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The Layman İndu and an Old Uighur Poem

Abstract: Edition of an Old Uighur poem preserved on the verso side of SI 4959 (Kr I 18) of the Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts. The fragment contains twelve stanzas à four lines. The contents is difficult to define, It is assumed that stanzas I to VI refer to an unnamed young boy who may be a Buddhist novice, while stanzas VII to XII emphasise the importance of doing *puṇya*, good deeds. The layman İndu is presented as a model. In stanza IX he vows to encounter with Maitreya expressed in an indirect way. Similar verses are known from Maitreya poems. The paper presents a full edition of this fragment with some notes on problematic words and phrases.

Key words: Old Uighur, alliterative poem, Buddhist culture, acquiring puṇya, layman (upāsaka) Indu.

Some introductory words

SI 4959 (Kr I 18)[1] is a fragment of a Chinese scroll of the 金剛般若 波羅蜜經論 *Jingang boreboluomi jing lun*[2]. It was cut and used for writing the Old Uighur text on the empty verso side of the paper. A similarly shaped leaf (SI 4051 (4bKr 56)) from the same Chinese text[3], but necessarily not from the same scroll, bears on its verso side an Old Uighur Maitreya text[4]. The Uighur script differs from that of the first leaf. It is not clear whether both fragments originally were parts of a bound booklet or not, but, clearly, the texts are different, too. Thus we have to conclude that both fragments originated under different circumstances, by different authors as well as by different scribes.

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[1] IOM Krotkov Collection. I express my thanks to I.F. Popova for the permission to publish the fragment, to A. Turanskaya for sending me its digital image that is attached at the end of this paper.

[2] T.XXV.1511.796c21-797a04.

[3] T.XXV.1511.790c20-791a03.

[4] Not metrical.

It is not easy to characterise the Old Uighur text of SI 4959 in toto. It consists of 12 stanzas of four verses composed in the usual strophic alliteration mode. One can distinguish two parts. Stanzas I to VI all end in *täginür* apparently referring to a young boy who may be a Buddhist novice. This first part concludes with the question "How can one explain it?" In the second part from stanza VII to XII emphasis is laid on doing *puṇya*. The layman (*upase* < Skt. *upāsaka*) İndu is presented as a model. In stanza IX he vows to encounter with Maitreya expressed in an indirect way. Similar verses are known from Maitreya poems.[5] In stanza XI other lay people are mentioned if the interpretation is correct: Sujāta and Sukha Tärim, both with names of Sanskrit origin. The author mentions them apparently as believers who fulfil *puṇya* deeds. With the last stanza (XII) probably a sermon started which expounds some essential Buddhist tenets like the unsteadiness of the body and the turbulences in the *saṃsāra*.

As a whole it is a Buddhist poem, but refers to some strange things in a very densely composed language. I am aware that my translation is not always matching the intention of the author. Some readings remain problematic.

Transliteration

01 *m*wywm tyṅmʾdy kʾnč ʾwqln . mwṅwą̈ čwp kwylmʾz twyz lwqln ..
   mwny tʾk qylw tʾkynsr

02 mwnkʾdqw kwylkw sv tʾkyṅwr ▪ ywdʾn qʾpčwą̈y ywmwrdą̈ʾ čwčʾky
   ywl ʾʾsmys

03 ///dʾky ywmą̈y tʾ tʾnklʾą̈w sv tʾkyṅwr ▪ twyyn kwyrklwk ʾrslʾn tʾ
   twdčy ʾyslʾkw

04 ʾysyk twrʾ pylyky čʾq kʾṅč twdwp sysynmʾz tʾk tʾkynwr ▪ pyrʾdy ʾ
   pylkʾ

05 pylyky ʾnklʾmys pylkʾ pntyd lr nynk nwm lʾryn pylyksy sy
   kwyčʾdmys pyčyn kʾyʾ

06 pytʾdy ʾwydkwṅmys tʾk tʾkynwr ▪ ʾrslʾn tʾyy nynk mʾṅkyn tʾ ʾrwq
   tylkw

07 ʾwydkwṅwp ʾʾdʾ tʾ tʾkmys tʾk tʾkynwr ▪ ʾyryndy lyk mwny tʾk ʾys lr
   nynk

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[5] Cp. BT III.

08 ʾysdʾmy pʾrkyn pylyp ʾwk ʾydy sʾčrwqswz ʾys pwlmʾq ʾyṅdw ʾwpʾsy
tyn

09 tyltʾq lyq tʾkyṅwr nʾdʾkyn typ tysr ▪ kym ʾwl

10 kyčyk yykyt yʾs yndynpʾrw . kysy tʾ kyṅkʾ pwlmʾdy kyčʾ kwyṅdwz
tydylyp

11 tʾkynyp kyṅkwrw pwyṅ lyq ʾys lr tʾ yʾrʾdyndʾčy ▪▪ʾwyk qʾṅk
twydwṅyn ʾwyčwrmʾdyn

12 ʾwyklydw ʾʾz twdtʾčy . ʾwyslwnčw kʾdʾky ʾdkwlwk ʾyslryk ʾwysmʾdyn

13 qyldʾčy twyswd lwk ▪ ʾylky tʾky qylyṅč lʾryn ʾwyčwrwp ʾydypʾdry

14 tnkry pʾldkwrmys ʾydwq ʾwrdw tʾ twrqw kwysws lwk ʾyndw ʾwpʾsy ▪

15 ʾʾčwk yʾrwq pylyky ʾʾz ʾysnkʾ kʾsdʾmy ʾʾdyn kʾ ʾwyzk pyr tʾk ʾrmʾk y

16 ʾʾnwpʾmʾ syz qʾ ywlʾsy ▪ swčʾdytʾ ʾdkw lwk ʾys lr tʾ ʾʾvryslyk swrmʾ
ą̈ʾmq

17 pwyʾn tʾ twyswd lwk swkʾ tʾrym pyrlʾ ʾykykw ʾynčʾ typ swysylʾsw (?)

18 tʾkynmys lʾr ▪ pʾslą̈ syz ʾwswn sʾnsr tyn pʾrw pʾssyz ʾtʾwyz ///

19 pʾrmʾnw lʾr tʾk tʾksynyp pʾs syz [...]

Transcription, translation and notes

I

[01]moyum tınmadı känč oglan .

munuk čöp külmäz tüz luglan ..

munı täg kılu tägins(ä)r

[02]muŋadgu külgü sav täginür ▪

       Confused[6], did not rest the young boy,

       disturbed[7], rubbish[8], not-laughing, equal[9] nonsense[10]:

       Doing like this

       are things[11] to wonder on and to laugh at.

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[6] *moyum* "confused" (ED 773a).

[7] Derived form *mun-* < *bun-* ED 348, *munuk* 'mentally confused' (OTWF 231, 802).

[8] *čwp* *čöp* i.a. "rubbish" (ED 394a).

[9] *twyz* *tüz* "flat, equal" (ED 571b), or *töz* "root" (ED 571a)?

[10] *luglan* cp. BT XXV, 0741 *kırı luvlan* "sinnlos"; BT XIII.13.98 *luvlan kartı* "id." (cp. *sačuk luglan* "id." in a text edited by M. Ölmez, cp. ÖLMEZ 1998, 277–278). Initial *l-* suggests a foreign origin, but the variants -g-//-v- point to the opposite. As suggested in BT XIII, it is probably an onomatopoetic formation. A further example occurs in a medical text (IOM SI 4133 recto 10) as a name of a disease: *luvlan agrıg*.

[11] Or "words"?

II

yudan kapčukı
yumurtga čäčäki
yol azmıš [03][ör]däki
yumkıta taŋlagu s(a)v täginür ▪

 A small bag[12] of yudan[13],
 a flower[14] of an egg,
 a duck (?)[15] lost[16] one's way
 all (of these are) things[17] most astonish-able.

III

toyın körklüg arslanta
tutčı išlägü [04]išig
törä biligi čak känč
tutup sezinmäz täg täginür ▪
 For[18] the lion of a monk's appearance[19]

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[12] *kapčuk* "small bag" (ED 581b).

[13] The word ywd'ṅ can be read in different ways like *yodan/yudan, yödän/yüdän*. If one thinks of a variant of *yodun* (ED 892a) one encounters the difficulty that *yodun* is not used as a single word, it is attested only in the compound *yok yodun* "destroyed". One expects here also something as a material thing. The next candidate could be *yatan* "a wooden bow" (ED 892a) which could fit to *kapčuk* "case, a small bag". But the vowel -w- instead of -ʾ- in the first syllable cannot be explained. If one suggests a yodicised form of a different word like *odan/udan* etc, the problems are similar. The light solution would be "the bag of a wooden bow", but in that compound there is no contradiction that the whole strophe aims at.

[14] čwčʾky ? Unfortunately, the spelling is not clear: As the second letter can be nothing else than -w-, it is nearly impossible to interpret it as a variant of *čečäk* "flower", but there is no obvious word like *čöčäk* or *čüčäk*. The modern Uighur word *čöčäk* < *čörčäk* "tale" (Jarring 76) cannot be taken into consideration here.

[15] The first three letters are not clearly distinguishable, they can be read as sth. like ʾlʾ or ʾwlʾ or ʾylʾ, while dʾky is very distinctly written. From the structure the final -y should be the possessive suffix and the preceding stem can end in *-ädäk*. Perhaps *ördäk* "duck" is not totally impossible assuming that a kind of contrast is meant. But still, what is a duck who lost its way?

[16] Spelled ʾʾsmys, this shows that also other verbs are possible, *as-* or *aš-*, but in connection wit *yol* "way" *az-* is at least one of the candidates.

[17] The spelling is sk or rather sv. I assume *s(a)v* "word(s)" or thing(s)".

[18] The translation of the suffix +*ta* here is difficult.

[19] The expression *toyın körklüg arslan* is probably an expression for the Buddha. I refer here to the first line of an Old Uighur poem: *toyın körklüg kesari arslan* "Lion king of monk's appearance", cp. ZIEME 2013, 15. This poem contains also some very peculiar expressions and still unclear words.

the deeds[20] always to do
(according to the) Wisdom of the Law[21] just[22] a young (boy)
should keep it and be one who does not doubt.

IV

piratya bilgä [05]biligi äŋilmiš
bilgä p(a)nditlarnıŋ nomların
biligsizi küčädmiš bečinkäyä
[06]bıtadı ötgünmiš täg täginür ▪

 Through the *dharma*s of the wise *paṇḍita*s
 who are bent[23] (by) the *prajñā* knowledge
 the little ape[24] whose nescience became strong
 is as if he is uselessly retelling[25] something.

V

arslan tayınıŋ maŋınta
...
aruk tilkü [07]ötgünüp
adata tägmiš täg täginür ▪ [26]

 Because of the gait[27] of a lion cub[28]
 …

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[20] I emend to *išig*, but probably two letters stand at the beginning of the line so that another word might be meant here.

[21] twrʾ. This word can be read either *tura/tora* or *tuna/tona* or also with front vowels. One of such words which fits to the spelling is *tura* that has a similar meaning like *tın* "breath" (ED 512a), another *tura* is "breastwork" or "village, a place" (ED 531a). The more recent word *törä* "custom, law" (< *törö* ED 531b) is probably a better solution, although it is spelled twyrw otherwise. It would be most fitful in connection with *bilig* "knowledge": "knowledge of the law". But again, it is not at all sure that the word *bilig* "knowledge" was intended here.

[22] The spelling is unclear. The likeliest one is *čak* "exactly" (ED 404a). But perhaps we can compare it to BT III, 949 where we read: *körünčlüg känčüki čak birlä* "together with a young dancer of a performance" (cp. explanation by S. Tezcan), although D. Maue does not see in the pair (skt.) *naḍa* = (Old Uighur) *čak* (spelled **ja-q**) the word "dancer" (MAUE 1996, 16, n. to no. 36). Together with this new example *čak känč* one is inclined to see in all three attestations the same word. Additionally, cp. U 4445 line 3 *čak är üküš türlüg kö[ ]* (cp. ZIEME 2017, 2).

[23] *äŋil*- "to be bent" (cp. *ägil*- ED 106b), cp. UWV II, 144.

[24] *bečink(ä)yä*. The suffix *k(ä)yä* is written *ky ʾ* as it is usually the case. The initial letter *k*- is written in this ms. with a hook on the line, cp. *käsdämi*.

[25] Cp. *ötgün*- "to imitate, tell" (ED 52a).

[26] This stanza has only three verses. Since all other stanzas have four lines, one verse seems to be missing.

[27] Cp. *maŋ* "gait" (ED 766b).

[28] The first letter of the word is unclear, but it is probably a *t*-, cp. *tay* "a one- or two-year-old foal" (ED 566b). As documented by I. Hauenschild, *tay* is used only for "foal" (HAUENSCHILD 2003, 201–202). Thus the reading and interpretation of *arslan tayı* remains dubious.

an emaciated fox – while passing[29] –
is one as if he is getting into danger.

VI

erintilig munı täg išlärniŋ
[08]istemi bärkin bilip ök
idi sačuksuz[30] iš bolmak
indu upasetın [09]tıltaglıg täginür

> Knowing the constant[31] steadiness
> of disgusting[32] deeds like this
> a totally un-scattered matter
> is caused by the layman İndu!

nätägin tep tesär ᛫

> How is this?

kim ol

> It is like this:

VII

[10]kičig yigit yašındınbärü .
kišitä kenkä bolmadı
kečä kündüz tıdılıp [11]täginip
keŋürü buyanlıg išl(ä)rtä yaratıntačı ᛫

> For people from the days of child- and youth-hood
> it never became too late[33]
> (to be) one who night and day – (although) hindered[34] –
> is extensively striving in *puṇya* deeds.

VIII

ög kaŋ tütünin öčürmädin
[12]üklitü asa tuttačı.
üzlünčükätägi ädgülüg išl(ä)rig
üzmädin [13]kıldačı tüšütlüg ᛫

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[29] Although clearly written with a dotted *-n-*, it might be a mistake for *ötgür-* "to pass" (ED 52b).

[30] The scribe manipulated the word in one or the other way wherefore it is difficult to give an exact spelling, but *sačruksuz* or *sačuksuz* is at least a possible reading.

[31] Spelled ʾysdymy *istemi*, cp. BT.XIII.13.135. Probably < Skt. *sthema* "continuance, duration" (MW 1265a).

[32] ʾyryndylyk *erintilig*, cp. *yerinti* "disgusting" (ED 971a; Laut 2011, 197; Li Gang 2016, 23, line 07; Mirkamal 2010, 5, line 11).

[33] This formation is unclear, if read *kenkä* it means "for later".

[34] This expression probably refers to the fact that human beings are often hindered by the *kleśa*s to do good works.

> Not extinguishing the smoke[35] of mother and father
> (rather) increasing and stimulating[36] it,
> up to the end as a doer of good deeds
> practicing[37] without interrupting.

IX

ilkitäki kılınčların öčürüp
idibadri [14]t(ä)ŋri bäldgürmiš
ıduk orduta turgu küsüšlüg
indu upase ⸰

> (For)[38] extinguishing the initial sins
> the layman İndu[39]
> has the wish to stay in the holy palace
> raised[40] by God Ṛddhibhadra[41].

X

[15]ačuk yaruk biligi
az iš(i)ŋä käsdämi
adınka özkä bir täg ärmäki
[16]anupamasızka yöläši ⸰

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[35] The use of *tütün* in the sense of family bonds is an interesting feature of this popular text. In Kirgiz *tütün* has three meanings "smoke", "house, court", and "yurt" (JUDACHIN 286b–287a). The example *tütüngö jarabagan jaman* "a poor man without family" makes it clear that the "smoke-hole" of a yurt is a symbol of family life.

[36] The order in this biverb is more often *as- üklit-* "to foster and to increase", cp. UWV II, 84, *tut-* is here used as an auxiliary verb.

[37] J. Wilkens reminded me of *tüšüt* in the meaning of "habit, practice", cp. BT XXV, line 3713.

[38] Or: "(After)".

[39] The personal name İndu is attested in several Old Uighur texts (U 3398 recto 05 (in bold script): ʾyṅdw; DTS 219; Bai & Matsui 2017, text I, l.12). From this text it is impossible to gain any further information about this İndu. There is one İndu who belongs to the entourage of Qubilay's minister Muŋsuz, cp. no. 16 印都 *yinduo* = Chinese transcription of İndu (GABAIN 1976, 205). In later periods the same name was a new borrowing from Persian as Hindi etc. (cp. Rásonyi and Baski, p. 279a).

[40] For the verb *bäldgür-* "to develop, to raise", a "mixed" form of *bälgür-t-* and the rare verb cp. *bäldür-t-* (*bältür-t-*) a member of the biverb *igit- bältürt-* "to nourish, raise, develop" (ZIEME 2018, 219).

[41] Due to the alliteration Sanskrit *Ṛddhibhadra is here written *idibadri*, for other examples spelled with initial r- cp. KITSUDŌ 2011, 337, lines 18–20 *ridibadri t(ä)ŋriniŋ kut kolmakı üzä etilmiš tokuz älig sıŋlıg kat kat ilig kalıklıg d(a)rmaprasat* "The Dharma-palace with forty-nine floors built by God Ṛddhibhadra's vow": translated from 四十九層重閣堂. 號曰法殿處當陽. 牢度跋提願力作. Cp. BT III, p. 98; BT XIII, p. 117, fn. 19.43.

> His clear and bright knowledge
> is near[42] to a deed of lust[43].
> His being equal to others and to oneself
> is comparable to *anupama*[44]-less.

XI

sučadita ädgülüg išl(ä)rtä ävrišlig
sorma kam(a)g ¹⁷buyanta tüšütlüg
suka tärim birlä ikigü inčä tep
sözläšü[45] ¹⁸täginmišlär ▪

> About Sujāta[46] behaving[47] in good deeds
> - do'nt ask![48] – and practicing in all *puṇya*,
> together with Sukha Tärim[49] they both
> were discussing each other.

XII

bašl(a)gsız uzun sans(a)rtın bärü
baššız ätʾöz ///
¹⁹parmanular täg tägzinip
baš/// [▪]

> Since the beginning-less long *saṃsāra*
> a headless body [   ]
> Like atoms rotating
> head[   ].

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[42] Spelled kʾsdʾmy: the intial *k-* is written with a hook leading to the line, the following hook is the aliph. The word *kästämi/käsdämi* is rare, it corresponds to 近 *jin* "near", e.g. WILKENS 2017, 15v18 *ölüm käsdämi*.

[43] *az iš(i)ŋä* "to the lust deed" is a conjecture, but perhaps it is better to read *az ešikä* "lust-woman". Among the examples of *az* in some cases it is regarded as female (UWN II, 2, p. 104), but so far the compound **az eši* is not attested. On the other hand, one may also think of *az* "few".

[44] Skt. *anupama* "unvergleichlich" (SWTF I, 63b).

[45] Here one observes some kind of correction. If *sözläšü* is the intended word, the verse is the only example of a distorted alliteration, as three verses have *so-/su-*.

[46] For Sujāta in the *Buyan ävirmäk* of the Old Uyghur *Altun Yaruk sudur*, cp. ZIEME 1991, 285.

[47] Cp. UWN II, 2, 347–348.

[48] *sor-ma* "do not ask!" (?).

[49] swkʾ may be interpreted as the Sanskrit term *sukha* "happiness" (cp. SWTF IV, 379). It is used as a female name corresponding to Turkic words like *kut* "happiness, charisma" or *sävinč* "joy". No other information about a person Suka Tärim is available. For *tärim* cp. ZIEME 2015.

Metrical structure

The composition follows strictly the metrical pattern of the strophic alliteration, which is the main feature of Old Uighur poetry. In detail the structure is as follows:

I mo-/mu-: 5+3 (8) / 5+3 (8) / 5+3 (8) / 3+3+3 (9) 8+8+8+9 ∑ 8–9

II yu-: 2+3 (5) / 3+3 / (6) / 3+3 (6) / 3+3+4 (10) 5+6+6+10 ∑ 5–10

III to-: 4+3 (7) / 5+2 (7) / 5+3 (8) / 5+4 (9) 7+7+8+9 ∑ 7–9

IV pi-/bi-: 4+3+3 (10) / 2+4+3 (9) / 4+3+4 (11) / 3+3+3 (9) 10+9+11+9 ∑ 9–11

V a-: 5+3 (8) / ... / 4+3 (7) / 3+3+3 (9) 8+...+7+9 ∑ 8–9

VI i-/ı-: 4+3+3 (10) / 3+5 (8) / 5+3 (8) / 6-3-3 (12) 10+8+8+12 ∑ 8–12

VII ki-/ke-: 4+5 (9) / 5+3 (8) / 4+3+3 (10) / 3+3+3+5 (14) 9+8+10+14 ∑ 8–14

VIII ö-/ü-: 5+4 (9) / 5+3 (8) / 6+3+4+ (12) / 3+3+3 (9) 9+8+12+9 ∑ 8–12

IX i-/ı-: 44+3 (11) / 4+5 (9) / 5+5 (10) / 2+3 (5) 11+9+10+5 ∑ 5–11

X a-: 4+3 (7) / 4+4 (7) / 3+4+3 (10) / 6+3 (9) 7+7+10+9 ∑ 7–10

XI su-/su-/su-/sö-: 4+3+3+3 (13) / 4+3+3 (10) 4+5+3 (12) 3+4 (7) 13+10+12+7 ∑ 7–13

XII ba-/pa-: 5+5 (10) / ? / 5+3 (8) / ? 10+?+8+? ∑ 8–10

Number of syllables per verse	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Number of verses	1		6	9	10	7	2	3	1	1

The table thus shows that 11 verses have 9 syllables, this corresponds as a rule to three words consisting of three syllables each. A pattern which is not rare in Old Uighur poetry. This number is followed by verses of 8 syllables (8 times), of 10 syllables (7 times), and of 7 syllables (6 times).

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