

## Book Reviews

### **Buddhist Manuscripts, Vols. I, II, Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection – I, III**

**Edited by Jens Braarvig  
Published by Hermes Publishing  
Oslo, Norway: 2000, xxii + 302 pp.  
(including 40 pp. of facsimiles in color);  
2002, xxiv + 370 pp. (incl. 56 pp. of  
facsimiles in color)**

The most welcome publication of these two tomes of *Buddhist Manuscripts* (hereunder 'BM 1, 2') is linked to the well-known recent events in Afghanistan involving not only endless suffering of people with repercussions for the whole world, but also rampant vandalism at the hands of unbridled fanatics. From the general editor's introduction (BM 1, xiii-xv) we learn about the circumstances as to how a fairly large hoard of Buddhist manuscripts has become accessible to the scholarly world. Local people, who had taken refuge from the Taliban forces in caves not far from Bamiyan and then in flight across the mountains to the north of the Khyber Pass, tried their best to save the manuscripts found by them while being chased by the Talibans. In 1996 at a Buddhological conference in Leiden, the news was broken that a London MS dealer had sold a collection of Buddhist MS remains to a Norwegian collector named Martin Schøyen. What the collector had acquired are, according to Lore Sander, a leading expert in ancient Indian scripts used in Central Asia, MS fragments containing examples of Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī scripts, of which the Brāhmī fragments could be dated between the 1st and 7th centuries AC. In her description, L. Sander had hypothetically suggested, on grounds of linguistic criteria, that the acquisition for the Schøyen Collection

came from a Mahāsāṃghika library. In BM 1, the Mahāsāṃghika school affiliation has been confirmed for some of the MSS, whereas it has not yet been established beyond doubt for the whole collection. To all who were informed of the Buddhist MSS from Afghanistan, it was instantly clear that these remains would prove extremely important not only for the study of the history of Indian Buddhism, but also for religious history and cross-cultural studies. In 1997, the general editor approached M. Schøyen, and it was agreed that an editorial committee should be formed consisting of international scholars to edit the MS remains. Immediately after its constitution, the committee began work on the project, identifying many fragments of the collection. In 1997 and subsequently, a large number of new fragments from the same hoard were acquired by Schøyen, keeping the collection growing steadily. So as to render the editorial committee's work more and more effective, four 'Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection' seminars were convened, two in Oslo (1997, 98), one in Berlin (1998) and one in Kyoto (1999). Simultaneous with the committee's editorial work,

Gradually – as the collection was catalogued from the earliest fragments on – the materials were conserved, cleaned, prepared and copied by Schøyen, and thus made available to the core group

of the editorial committee. As the general editor states,

At present the collection contains ca. 5,000 sizable fragments of palmleaf, birchbark and vellum, from about 2 cm<sup>2</sup> up to complete MS leaves, including seven poṭhis with an unknown number of folios since they are still undergoing a process of

preservation, and about 8,000 microfragments.

Concluding his general introduction to the present volume containing a selection of MSS from different parts of the collection, he sketches out the committee's future program:

In the forthcoming volumes the remaining MSS will gradually be published, and later volumes will also contain an *index verborum* and a complete paleographical treatment of the scripts in the collection. Computerized versions of the publications will also be available at a later stage. The many unidentified fragments in the collection represent a major challenge to scholars of Buddhist literature, both in respect of editing them and in their systematical and historical treatment, and we present this first volume also with the view of [read: 'with a view to...'] inviting collaboration from other specialists in the field.

The first contribution to BM 1 by Lore Sander deals with "Fragments of an Aṣṭasāhasrikā manuscript from the Kuṣāṇa period" (pp. 1-51). As Sander observes, the MS remains examined by her most probably come from a deposit near Bamiyan and certainly are 'the oldest traces of an Aṣṭasāhasrikā manuscript in an Indian vernacular known so far'. Since the oldest translation into Chinese by Lokakṣema is dated 179-80 AC, scholars assumed that MSS of this proto-Mahāyāna text must have existed before this date, and now by the discovery from Afghanistan this hypothesis has been confirmed. The text of the present fragments is remarkably close to the Sanskrit (hereunder 'Skt.') edition based on MSS from Nepal dating back to the 11th and 12th centuries, whilst the language partly differs. Before presenting her edition, Sander describes the physical appearance of the fragments and makes some remarks about the language which is Skt., mixed with forms close to what Edgerton called 'Buddhist

Hybrid Sanskrit' (better simply named 'Buddhist Sanskrit', because many scholars find Edgerton's naming problematic and not backed by indigenous tradition); see, for instance, the Middle Indic forms *thātavyam* (Skt. *sthātavyam*, 'should be one's basis') or *thera* for *sthavira* (pp. 3, 7, 15, 33). Very conveniently, the fragments from Afghanistan are published together with the Skt. text (Wogihara ed.) in two columns. The English translation of the quoted Skt. by E. Conze, who argues that the text originally developed among the Mahāsāṃghikas of Andhrapradesh, is also given (Calcutta, 1970).

In "The Caṃgīsūtra of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins" (BM 1, pp. 53-62), Torkel Brekke presents those fragments that have been identified as belonging to a Buddhist Skt. and prakritic version of the Caṅkīsutta, Majjhima-Nikāya, No. 95. This important discourse is, indeed, an extraordinary document in which the historical Buddha criticizes blind faith, dogmatism and intolerance (*idam eva satyaṃ mogham anyat*, p. 58, 'this is true, all else is nonsense'). The existence of a Buddhist Skt. version of this Āgama text (in the Chinese Āgama collections no parallel to the Caṅkīsutta exists) corroborates the authenticity of the present discourse as originating in the early period of Buddhism. Brekke also discusses the language of the text transliterated by him and the school affiliation. The Caṃgīsūtra fragments contain many forms that also occur in the Mahāvastu and the Vinaya of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins. With reservations though, Brekke thinks it likely that the text can be attributed to the said school.

Next, Kazunobu Matsuda transliterates, reconstructs with the help of Tibetan and Chinese parallel texts and translates three folios of the "Śrīmālādevīs imhanādanird-eśa" (BM 1, pp. 65-76). Given the enormous popularity which this Mahāyāna discourse enjoyed in China and Japan, the discovery of these three virtually complete folios together with another two fragments

belonging to the same text is one of the highlights of the finds from Afghanistan; these folios are the only remains of an original Indic version of this sūtra discovered so far, whereas the complete text is available only in Chinese and Tibetan translations apart from a few short quotations to be found in the Ratnagotravibhāga and Śikṣāsamuccaya. Matsuda has to be credited with having identified a great number of MS remains. On the other hand, in a few places criticism should be offered. On p. 66, l. 29, the MS has °mānuṣāsure lokeneti; for the emended °mānuṣāsure(na) (p. 68, l. 20) read °re(na) (in the MS, the cerebralization rule is also observed; cf. p. 66, l. 22: °sargeṇa). Bearing in mind that the Śrīmālādevīsīmhanādanirdeśa is a Mahāyāna text promulgating, *inter alia*, Bodhisattva ethics, in some places Matsuda's translation is neither felicitous nor correct. On p. 69, he translates: '...with regard to these people who turn their backs on the true doctrine, who are followers of other heathen teachings (*tīrthika*), who have rotten seeds within them (*pūtibijika*)... they must be destroyed... they must be removed from the world of the gods, humans, and asuras... you have explained... the removal of those critics...' One had better translate *anyatīrthike* as 'adherents of other soteriologies'; 'must be destroyed', rendering *nāśayitum*, is not incorrect; but it is equally possible to translate 'should be caused to disappear/ should be expelled or removed'; 'they must be removed from the world...', however, is incorrect; for *sannigrhyās* (*saṃ-ni-√grah*) is not a verb form which has the sense of separation (in which case an instrumental is used like an ablative); read: 'they should be checked / curbed / restrained by the world with its gods, humans, and asuras... you have explained... the restraining / keeping back of those critics...'

At BM 1, pp. 77-80, Matsuda treats some MS remains which, tentatively, he considers as belonging to "A Mahāyāna version of the Pravāraṇāsūtra". The Chinese Tripiṭaka contains many versions of this sūtra, nearly all of which are found

in the Āgamas. For stylistic reasons the fragments from Afghanistan seem to belong to a Mahāyāna version of the discourse. Matsuda promises to probe into its school-affiliation in a future study.

The longest contribution to BM 1 (pp. 81-166) is by Jens Braarvig, dealing with the "Sarvadharmāpravṛttinirdeśa", 'a sūtra belonging to the great mass of literature representing the middle period of Mahāyāna literature – after the Prajñāpāramitā literature...', i.e. a discourse going back to the formative periods of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Braarvig transliterates 29 rather substantial fragments of the *nirdeśa*, reconstructs the Skt. with the help of lengthy Tibetan and Chinese parallel texts quoted by him and offers a translation of the extant Skt. text, meant to serve as a guide to the understanding of the discourse. As Braarvig states, the sūtra is very interesting because of the extraordinary way it imparts its teachings of *śūnyatā*, its warning against the purely rhetorical use of the Mahāyāna doctrines of emptiness, etc. On p. 84f., Braarvig renders *ḷṣānti* as 'tolerance' and *anutpattikadharmakṣānti* as 'the tolerance that all moments of existence are unborn'. In the given context, however, *ḷṣānti* should be translated, after Edgerton (*Buddhist Hybrid Skt. Dictionary*, pp. 199, 27), as 'the being ready in advance to accept knowledge'; cf. also L. Schmithausen in *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden II*, p. 145: '(geistige) Aufnahmebereitschaft (als Vorstufe des *jñāna* in den einzelnen Phasen des *abhisamaya*)'; Edgerton translates *anutpattikadharmakṣānti* as 'intellectual receptivity to the truth that states of existence have no origin'. Braarvig has made accessible a fascinating text that will prove indispensable for future research concentrating on early Mahāyāna.

A second highlight of BM 1 is the "Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra". After publishing one fragment of this sūtra in *Sūryacandrāya, Essays in Honour of Akira Yuama* (ed. by Paul Harrison and Gregory

Schopen, *Indica et Tibetica* 35, Swistla-Odendorf, 1998), Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann concentrate on all the MS remains of this discourse, on the Chinese and Tibetan parallel texts and provide an English translation of the Tibetan version of the text (pp. 167-216, 301f. – addendum: “Two additional fragments of the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra*”). As in the case of the *Śrīmālādevīsīmhanādanirdeśa*, the fragments of the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra* from Afghanistan are the only specimens of this text which are known to have survived until now in Skt. The sūtra was translated into Chinese several times, for the first time by Lokakṣema in the late 2nd century AC. Since Lokakṣema’s translations of a small group of Mahāyāna sūtras into Chinese can be dated, as emphasized by Harrison and Hartmann, they thus provide us with our first solid evidence for the early development of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Apart from the historical importance, the present sūtra, as the title already suggests, – ‘Discourse on Dispelling *Ajātaśatru*’s Remorse’ – is a unique discourse on account of its topic: the dramatic ‘redemption’ of a patricide doomed to hell through insight into emptiness and the perfection of wisdom. We are indebted to Harrison and Hartmann not only for retrieving parts of an astonishing piece of Buddhist literature in Skt., but also for making known the contents of a ‘philosophically complex and demanding’ text thanks to their summary of the entire sūtra and translation of significant parts of it.

At BM 1, p. 217f., a transliteration of “Unidentified fragments” is given by Matsuda, Hartmann and Braarvig. After identifying, with the help of the *Divyāvadāna*, nine fragments as being parts of the *Avadāna* literature, Klaus Wille presents them in “Fragments from the Aśoka legend” (pp. 219-231). Seishi Karashima transliterates “A fragment of the *Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga* of the *Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins*” (pp. 233-241) which he also translates into English as well as a Chinese parallel found

in the Vinaya of the *Mahāsāṃghikas* (for ‘*Mahāsāṃghikas*’, occurring three times on p. 239, read ‘*Mahāsāṃghikas*’).

The next contribution by Mark Allon and Richard Salomon, “*Kharoṣṭhī* fragments of a *Gāndhārī* version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*” (pp. 243-273) is unique in several respects. On the one hand this discourse has been attracting the undiminished attention of scholars of religious history and cross-cultural studies, on the other buddhologists are likely to be thrilled at the textual remains of this sūtra in *Gāndhārī*, which Allon and Salomon compare with the parallels in Pāli and Skt. They notice marked similarities between the *Gāndhārī* text and the corresponding Chinese *Dīrghāgama* version, nearly unanimously accepted as pertaining to the Dharmaguptaka school. Besides their description, transcriptions and translations of the fragments, they make highly significant paleographic and linguistic observations on the *Gāndhārī* fragments. Equally relevant to religious history and cross-cultural studies is “a Bactrian Buddhist manuscript” explored by Nicholas Sims-Williams (pp. 275-277), viz. two fragments of a leather MS ‘with eight lines of Bactrian written in cursive Graeco-Bactrian script on each side’. As Sims-Williams mentions, he has also worked on a particularly close parallel to the Bactrian fragments of the Schøyen Collection which is to be found in the only other Buddhist text so far known in Bactrian and which belongs to the Dr. D.N. Khalili Collection (London). In both texts the Buddha *Lokeśvararāja* (*lōgoaspharora-dzo boddo*) is mentioned and, additionally, in the London MS *Dīpaṃkara*. Matsuda has pointed out that ‘the mention of the buddhas *Lokeśvararāja* and *Dīpaṃkara* suggest that both texts belong to the Pure Land school of Buddhism’.

BM 1 is concluded by a bibliography (pp. 279-284) and an appendix in which “A brief paleographical analysis of the *Brāhmī* manuscripts in volume I” is given by Lore Sander. She discusses paleographic minutiae with the help of

excellent reproductions of single *akṣaras* and compound consonants from the MSS.

In the general editor's introduction to BM 2 (p. xiii.f.), both the events of September 11, 2001 are mentioned and the demolition of the giant Buddhas at Bamiyan earlier that year. He informs us that

the political course of events itself has inevitably accelerated the arrival of these [i.e. Buddhist] manuscripts and others on the international market. Amid the political and military turmoil in this region, not only in Afghanistan but also in Pakistan and India, new finds continue to be made and fresh manuscripts continue to arrive in the West, along with other artifacts like jars and copper-plate inscriptions.

Consequently, as Braarvig reports, since the publication of BM 1 the Schøyen Collection has continued growing so that in BM 2 a selection of texts from almost all genres found in Buddhist literature is presented, viz. from Āgama and Mahāyāna sūtras, from Vinaya and Abhidharma works, poetical and narrative pieces, and even from a non-Buddhist philosophical treatise. We also learn that the process of working on the MSS for BM 2 has advanced considerably thanks to specialized software for producing and manipulating digital images of the texts so that it has become possible to read the MS remains far more accurately than by normal eyesight. At times, in university circles and among those who finance research in the humanities, the present-day relevance of indology and Buddhist studies is queried. The concluding remarks of the general editor, in the opinion of the present reviewer, are a convincing answer to such queries:

Many of the individual papers in this volume are collaborative efforts, often produced by researchers working in countries widely distant from each other, and the volume as a whole could not have been produced without enthusiastic and committed team-work. In an age where conflict and terror

loom dangerously large and so much is needlessly lost, it is a source of considerable reassurance that these literary remains of a religion devoted to peace are preserved by the efforts of people from different nations and cultures working together for a common goal.

In the first contribution to BM 2 (pp. 1-16), Hartmann examines "More Fragments of the Caṅgīsūtra". We are informed that now three versions of the sūtra are available, all of them preserved only in Indian languages: Apart from the complete text in Pāli, some fragments of a Skt. version of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins have been published in Germany in the series Skt. MS remains from the Turfan discoveries (Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden). Considerable MS remains belonging to a new Dīrghāgama find from Pakistan or Afghanistan which Hartmann has explored in several publications of his, have also turned out to be part of a (Mūla-) Sarvāstivādin version. As for the present remains of the Caṅgīsūtra, he prefers, for the time being, not to answer the question of school affiliation; the fragments might represent a Lokottaravādin version of the discourse, but it would be premature to draw definite conclusions.

Furthermore, five "Fragments of the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra" are treated by Wille (pp. 17-24). Two of the fragments show a diction coming close to that of the (Mūla-) Sarvāstivādins known from Central Asia, while the other three are suggestive of Dharmaguptaka diction as preserved in the Chinese translation of the Dīrghāgama. Well-known is E. Waldschmidt's work on the Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra remains from Central Asia. In his edition, however, there are many lacunae. With the materials at his disposal, Wille has succeeded in partly filling the lacunae. Unlike the Kharoṣṭhī fragments of this discourse published in BM 1, the script of the present (as of the majority of the other) remains, respectively, is "Gilgit/ Bāmiyān Type I" and "standardized Gilgit/ Bāmiyān Type I". On

pp. 25-36, Siglinde Dietz deals with “Fragments of the Andhasūtra, of the Sūtra on the Three Moral Defects of Devadatta, and of the Kavikumārāvādāna”, and Sander presents “New Fragments of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā of the Kuṣāṇa Period” (pp. 37-44). We are indebted to Harrison and Hartmann for making accessible “Another Fragment of the Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanāsūtra” (pp. 45-49). By their applying ultraviolet light to the fragment it has become clear that it had been manipulated by local dealers, perhaps. Obviously, such manipulation – and this is not the only case – is occasioned by the temptation to multiply MS remains due to the sums of money now involved in MS trade. Braarvig and Harrison examine a fragment belonging to the “Candrottarādārikāvākarāṇa” (pp. 51-68), surely a kind of sequel to the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa with a certain charm of its own and which can be regarded as a product of Mahāyāna Buddhism in its middle period, somewhere around the 3rd century AC.

Next, Hirofumi Toda, one of the leading Lotus Sūtra specialists, presents the MS remains of the “Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra” from Afghanistan (pp. 69-95). In the longest contribution to BM 2, Andrew Skilton concentrates on twenty-four pieces coming from a single MS of the “Samādhirājasūtra” (pp. 97-177). He presents the Schøyen fragments together with the corresponding Gilgit version in two columns, followed by his edition of the text and translation. Due to the fact that the Schøyen fragments preserve some preferable and even unique readings that are not found in any other recensions and in view of the text’s importance to comparative religion, this part of BM 2 could be considered this volume’s highlight together with the following work by Harrison, Hartmann and Matsuda on the Schøyen remains of the “Larger Sukhāvativyūhasūtra” (pp. 179-214).

The next two contributors dedicate themselves to Vinaya fragments: a) Karashima carefully studies “Two More

Folios of the Prātimokṣa-Vibhaṅga of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins” (pp. 215-228) and b) Jin-il Chung the “Fragments of a Karma-vācanā Collection, Karmavācanā for Ordination” (pp. 229-237). Exciting finds are the following two items, viz. “Three Fragments Related to the Śāriputra-Abhidharma” (pp. 239-249), explored by Matsuda, and “Fragments of an Early Commentary” by Lambert Schmithausen. Although the latter fragments give no hint of the commentary’s title, for paleographic reasons the remains can be dated: the MS was written in the Kaṇiṣka era in the 2nd century. In his notes on the contents of the commentary, Schmithausen shows that in all likelihood we have before us an Āgama commentary, the counterpart, as it were, of a Pāli Aṭṭhakathā. By no means of less interest are the next two documents: “A Fragment of a Collection of Buddhist Legends, with a Reference to King Huviṣka as a Follower of the Mahāyāna” (pp. 253-267), presented by Salomon, and “A Mīmāṃsaka among the Buddhists. Three Fragments on the Relationship between Word and Object” (pp. 269-285) by Eli Franco. Ten fragments in the Schøyen Collection have been identified as belonging to the “Jyotiṣkāvadāna”, treated by Stefan Baums (pp. 287-302). Here, too, the Schøyen fragments yield several textual improvements on the available Divyāvadāna recension. Luckily, among the MS remains from Afghanistan also poetical texts are found. Two of them are dealt with by Hartmann: a) “Buddhastotras by Mātṛceṭa” (pp. 305-311) and b) “Āryaśūra’s Jātakamālā” (pp. 313-322). The third poetical text is “Haribhaṭṭa’s Jātakamālā” discussed by Michael Hahn (pp. 323-336). In spite of the brevity of the two small fragments of this text, Hahn considers their discovery eminently important. For one thing, the remains from Afghanistan antedate the oldest Nepalese MS by more than one millennium, and for another, the early date of the Schøyen fragments confirms Hahn’s previous dating of Haribhaṭṭa, i.e. his *floruit* must have been before 445 AC.

The final contributions to BM 2 are a) Sander's "An Unusual *ye dharmā* Formula" (pp. 337-349), in which she describes the famous *ye dharmā* āryā verse incised on a small copperplate. She also offers a paleographic analysis of the incised *akṣaras* by comparing them with those used in Indian and Nepalese inscriptions; b) Salomon's information on "A Jar with a Kharoṣṭhī Inscription" (pp. 351-355); this special find is a spherical clay jar with a dedicatory inscription in Gāndhārī language, "recording its donation to the masters of the 'Dharmamūya' (= Dharmaguptaka?) school". Evidently, the jar served as container for the interment of manuscripts. A bibliography (pp. 357-365) and three and a half pages of "Corrigenda – Volume I" bring BM 2 to an end. In the bibliography, the full bibliographic information about 'Hartmann 2000' (BM 2, p. 2, n. 6) is missing, viz. Hartmann, "Zu einer neuen Handschrift des Dīrghāgama", in: Christine Chojnacki, Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Volker M. Tschannerl (eds.), *Vividharatnakaraṇḍaka*, Adelheid Mette felicitation volume, Indica et Tibetica 37, Swisttal-Odendorf, 2000, pp. 359-367). In connection with the BM project, the work of an Indian epigraphist, historian and buddhologist should be mentioned who went on an expedition to Afghanistan in 1976: C.S. Upasak, *History of Buddhism in Afghanistan*, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath / Varanasi, 1990. In this book among the numerous illustrations, fig. 29, for instance, shows a manuscript in Brāhmī (6th century AC), recovered from a cave at Bamiyan and brought to Kabul Museum. As an illustration to BM 2, p. 287ff., fig. 41 shows Jyotiṣka's mother on the pyre (clay, 8th century, brought to Kabul Museum from Fondukistan).

The papers published in BM 1, 2 are of immense value in that they provide a flood of new challenging material for the scholarly world to work upon. Grateful thanks of the user of the two tomes are due to the contributors who have taken great pains to make the antiquities from

Afghanistan universally accessible. Moreover, these antiquities convey a message for the present-day globalized world: Human history is not only replete with chaos and violence; it has also seen, however short-lived, inspiring periods of peace and enlightenment. Greater Gandhara, too, was a homeland of a truly multi-cultural, open society in which intellectual freedom and tolerance (the passages referred to in the Śrīmālādevī-siṃhanādanirdeśa – as they stand – should be taken with a grain of salt) were the most cherished good and in which the *ye dharmā* formula met the needs of everybody: of common man as a protective charm and of the educated as their credo, their trust in reason and man's potentialities ultimately to overcome ignorance and suffering.

– Bhikkhu Pāsādika

## Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies Volume IX – Buddhist Philosophy from 350 to 600 A.D.

By Karl H. Potter

Published by Motilal Banarsidass

Delhi, India: First Indian Edition 2003

ISBN: 81-208-1968-3

This impressive volume in the monumental publication, the Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies, by Motilal Banarsidass, like its two immediate predecessors, Volume VII (Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.) and Volume VIII (Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D.), ranks as the most outstanding contribution to a deeper and more comprehensive study of Buddhist Philosophy. The indefatigable General Editor of the Encyclopedia, Karl H. Potter, Professor of Philosophy and South Asian Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA, USA, has been personally responsible for this volume. The quality of scholarship and the concentration on