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Artiom Mesheznikov

New Fragments of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra in the Serindia Manuscript Collection (IOM, RAS)

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Abstract: The present work deals with the four previously unpublished fragments of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra kept in the Serindia Collection in the subcollection of N.F. Petrovsky under the call numbers SI 2098 (2 fragments), SI 3693, SI 3694. These fragments have some points in common considering the information about the codicological and paleographical features. The fragments present a remarkable similarity to each other in terms of material, type of script and ductus of the writing. It is estimated that the original complete folios of the manuscripts had 7 lines and the same presumable dimensions. On these grounds it is very probable that the four fragments belong to one and the same manuscript. Apart from this, the analysis of text makes it clear that the two fragments under the call number SI 2098 are the two almost conjoining parts of one and the same folio. The article includes transliteration and English translation of the fragments, their comparison with the corresponding text from the Kashgar manuscript of N.F. Petrovsky and with the text of the Kern & Nanjio edition. As a result of comparing the text of the fragments with the texts representing two currently known Sanskrit versions of the Lotus Sūtra (the Gilgit-Nepalese and the Central Asian) it becomes possible to assume that our fragments are closer to the Central Asian version. Fragments containing the texts of this version are of particular interest and utmost importance for the textual history of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra, because such texts represent the earlier stage of textual development of the Sūtra than the Sanskrit texts from Nepal and Gilgit that show more modern and remodeled variant.

Key words: Serindia Collection, Sanskrit manuscripts, Lotus Sūtra, Khotan, Nikolai F. Petrovsky

The Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM, RAS) has preserved a significant number of folios and fragments of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra. Among the
manuscripts of the Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection the Lotus Sūtra
texts take the first place in terms of the number of copies and the volume of
the manuscripts. The Serindia Collection includes 30 Sanskrit manuscripts of
the Lotus Sūtra among which some folios and fragments still remain
unpublished. After they had been identified, it became possible to publish
the next seven fragments¹ and thereby to make significant progress in
introducing into scientific circulation the manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra
stored in the Serindia Collection.

The Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra kept in the Serindia
Collection were compiled mainly in the 8–9th cc.² All the manuscripts were
written on paper in pothi format in Southern Turkestan Brāhmī script. Both
Sanskrit versions of the Sūtra (Gilgit-Nepalese and Central Asian) are
presented in the Serindia Collection, but it is necessary to note that the
manuscripts related to the Central Asian version greatly predominate. It is
sufficient to point out that the Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection contains
the largest existing Central Asian manuscript of the Lotus Sūtra which is
well-known as the so-called Kashgar manuscript kept in the subcollection of
N.F. Petrovsky. Since this manuscript has been preserved almost entirely
(including over 400 folios and fragments), it serves the basis for
investigating the Central Asian version, which is considered as the earliest
version containing an older text being very close to the original variant of the
Lotus Sūtra.³ Studies of the text of the Kashgar manuscript showed that
initially it consisted of about 500 folios, of which 399 folios and fragments
are stored now in the Serindia Collection in the subcollection of N.F. Pet-
rovsky (under the call number SI 1925/27).⁴ Most of the other Sanskrit

¹ SI 2098 (2 fragments), SI 3000 (2 fragments) and 3 fragments for the call numbers
SI 3631, SI 3693 and SI 3694.
² According to the data of paleography it can be assumed that several fragments were
recorded in the 5–7th cc.
³ In the preface to the Kern and Nanjio’s edition of the Lotus Sūtra H. Kern suggested that
the Kashgar version was older and closer to the original composition of the Lotus Sūtra than
the other texts, since the grammatically correct Sanskrit of the Nepalese manuscripts was the
outcome of subsequent innovations made by the authoritative revisers (KERN & NANJIO 1908–
1912: IX).
⁴ Apart from a larger part of the text preserved in the Serindia Collection and those
12 folios which are considered to be missing some parts of the Kashgar manuscript are kept in
the following places in the world: 40 folios are held in the Stein collection in the British
Library and 4 folios are in the Hoernle collection in the India Office Library; 9 folios are in
the Trinkler collection in the State Library of the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz formerly
in Marburg and now in Berlin; 6 fragments are now in the Otani collection in the Peking
Library; one fragment is in the Ellsworth Huntington papers in the Sterling Library of Yale
University (TODA 1981: XII).
manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra from the Serindia Collection show similarities or even verbatim matches with the text of the Kashgar manuscript and thus stand closer to the Central Asian version. When compared with the Sanskrit texts of Nepalese and Gilgit manuscripts, almost all Central Asian folios and fragments represent a quite different recension of the textual tradition of the Lotus Sūtra. The Gilgit-Nepalese version of the Lotus Sūtra is formed by Sanskrit manuscripts on palm leaf and paper from Nepal and Tibet, as well as Sanskrit manuscripts on birch bark discovered in 1931 in a stūpa site north of Gilgit in Kashmir. Only three Sanskrit manuscripts preserved in the Serindia Collection under the call numbers SI 1941, SI 3332/3, and SI 4645 are close to the Gilgit-Nepalese version of the Lotus Sūtra.

The paleographic and linguistic analysis of the manuscripts showed that during the second half of the 1st millennium AD the Lotus Sūtra was circulating in the Southern oases of the Tarim Basin, mainly in Khotan. This is confirmed by some happily survived Khotanese colophons to several manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra in which the Khotanese donators transfer the merits to their dead relatives. The widespread circulation of the Lotus Sūtra in Khotan also could be confirmed by the type of script. As has already been noted, Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra from the Serindia Collection were written in Southern Turkestan Brāhmī script developed and used for copying texts in the southern rim of the Tarim. Comparison of Sanskrit manuscripts from the Serindia Collection with the Sanskrit texts in Northern Turkestan Brāhmī from the German Turfan Collection revealed that Hinayāna texts were more popular in the Northern oases while Mahāyāna texts predominated in the Southern. The Lotus Sūtra and other Mahāyāna texts are represented in the Turfan Collection by only a small number of manuscripts, while these texts perform the main part within ‘Sanskrit division’ of the Serindia Collection. In this respect, being probably one of the most popular Sanskrit texts in Khotan, the Lotus Sūtra may well have been one of the school-forming Sūtras in the Southern oases of Tarim Basin.

5 Undoubtedly the Sanskrit texts found in the Gilgit manuscripts agree very closely with the Sanskrit texts of the Nepalese manuscripts and thus both groups of texts form single Gilgit-Nepalese version.
8 See: MESHEZNIKOV 2021.
9 For example, the Kashgar manuscript of N.F. Petrovsky has such a colophon on the f. 459b (TODA 1981: 225).
It is noteworthy that the name “Kashgar manuscript” is conditional and should be associated with the place where this manuscript was acquired by the Russian Consul General in Kashgar N.F. Petrovsky from a local collector aqsaqal Badruddin Khan, who had discovered it near Khotan (most probably in the Domako region, in the ancient Buddhist site at Khādalik, where excavations were carried out at the beginning of the 20th c., and where many other manuscripts of the Serindia Collection were found). Judging the presumptive provenance, the Kashgar manuscript of N.F. Petrovsky strictly scientific should be called the Khotan manuscript.

Manuscripts from Central Asia contain the original Sanskrit Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna texts and represent the early versions of the sūtras, which had already been replaced in India by the newer ones. The same applies to the Sanskrit variants of the Lotus Sūtra. The study of Chinese translations shed light on the chronology of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra texts. Comparison of available Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra with the Chinese Buddhist texts allowed to determine which Sanskrit version had served the basis for a certain Chinese translation of the Sūtra. The exact dates of the Chinese translations gave grounds for making assumptions about the textual history of the Sanskrit versions. On one hand, it was discovered that the Gilgit-Nepalese version had appeared in India presumably around the fourth century AD and it was this version which had been chosen for the Chinese translation of Kumārajīva in 406. On the other hand, the earlier version of the Sūtra, which at present we know as the Central Asian one, most likely penetrated oases of Tarim Basin in the first centuries AD and was translated into Chinese at as early a date as the third century AD by Dharmarākṣa.

In this regard Prof. Heinz Bechert attempted to research the textual history of the Sanskrit text of the Lotus Sūtra checking its Chinese translations and all currently known Sanskrit manuscripts in Nepalese, Devanāgarī and Brāhmī scripts. Having studied the chronological relationship between Indian and Central Asian texts, H. Bechert tried to explain the appearance of several versions of the Sūtra. According to him, the Gilgit-Nepalese version which underlies Kumārajīva’s translation and must be dated earlier than 406 AD was neither of Nepalese, nor of Kashmirian origin. Initially, the earliest text of the Sūtra was recorded in the first centuries AD and brought from India to Central Asia. Subsequently in India this text was remodeled by unknown scholars, and as a result appeared the so-called Gilgit-Nepalese

10 Vorobiova-Deiatovskaja 2011: 245.
version. The hybrid language\(^\text{12}\) of the original text of the Sūtra was changed by scholars applying the rules of classical Sanskrit grammar. The new form of the text was widely accepted in the Buddhist tradition of North India and replaced the earlier variant, because the upgraded version fitted much better the taste of time of the so-called Sanskrit renaissance.\(^\text{13}\) During that period the Buddhist literary tradition, which had been functioning for a long time in the large variety of Middle Indian dialects, was transferred to a single classical Sanskrit. The original text of the Lotus Sūtra was restructured, its variations from classical Sanskrit in orthography, phonology, syntax, and morphology were removed or unified in accordance with standard Sanskrit grammar. The more modern version of the Lotus Sūtra began to spread throughout North India, while in oases of Tarim Basin the earlier so-called Central Asian recension had been already generally accepted and widely transmitted. Thus, the Central Asian manuscripts represent the early stage of textual development of the Lotus Sūtra. Such manuscripts were in circulation especially in Khotan and the unpublished fragments to which the present article is devoted are among them.

The present work deals with the four previously unpublished fragments of the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra kept in the Serindia Collection in the subcollection of N.F. Petrovsky under the call numbers SI 2098 (2 fragments), SI 3693, SI 3694. We introduce transliteration of the fragments, their English translation and facsimile.

\(^{12}\) Franklin Edgerton in his seminal work *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* proposed a description of Buddhist Sanskrit texts based on the assumption that the originally used Prakrit languages had been undergoing the process of a progressive Sanskritization during which middle Indic forms were gradually purged. Presumably, Sanskritization was increasing exponentially in the course of a gradual oral transformation, Sanskrit elements were penetrating more and more into texts in Middle Indic languages, and as a result this process formed an array of texts, characterized by a different ratio of Sanskritisms and Prakritisms in them. Speaking about the manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra presented in the Serindia Collection, they contain the texts which underwent changes in the direction of greater Sanskritization, their prose passages were composed in almost regular Sanskrit comparatively free from recognizable Middle Indic influence, but many archaic hybrid language forms also retained especially in the verses.

\(^{13}\) *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* 1977: 6.
Description of the fragments

SI 2098. According to the text fragment 1 (in size 13.9×13.1 cm) and fragment 2 (13.7×10.6 cm) are almost connected. A large decorative circle has been preserved (diameter: 10.1 cm). It was supposed to contain a colored miniature. Such circles can also be found in the Kashgar manuscript, usually at the beginning or the end of chapters. (Pl. 1, 2, 3, 4)

SI 3693. The fragment measures 14×20.1 cm, only the left part of the pothi folio is extant. Fragment preserves a left margin (2 cm) and a small decorative circle (diameter: 3.1 cm) for marking a binding hole. The number of the page (225) is preserved on the left side-recto. (Pl. 5, 6)

SI 3694. The manuscript, which measures 7.5×18.6 cm, belongs to the left half of the folio and preserves part of a small decorative circle (diameter: ≈ 3 cm). It consists of three fragments, two of which are very tiny and preserve only illegible fragments of aksaras. On the basis of the Kashgar manuscript we estimate that a complete folio SI 3694 bore 7 lines of writing on each side as with the fragments SI 2098 and SI 3693. Comparison with the Kashgar manuscript shows that the recto side of the fragment SI 3694 might include the lines from 5 to 7 and the verso side continues with the excerpts of the next four lines. (Pl. 7, 8)

From an evaluation of the available information about the external features of the fragments (material, type of script and ductus, number of lines, etc.) it is possible to assume that they were parts of one manuscript copied in Khotan. Moreover, two fragments kept under the call number SI 2098 form parts of one and the same folio of this manuscript. Our fragments are written in the ornamental formal Southern Turkestan Brāhmī script, the forms of the aksaras look very similar, and, judging by the paleography, the manuscript dates back to the 8–9th cc. AD. The text is put down in black ink on light brown paper. The complete pothi folio contains 7 lines on each side, the dimension between the lines is 1.8 cm. The upper and lower edges are partially preserved in some of our fragments and measure 1 to 1.5 cm, the size of left and right margins according to the fragments is 1.5 to 2 cm.

As mentioned above, the Sanskrit Lotus Sūtra texts in the manuscripts of the Serindia Collection often coincide almost verbatim with the text contained in the Kashgar manuscript. Aside from those few fragments that turned out to be closer to the Gilgit-Nepalese version, the rest manuscript
fragments clearly follow the text of the Kashgar manuscript, and rare discrepancies found among them can be considered equivalent in terms of both content and grammatical form. With the help of the text of the Kashgar manuscript it is possible to calculate that there would originally have been 25–30 aksaras to the line of the entire folio of the manuscript to which our fragments belong. From the facts mentioned above, the size of the entire pothi folio may be calculated as having originally been roughly 15×50 cm.

Contents of fragments

The fragments contain text from two chapters of the Lotus Sūtra. The text of SI 3693 belongs to the 18th chapter of the Lotus Sūtra (“The Chapter Describing the Religious Merit [Obtained through] Joyful Participation [in Dharma]”, ‘Anumodanāpunyanirdeśaparivartaḥ’). The fragments SI 2098 and SI 3694 are the excerpts from the 19th chapter (“Benefits of a Dharma Preacher”, ‘Dharmabhānakānṛśaṃsa-parivartaḥ’).

The excerpt of fragment SI 3693 belongs to the end of the 18th chapter, which, as the name of the chapter implies, outlines a description of religious benefits obtained from the joyful acceptance of Dharma. The content of the chapter may be summarized as follows. Bodhisattva Maitreya asks Buddha what achieves a person who listens to the Lotus Sūtra and follows it with joy. According to Buddha, accepting the teachings of the Lotus Sūtra will bring incalculable religious merit to an adept and lead to a better rebirth. The key term for this chapter is anumodanā (acceptance, (expression of) thanks, gratification or approval).14 In the context of the Lotus Sutra this term may be understood as a joyful participation in knowledge. Through listening to the Lotus Sūtra, a person experiences a joyful participation in the truth inherent in it, which Buddha comprehended, and which the listener of the Sūtra comprehends.15 The chapter emphasizes that concerning accumulation of religious merit anumodanā gained through listening to the Sūtra surpasses other methods of spiritual development, namely the practice for the laity (offering gifts) and yogic practice. Our fragment tells that if a person of a good family16

14 MONIER-WILLIAMS 1899: 37; EDGERTON 1953: 32.
16 Both the 18th and 19th chapters speak about sons and daughters of a good family. They may be understood as sentient beings who have awakened to the realization of their Buddha-nature, of their innate potential for enlightenment, and the spiritual tendencies of these beings are directed towards attaining Buddhahood through the path of a bodhisattva.
hears the Dharma of the Lotus Sūtra, were it even just one line for a single moment, and, as mentioned before, if that person joyfully receives it, feeling participation in knowledge it contains, the religious benefits of that person will be incalculable and incomparable. Namely those who hold joy in their mind while hearing the Dharma (and also persuading other beings to listen to it) will be reborn into the body which will acquire marvelous carts, palanquins, vehicles etc., obtain seats of Indra, Brahma, a Cakravartin’s royal lion-throne, gain birth in the same place as the bodhisattvas acquired dhāraṇī-powers.

The text of fragments SI 2098 represents the very beginning of the 19th chapter of the Lotus Sūtra, which speaks about those who spread the Dharma. This chapter focuses not only on the transformative power of the text of Sūtra itself, but also on the exalted status of its preacher. It tells about the good qualities acquired by sentient beings through the reading, explaining, propagating the Lotus Sūtra to others. According to the text, a person who keeps the Lotus Sūtra, takes care of it, recites it’s Dharma, explains difficult passages, rewrites and propagates the text of the Sūtra, is called Dharmabhāṇaka or a Dharma-preacher. The passage from SI 2098 enumerates the merits obtained by Dharmabhāṇaka in terms of rewards for the six senses. The number of good qualities that a Dharma-preacher will receive is indicated for each of six sense faculties (the five sensory organs and the mental organ — the mind), and it is either 800 or 1200. One of the interpretations of these numbers was offered by Kumarajiva’s student Tao-shen (360–434) in his Commentary on the Sūtra.¹⁷ The 10 precepts of Buddhism (10 kinds of goodness) correspond to 10 virtues or good qualities. Every good quality can be combined with the 10 good qualities, thus their number should be multiplied by itself, resulting in 100. Good qualities are inherent in the four proper deeds (self-practice, teaching the Dharma, praising the Dharma and following it with joy) and thus 400 good qualities result from it. Good qualities have three grades. Everything can be characterized as the lowest, the middle and the highest. The middle level includes the lowest, and the highest level includes both the lowest and the middle. If the lowest level has 400 good qualities, then the middle and highest levels have 800 and 1200 respectively. According to the 19th chapter three organs — ears, tongue and mind — can be described as the highest, and they get 1200 good qualities, the other three — eyes, nose and body — are of the middle grade, so they have 800 good qualities. Further the text

specifies how pure and perfect will be Dharmabhāṇaka’s faculties of seeing, hearing, perceiving etc. In particular fragment SI 3694 presents the excerpt which deals with the Dharmabhāṇaka’s body.

Transliteration, correspondences and English translation

The fragments presented here under the call numbers SI 2098 and SI 3693 correspond to the text from the folios of the Kashgar manuscript preserved in the Stein collection of the British Library. The fragments SI 2098 follow the text of the folios 340–341 kept under the call numbers Or.9613–14 and Or.9613–15. The fragment SI 3693 corresponds to the text of the folios 336–337 (Or.9613–10, 11). Speaking about the fragment SI 3694 it overlaps with the folio No. 357 of the manuscript SI 1925 kept in the N.F. Petrovsky subcollection of the Serindia Collection. The text of the Central Asian version of the Lotus Sūtra, contained in the Kashgar manuscript is most fully presented in the edition of H. Toda. Also, the facsimile edition of L. Chandra was used when comparing the text of our fragments with the Kashgar manuscript.

Apart from the comparison with the Kashgar Manuscript our fragments may be also compared with the corresponding text of the well-known Kern and Nanjio edition of the Lotus Sūtra which is based mostly on the texts of the Nepalese manuscripts and thus differs textually from the Central Asian version. The comparison of our fragments and texts of the Kashgar manuscript with the version known from the late Sanskrit Nepalese manuscripts shows that more modern rearranged version in some parts overlaps with the Central Asian, but also has many differences due to later alterations.

18 See: TODA 1981.
20 See: KERN & NANJIO 1908–1912.
21 The manuscripts used by H. Kern and B. Nanjio are all much newer than the Central Asian manuscripts. Nepalese palm leaf texts preserving comparatively older readings may be dated to the 11–12th cc., and more modern Nepalese paper manuscripts have been copied since the 17th c.
Symbols used in the transliteration

( ) — restored akṣara(s)
[ ] — akṣara(s) whose reading(s) is(are) uncertain
< > — omitted (part of) akṣara(s) without gap in the manuscript
{ } — superfluous akṣara(s) or a daṇḍa
+ — one lost akṣara
.. — one illegible akṣara
. — illegible part of an akṣara
/// — beginning or end of a fragment when broken
| — daṇḍa
|| — double daṇḍa
* — virāma
• — punctuation mark
: — visarga used as punctuation
। — avagraha
〇 — decorative circle
_hex — jihvāmūlīya

SI 2098 (fragment 1 + fragment 2 (in italic))

**Recto**

1. /// ◯ .. + kha(l)u]+++ n] sa ..
2. /// ◯ ti sma [•] [y]at kaśc(i)t sa[t].
3. /// ◯ v[i]ma[m dharmapa-]
4. /// ◯ vā[cy]a[isyati de-
5. /// ◯ [ś]yati • svādhyā-
6. /// [r]gu ◯ na[ś]i • pratilapsya-
7. /// .. • aṣṭo ghrāṇa[ṇ]a + (t)[ä]ni pra(t)i-

**Verso**

1. /// • aṣṭau kāyag[ṇ]a .. (t)[ä]ni [p]ra +
2. /// [y]a[ti • yebhir guṇe + s [t]asya kulaputra-
Kashgar manuscript 340b(4)–341b(2):

atha khalu bhagavān satatasamitābhīyuktanāma bodhisatvanāma+ + +tvam23 āmaṇtrayati sma • yāḥ kaścit satatasamitābhiyu /// — ///24 tā25 vā imaṁ dharmaparyāyaṁ udgrhiṣyati /// — ///26 samprakāśaḥśiṣyantī • svādhyaḥśiṣyantī /// — /// lapsyati27 • dvādaśa śrotaguṇaśatānī prati /// — /// psyati28 • dvādaśa jihvāguṇaśatānī pratilapsyati • aṣṭ29 /// — /// lapsyati29 • dvādaśa managuṇaśatānī pratilapsya(ti • yebhir guṇeḥḥiḥ tasya (k)ula[plutrasya bahubhir guṇaśatābhi śārīre śaḍendriyagraṇām śuddhaṃ pa〇ṛiṣuddhaḥ bhaviṣyati • supariṣuddhaḥ bhaviṣyati sa kulaputra eva pariṣuddhaḥ caṣṣurindriyaḥ pratilapsyati ye caṣṣurindriyeṇa pratilabdhena prākṛtiḥ māṁsa caṣṣuṣā māṭāpiṭrṣambhāvena sarvaṃ tṛṣāḥsaḥram mahāśahasram lokadhātuḥ drakṣyati sāntarabhirdham sasumeruḥ sacakrravāṭaṃ mahācakrravāṭaṃ mucilendramahāmucilendraṃ sasālaṃ savanaṣādaṃ sotsaṃ sasarabhaṭakaṃ heṣṭimena yāvad avici mahānarakam drakṣyati •

22 Kashgar manuscript: scribal error for “bhāṭakaṃ”.
23 (mahāsa)tvaṃm (TODA 1981: 169). Hereinafter restoration of some parts of the missing text of the Kashgar manuscript is given in accordance with the edition of H. Toda.
24 The symbol /// — /// indicates those parts of the folios in the Kashgar manuscript which are missing due to fire.
25 (kta … kuladuhitā).
26 (dhārayiṣyati vācaḥśiṣyati deśayiṣyati paryāpuniṣyati).
27 (likhiṣyati … prati)lapsyati.
28 prati(lapsyati … prati)lapsyati.
29 aṣṭ(aḥ … prati)lapsyati.
Pl. 1.
A fragment of Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS.
SI 2098, fragment 1 recto

Pl. 2:
A fragment of Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS.
SI 2098, fragment 1 verso
Pl. 3:
A fragment of Saddharmapundarika-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS. SI 2098, fragment 2 recto

Pl. 4:
A fragment of Saddharmapundarika-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS. SI 2098, fragment 2 verso
Thereupon Bhagavan addressed Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Satatasmitābhiyukta (‘Forever Diligent’): “If a young man of a good family preserves, recites, teaches, writes this Dharmaparyaya, that person will attain eight hundred good qualities of the eye, twelve hundred qualities of the ear, eight hundred qualities of the nose, twelve hundred qualities of the tongue, eight hundred qualities of the body, and twelve hundred qualities of the mind. By these many hundred good qualities the six sense faculties of that person will become completely pure and perfect. That person will gain pure vision. By means of the natural, bodily eyes given by his parents he will see the whole universe consisting of triple thousand great thousand worlds, within and beyond, with its great mountains Sumeru, Cakravāla, Mucilinda, mountain ranges, forests, clouds, seashores, all the existence from the lowest hell Avīci and up to the highest summit of the universe.

30 Cakravāṭa/Cakravāḍa/Cakavāla — n. of a mountain or rather mountain-range, supposed to surround the earth.
SI 3693
Folio 225

Recto
1. rmaparyāyaṃ śṛṇuyā[†]t*) u ///
2. saṃskāreṇa kṛtenopaci ///
3. lābhe gorathā[ntāṃ] lā[bhi] ///
4. yānānāṃ sarṣa ○ pa(y) ///
5. bhi bhaviṣyati • sa[ce]t pu[na] ///
6. rmaparyāyaṃ [śṛ]nuyā* para[s] ///
7. rasya sa[tva] ++ tena [pə]ra ///

Verso
1. kuśalābhisaṃ++reṇa lābhī [bh] ///
2. sanānāṃ sīṁ(hā)sanānāṃ lābhī ///
3. aparasya puruṣasyaivaṃ + ///
4. traṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ ○ śṛṇu ///
5. yadi mūhūrt[a]mā ○[t]e[ra][m] ///
6. saṃskāreṇa pa[ra]ṃ prautsā+ ///
7. labdhebhir bodhisatvebhiḥ sārdhaṃ ///

Kashgar manuscript, 336b(1)–337b(1):

tatra vihāre muhūrtamātram api imaṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ śṛṇuyāt* utthito vā • niṣṣaṇo vā sa ajita kulaputras taṃ mātrakena puṇyābhīsaṃskāreṇa kṛtenopacitenā jātīvītivṛtto dvīfiye ātmabhāvapratiśvābhī gorathānāṃ lābhī bhaviṣyaty aśvarathāna hastira ○ thānāṃ śivikāyanāṃ nāvayānānāṃ sarṣapayānānāṃ sukhamayānāṃ divyānāṃ ca vimāna(y)ā /// — /// iṣyati31 •
sacet punas tatra dharmāśrayo mūhurtamātram api /// — /// ryāya32 śṛṇuyā parasatvāṃ vā niṣīdā /// — /// sya33 satvasya sa tena

31 (nānāṃ lābhī bhav)isyati (TODA 1981: 166).
32 (…dharmaprayāya.
33 niṣīdā(ayed… aparasa)ya.
paramāsana // — /// skāreṇa\(^{34}\) kuśalābhisaṃskāreṇa lābhī bhaviṣya(t) (ca) kṛrvavartirjāsanānāṃ sīṃhāsanānāṃ lābhī bhav // — ///\(^{35}\) ajita tatra kaścid eva puruṣaḥ aparasya ○ puruṣasyaivaṇ vaded āgaccha tāv(t) tvaṃ bhoḥ puruṣaḥ saddharmapuṇḍarīkaṃ nāma sūtraṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ śṛṇusya\(^{34}\) sa ca puruṣas tasya puruṣasya taṃ protsāhanam āgamyā āgatvā yadi mūḥurtamātram\(^{35}\) api imāṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ śṛṇuyāt* tasya satvyasyānena puṇyābhisaṃskāreṇa paraṃ protsāhanakusalamūlenabhisaṃskṛtena puruṣaḥ sadādhāraṇirpratilabhī pradhebhir bodhisatebhī • sārdhaṃ samavadhānaṃ prratilabhāti •

Kern & Nanjio, 349(9)–350(4):

sa ca gattvā tasminnimaṃ dharmaparyāyaṃ mūḥurtakamapi śṛṇuyātsthitto vā niṣaṇṇo vā sa sattvastanmātreṇa puṇyābhisaṃskāreṇa kṛtenopaci\(^{35}\) tena jātvinivṛttyo dvitīye samuccraye dvitīya ātmabhāvapratilambhe gorathānāṃ lābhī bhaviṣyatyaśvarathānāṃ hastirathānāṃ sīvikānāṃ goyānāṃśabhayānāṃ divyānāṃ ca vimānānāṃ lābhī bhaviṣyatī| sacetpunastrasatvaṃ dharmāśrayanca mūḥurtamātramapi niṣadyemaṃ dharmparyāyaṃ śṛṇuyātparaṃ vā niṣādayedāsanavabhiṣkānaṃ vā kuryādāparasya sattvasya tena sa puṇyābhisaṃskāreṇa lābhī bhaviṣyatī | sacetpunerajita kaścideva kulaupatro vā kuladuhitī vā paraṃ puruṣamevaṃ vadedāgaccha tvam bhoḥ puruṣa Saddharmapuṇḍarīkaṃ nāma dharmaparyāyaṃ śṛṇusya sa ca puruṣastasya tāṃ protsāhanāmāgamyā yadi mūḥurtamātramapi śṛṇuyātsa sattvastena protsāhena kuṣalamūlenābhisaṃskṛtena dhāraṇipratiladbhairbodhisattvaiḥ sārdhaṃ samavadhānaṃ prratilabhāte|  

\(^{34}\)(…puṇyābhisaṃ)skāreṇa.
\(^{35}\)bhav(iṣyati…).
Pl. 5:
A fragment of Saddharmanapundarika-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS. SI 3693 recto

Pl. 6:
A fragment of Saddharmanapundarika-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS. SI 3693 verso
Translation

...if a man of a good family approaches a monastery and there hears this Dharmaparyāya for even a single moment, either standing or sitting. Then, O Ajita! Through the store of merit attained from this action that person after the end of his present life, at the time of his second existence will become a possessor of carts yoked with oxes, horses and elephants, palanquins, ships, light and beautiful carriages, heavenly vehicles, aerial cars. If that person sits down at a place where the Dharma is taught, even for a moment to hear this Dharmaparyāya, or invites another person to sit and listen or shares with him his own seat, by the merit of goodness attained through that action he will gain seats of Indra, of Brahma, thrones of a Cakravartin. O Ajita! If that same person says to another person: “Come and listen to the Dharmaparyāya called the Lotus Sūtra of the True Law”, — and if due to his exertion that other person comes to listen to it even for a single moment, then by the merit of the root of goodness attained through this exertion the first person will obtain co-existence with Bodhisattvas having acquired dhāraṇīs.

SI 3694

Transliteration

Recto
5. /// ya[th]a[iva vai][dū][rya][ma][yi] ///
6. /// dhāreti idaṃ hy udā ++ ///
7. /// thā 's[ya] [dṛ](śya)te • sau [t](u) [s](va)yaṃ [pa] ///

Verso
2. /// iṣu prat[i]bimba drṣyaṃ[ti] [hi] [t] ///
3. /// cakravādā : hi[ma]vā[ṇ] su+ ///
4. /// [thai]+ ○ [4] ++++ sau pa[ś] ///
Pl. 7:  A fragment of Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS.  
SI 3694 recto

Pl. 8:  A fragment of Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Sub-Collection. The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS.  
SI 3694 verso
Kashgar manuscript, 357a(7)–357b(6):

pariśuddha tasya bhavate ‘tmabhāvo yatheva vaiḍūryamayī sunirmalaḥ priyadarśanaḥ bhoti ca sarvaprāṇināṃ : ya sūtra dhāreti īdanaḥ hy udāraṃm36 ādarśa mṛráṣṭe yatha bimbha drśyate loka ‘syā kāyasmi tathā ‘syā drśyate • sau tu svayaṃ paśyati no ca anye pariśuddhakāyasī iyam evarūpam* 2 ye lokadḥātī yā svatam satvā manuṣya devasuraguhakāṣ ca • nanarakeṣu vā pre○tiraścayoniṣu pratibim(ba) drśyantī hi tasya kāye 3 devavimāṇā ca bhavāgra yāva(c ch)aia || — /// ā • himavān sumerūṣ ca mahāṃś ca meruḥ kaya(sm)i /// — /// ṣyantī37 ātmabhāve saśrāvakā bu[d](dha) /// — /// ā38 gaṇe ca ye dharma prakāṣa39 ///

Kern & Nanjio, 370(10)–371(6):

pariśuddha tasya bhavatetmabhāvo yathāpi vaiḍūryamayo viśuddhāḥ| sattvāna nityam priyadarśanāṣcā yaḥ sūtra dhāreti īdanaḥ udāram ||61|| ādarśaṃrṣhe yatha bimbhu paśyet loko ‘syā kāye ayu drśyate tathā| svayaṃbhur so paśyati nānyasattvāṃ pariśuddhi kāyasīyamevarūpā ||62|| ye lokadḥātāu hī ihāṣtī sattvā manuṣyadevaśuraguhakā vā| narakeṣu preteṣu tiraścayoniṣu pratibimba saṃdrśyati tatra kāye||63|| vimāna devaḥ bhavāgra yāvacchailaṃ pi ca parvata cakravāḍam| himavān sumerūṣa mahāṃśa ca meruḥ kāye| sarvathaīva ||64|| buddhāṃ pi so paśyati ātmabhāve saśrāvakāṃ buddhasutāṃ satsthānāṃ || ye bodhisattvā viharantī caikakā gaṇe ca ye dharma prakāṣyantī ||65||

37 (… 4… pāśyāṃi.
38 buddha(sutāṃs… caikak)ā.
39 prakāṣa(yantī 5…).
Translation

His body becomes entirely pure, perfectly clear and excellent, as if made of a cat’s-eye gem; he who preserves this Sūtra is always an utterly pleasant sight for all sentient beings.

Since everything reflects on the surface of a mirror, so the world’s image is seen in his body. He alone sees it, while no other beings do, such is the perfection of his body.

All sentient beings of the world, humans, gods, demons, spirits, hell’s inhabitants, hungry ghosts, animals are reflected on that body.

The aerial chariots of the gods which reach as high as the extremity of the universe, the mountains Cakravāḍa, Meru, Mahāmeru are reflected on that body.

He sees the Buddhas in his body, likewise the Śrāvakas and other sons of Buddha, the Bodhisattvas who lead a solitary life, and those who teach the Dharma to the assembly.

References


