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A Sanskrit Manuscript in Proto-Śāradā Script: Fragments of Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*

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Abstract: The article continues a series of publications of Sanskrit manuscript fragments written in the Proto-Śāradā script and kept in the Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM, RAS). This article contains passages of stories from the “Garland of Jātakas” (Jātakamālā) by Āryaśūra. The article argues that the fragment from the Serindia Collection of the IOM, RAS belongs to the same manuscript as folios from the Turfan Collection (Berlin, Germany) and the Lüshun Museum (Dalian, PRC). All these scattered folios, which appear in different collections, used to be parts of one and the same manuscript of Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā. The Sanskrit fragment of the Mahābodhi-jātaka from the Serindia Collection of the IOM, RAS, analyzed in this article, is a passage from a dispute between a Bodhisattva and various Indian teachers, in which the Buddhist ascetic refutes the arguments of his opponents.

Key words: Buddhism, Sanskrit manuscripts, Jātaka, paleography, ‘Proto-Śāradā’, Serindia, Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā

Provenience

In the previous WMO issue we have published a new fragment of Mātrceṭa's Varṇārharvaṇa, a well-known hymn on the Buddha. Originally it belonged to the Petrovsky Collection, now part of the Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM, RAS) in St. Petersburg.¹ This fragment is unusual for three reasons: first, it belonged to a manuscript written in a script that does not count among the standard scripts used for Sanskrit manuscripts in Central Asia, but

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¹ SHOMAKHMADOV & HARTMANN 2022.

rather suggests an Indian origin; second, it soon became clear that fragments of this manuscript were preserved not only in the IOM; and third, it was an extraordinary long manuscript consisting of more than 400 folios and containing at least three very famous and important poetical works: Mātr̥ceṭa's Varnārhavarṇa (a hymn on the Buddha), Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā (a collection of birth stories) and Kumāralāta's Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā Dr̥ṣṭāntapaṅkti (a collection of tales). For a description of the manuscript and its peculiarities we refer the reader to our previous article. There we also mentioned the fact that the Petrovsky Collection had contained a fragment of the Jātakamālā and the Petrovsky and Krotkov Collections each had one fragment of the Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā.

Explaining this curious spread of fragments, we pointed out that Albert von Le Coq, the leader of the German expedition, is known to have presented manuscript fragments as gifts not only to other researchers, but also to officials. However, new information obtained recently speaks very strongly against this explanation. Now it seems much more plausible that various collectors and researchers visited exactly the same site and simply picked up what their predecessors had left on the ground. According to the description in the catalogue volume of the German Turfan Collection, the manuscript fragments were found among many others in the northernmost Buddhist monastery complex on the eastern bank of the Toyoq creek.² We owe Le Coq a brief description of the place and the find: "There, an enormous block of conglomerate rock had fallen from a height into a monk's cell, had partially blasted the walls and sat like a plug in the room. It was possible to remove this soft, crumbling rock, and to my delight I found the whole room, which, by the way, was built after the pattern of an Iranian room, filled with large piles of old manuscripts. Here we found Manichaeian, Christian and Buddhist manuscripts with Chinese scrolls and Indian palm leaves and birch bark leaves mixed together. ...After all, we found about two sacks full of manuscripts from the eighth and ninth centuries, intermingled, however, with later manuscripts".³

² SHT I: 286.

³ "Dort war ein ungeheurer Block des Konglomeratgesteines aus der Höhe in eine Mönchszelle gefallen, hatte die Mauern zum Teil gesprengt und saß wie ein Pfropfen in dem Raum. Es gelang, dieses weiche, bröcklige Gestein zu entfernen, und zu meiner Freude fand ich das ganze Zimmer, das übrigens nach dem Muster eines iranischen Zimmers gebaut war, mit großen Haufen alter Manuskripte erfüllt. Hier fanden wir manichäische, christliche und buddhistische Handschriften mit chinesischen Rollen und indischen Palmbblatt- und Birkenrinde-Blättern vermischt. ...Wir fanden immerhin ungefähr zwei Säcke voll Manuskripte des achten und neunten Jahrhunderts, vermischt, allerdings, auch mit späteren Handschriften". See LE COQ 1926: 82.

It becomes clear that the German explorers made the room accessible and, therefore, that they must have been the first to enter it. However, it is not difficult to imagine that in view of the rich booty, no attempt was made to completely empty the room. This in turn might explain why later researchers were still able to find fragments. Recently it became evident that one of the collectors for the Japanese Count Ōtani Kōzui must have visited the same place and picked up some fragments, since the Ōtani Collection contains altogether three fragments of the *Jātakamālā*. Today, this part of the Ōtani Collection is kept in the Lüshun Museum (旅顺博物馆) in Dalian in Northern China. Another fragment in the collection, which must belong to the same manuscript, preserves a dogmatic text. Since this latter fragment is a part of the same folio as one of the fragments listed under the catalogue number SHT 638 in the German collection, it must come from the same place. This is a new insight — the combined manuscript must have contained at least one non-poetical text. Regrettably, the fragments come from the middle of the leaf and do not preserve the folio number, and therefore it is impossible to locate the text within the lengthy manuscript. There are more fragments of it with a dogmatic content in the Russian and German collections; we intend to publish all of them in the nearest future.

Finally, mention has to be made of yet another unexpected find: when Chinese archaeologists examined the Toyoq caves in the years 2010–2011, they also recovered manuscript fragments. It seems that there is at least one fragment, and perhaps more, of “our” manuscript, possibly even a fragment of the *Jātakamālā*. So far, only preliminary reports appeared,⁴ and the final excavation report is still to be published. It is unlikely that a closer study of these fragments will become possible before its publication, and therefore we decided not to wait for it. At present, the find serves to confirm not only the original location, but also the fact that none of the earlier explorers was able or interested in completely clearing the cave of its manuscript fragments. Here we present unpublished fragments of the *Jātakamālā* from three collections, the Serindia Collection of the IOM, RAS in St. Petersburg, the Ōtani Collection in the Lüshun Museum and the Turfan Collection in Berlin. Each of the three collections contains a fragment from the same folio (no. 3 below).

⁴ CHEN 2012.

Jātakas in the manuscript fragments

The fragments examined in this article contain passages from three jātakas: 1) “The Jātaka on the High-minded One” (Mahābodhi-jātaka), which tells about the condemnation of false teachings, as well as the need to constantly feel compassion for living beings, even if one has been unjustifiably offended; 2) “Jātakas [about the inhabitant of the world] Brahma” (Brahma-jātaka), the main idea of which is, as in the previous story, the need to avoid the sin of adherence to false views, and 3) the Kṣāntivādi-jātaka, which we have introduced earlier.⁵

The Brahma-jātaka tells about one of Buddha’s previous births in the Brahma heaven. Once, a Bodhisattva saw Aṅgadinna, the king of Videha, who turned away from the Noble Path, falling into false views.⁶ The Bodhisattva was imbued with compassion for Aṅgadinna, because the sins of the king threatened misfortune not only for him, but for his entire kingdom. Then the Bodhisattva appeared to Aṅgadinna in his entire splendor, and the king, seeing the ascetic’s glory, asked him about the truth of the existence of another, better, world. Moreover, the assurances of the Bodhisattva were not enough for the king, he needed logical arguments, and the Bodhisattva gave them. Also, the Bodhisattva told the king in detail about the suffering that sinners endure in hell spheres. Frightened by such fate, Aṅgadinna asked the Bodhisattva how he could avoid such torment after death. The Bodhisattva revealed to the king the essence of the Noble Path. And the king, as well as his advisers and all subjects began to follow the Noble Path.

The Brahma-jātaka fragments contain the Jātaka’s text with the arguments in favor of the existence of another, better, world.

The Kṣāntivādi-jātaka fragment contains a passage in which the king, waking up, did not see his wives next to him. The servants said that the queens went into the grove to listen to the sermon of a hermit named ‘One who teaches patience’ (Kṣāntivādin).

The Mahābodhi-jātaka tells of one of Buddha’s previous births, namely, a monk named Mahābodhi. Being an excellent householder, he diligently followed his social duty — dharma, i.e. he studied secular sciences. After leaving the house, he completely followed the rules of the hermit life with the same diligence, thereby earning honor and respect of many people.

⁵ SHOMAKHMADOV & HARTMANN 2022.

⁶ In this case the Jātaka text tells about Lokāyata (Indian materialism) views.

The king favored Mahābodhi, but his ministers secretly envied the hermit and began to set the ruler against the ascetic, assuring the king that Mahābodhi was a spy sent by enemies to lull the ruler's vigilance and turn him away from the rājadharma ("dharma of kings").⁷ Then the king lost interest in the dharma and distanced Mahābodhi from himself. The hermit did not complain, but got ready and was about to leave the palace. Preserving the remains of righteousness, the king at the last moment stopped the hermit, asking why he was leaving and how the king offended him. Mahābodhi replied that he was not offended by the bad treatment of the king and his courtiers. But since the king turned away from the dharma, Mahābodhi wanted to leave him. The hermit retired to a forest, where he indulged in the meditation practice and achieved great success. And so, while in the forest, Mahābodhi remembered the king. He was sad, because the ministers continued to turn the ruler away from the True Path.⁸ Then, Mahābodhi, dressed in the skin of a monkey, returned to the palace. The king met the guest with due respect. In the course of a dispute with the ministers, Mahābodhi refuted their entire teachings one by one. Thus, Mahābodhi returned the ruler to the True Path.

The manuscript fragments presented in this article from the Lüshun Museum, IOM, RAS and the Turfan Collection in Berlin contain the final phrase exposing the follower of the teaching on causelessness (ahetuvāda), as well as the beginning and end (SI 6782 verso) of the dispute with the follower of the concept of Creator (īśvaravāda).

⁷ 'The rules for a king' in the Brahmanic (Indian orthodox) tradition.

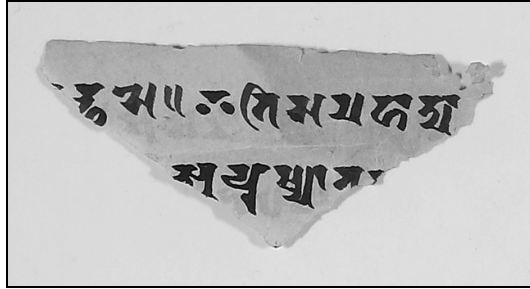
⁸ The Mahābodhi-jātaka lists different Indian religious and philosophical views, orthodox as well as non-orthodox. Thus, the first opponent of the Bodhisattva is, rather, an Ājīvikavādin with the views on causelessness (ahetuvāda). The second one is a follower of the concept of the Creator (īśvaravādin); these views were popular in the Vedānta school, Nyāya-vaiśeṣika, Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva traditions. The third opponent is a follower of a specific Indian 'determinism' according to which all in the universe is caused by the 'former deeds' (pūrvakarma). The fourth Bodhisattva's disputant is a follower of Cārvāka-Lokāyata and its doctrine of the total annihilation (ucchedavāda). And, finally, the fifth contradictor is an adherent of the 'Warrior Knowledge', 'The knowledge of ruling a kingdom' (kṣatравид्या).

Survey of the fragments

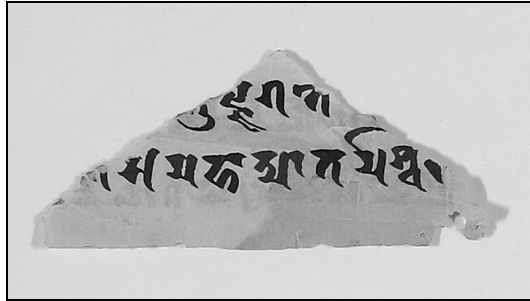
Two fragments are preserved in the IOM in St. Petersburg:

SI 2998 (B/130-3): story no. 28 (Kṣānti), identified and published by Shomakhmadov;⁹

SI 6782: story no. 23 (Mahābodhi), identified by Shomakhmadov, see below, no. 3.



Pl. 1. A fragment of the Mahābodhi-jātaka from the Serindia Collection.
The Institute of Orient Manuscripts, IOM, RAS. SI 6782 recto



Pl. 2. A fragment of the Mahābodhi-jātaka from the Serindia Collection.
The Institute of Orient Manuscripts, IOM, RAS. SI 6782 verso

Three fragments are kept in the Lüshun Museum:

LM 20_1553_17 (P.25.12, 1): story no. 23 (Mahābodhi), identified by Hartmann, see below, no. 3;

LM 20_1551_36 (P.3e): story no. 28 (Kṣānti), see below, no. 2;

LM 20_1553_17 (P.25.12, 2): story no. 29 (Brahma), identified by Hartmann, see below, no. 1.

⁹ SHOMAKHMADOV 2022.

The Turfan Collection in Berlin contains 14 fragments identified by Else Lüders and edited by Friedrich Weller.¹⁰ One of them, SHT 638g, belongs with LM 20.1553, 17 (P.25.12) and SI 6782 to one folio, see below, no. 3.

Symbols used in the transliteration

+	a lost akṣara(s)
[]	akṣara(s) whose reading(s) is (are) uncertain
..	one illegible akṣara
.	illegible part of an akṣara
///	beginning or end of a fragment when damaged
	the double daṇḍa — punctuation mark

Transliteration of the fragments

1) LM 20_1553_17 (P.25.12, 2), fragment 2: Jātakamālā 29 (Brahma), JM: 194.13–17

Recto

6: /// .. gyāsu [k]r] ///

Verso

1: /// saṃpratyayā .. ///

2: /// .. ce .. ++ ///

r6: JM: 194.13 *āhārayogyāsu kṛtaśramatvaṃ.*

v1: JM: 194.15 *paralokasaṃpratyayā.*

v2: JM: 194.17 *cet tad.*

2) LM 20_1551_36 (P.3e): Jātakamālā 28 (Kṣānti), JM: 185.18–186.13

Recto

1: /// ++ .y. iti [ś]. +++

2: /// ++ labhya śayanapāli ///

3: /// ++ [tsu]kamatir utthāya ///

4: /// ++++ ..ḥpurā + ///

¹⁰ WELLER 1955 and SHT I: 286, no. 638.

Verso

3: /// + + + + + prac. .. + ///

4: /// + + .. [ha]. bhoḥ asma + ///

5: /// + .[v]ā varṣavarāḥ saṣaṃ .r. ///

6: /// + + + yaṃ kṣāntivādī nā .e ///

r1: JM: 185.18 *devya iti śayanapālikāḥ*.r2: JM: 185.21–22 *copalabhya śayanapālikābhyaḥ*.r3: JM: 185.23 °*darśanotsukamatir utthāya*.r4: JM: 185.24 *antaḥpurāvacaraiḥ*.v3: JM: 186. *viraktakāntilāvanyaśobhaḥ pracalat kanakavalayau*.v4: JM: 186.8–9 *haṃho | asmattejah*.v5: JM: 186.11 *tac chrutvā varṣavarāḥ saṣaṃbhramāvegā*.v6: JM: 186.12–13 *munir ayaṃ kṣāntivādī nāmeti*.

In the bottom line of the recto and the upper line of the verso another fragment is attached which, however, does not belong here and can be located neither in the Varṇārhavarṇa nor in the Jātakamālā.

rz /// [tā] yo hy ā[t]u .. ///

v1 /// .[ū]dhacetas (ta)[thā] ///

The fragment can be located in Kumāralāta's Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā

Drṣṭāntapañkti (identified by Klaus Wille)

Cf. SHT 21, fol 132 r5–v1 (IDP SHT 21/86):

r5 ----- [m]i kārūnyenā[bh]i[p]īḍitaḥ 21

bhūtagrahāveśavimūdhaceta **yo hy ā** ----- ti na tatra vaidyaḥ
(pra)karoti

v1 ----- (22 kleśa)grahāveś(avimū)**dhacetas tathā** jano
'ya(m) prakaroti pāpam tatrā[tma] ----- (pī)ḍam kleśeṣu na kleśa
rāj. t. -

3) Jātakamālā 23 (Mahābodhi), JM: 149.21–150.19; three fragments of one folio: SHT 638 g, LM 20_1553_17 (P.25.12, 1), SI 6782. The fragments from the Lüshun Museum and the Serindia Collection are directly adjacent to each other, while the complete folio is reconstructed including the fragment from the Turfan Collection. This is possible with a fairly high degree of plausibility, since the Turfan fragment belongs to the left margin and the fragment of the Serindia Collection to the right one; in r1 and v6 both margins are preserved, and thus the total length of the line is ensured. To clearly mark each fragment, the one from Berlin is printed in *bold italics*,

the one from the Lüshun Museum in **bold** and the one from St. Petersburg in steep. The text lost in between is printed in *italics* within round brackets.

Recto

- 1: /// ++ **gar**[ha]se || iti sa mahātmā
 2: /// + [**m**]. **ntryovāca** | [ā]yuṣmān. .. +
 3: /// **rute** [y]. .[i] + + + + + + +

Verso

- 4: /// .. + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
 5: /// [**m**] **īśvara eva** [**vi**] .u [r j]. gat[o] + +
 6: /// + + **i**[t]i sa mahātmā tam īśva[r].

Reconstructed folio with omission of text-critical symbols

Recto

1 **tad evam api ced bhā**(vān anupaśyasy ahetukān | ahetor vānaravadhe siddhe kiṃ māṃ vi)garhase || <31> iti sa mahātmā

2 **tam ahetuvādinam vi**(śadair hetubhir niṣpratibhaṃ kṛtvā tam īśvarakāraṇikam ā)m(a)ntryovāca | āyuṣmān (apy asmā-

3 n nā)rhaty eva vigarhitum īśva(rah sarvasya hi te kāraṇam abhimataḥ | paśya | ku)rute y(ad)i (sarvam īśvaro nanu te-

4 naiva) hataḥ sa vānaraḥ tava (keyam amaitracittatā paradoṣān mayi yan niṣiṅcasi || 32 || atha vānaravīravai-

5 śasam) na kṛtam tena dayānu(rodhinā | bṛhad ity avaghuṣyate katham jagataḥ kāraṇam īśvaras tvayā || 33 || api ca bhadra

6 sarvam ī)śvarakṛtam iti p(aśyataḥ | īśvare prasādāsā kā stutipraṇāmādyaiḥ | sa svayaṃ svayambhūḥ te yat karoti)

Verso

1 (tat ka)rma || tvatkṛtātha ya(d tījyā na tv asau tadakartā | ātmano hi vibhūtyā yaḥ karoti sa kartā || 35 || īśvaraḥ kuru-

2 te cet) pātakāny akhilā(ni | tatra bhaktiniveśaḥ kaṃ guṇaṃ nu samīkṣya || 36 || tāny adharmabhayād vā yady ayaṃ na karoti |

3 te)na vaktum ayuktaṃ sarva(m) īśvarasṛṣṭam || 37 || tasya ceśvaratā syād dharmataḥ parato vā | dharmato yadi na prāg īśva-

4 ra)ḥ sa tato 'bhūt* dāsa(t)ai(va ca sā syād vā kriyeta pareṇa | syād athāpi na hetoḥ kasya neśvaratā syā-)

5 t* || evam api tu gate (bhaktirāgād avigaṇitayuktāyuktasya | yadi kāraṇa)m īśvara eva vi(bh)ur j(a)gato (nikhi-)

6 *lasya tavābhima*(*taḥ | nanu nārhasi mayy adhiropayituṃ vihitam vibhunā kapirājavadhā || 40 ||*) **iti** sa mahātmā tam īśvara

Translation of the fragment by J.S. Speyer¹¹

‘Moreover, sir,

30. For the sake of happiness you pursue the objects you desire, and will not follow such things as are opposed to it. And it is for the same purpose that you attend on the king. And notwithstanding this, you dare deny causality!

31. And, if nevertheless you should persist in your doctrine of non-causality, then it follows that the death of the monkey is not to be ascribed to any cause. Why do you blame me?’

So with clear arguments the High-minded One confounded that advocate of the doctrine of non-causality. Then addressing to the believer in a Supreme Being, he said: ‘You, too, never ought to blame me, noble sir. According to your doctrine, the Lord is the cause of everything. Look here.

32, 33. If the Lord does everything, He alone is the killer of that ape, is He not? How can you bear such unfriendliness in your heart as to throw blame on me on account of the fault of another? If, however, you do not ascribe the murder of that valiant monkey to Him because of His compassionateness, how is it that you loudly proclaim, the Lord is the cause of this Universe?

Moreover, friend, believing, as you do, that everything is done by the Lord,

34. What hope have you of propitiating the Lord by praise, supplication, and the like? For the Self-born Being works those actions of yours himself.

35. If, however, you say, the sacrifice is performed by yourself, still you cannot disavow that He is the author of it. He who is self-acting out of the fullness of His power, is the author of a deed, no other.

36, 37. Again, if the Lord is the performer of all sins, however many there are committed, what virtue of His have you in view that you should foster devotion to Him? On the other hand, if it is not He who commits them, since He abhors wickedness, it is not right to say that everything is created by the Lord.

38, 39. Further, the sovereignty of the Lord must rest either on the lawful order of things (Dharma) or on something else. If on the former, then the Lord cannot have existed before the Dharma. If effected by some external cause, it should rather be called “bondage” for if a state of dependency should not bear that name, what state may not be called “sovereignty?”

¹¹ SPEYER 1895: 210–212.

Nevertheless, if in spite of this reasoning, attached to the doctrine of Devotion and without having well reflected on its probability or improbability,

40. You persist in holding the Supreme Being and Lord for the sole cause of the whole universe, does it, then, become you to impute to me the murder of that chief of monkeys, which has been decided by the Supreme Being?’

So reasoning with a well-connected series of conclusive arguments, the High-minded One struck dumb, so to speak, the minister who was an adherent of the Lord (Īśvara)-supreme cause. And turning to that minister who was a partisan of the doctrine of former actions, he addressed him in a very skillful manner, saying: ‘No more does it become you, too, to censure me. According to your opinion, everything is the consequence of former actions. For this reason, I tell you,

41. If everything ought to be imputed exclusively to the power of former actions, then this monkey has been rightly killed by me. He has been burnt by the wild fire of his former actions. What fault of mine is to be found here that you should blame me?’

Abbreviations

SHT I: *Sanskriithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, Teil I, ed. Ernst Waldschmidt unter Mitarbeit von Walter Clawiter und Lore Holzmann, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner 1965 (VOHD, X,1).

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