The Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra at Gilgit
Manuscripts, Worshippers, and Artists

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T HE Gilgit library, the only surviving library from ancient India, was discovered by chance in 1931 at Naupur near Gilgit at the site of an ancient building often mistakenly thought to have been a *stūpa*. Recent researches by G. Fussman, however, point into a different direction. As far as this can be deduced from the rather poorly documented archaeological evidence, the building was a small lived-in tower rather and a living place for monks thus resembling edifices, which can be seen on images from ancient Gandhāra. The monk(s), who used this small perhaps two-storied building, served as religious advisers, possibly also practitioners of rituals, and certainly as healers to the local Buddhist community. This is confirmed by two medical texts found among the books recovered from Naupur/Gilgit. Recently Fussman's findings were more supplemented than contradicted by G. Schopen, who certainly correctly emphasized other activities of the monks as scribes and copyists of Buddhist manuscripts[1]. The site seems to be covered by a Muslim cemetery today[2].

It is impossible at present to determine the exact number of texts, or, perhaps titles rather[3], and manuscripts preserved in this library once. One of the reasons is that the facsimile edition, useful as it is, does not allow reassembling the folios dispersed after the discovery of manuscripts split up into different parts[4]. This could be done only in using the originals[5]. Consequently, only an estimate is possible according to which there were approximately 50 manuscripts containing 57 titles plus 17 Avadānas, which may or may not have been preserved as separate texts or as parts of an as yet uncertain number of Avadāna collections.

The Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra figures prominently among the Gilgit manuscripts, because no less than four manuscripts are preserved in the collection. Three manuscripts are kept in the National Archives in New Delhi which are split up into different parts numbered as serial nos. 44, 45, 47a, 48, and 49. Moreover, there are stray folios in the serial numbers 50a, 52a, 52d,2[6].

A large number of these folios was edited by Shoko Watanabe: Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra Manuscripts Found at Gilgit. Tokyo Part I (1972), Part 2 (1974), whose "Group A" comprises the 120 folios from serial no. 45 (FE pages 2813-3052), "Group B" comprises 14 folios from serial no. 44 (FE pages 2785-2812), 33 folios from serial no. 47a (FE pages 3053-3118), while 2 folios from serial no. 49 (FE pages 3217-3220) and 2 folios from serial no. 52d,2 (FE pages 3311-3312) are missing in S. Watanabe's edition though they actually are folios 99, a fragment from the XXth Parivarta as well as 71 and 72 of his "Group B" respectively. The same is true for serial no. 52a (FE page 3306), which consists of the right half of folio 102a,b in S. Watanabe's edition and of folios 65 and 98 of "Group B" (FE pages 3496/3495 and 3499/3500) buried in serial no. 50, which otherwise contains folios of a large Prajñāpāramitā text. Lastly, serial no. 48 (FE pages 3121-3216) contains 48 folios of S. Watanabe's "Group C", which were edited by Hirofumi Toda: Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra Gilgit Manuscripts (Groups B and C), in: Tokushima Daigaku Kyōyōbu Kiyō (Jinbun-Shakai Kagaku) 14. 1979, p. 249-304, particularly p. 249-300. Twenty additional folios of this manuscript were edited later also by H. Toda: Gilgit Manuscripts (Tucci's Collection) Group C, in: Tokushima Daigaku Kyōyōbu Rinrigakka kiyō 15. 1988. This transcript is based on photos preserved in Rome and published by Raniero Gnoli: The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtram, in: Orientalia Iosephi Tucci Memoriae Dicata. Vol. II. Serie Orientale Roma LVI, 2. Rome 1987, p. 533 and plates I-XX. Lastly, seven folios are preserved in the British Library. Only this part of the manuscript appears in S. Watanabe's edition as "Group C."

Finally, a large fragment of a fourth Gilgit manuscript comprising 30 folios which are preserved today in Kashmir (the exact location is not known) was edited by O. v. Hinüber: A new fragmentary manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra. Tokyo 1982[7]. A facsimile of all fragments accompanies by this edition.

Apart from this facsimile, the Gilgit manuscripts of the Saddharma-puṇḍarīkasūtra are also available in black and white facsimiles, which were published from Delhi between 1959 and 1974 by Lokesh Chandra as mentioned in note 4. Furthermore, Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manu-scripts are also available electronically as facsimiles reproduced from various microfilms of the National Archives at Delhi on a set of CD-ROMs published by the Rissho University. Here, the Gilgit

manuscripts are found on CD-ROM Vol. II nos. 9 and 10 containing only the serial numbers 44, 45, and 47.

All of the Gilgit manuscripts of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra are written on birch bark, with the notable exception of manuscript no. 48 ("Group C") written on so called "clay-coated paper," which was described and chemically analysed by R. Kishore: A Clay-coated manuscript in the Gilgit Collection. The Indian Archives. New Delhi 15. 1963/63, p. 1-3. This is the only Gilgit manuscript in its entirety written on this particular sort of "paper," while very few other manuscripts, e.g., no. 36 Saṃghāṭasūtra (manuscript "F") are written partly on birch bark and partly on "paper."

Only rarely colophons of the Gilgit manuscripts are preserved. By lucky coincidence, two Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts are among them. This is of eminent interest and importance, because the persons mentioned in the colophons as donors of the manuscript are, at the same time, the first worshippers of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, whom we know by name. These names were probably kept alive in the local Buddhist community also after the manuscript was donated. For it is said in the Śayanāsanavastu of the Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya[8]:

> uktaṃ ca bhagavatā abhyatītakālagatānāṃ dānapatīnāṃ nāmnā
> dakṣiṇā ādeṣṭavyā iti. saṃghasthaviro 'bhyatītakālagatānāṃ
> dānapatīnāṃ arthāya gāthāṃ bhāṣate

> "And it was said by the Lord: 'Reward must be ascribed by name to the deceased, passed away donors.' The senior-most monk in the community recites a verse for the benefit of the deceased, passed away donors."

Although this paragraph refers to the donation of a monastery, it is not at all unlikely that other donations such as manuscripts, which were held in high esteem, were also accompanied by a recitation of the names of those who donated them. Moreover, it seems likely although this is not clearly stated in the text quoted above that it was a custom to repeat the recitation of the names of the deceased donors to keep alive their memory. Thus it is not impossible that the names of the donors of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra were remembered in Gilgit over a longer period of time.

Fortunately, it is certain that we have at least the colophon to manuscript "C," because the end of the text immediately precedes the colophon, or better colophons. For there is first a colophon added to the text of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra and a second one composed by and for the donors of the individual manuscripts.

The colophon attached to manuscript "C" marks the beginning of one line of the manuscript tradition in which a colophon with a string of attributes praising the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra is used comprising the verse:

> *aṃgārakarṣūṅ gāhitvā ākramya kṣurasaṃstaraṃ.*
> *gantavyaṃ kulaputreṇa yatra sūtram ida[ṃ] bhavet.*

> "A son of a good family must go where the Sūtra is (even)
> after having dived into pits (filled with) burning coals,
> having stepped upon scattered razors."

This line is continued until the end of the Nepalese manuscript tradition in the 19th century, while this verse (and other verses added occasionally) are missing in a second line of the manuscript tradition, which begins in the 11th century in Nepal[9].

The colophon of manuscript "C" was made known by Sylvain Lévi as early as in 1932 in the very first publication of texts from the Gilgit find. The text given here is based on "Die Palola Ṣāhis" p. 81f. No. 41B with some minor corrections[10]:

> *… yatra sūtram ida[ṃ] bhavet || /1/ devadharme (!) yaṃ mahāsraddhopāsaka (1) lerakṣiṇena. (2) tathā sardhaṃ śiri/2/yena. (3) tathā śuśureṇa. (4) tathā mahāśiriyena. (5) tathā chchāḍipuruṣe sithusighena. (6) tathā sārdhaṃ putraena. (7) tathā vā/3/śāsighena leranihelapatinā. (8) tathā jīvasidhiyena. (9) tathā vupharṇena. (10) sidhasighena. /4/ (11) tathā sārdhaṃ mahādharmabhāṇaka ācārya bhikṣu krayādhana kalyāṇatrāt[e]na. (12) tathā sārdhaṃ mahādharmabhāṇaka bhikṣu dhrarme/5/dramatinā. (13) tathā sārdhaṃ aṣṭauliyena saṃcavamena. (14) tathā sārdhaṃ bhikṣunā kṣemaena. (15) tathā cikirirṣeṇa. (16) tathā sārdhaṃ /6/ burīsukhena. (17) tathā sārdhaṃ sāitāpuruṣe vargasighena. (18) tathā mātumena. (18a) jīvakṣinena. (19) tathā maṅgalaśiriyena /7/ (20) tathā burĭkṣiṇena. (21) tathā sārdhaṃ cvavaśiriyena. (22) tathā kulācīna aparṣikena. (23) tathā khukhuphanena. (24) tathā pevoṭhī/8/yena. (25) tathā daśiyena. (26) tathā śaraśriyena. (27) tathā mulāriyena. (28) tathā utrupharṇena. (29) tathā kararatsena. /9/ (30) tathā kālagatena pitunā cikirirṣeṇa. (31) kālagata vālosenana(!). (32) kālagata sagarkaena. (33) kālagata vā/10/sathūlena. (34) kālagata khukhathūlena. (35) kālagata khukhiyena. (36) kālagata pharṇena. (37) kālagata cvarmakṣiṇena. /11/ (38) kālagata lerapukhrena. (39) kālagata putreṇaṇa (!) śūlaphanana. (40) kālagata mitapharṇena. (41) kālagata khukha/12/ + (ś)ena. (42) kālagata si + + + + +. (43) (kālagata vālo)sighena*

"This is the pious donation by (1) the most devout upāsaka Lerakṣiṇa.
(2) together with Śiri/2/. (3) with Śuśura. (4) with Mahāśiri. (5) with
Chchāḍipuruṣe-Sithusiṅgha[11]. (6) together with (his?) son. (7) with
Vā/3/śāsiṅgha Lera-nihelapati. (8) with Jīvasidhi. (9) with Vupharṇa.
(10) Sidhasiṅgha. /4/ (11) together with the Mahādharmabhāṇaka (and)
Ācārya the monk Krayādhana Kalyāṇatrāta. (12) together with the
Mahādharmabhāṇaka the monk Dhrarme/5/dramati. (13) together with
Aṣṭauli(ya) Saṃcavama. (14) together with the monk Kṣema. (15) with
Cikirirṣa. (16) together with /6/ Burīsukha. (17) together with
Sāitāpuruṣe-Vargasiṅgha. (18) with Mātuma. (18a) Jīvakṣina. (19) with
Maṅgalaśiri /7/ (20) with Burīkṣiṇa. (21) together with Cvavaśiri. (22)
with Kulācīna Aparṣika. (23) with Khukhuphana. (24) with Pevoṭhi /8/.
(25) with Daśi. (26) with Śāraśri. (27) with Mulāri. (28) with
Utrupharṇa. (29) with Kararatsa. /9/ (30) with the deceased father
Cikirirṣa. (31) the deceased Vālosena. (32) the deceased Sagarka. (33)
the deceased Vā/10/sathūla. (34) the deceased Khukhathūla. (35) the
deceased Khukhi. (36) the deceased Pharṇa. (37) the deceased
Cvarmakṣiṇa. /11/ (38) the deceased Lerapukhra. (39) (his?) deceased
son Śūlaphana. (40) the deceased Mitapharṇa. (41) the deceased
Khukha/12/ + (ś)a. (42) the deceased Si + + + + +. (43) the deceased
Vālosiṅgha."

This, then, is the first time in the history of Indian Buddhism that a
group of lay people venerating the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra speaks to
us directly.

The names are discussed in some detail in "Die Kolophone der Gilgit-
Handschriften[12]." They point to fairly international group of donors.
Names ending in °pha(r)ṇa (nos 9, 23, 28, 36, 39, 40) show Iranian
influence as does no. 38 Lera-pukhra containing the Iranian, possibly
Bactrian or Parthian word for "son" pukhra[13], which is also discussed
below. On the other hand those containing the element puruṣe (nos. 5
and 17) point to a local language of the Gilgit area, Burushaski, as do
those formed with khukha/khukhu (nos. 34, 35, 41). Others are hybrid
names such as the Burushaski-Iranian name no. 23 Khukhuphana, and
many are simply obscure.

It is not only the large number of names that point to a major
donation. There are three monks involved in this project (nos. 11, 12,
14), the first two being senior monks as mahādharmabhāṇakas.
Obviously, the more venerable monk, as indicated by his titles Mahā-
dharmabhāṇaka and Ācārya, Krayādhana Kalyāṇatrāta is named first.
The word krayādhana or perhaps rather krayādhara as read by Sylvain

Lévi is obscure but should also be a title[14]. The next person is the Mahādharmabhāņaka the monk Dhrarmedramati, whose name corresponds to standard Sanskrit Dharmendramati. The peculiar linguistic form of his name is of particular interest because *dhrarma* instead of *dharma* shows a typically north-western linguistic feature the so-called "Dardic metathesis of liquids," which confirms that this was a local monk and, consequently, that the donation was in all likelihood a local project.

The following name no. 13 Aṣṭauliya Saṃcavama is enigmatic. The name in itself is obscure; *aṣṭauliya* or *aṣṭauli* should be a title, higher in rank than that of a simple monk (*bhikṣu*), because Saṃcavama precedes the *bhikṣu* Kṣema.

It should be noted that the names of all three monks are Sanskrit, while otherwise names that could be derived from Sanskrit constitute a small minority of six out of probably 44 persons enumerated (2, 4, 8, 10, 18a[?], 19). For, given the obscure derivation of most names, it is by no means always clear how to segment names and titles, and consequently to arrive at an exact number of donors.

Fourteen of the at least forty-four persons mentioned in the colophon were dead at the moment of the donation (nos. 30-43), and, consequently, the merit made was transferred to them. The first among the deceased is no. 30 the father Cikirirṣa, and it is remarkable that there is a second living person also named Cikirirṣa (no. 15). Most likely the deceased Cikirirṣa was the father of the principal donor Lerakṣiṇa, who might be an Iranian, if no. 38 Lerapukhra is compared[15]. Moreover no. 20 Buri-kṣiṇa can be compared to no. 1 Lera-kṣiṇa, and, furthermore no. 16 Burī-sukha to Buri-kṣiṇa. If Lera is the son of Lerakṣiṇa, he is named after his father as is Mamu-pukhra after his mother (see below).

It is striking that at a first glance not a single woman seems to have participated in the donation, because all names end in *-(y)ena*, a masculine ending. This is all the more astonishing once the Gilgit bronzes are compared where women abound. However, this impression is a deception, because in these formulas masculine case endings are also used with feminine personal names. Therefore, names such as °*śiriyena* may well be ending in °*śrī*, and could be feminine (or masculine, of course). However, no. 24 Pevoṭhī certainly is a lady, as are most likely no. 25 Daśi, no. 26 Śāraśrī, no. 27 Mulāri, and no. 19 Maṅgalaśrī, and moreover, no. 2 Śiri (Śrī), perhaps the wife of Lerakṣiṇa placed next to him (?) and no. 4 Mahāśrī. Thus at least seven ladies are mentioned.

Masculine names ending in *-oṭ(h)a-* are well attested in the inscriptions along the Upper Indus, the area where all these people most likely lived, and these names have regularly feminine forms ending in *-oṭ(h)ī-*. Thus, the name Pevoṭhī again points inhabitants of the (perhaps wider) Gilgit area as donors.

It is not entirely certain whether or not a stray folio without pagination contains the colophon to manuscript "A," which is connected only tentatively to this manuscript by S. Watanabe. The size however seems to fit. The reading of the colophon, which was published in "Die Palola Ṣāhis," no. 40B p. 80 could be improved in many places by the help of the excellent photos prepared for the planned new facsimile edition[16].

> */1/*](s)ya. (1) tathā sārdhaṃ mahāśraddhopāsikă mamuśiriyena. (2) mamupukhrasya. (3) tathā sārdhaṃ vālopharṇasya (4) tathā sārdhaṃ mahāga[ṃ]{ja}pati dīlīka agaco */2/* [… tath]ā sārdhaṃ (5) sadāvida-vagātureṇa. (6) tathā sārdhaṃ mahā(ṣṭha) āramatideśapharṇasya. (7) tahā sārdhaṃ khītām-puruṣeṇa gakhrapatināṃ. (8) tathā sārdhaṃ sa/3/ […] sarvasatvānāṃ anut(!)a{ra}jñānavāpunāyā bhavati. ||

The first half of the folio containing approximately 18 *akṣaras* in each line is lost, if complete folios of this manuscript are compared. In case the colophon started in line 1 as usual by *deyadharmo yaṃ* (5 *akṣaras*), the name of the principal donor (5 *akṣaras*) *tathā sārdhaṃ* (3 *akṣaras*) and the name of a second donor (5 *akṣaras*) are lost, or, alternatively, only the name of the principal donor (5 *akṣaras*) and his title, e.g., *mahāśraddhopāsaka* (7 *akṣaras*). At a first glance the clearly recognizable remains of the genitive ending]*sya* at the beginning of line 1 seem to favour the second alternative. However, *tathā sārdhaṃ* is also used together with the genitive instead of the instrumental case in this and other colophons.

In lines 2 and 3 again 18 *akṣaras* each are missing. Here, it is impossible to estimate the number of donors, which could fill the gap, because of the varying length of names and titles. However, two names are the minimum of the text lost, and probably three the maximum, because *yad atra puṇyam* or the like should have preceded *sarva-satvānaṃ* in line 3, which is written with a gap in the middle of the word as *sarvasa* (gap) *tvānāṃ* because of a knothole. Therefore, about alto-gether a dozen persons participated in the donation among them again one lady no. 2 Mamuśiri, a most devout *upāsikā*, and her son named obviously after his mother "the son of Mamu." This is remarkable, because in ancient India, mothers are named after their sons not the

other way round, a well-known example being the former wife of the Buddha called Rāhulamātā. In the colophon of manuscript "C" the name no. 38 Lera-pukhra, who is perhaps named after his father, if he is the deceased son of the principal donor no. 1 Lerakṣiṇa is equally remarkable. Again there are Iranian names, such as no. 3 Vālopharṇa, cf. colophon "C" no. 43 Vālo-siṅgha and no. 32 Vālo-sena, and one Burusho no. 7 Khītāṃ-puruṣa Gakhrapati, but not a single Sanskrit name. Most names and titles are obscure. It is not impossible that no. 4 is a *mahāgaṃ{ja}pati* "great treasurer" if the scribe dropped one character as in *anut(!)ajñāna° for anuttarajñāna°*. The Iranian title (*mahā*)*gaṃjapati* occurs occasionally in inscriptions on bronzes[17].

Thus the assumed colophon of the manuscript containing group "A" confirms the conclusions drawn from the colophon of group "C" that the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra was venerated by Buddhists from the Gilgit area as first of all the Burushaski names indicate, and by devotees with an Iranian background, most likely from Central Asia. This Central Asian connection is well known from other sources. Suffice it to recall the Soghdian merchants writing their names on the rocks at Shatial[18]. Moreover, it is well known that many fragmentary manuscripts and the voluminous Kashgar (Khotan) manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra bear ample witness of the immense popularity of this text in particular in the Khotan area[19]. The predilection of one particular Buddhist text shared by Buddhists in Gilgit and in Khotan is well known also in the case of the Saṃghāṭasūtra. The Saṃghāṭasūtra is better attested in Gilgit than any other text with traces of altogether eight manuscripts preserved in the Gilgit library followed with four manuscripts each by the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka- and the Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtras. This again underlines the exceptional importance of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra for the Buddhists in ancient Gilgit, which can be substantiated further in going beyond the evidence collected from the manuscripts of the Gilgit library alone and looking also at other Buddhist documents from Gilgit.

Long ago the art historian Pran Gopal Paul drew attention to a possible connection between the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra and one of the Gilgit bronzes in his thesis "Early Sculpture of Kashmir.[20]" Paul maintained that the Gilgit bronze donated by the Palola Ṣāhi Nandivikramādityanandi in the (Laukika) year 80 on the eighth bright day of the month Vaiśākha (= 20th April 714) can be interpreted as Śākyamuni in the light of a paragraph found in the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra (plate 1)[21]. For it is said in the tenth chapter, the Dharmabhāṇa-kaparivarta:

tathāgatapāṇiparimārjitamūrdhānaś ca te (sc. *kulaputrā vā kuladuhitaro vā*) *bhaviṣyanti ya imaṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ tathāgatasya parinirvṛtasya śraddadhiṣyanti vācayiṣyanti likhiṣyanti satkariṣyanti gurukariṣyanti pareṣāṃ ca saṃśrāvayiṣyanti*, SP (ed. H. Kern 231,3-6)

"The head of sons or daughters from good families, who after the Nirvāṇa of the Tathāgata, will put their faith into this exposition of the Dharma (sc. the Lotus Sūtra), have it recited, write it, honour it, venerate it, and recite it to others will be touched by the hand of the Tathāgata."

The text is even more explicit in the twenty-sixth chapter, the Samanta-bhadrotsāhanaparivarta, when it is said again in connection with *dharmabhāṇakas* and with Samantabhadra also referring to the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra:

Śākyamuninā ca tathāgatena teṣāṃ mūrdhni pāṇiḥ pratiṣṭhāpito bhaviṣyati, SP (ed. H. Kern 480,5 foll.)

"The hand will be placed upon the head of those (who venerate Samantabhadra and hear the Lotus Sūtra) by the Tathāgata Śākyamuni."

It is not at all impossible that the artist(s), who created the bronze for King Nandivikramādityanandi and, of course the donor himself, were inspired by this paragraph in the Lotus Sūtra. If so, the book carried by the supposed Buddha Śākyamuni might well be a copy of this text[22]. It should be kept in mind, however, that the iconography of the bronzes cast for the Palola Ṣāhis is still poorly, if at all understood. At any rate the idea that the very unusual gesture of the Buddha's right hand was inspired by reading the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra available in four copies in the Gilgit library cannot be rejected from the very beginning, whether the donor had the Tathāgata Śākyamuni in mind or not.

We are on much safer ground, if an image discovered at the site of Hodur a few years ago is compared (plate 2)[23]. Here, we see two Buddhas sitting on either side of a *stūpa*. This, of course, is a representation of the Buddhas Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna as described in the eleventh chapter of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra. Although it is said in the text that Prabhūtaratna invites Śākyamuni to share his seat inside the *stūpa* magically opened by the Buddha Śākyamuni, it is usual in Chinese art to show both Buddhas by the side of the *stūpa*. The representation of this famous episode, popular as it was in China, was completely absent from Indian art so far. Consequently, the importance of this drawing on a rock at Hodur is considerable.

This image was perhaps drawn by or for a traveller well known from other inscriptions, although it is not certain to which of the two *stūpas* the votive inscription written between the two images relates[24]:

/line 1/ devaddharmo yaṃ /2/ amṛtendrā[laṃkā]rasya

"This is the pious gift of Amṛtendrālaṃkāra."

Even if his name is partly destroyed, it can be read with confidence, because it is a rare name and it occurs written by the same hand more than once. As we find inscriptions with the name Amṛtendrālaṃkāra in more sites than that of any other traveller, it is possible to trace the route followed by Amṛtendrālaṃkāra along the Upper Indus for about 50 km from Shing Nala via Gichi Nala and Hodur ending up at Thor.

Among the travellers tracking along the Upper Indus were also three *dharmabhāṇakas*, "Reciters of the Law" whom we meet in two inscriptions found at the site of Oshibat[25]. Interestingly, all three reciters emphasise the fact that they are travellers:

   I. */line 1/ vicarati dharmavāṇaka śūra /2/ carmavidakama+ /3/ vicarati dharmabhāṇaka pāla* (11:4)
   II. *vicarati guṇasena dharmabhāṇa[ka]* (15:9)

   I. "The Reciter of the Law, Śūra wanders about. Carmavidakama (??). The Reciter of the Law Pāla wanders about."—II. "Guṇasena the Reciter of the Law wanders about."

This matches the evidence found in the colophons of the Saddharma-puṇḍarīkasūtra manuscript "A" where two *dharmabhāṇakas* participated in the donation. Moreover, still another *dharmabhāṇaka* named Narendradatta copied the manuscript of the Ajitasenavyākaraṇa also preserved in the Gilgit Library.

Consequently, the presence of at least five persons, two of them as Kalyāṇatrāta and Dharmendramati, both mentioned in the colophon of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, and both being monks, are classified as *dharmabhāṇakas*. It is certainly not by chance that *dharmabhāṇakas* are connected to the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, which praises those who propagate the law not only in the tenth chapter, the Dharmabhāṇaka-parivarta. Thus this text can also be seen as a reassurance of the *dharmabhāṇakas* living and preaching perhaps under the strain of partly unfavourable conditions when they reached out from Buddhist Gilgit to other remote areas in the Karakorum. The author of the so-called Mahāyāna-Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra or better Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra, might have had a similar situation in mind when he wrote the following

sentences quoted from the English summary added to his book by M. Shimoda[26]: "The *dharmakathikas* (or *dharmabhāṇakas*) allow laymen to arm themselves in order to protect the *ācārya* without accepting the five precepts. They wander through dangerous areas and over mountains accompanied by lay people including Caṇḍālas." This almost reads like a description of a journey along the Indus and demonstrates, how inscriptions and literature shed light upon each other.

From another Gilgit manuscript we learn that the *dharmabhāṇakas* also sought magical protection. For, there is a special Dhāraṇī in the Ratnaketuparivarta[27], which does not only protect *dharmabhāṇakas* against all sort of diseases, but in particular against ill health (*dhātusaṃkṣobha*) resulting from bad karma and leading to a "disturbance of the articulation" (*svarasaṃkṣobha*) thus destroying their ability to recite the teaching of the Buddha properly.

Of course *bhāṇakas* are mentioned frequently in Buddhist literature[28]. To quote only one more example from Gilgit:

> *bhagavān āha. dharmabhāṇakaḥ sarvasūra tathāgatasamo jñātavyaḥ.*
> *sarvasūra āha. katamo dharmabhāṇakaḥ. bhagavān āha. yaḥ*
> *saṃghāṭaṃ sūtraṃ śrāvayati sa dharmabhāṇakaḥ*, Saṃghāṭasutra § 45[29]

> "The Lord said: 'A reciter of the Law (*dharmabhāṇaka*), Sarvaśūra, must be regarded like a Tathāgata.' Sarvaśūra said: 'Which reciter of the Law?' The Lord said: 'Who ever recites the Saṃghāṭasūtra.'"

In the same way all *sūtras*, which mention *dharmabhāṇakas* praise the reciter of that very text, of course. Still the fact remains remarkable that two *dharmabhāṇakas* are mentioned in the colophon of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra which devotes a whole chapter to the reciters of the Law and that three additional *dharmabhāṇakas* occur in inscriptions of the area.

All these observations around the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts demonstrate that this text was firmly embedded in the Buddhist culture of Gilgit during the reign of the Palola Ṣāhis from the late sixth to the early eighth centuries. The literary tradition of the text was cultivated by copying manuscripts of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra. As far it is possible to draw conclusions from the colophons, these manuscripts were used in worship. Furthermore, the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra most likely served as a source of inspiration when the Palola Ṣāhi Nandivikramādityanandi conceived the unusual iconography of his bronze dedicated in the year AD 714 a few days before the important date of the Viśākhapūjā, the full-moon of the month Viśākha,

traditionally the date of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and Nirvāṇa. Lastly, two *dharmabhāṇakas*, Buddhist monks who propagated the Law organized one of the extant Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts to be copied for the benefit and merit of a large group of laypeople with a widely varied ethnic background. This shows the universal veneration of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra across many different nationalities far beyond Gilgit.

Consequently, the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts recovered from the Gilgit Library not only preserve for the first time, without being complete however, large parts of the text. For the presence of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra is, moreover, felt in many areas of Buddhist religion and Buddhist culture in ancient Gilgit. This is by far more than any other find of manuscripts from ancient India can tell about the immediate impact of the Lotus Sūtra.

NOTES

[1] Gérard Fussman: Dans quel type de bâtiment furent trouvés les manuscrits de Gilgit? Journal Asiatique 292. 2004, p. 101-150; Gregory Schopen: On the absence of Urtext and Otiose Ācāryas: Books, Buildings, and Lay Buddhist Ritual at Gilgit, in: Gérard Colas et Gerdi Gerschheimer (Édd.): Écrire et transmettre en Inde classique. (École française d'Extrême-Orient. Études thématiques 23) Paris 2009 [rev.: Jean-Pierre Filliozat, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 2009 [2011], p. 1754-1760; L. Rocher, Journal of the American Oriental Society 131. 2011, p. 133–135; O. v. Hinüber, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (in press)], p. 189-219. For more details see also O. v. Hinüber: The Gilgit Manuscripts. An Ancient Buddhist Library in Modern Research: Introduction (in press). —Images from Gandhāra showing the type of a building as reconstructed by G. Fussman can be seen in Isao Kurita: Gandharan Art. Vol. I. Tokyo ²2003, p. 260f. and in Giuseppe de Marco: The *stūpa* as a funerary monument. New iconographic evidence. East and West New Series 37. 1987, p. 191-246, particularly p. 203 fig. 6 with p. 202 note 23: The image reproduced by de Marco was seen in the market at Karachi in 1974. The present whereabouts of the piece seem to be unknown.

[2] Images showing the site at the time of the discovery of the Gilgit manuscripts can be found in Willy Baruch: Beiträge zum Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra. Leiden 1938, II. Beilage, 3 plates.

[3] Some texts are embedded in other texts, such as the Nāgakumāra-avadāna in the Pravrajyāvastu of the Vinayavastu.

[4] Lokesh Chandra: Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts (Facsimile Edition). Śata-Piṭaka Series Vol. 10, 1-10. Delhi 1959-1974 (abbreviated here as "FE"), reprinted in three parts as: Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts, revised and enlarged compact facsimile edition. Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series 150, 151, 152. Delhi 1995.

[5] The new facsimile edition planned by the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University giving for the first time the measurements of each folio, could also be very helpful for reassembling the manuscripts in their original form.

[6] The numbers refer to The Gilgit Manuscripts, as note 1, where the numbers introduced by the National Archives and used in the Facsimile Edition are kept, but partly split up into sub-numbers, where ever this seemed useful and appropriate. This—hopefully—helps to avoid confusion, although the original numbering is neither adequate nor very practical.

[7] This book was reviewed by H. Bechert: Journal of Religious Studies (Patiala) 11. 1983, p. 118-120; G. Fussman, Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient 73. 1984, p. 384 foll.; H. - O. Feistel, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 134. 1984, p. 387; P. Williams, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 1984, p. 156 foll.; D. Seyfort-Ruegg, Journal of the American Oriental Society 106. 1986, p. 879; H. Eimer, Orientalistische Literaturzeitung 81. 1986, columns 393foll.

[8] The Gilgit Manuscript of the Śayanāsanavastu and the Adhikaraṇavastu edited by Raniero Gnoli. Serie Orientale Roma L. Rome 1978, p. 38,6–8.

[9] For details cf. O. v. Hinüber: Aus der Welt der Kolophone von Gilgit bis Lān² Nā (to appear in "On Colophons" [Conference organized by the research group "Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa" in Hamburg from 3rd to 5th December 2009].

[10] O. v. Hinüber: Die Palola Śāhis. Ihre Steininschriften, Inschriften auf Bronzen, Handschriftenkolophone und Schutzzauber. (Antiquities of Northern Pakistan 5). Mainz 2004 [rev.: Adam Nayyar, Journal of Asian Studies 65. 2006, p. 453 foll.; R. Salomon, Bulletin of the Asia Institute 17. 2003, p. 183-185; Harry Falk, Orientalistische Literaturzeitung 100. 2005, columns 696-698; Gérard Fussman, Journal Asiatique 293. 2005, p. 734-742; R. Schmitt, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 157. 2007, p. 500-502; Alberto M. Cacopardo, East and West New Series 58. 2008, p. 475-477] with supplements: Three New Bronzes from Gilgit. Annual Report of the International Research Institute of Advanced Buddhology (at Soka University) 10. 2007, p. 39-43; More Gilgit Bronzes and Some Additions to "Die Palola Ṣāhis." *ibidem* 12. 2009, p. 3-6; An Inscribed Incense Burner from the MacLean Collection in Chicago, *ibidem* 13. 2010, p. 3-88 and Four Donations Made by Maṅgalahaṃsikā, Queen of Palola (Gilgit), ibidem 14. 2011, p. 3-6.

[11] In spite of the fact that the scribe wrote °*sigha* throughout there can be little doubt that °*siṅgha* is meant, which occurs very frequently elsewhere in names in inscriptions along the Upper Indus.

[12] O. v. Hinüber: Die Kolophone der Gilgit-Handschriften. StII 5/6. 1980, p. 49-83 = Kleine Schriften. Wiesbaden 2009, p. 688-721, particularly p. 66-69 on IX Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, cf. also the index to this article under the individual names.

[13] For Parthian *pwhr*, cf. Rüdiger Schmitt: Die mitteliranischen Sprachen im Überblick, in: Rüdiger Schmitt (Ed): Compendium Linguarum Iranicarum. Wiesbaden 1989, p. 99, and for Bactrian *poora* or *poura*, i.e. *puhra*, cf. Ivan Michajlovitch Steblin-Kamenskij: Baktrijskij jazyk, in: Vera Sergeevna Rastorgueva (Ed.): Osnovy iranskogo jazykoznanija. Sredneiranskie jazyki. Moscow 1981, p. 338.—The reading *pukhrena* follows Sylvain Lévi, who recognized the Iranian word *pukhra*, which was most likely not represented by *hra* in Indian script, because Indian *h* is voiced in contrast to the voiceless *h* in Parthian: Werner Sundermann: Parthisch, in: Compendium, as above, p. 122. The rare *akṣara* interpreted as *khra* does not normally occur in Indian languages.

[14] Perhaps it might be assumed, if the reading *krayādhara* is correct, that *krayādhara* either stands for **kryādhara = kriyādhara* (for *ṛ* : *ra* cf. *pṛhṛṣṭo* : *prahṛṣṭo*, Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden Teil IV. Wiesbaden 1980, p. 237, K 466, b Blatt 12 R 2), or it is a writing mistake for **kriyādhara*. However, **kriyādhara* "practitioner (??)"or

"decision maker (??)" is not attested otherwise.

¹⁵ In no. 7 *lera-nihela-pati* seems to be a title rather than a name; on Khotanese *nihela-pati* cf. Ronald Eric Emmerick: Two Indian loanwords in Khotanese., in: Studien zum Jainismus und Buddhismus. Gedenkschrift für Ludwig Alsdorf. Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 23. Wiesbaden 1981, p. 79-82, particularly p. 81, where the meanwhile outdated reading *nihela-mati* is repeated.

¹⁶ I am obliged to Prof. Dr. Seishi Karashima and Dr. Noriyuki Kudo for granting access to these as yet unpublished materials.

¹⁷ Cf. Die Palola Ṣāhis, as above note 10, p. 141 with note 181.

¹⁸ Ditte König, Gérard Fussman (Edd.): Die Felsbildstation Shatial. Materialien zur Archäologie von Nord-Pakistan 2. Mainz 1997.

¹⁹ In contrast to the Saṃghāṭasūtra, which was translated into Khotanese Saka, there is only a single line of the text of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra preserved in Khotanese translation in the Book of Zambasta VI 3 and a brief metrical summary of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra in Khotanese, cf. Mauro Maggi: Khotanese Literature, in: The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran. Companion Volume I to A History of Persian Literature ed. by Ronald Eric Emmerick and Maria Macuch. A History of Persian Literature Volume XVII. London 2009, p. 375.

²⁰ This thesis was printed in Enschede (Holland) in 1986 as a "Proefschrift" (thesis), see p. 204-209.

²¹ The inscription on this bronze is edited and discussed in "Die Palola Ṣāhis," as note 10, no. 14, p. 38 foll.

²² There are also quite different and contradictory interpretations of this bronze, first as the Palola Ṣāhi "as an initiate under the guidance of the great master Mañjuśrī" "exploiting Sudhana's model" (??) by Anna Filigenzi: The Dāna, the Pātra and the Cakravartin-ship: Archaeological and Art Historical Evidence for a Social History of Early Medieval Buddhism, in: Claudine Bautze-Picron (Ed.): Miscellanies about the Buddha Image. South Asian Archaeology 2007. Special Sessions 1. BAR International Series 1888. Oxford 2008, p. 11–24, particularly p. 21, and again very recently without referring to neither P. G. Paul nor to A. Filigenzi by Rebecca L. Twist: The Patola Shahi Dynasty. A Buddhological Study of their Patronage, Devotion and Politics. Saarbrücken 2011, p. 146 foll. with figure A.1, who tries—very wisely hesitatingly—to establish this image as a representation of Vairocana/Mañjuśrī (whatever that is), without, however, even mentioning the gesture of the right hand of the Buddha or being able to interpret the image as a whole limiting herself to erratic and mostly extremely vague connections of iconographical details to representations of both, Vairocanan and Mañjuśrī, which is rather unhelpful. Moreover, attention should be paid to the simple fact that the name Vairocana is conspicuous by absence among the (quite a few) names of Buddhas found in the inscriptions along the Upper Indus.

²³ The drawing was published in the catalogue "Gandhāra. Das buddhistische Erbe Pakistans. Legenden, Klöster und Paradiese. 21. Novermber 2008 bis 15. März 2009 in der Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Bonn", p. 353, cf. 357a. I am obliged to Prof. Dr. Harald Hauptmann, Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, for the permission to publish this image.

²⁴ Above this inscription there are some clumsily written *akṣaras* probably signifying nothing. There seem to be two characters below the *devaddharma* line *dhi +* of uncertain meaning.—By the side of the second *stūpa* there is one line in small *akṣaras* reading *sārddhaṃ yaśa*(*bhaḍa*)*sya* "together with Yaśa[" and in large characters *candrasenasya*

"of Candrasena" and again below this name *candrasenavihāre*. The last three characters are clearly readable once the image is enlarged.—The wording "together with Yaśa[" seems to indicate that Yaśa[might be the donor or participated in the donation of the smaller *stūpa*, which is most likely later than the Prabhūtaratna scene given the way in which the available space on the rock is used. The relation of the name Candrasena to the *stūpas* is as obscure as the meaning of "in the Candrasena Monastery." Perhaps Candrasena was a traveller who visited the site and wrote down his name after the two stūpas were drawn.

    [25] Martin Bemmann und Ditte König (Edd.): Die Felsbildstation Oshibat. Materialien zur Archäologie von Nord-Pakistan 1. Mainz 1994.

    [26] Masahiro Shimoda: A Study of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra with a Focus on Method-ology of the Study of Mahāyānasūtras. Tokyo 1997, p. 15. The Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra actually uses the word *dharmakathika*, cf. Seishi Karashima and Klaus Wille: The British Library Sanskrit Fragments. Buddhist Manuscripts from Central Asia. Vol. II.1 Texts, Tokyo 2009, p. 554: *[bha]yārditānāṃ dharmakathi‹kathi›kānām dharmanaitrī […]/*line 2/ …] *kāntare vā aṭavīkāntāre vā nadīkāntāre*[… .

    [27] *dharmabhāṇakarakṣāyai*, Ratnaketuparivarta ed. by Yenshu Kurumiya. Kyoto 1978, p. 137,2* "for the protection of *dharmabhāṇakas*."

    [28] On *dharmabhāṇakas* see Graeme MacQueen: Inspired Speech in Early Mahāyāna Buddhism II. Religion 12. 1982, p. 49–65, particularly p. 53 foll.; Keisho Tsukamoto: Source Elements of the Lotus Sūtra, Buddhist Integration of Religion, Thought, and Culture. Tokyo 2007, p. 179 foll. for references also from inscriptions and Davis Drewes: Dharmabhāṇakas in Early Mahāyāna. Indo-Iranian Journal 54. 2011, 331-372. —Richard Nance: The *dharmabhāṇaka* inside and outside the *sūtras*. Religion Compass 2. 2008, p. 134-159 is not accessible to me. In later texts such as the Nepalese version of the Kāraṇḍavyūha, the *dharmabhāṇaka* is also seen as a tantric yogī, cf. Adelheid Mette, Indo-Iranian Journal 47. 2004, p. 325 note 11; for evidence from Khotan cf. O. v. Hinüber, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 157. 2007, p. 390 note 14.

    [29] Giotto Canevascini: The Khotanese Saṅghāṭasūtra. A critical edition. Beiträge zur Iranistik Band 14. Wiesbaden 1993.

Plates

plate 1-a

plate 1
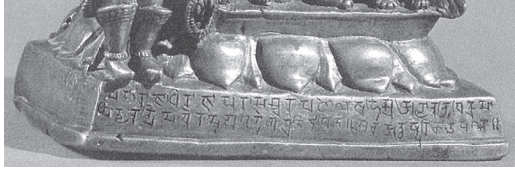
plate 1-b

plate 2