the counterpart of SA 1184 and ASA 99. This Pāli discourse adds that none but the *Tathāgata* or a disciple (*sāvaka*) of the *Tathāgata* could eat and digest the food properly.¹⁵ The reason for this is not explained in the text itself.

To summarise, SA 102 = ASA 268 = Sn 1.7 *Vāsala-sutta* record an important shared teaching on the subject of *Brāhmaṇas*. It is that a person's status as *Brāhmaṇa* or outcaste depends entirely on conduct, not on birth – a clear indication of opposition to the caste system. Two unshared teachings are found in the three versions: a deed associated with prostitution is mentioned only in the SA and ASA versions; and the Pāli version alone describes the abnormal food offering as fit to be eaten and digested only by the *Tathāgata* or a disciple of the *Tathāgata*.

(2) The *dharma*s that are good for a layperson (SA 91 = ASA 91 = AN 8.55 *Ujjaya*)

SA 91, ASA 91 and their Pāli counterpart AN 8.55 (cf. AN 8.54) record in common how a *Brāhmaṇa* comes to ask the Buddha to teach him *dharma*s (practices) that will bring advantage

¹⁴SA 1157 = ASA 80 (CSA iii, 118; FSA 3, 1827; T 2, 308b, 401c); SA 98 = ASA 264 (CSA iii, 141–2; FSA 3, 1872; T 2, 27b, 466c); SA 102 = ASA 268 (CSA iii, 150; FSA 3, 1886; T 2, 29b, 468a); SA 1184 = ASA 99 (CSA iii, 161; FSA 4, 1911–2; T 2, 320c, 409b).

¹⁵SN I 1998, 362; 1884, 169: '... *aññatra* ... *Tathāgata*ssa *vā* *Tathāgatasāvaka*ssa *vā*.' Cf. Bodhi (2000), p. 263; Rhys Davids (1917), p. 212.

and happiness in this world and in the next life for a layperson or householder (*suren-zaijia* 俗人在家/*zaijiaren* 在家人, *gihī* in AN 8.54) such as the *Brāhmaṇa* himself. The Buddha replies (in summary):¹⁶

- (a) Four *dhammas*, if attained, lead to a layperson's advantage and happiness in this world:¹⁷
 1. effort, 2. guardedness, 3. good friendship/companionship, and 4. an even life/right livelihood.¹⁸
- (b) Four *dhammas*, if attained, will lead to a layperson's advantage and happiness in the next life:¹⁹
 1. attainment in faith, 2. attainment in virtue, 3. attainment in charity, and 4. attainment in wisdom.²⁰

The teaching of these practices indicates opposition to the traditional practice of sacrificial ritual praised by the priestly *Brāhmaṇas*.²¹ Most of the contents relating to the above items are generally similar in meaning in the three versions, though there are some differences in wording. However, there are two differences in content, which will be addressed here.

¹⁶SA 91 (CSA iii, 128–30; FSA 3, 1845–49; T 2, 23a–c). ASA 91 (T 2, 404c–405b). AN 8.55 (cf. AN 8.54): IV 285–89 (IV 281–85); cf. Hare (1935), pp. 187–191.

¹⁷SA: '佛告婆羅門。有四法。俗人在家得現法安。現法樂。' ASA: '佛告摩納。有四法。使在家人。得現世報。獲利益樂。' AN: 'Cattāro 'me brāhmaṇa dhammā kulaputtassa dīṭṭhadhammahitāya saṃvattanti dīṭṭhadhammasukhāya' (AN IV 285).

¹⁸SA: '方便具足·守護具足·善知識具足·正命具足。' ASA: '一能精勤。二能守護諸根。三得善知識。四正理養命。' AN: 'Uṭṭhānasampadā ārakkhasampadā kalyāṇamittatā samajivitā'.

¹⁹SA: '佛告婆羅門。在家人有四法。能令後世安。後世樂。' ASA: '佛告摩納。有四種法。能獲福報。' AN: 'Cattāro 'me brāhmaṇa dhammā kulaputtassa samparāyahitāya saṃvattanti samparāyasukhāya' (AN IV 288).

²⁰SA: '信具足·戒具足·施具足·慧具足。' ASA: '信·戒·及施·聞慧。' AN: 'Saddhāsampadā silasampadā cāgasampadā paññāsampadā'.

²¹SA 89 (CSA iii, 126–7; FSA 3, 1842–4; T 2, 22c–23a), ASA 89 (T 2, 404a–b), and their Pāli counterpart, AN 4.39 *Ujjaya* (II 42. Cf. Woodward (1933), pp. 49–50, all record in common that the Buddha does not praise every sacrifice (*xiesheng* 邪盛/*si* 祀, *yañña*): He does not praise sacrifice in which animals, such as cows, goats and sheep, are slaughtered; but he praises sacrifice in which butchery is not involved, living beings are not destroyed, and charitable giving (*shi* 施/*hui* 惠施, *dāna*) is practised. Cf. also SA 93 (CSA iii, 132–5; FSA 3, 1853–9; T 2, 24b–25c) = ASA 259 (T 2, 464b–465b) = AN 7.44 (IV 41–46. Cf. Hare (1935), pp. 24–27), which state in common that sacrifice associated with sword (*dao* 劍/*dao* 刀, *sattha*) and fire (*huo* 火, *aggī*) is transformed entirely in the sense of moral purity and charitable giving in the teaching of the 'three fires' (SA: '供養三火...一者根本。二者居家。三者福田。' ASA: '有三種火。一名恭敬火。二名苦樂俱火。三名福田火。' AN: 'Tayo kho 'me...aggī...āhuneyyaggi, gahapataggi, dakkhiṇeyyaggi.' (IV 44–5)). On the three fires the three versions have different wording but the main teachings are similar, namely: veneration to parents, to family members including workers of the family, and to Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇas who lead a solitary, pure life. Here, the ASA 259 version at the end of the discourse adds: '爾時如來。即為呪願。'

於諸大祀中 祠祀火為上
 婆羅門書中 薩婆底為上
 一切國土中 人王最為上
 百川眾流中 海水最為上
 列宿麗于天 月光最為上
 一切眾明中 日光最為上
 十方世界中 佛為第一尊'

The translation is: '... Then the Buddha uttered these verses: Of all sacrifices, the fire sacrifice is the highest; of all the *Brāhmaṇa*'s hymns, the Sāvitrī 薩婆底 is the highest; in all lands, the king of the people is the highest; of all waters, the sea is the highest; of all lights in the night sky, moonlight is the highest; of all lights, sunlight is the highest; in the ten directions of the world, the Buddha is the most venerable.' (Cf. Peter Skilling (2003), pp. 637–667). These verses are not found in the corresponding SA 93 and AN 7.44. They may be a later addition in the ASA tradition.

First, in the Pāli version, after teaching about an even life (4) in section (a) and before section (b), the text adds two more sets of four items:

- Four channels for the flowing-away of amassed wealth, namely: careless indulgence with women, careless indulgence in drinking, careless indulgence in gambling, and having friendship, companionship, and intimacy with evil-doers.²²
- Four channels for the flowing-in of wealth, namely: non-indulgence with women, non-indulgence in drinking, non-indulgence in gambling, and having friendship, companionship, and intimacy with the good.²³

These are entirely absent from the corresponding SA and ASA versions. They may have become lost in these two Chinese versions, or they may represent a sectarian doctrine developed within the Pāli tradition.

Second, in teaching about faith (1) in section (b), the ASA version mentions the word ‘faith’ but lacks all of the other content, giving none of the explanation or relevant context found in its two counterparts. It is likely that this material has been accidentally lost during the textual transmission in China.

The SA version, when referring to faith, explains:

One has a mind of respectful faith in the *Tathāgata* (*yu Rulai suo, de xinjing xin* 於如來所·得信敬心·), established fundamentally firm, such that no *devas*, *Māras*, *Brahmas*, or other human beings in the world are able to harm [his mind of respectful faith in the *Tathāgata*].²⁴

The corresponding Pāli version, AN 8.55, reads:

One has faith in the wisdom of the *Tathāgata* (*Tathāgatassa bodhiṃ*), thus: He, [the Exalted One (*Bhagavā*)], is [*arhant*, perfectly enlightened (*sammāsambuddho*), complete in knowledge and practice (*vijjā-caraṇasampanno*), well-gone (*sugato*), world-knower (*lokavidū*), unsurpassed (*anuttaro*) charioteer of men to be tamed (*purisa-dammasārathi*)], teacher of *devas* and humankind (*satthā deva-manussānaṃ*), awakened (*buddho*), exalted (*bhagavā*) (IV 288).

Here, “a mind of respectful faith” in the SA version and “faith in the wisdom” in the Pāli version can be seen as not referring to the same concept. The former can mean devotional faith in the Buddha, whereas the latter focuses on confidence in the ‘wisdom’ of the Buddha. Nevertheless, they agree in saying that *attainment in faith* (*xinjuzu* 信具足, *saddhāsampadā*) is having definite faith in the Buddha.

To conclude this section, the three versions state in common that there are four *dharma*s that will lead to advantage and happiness for a layperson in this world and in the next life. They also indicate opposition to the traditional sacrificial practice praised by the *Brāhmaṇas*.

Two different teachings are found in the three versions. First, regarding even life/right livelihood, only the Pāli version presents a doctrine of four gateways to both the

²²AN IV 287: ‘*Evaṃ samuppannānaṃ brāhmaṇa bhogānaṃ cattāri apāyamukhāni honti: itthidhutto hoti, suwādhutto, akkhadhutto, pāpamitto pāpasahāyo pāpasampavaiko.*’

²³AN IV 288: ‘*Evaṃ samuppannānaṃ brāhmaṇa bhogānaṃ cattāri āyamukhāni honti: na-itthidhutto hoti, na-suwādhutto, na-akkhadhutto, kalyāṇamitto kalyāṇasahāyo kalyāṇasampavaiko.*’

²⁴何等為信具足。謂善男子於如來所·得信敬心·建立信本·非諸天·魔·梵及餘世人同法所壞·是名善男子信具足· (CSA iii, 129; FSA 3, 1848; T 2, 23b).

flowing-away and flowing-in of wealth. Second, regarding faith, the ASA version completely lacks the content, whereas the corresponding SA and Pāli versions present instructions on it with minor differences. These are mainly “a mind of respectful faith in the *Tathāgata*” in the SA version and “faith in the wisdom of the *Tathāgata*” in the Pāli version; but both versions show in common that having definite faith in the Buddha is the main point in regard to *attainment in faith*, as one of the four *dharma*s which, if attained, will lead to advantage and happiness of a layperson in the next life.

(3) Alms (SA 95 = ASA 261 = AN 3.57)

Finally, I discuss what the three versions say about alms.

SA 95 and ASA 261 describe in common how a *Brāhmaṇa* called Jānuḷḷiṇī (Shengwen 生聞) comes to ask the Buddha a question. He first tells the Buddha that he has heard a report that the Buddha states that alms should be given to the Buddha himself and his followers, not to others, because alms given to him and his followers obtain great [karmic] profit/fruits, but not so alms given to others. The *Brāhmaṇa* asks the Buddha if this report is correct, true, not misrepresenting his view and teaching. The Buddha replies that he has never said this, and indeed that he regards one who holds such a view as obstructing action in two ways:

- (1) He obstructs the giver in giving alms, and
- (2) He obstructs the recipient in receiving the gift.²⁵

The corresponding Pāli version, AN 3.57, is similar regarding the question, though the question is posed by the wanderer Vacchagotta (Vacchagotto paribbājaka), who possibly also belongs by birth to a *Brāhmaṇa* caste. The reply from the Buddha is also similar, except that he regards a person who prevents another from giving alms as causing three obstructions:

- (1) He obstructs the giver in acquiring merit,
- (2) He prevents the receivers from getting a gift, and
- (3) He himself is already ruined, completely ruined.²⁶

Thus, the Pāli has one item more than the SA and ASA versions.²⁷

After the Buddha has spoken about these obstructions, the ASA version alone states that one who holds such a view about action will eventually fall, after death, into one of the three evil realms (the realms of hell, of animals, and of ghosts).²⁸

The three versions then record in common that the Buddha considers that even feeding small creatures will be a source of merit to the giver, how much more so feeding or charitable

²⁵SA: ‘我作如是說者。作二種障。障施者施。障受者利。’ (CSA iii, 137; FSA 3, 1862; T 2, 26a). ASA: ‘佛言。...若如是說作二種難。一者遮難。二者受者得減損難。’ (T 2, 465c).

²⁶‘*Dāyakassa puññantarāyako hoti, paṭiggāhakānaṃ lābhantarāyako hoti, pubb’eva kho pan’ assa attā khato ca hoti upahato ca.*’ (AN I 161). Cf. Woodward (1932), p. 144, in which item (3) is translated as “his own self is already ruined, utterly ruined”.

²⁷The same three items are also found in the corresponding unattributed SA version in T 2, no. 101, sutra no. 2: ‘若有說如是。便壞三倒道。布施家壞福。受者壞德。亦自壞意。’ (T2, 493b).

²⁸‘若如此說作大損減。身壞命終墮三惡道。’ (T 2, 465c).

giving to human beings. Nevertheless, the Buddha in the three versions says that a gift given to the virtuous (*chijiezhe* 持戒者, *sīlavant*) is of great fruit, but not one given to the wicked.²⁹

Both the SA and ASA versions give no information on ‘the virtuous’; only the Pāli version does. In the Pāli the virtuous is one who has abandoned five qualities and possesses five qualities (*pañcaṅgavippahīno pañcaṅgasamannāgato*):³⁰

- 1. Sensual desire (*kāmacchando*), 2. ill-will (*vyāpādo*), 3. dullness-and-drowsiness (*thīna-middham*), 4. restlessness-and-worry (*uddhacakukkuccam*), and 5. doubt-and-uncertainty (*vicikicchā*) are abandoned (*pahīnāni*).
- 1. He is possessed (*samannāgato*) of the morality-aggregate of one beyond training (*asekhena sīlakkhandhena*), 2. the concentration-aggregate of one beyond training (*asekhena samādhikkhandhena*), 3. the wisdom-aggregate of one beyond training (*asekhena paññakkhandhena*), 4. the liberation-aggregate of one beyond training (*asekhena vimuttikkhandhena*), and 5. the knowledge-and-vision of liberation-aggregate of one beyond training (*asekhena vimuttiñāḍassanakkhandhena*).

These are entirely absent from the corresponding SA and ASA versions. They may have been added or developed in the Pāli version.³¹

Accordingly, regarding the teaching on alms in the three versions it is found that the Pāli version has more doctrinal contents than the SA and ASA versions.

Conclusion

This comparison of the *Brāhmaṇa Saṃyutta* of SN and its two Chinese counterparts has revealed the following main points:

1. The three versions record a shared teaching on the topic of *Brāhmaṇas*: A person’s status as *Brāhmaṇa* or outcaste is determined by conduct, not by birth. This is a clear indication of opposition to the caste system.
2. Regarding the outcaste, only the SA and ASA versions mention action associated with prostitution. They indicate that if the person sexually misbehaves with others, rather than lawfully having sex with his spouse or with a prostitute, he is regarded as an outcaste. The two Chinese versions in this case seem to be more broadminded toward sex workers.
3. The Pāli version alone speaks of the abnormal food offering that is fit to be eaten and digested only by the *Tathāgata* or a disciple of the *Tathāgata*.
4. Only the Pāli version presents the doctrine of four channels to both the flowing-away and the flowing-in of wealth in the teaching on four *dharmas* that lead to advantage and happiness for a layperson in this world and in the next life.
5. The four *dharmas* for a layperson’s advantage and happiness again indicate opposition to the *Brāhmanas*’ traditional sacrificial ritual. This teaching is shared in common by the three versions.

²⁹SA: ‘施持戒者得大果報。非施犯戒。’ (CSA iii, 138; FSA 3, 1863; T 2, 26a). ASA: ‘施持戒者得福甚多。施破戒者得福少。’ (T 2, 465c). AN: ‘... *sīlavato dinnam mahapphalaṃ... no tathā dussīle.*’ (I 161).

³⁰AN I 161–2.

³¹Another SA version, T 2, no. 101, sutra no. 2, also lacks any reference to these five.

6. Regarding alms-giving, the Pāli version has more doctrinal content than the Chinese SA and ASA versions. For example, only the Pāli version gives information on the ‘virtuous’ (*sīlavant*): one who has abandoned five qualities (*pañcaṅgāni pahīnāni*) and also possesses five qualities (*pañcaṅgehi samannāgato*).

Overall, this study has revealed some substantial disagreements among the three versions regarding the major teachings on *Brāhmaṇas*.

Abbreviations

- AN *Aṅguttara-nikāya*
 ASA *Bieyi Za Ahan Jing* [Additional Translation of *Samyuktāgama*] (T 2, no. 100)
 CSA Yin Shun’s *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* [Combined Edition of *Sūtra* and *Śāstra* of the *Samyuktāgama*] (3 vols, 1983)
 EA *Ekottarikāgama* (T 2, no. 125)
 FSA Foguang *Tripitaka Za Ahan Jing (Samyuktāgama)* (4 vols, 1983)
 MA *Madhyamāgama* (T 1, no. 26)
 MN *Majjhima-nikāya*
 P. Pāli
 PTS Pāli Text Society
 SA *Samyuktāgama* (T 2, no. 99)
 SA-u Un-attributed SA (T 2, no. 101)³²
 SN *Saṃyutta-nikāya*
 Sn *Sutta-nipāta*
 T Taishō Chinese *Tripitaka* (the standard edition for most scholarly purposes)
 AN, MN, SN, and Sn references are to PTS editions.

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³²The translator and school of this collection are unidentified. An Shigao 安世高 (fl. 148–170) is considered the translator by some Harrison (2002), p. 2.

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