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A NOTE ON A NEWLY IDENTIFIED PALM-LEAF MANUSCRIPT OF THE SAMĀDHIRĀJASŪTRA

During his visit to the Sa skya Monastery in 1936, the famous Rāhula Śāṅkṛtyāyana photographed a palm-leaf manuscript consisting of altogether 108 folios, which he described as containing an Arthaviniścaya-dharmaparāyāya. In fact he noticed a discrepancy between this manuscript and two others of a text with the same title, which he could also examine and photograph (nos. 47 and 87 on his list, both from the Nor monastery), but he apparently found no time to assess this puzzling difference. Evidently relying on the colophon of the last folio, he was misled just as a Tibetan reader had been before him, who had written (don) rnam par nes pa'i chos kyi mam grans (= Arthaviniścayadharmaparāyāya) in Dbu-med characters on the title page, the syllable don being broken off with part of this leaf.

Indeed, the colophon has arthaviniścayo nāma dharmaparāyāyaḥ samāptaḥ, and the size and the script of this folio look so similar to those of the foregoing 107 leaves, that, on first sight, they all seem to belong to one and the same manuscript. On closer examination, however, they have to be separated for two formal reasons. First, the folios are consecutively numbered from 1 to 107, while the last folio bears the page number 10, and second, folios 1 to 107 are divided by two punch holes into three columns of text, while the last leaf has two punch holes as well, but with only the left one dividing all the lines of the text. Accordingly, only the last folio belongs to a manuscript of the Arthaviniścayasūtra, preserving text from mahāpuruṣalaksāṇa 29 (it begins with the word keśatā) until the end of the sūtra (10b5).

All the remaining folios, however, form part of a manuscript of the Samādhirājasūtra, and once this is recognized, it becomes possible to read some very faint aṅkaras in the middle of the first page as “Candrapradīpa”, the alternate title of the sūtra. Next to the Gilgit manuscript which goes back to the 6th century, it appears to be the second oldest manuscript known so far, since the script can, with a great deal of caution, be dated to the 11th century. Judging by the script, the five palm leaves of a Samādhirājasūtra manuscript listed by Hara Prasad Śāstri and microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project under reel no. A 38/86 are definitely younger, and the same probably holds true for the 25 palm leaves in the Tokyo University Library, which I have not seen. Regrettably, the

present manuscript is also incomplete; the last folios are missing, and therefore no final colophon is preserved which could help in dating the copy more precisely. It is very well written, and one's first impression is that it contains few errors. Generally, it corresponds to the version represented by the Nepalese manuscripts (see below), but there are other features which connect it with the version on which the Tibetan translation is based, as for example the splitting up of chapter 22 into two separate chapters and the length of chapter 24. A few chapter titles show differences from those in some of the other versions (3, 4, 6, 22).

Since the chapter colophons are not easily found on first sight, they will be given here with reference to folio, line and column.

Introductory verses (1bff.): verses 1 to 12 and 43 in Appendix I, Nos. 1 and 3, of Vaidya's edition (cf. note 9), and three additional verses; beginning of the sūtra proper: evam mayā śrutam etc. (1b8 middle):

1. nidāna-parivarto nāma prathamah (5a8 right);
2. sālendrarāja8 (6b5 right);
3. bhūtabuddhaganavarṇaparakāśana (8b1 middle);
4. samādhi (9b5 left-middle);
5. ghosadatta (12b2—3);
6. anantajñāna (13b6 left);
7. triksāntyavatāra (15a7 right);
8. abhāvasamudgata (17a2 middle-right);
9. hardly readable, but probably gambhīradharmakṣānti (20a6 left);
10. purapravēsā (27b6 right);
11. sūtradhāraṇa (30b1 right);
12. samādhyanuṣikṣāna (31b3 middle-right);
13. samādhinirdeśa (33a1 left-middle);
14. smitaṃ darsana (read smitaśaṃdarsana; 36b2 middle-right);
15. smitavyākaraṇa (37a5 left);
16. pūrvayoga (39a1 left);
17. bahubuddhanirhārasamādhimukha (48a3 middle-right);
18. samādhyanupaṁdīndana (50a4 middle);
19. acintyabuddhadharmanirdeśa (52b4 left-middle);
20. no colophon; the chapter ends with samprakāṣayati sma after the text presented in Appendix I, No. 22, in Vaidya's edition, i.e. verses 1—11 are missing (54a6 left);
21. pūrvayoga (55b3—4);
22. kāyādhyavasāya (56a1 right); the chapter ends with verse 133 of
Appendix I, No. 24, in Vaidya's edition. In the Gilgit text and evidently in other Nepalese manuscripts, chapters 22 and 23 belong together, forming one chapter entitled Tathāgatakāyanirdeśa, while in the Tibetan translation this section is equally divided into two chapters, Lus ņes par bstan pa (*Kāyanirdeśa) and De bzin gšegs pa’i sku ņes par bstan pa (*Tathāgatakāyanirdeśa). Thus, chapter 24 of the present ms. corresponds to 23 in Dutt and Vaidya, 25 to 24 etc.

23. tathāgatakāya (58a4 left-middle);
24. tathāgatācintyanirdeśa (64a5 left-middle); in both the present ms. and in the Tibetan translation, this chapter is considerably longer than in the text established by Dutt.

25. pratisamvidāvatāra (66a2 middle);
26. anumodayanā (67a1 right);
27. dānānuṣaṇsā (67b2 right);
28. śilaniṣeṣa (67b6 left-middle);
29. daśānuṣaṇsā (71b6 right);
30. tejogantarāja (76a4 right); the title is mistakenly reproduced as tejagantarāja by Dutt (and, accordingly, by Vaidya), but the name of the Tathāgata is given as Tejaganirāja in verse 1; cf. Dutt, p. 358, note 2, with a reference to the Tibetan translation gzi brjid tshogs (kyi rgyal po). The present ms. also has tejaganirāja in verse 1 (72a4, left column).

31. 76b6 (the photograph of the verso of folios 73—82 is missing in the collection of the Seminar für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde, but 77a1 starts with tasmāt tarhi in the first sentence of chapter 32);
32. sarvadharmasvabhāvanirdeśa (78a6 right);
33. śūradhāraṇānuṣaṇsā (86a5 right);
34. kṣemadatta (89a6 right);
35. jñānāvati (93a4 left-middle);
36. supuspacamdrā (104b5 middle-right);

folio 107b6: end of the manuscript; it breaks off with verse 68d of chapter 37.

For the first part of chapter 9 up to verse 40, the readings of the manuscript have been checked against the exemplary edition of Christoph Cüppers, which presents the Gilgit, the Nepalese and the Tibetan versions synoptically, therefore greatly facilitating comparison. Since the script on folios 19b and 20a, containing the rest of the chapter, is generally very faint and even partly rubbed off, these two pages have been disregarded. The text agrees very well with the wording of the Nepalese recension established
by Cüppers and contains every addition or omission which distinguishes the Nepalese from the Gilgit version. To give an impression of the manuscript, in the following the major variants and mistakes are listed.

*varṇṇitaḥ (17a3) as against *saṃvarṇṇitaḥ 1,6.
sarvatathāgatāḥ and sarvaśrāvaka* with most Nepalese mss. as against sarve in the edited text.
paribhāsa (17b1) as against pratibhāsa 7,3—4.
anāṅgaṇa (17b5) with Gilgit as against anaṅgana 9,18.
niśkeso (17b5) as against niśkleśo 11,1, but with the variant niśkeso in the manuscripts WXYZ.

tātā khalu (17a2) with Tibetan de nas yaṅi as against only tatra, p. 1, line 1.

°varṇṇitah (17a3) as against °saṃvarṇṇitah 1,6.
sarvatathāgatāḥ and sarvaśrāvaka* with most Nepalese mss. as against sarve in the edited text.
paribhāsa (17b1) as against pratibhāsa 7,3—4.
anāṅgaṇa (17b5) with Gilgit as against anaṅgana 9,18.
niśkeso (17b5) as against niśkleśo 11,1, but with the variant niśkeso in the manuscripts WXYZ.
tīrṇṇa* (17b7) with Gilgit as against utīrṇa* 13,4.
aparyavasāna (17b7) as against aprtyavadāna 13,11, Gilgit aprpa-ryavadhāna and Tibetan kun nas dkrīs pa med pa (= apravasthāna).
puruṣacandraprabha (18a2), probably influenced by the name of the interlocutor of the Buddha, as against puruṣacandra 15,7.
avabhāṣata (18a2), mistake for abhāṣata 15,13.
ūrdham (18a3) as against uṛdvaṃ, verse 2c (probably to be read as uṛddham, too).

uhyaṃtu (18a4) confirms the conjecture in 5b.
pānagadēna (18a6) as against pānāmadēna 8a.
rodāye (18b1) as against rodāyī 13b.
bālu (18b2) with Gilgit as against bāla 15c.
ṛupāṇ yatho (?) 18b2—3) as against rūpaṇy atho 16a with the variant rūpaṇ yathā in the mss. DV.
supināntare ('smin (18b3) with most Nepalese mss. as against supināntarasmīn 17a.

mrtaṃ (18b3) as against mṛtaṃ 18a.
skandham (18b5) as against skandhaṃ 22a.
*pathe anarthihā (18b7), with a and na exchanged, as against *pathena arthihā 24c.
pūrvānti (18b7) with Gilgit as against pūrvāntu 25a.
avēksyaṃāne (18b7) with Gilgit as against aveksamāne 25a.
nirvṛti (18b7) with Gilgit as against nirvṛti 26a.

na (19a2) omitted in 28c.
kathitvā (19a2) as against kathetvā 29a and 30a, but also kathetvā (19a3) in 31a.
sarvaṃjñinā (19a4), metrically preferable to sarvaṃjñinenā 33b.
sampratyanubhoti (19a5) as against sa pratyabhuti 35d with the variant sampraty in the mss. WXYZ.

pratyaveksu (19a6) with Gilgit as against pratayecksya 37b.

jivita (19a6) as against jivika 38b.
grhita (19a6) as against grhita 38d.

corana (19a7) as against cauraṇa 40a (cf. above, rūpānyaḥ as against rūpānyaḥ).

Finally, aside from those misprints already noted by J. W. de Jong, a few more could be corrected in the edition of Cüppers: p. 1, line 3 read mahāsatvah; verse 10c read janayeta; 28b read aśuddhi; 36d yathodraka appears to be preferable.

NOTES


2 Loc. cit., note 3: “It is different from the Arthaviniscayasūtra”.

3 All the details are based on a photocopy of the manuscript in the possession of the Seminar für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde der Universität Göttingen (shelf mark: Xc 14/31). Most of the photos are clear, only one of them being partly out of focus, and with the exception of a few folios the script is easily readable. Presently, a catalogue of all the prints of R. Sānkṛityāyana’s photographs in the Seminar is being prepared by Frank Bandurski, M.A.; the present manuscript is no. 30 in his catalogue.


7 S. Matsunami, A Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Tokyo University Library, Tokyo, 1965, p. 120, no. 333.II.

8 The chapter colophons are written in accordance with the first one, i.e. parivarto nāma and the number written out as a word, but this is abbreviated here to the title alone.
