

The *Sabbāsava-sutta* continues by taking up the theme of “using”, a method concerned with the proper use of the four requisites of a monk or a nun. According to all versions, proper use of robes means to employ them just to cover the body and to protect it from the impact of weather and insects. The *Madhyama-āgama* and *Ekottarika-āgama* versions add that robes should not be used for the purpose of adornment, a point both versions also make in relation to dwelling places.³⁴ The *Sabbāsava-sutta* and the *Āsava-sutta*, however, speak of avoiding adornment in relation to the proper use of food.³⁵ This unexpected association of adornment to food invites further examination.

In other Pāli discourses, “adornment” refers to external embellishment, such as wearing garlands, bracelets, decorated sandals, jewels, and long-fringed clothes, etc.³⁶ Similarly, the injunction to refrain from “adornment” as part of the eight precepts undertaken on full moon days by Buddhist lay followers is concerned with external forms of beautification.³⁷ In view of this, it would be more natural for the problem of “adornment” to arise in relation to robes. A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallel in the *Samyukta-āgama* provide an example of misuse of robes for the sake of adornment, as they describe the monk Nanda incurring the Buddha’s reproach for wearing ironed robes.³⁸

According to an explanation given in the *Visuddhimagga*, adornment in relation to food takes place when one partakes of food in order to become plump or to have a clear skin, such as harem women or actors might do.³⁹ This explanation appears somewhat contrived. In sum, it seems that the *Madhyama-āgama* and *Ekottarika-āgama* parallels to the *Sabbāsava-sutta* offer a more natural presentation by relating the problem of adornment to robes instead.⁴⁰

³⁴ MĀ 10 at T I 432b23+29 and EĀ 40.6 at T II 741a2+7.

³⁵ MN 2 at MN I 10,9: “he uses alms-food ... not for ornament or adornment”, *piṇḍapātamaṃ paṭisevati ... na maṇḍanāya na vibhūsanāya*; cf. also AN 6:58 at AN III 388,18. T 31 at T I 813c21 similarly admonishes not to use food for the sake of attractive appearance, 不端正故. The Tibetan version speaks of adornment in relation to all four requisites, D (4094) *mngon pa, ju* 93a4 or Q (5595) *tu* 106a4. Adornment in relation to alms food is also mentioned in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* in Shukla 1973: 86,11 or ŚSG 1998: 132,8, reading: *na maṇḍanārtham na vibhūṣanārtham iti*, with its Chinese counterpart in T 1579 at T XXX 409c6: 不為飾好, 不為端嚴, followed by a detailed explanation; cf. also below p. 539.

³⁶ DN 1 at DN I 7,20 lists, among others, *mālā*, *hatthabandha*, *citrupāhana*, *maṇi*, and *vattu dīghadasa* as instances of *maṇḍanavibhūsanatthānānuyoga*. An example that further supports the impression that *maṇḍana* generally refers to external forms of “beautification” or “ornamentation” can be found in MN 91 at MN II 139,26, which notes that the Buddha was not concerned with *pādamaṇḍanānuyoga*, rendered by Horner 1957/1970: 325 as “the practice of beautifying his feet” and by Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 748 as “grooming his feet”. An extract from the present discussion already appeared in Anālayo 2005b: 1-2.

³⁷ Khp 1,20: *mālāgandhavilepanadhāraṇamaṇḍanavibhūsanatthānā veramaṇī*. Notably, a counterpart in the *Karmavācanā* fragment 226V8 and R1 in Härtel 1956: 29 only reads *gandhamā[1]yavilepa[nadh]āraṇād*, without referring to *maṇḍana* or *vibhūṣaṇa*.

³⁸ SN 21:8 at SN II 281,3 and SĀ 1067 at T II 277a12.

³⁹ Vism 32,1.

⁴⁰ Minh Chau 1964/1991: 84 concludes that the reference to adornment in regard to food in the Pāli version “looks rather forced here. The Chinese version seems more plausible”.