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ON THE COVER:

SI 2019 from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.

Artiom V. Mesheznikov

Sanskrit Fragments of Mahāprajñāpāramitā (SI 2097, SI 3017, SI 3331/5) in the Serindia Collection (IOM RAS)

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Abstract: The present paper deals with the previously unstudied Sanskrit manuscript fragments of Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (“Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom in 25 000 lines”), kept in the St. Petersburg Serindia Collection (IOM RAS) under the call numbers within the “N.F. Petrovsky Subcollection” (SI 2097, SI 3017) and the “M.I. Lавrov Subcollection” (SI 3331/5). Sharing a set of codicological and paleographic features the two new fragments SI 3017 and the fragment SI 2097 are attested to be the parts of a single pothi-type folio of paper containing the sutra’s Sanskrit text recorded in the so-called South Turkestan Brāhmī script. The paleography allows to trace the origin of the manuscript localizing it to Khotan and dating it to the 8th–9th cc. AD. The uniqueness of another Prajñāpāramitā fragment (SI 3331/5) lies in the fact that it belongs to the most ancient examples of Sanskrit manuscripts copied directly in Khotan, and, therefore, to the oldest Prajñāpāramitā texts written on Central Asian paper in the so-called Early Turkestan Brāhmī script variation used for recording Buddhist texts in the 5th–6th cc. AD in Serindia. This paper includes a description of the fragments, transliteration, correspondences with the critical edition, an English translation and a facsimile.

Key words: Buddhism, Central Asia, Khotan, Mahāyāna, Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Sanskrit manuscripts, Serindia Collection, IOM RAS

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Introduction

Sanskrit manuscripts from Central Asia constitute one of the most ancient and badly preserved parts of the Serindia Collection kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IOM RAS).

Though, according to current data, the Sanskrit part of the Serindia Collection includes 667 items registered in inventory books, a significant number of them consist of piles of tiny fragments. Thus, at present, the actual number of Sanskrit manuscripts cannot be counted accurately. The Serindia Collection is characterized by extreme heterogeneity in terms of volume and composition: the Serindia artifacts have come down to us, for the most part, in a rather fragmented and scattered condition. Generally, under separate call numbers the Sanskrit collection contains various parts of pothi-folios, palm, birch bark, and paper fragments, including numerous scattered pieces of half-decayed manuscripts, often containing almost no text.

Approximately 100 items of the Sanskrit segment of the Serindia Collection, relatively complete manuscripts with research potential, have been introduced into scientific circulation by Russian and foreign scientists, but a large array of texts has not been covered yet in scholarly publications. In this regard, relying on the St. Petersburg manuscript collection as a source base to reconstruct and study the Sanskrit Buddhist canon is a scholarly task of utmost relevance, although it is still very far from being accomplished.

Among the Sanskrit manuscripts of the Serindia collection that have not been studied yet, fragments of the fundamental works of Mahāyāna Buddhism — the Sūtras on Perfect Wisdom, or the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras — undoubtedly occupy an honorable place (both in terms of quantity and quality of preservation). Analysis of the repertoire of Sanskrit texts from Khotan (the medieval Central Asian center of Buddhism most richly endowed with Sanskrit sources) indicates that since the middle of the 1st millennium AD Mahāyāna became the leading trend in Serindia (the historical territory on the periphery of India, China and Tibet within the borders of modern-day Xinjiang). Following the introduction and spread of Central Asian paper as the main writing material, since the 5th–6th cc. Mahāyāna canonical texts were being actively copied in Khotanese monastic scriptoria, and local Buddhists accepted as their basic philosophical premise the Mahāyāna doctrine of emptiness (Skt. *śūnyatā*), which had been elaborated particularly in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtras.

Prajñāpāramitā designates a category of sutra texts of varying length that expound the doctrine of “perfect wisdom” (Skt. *prajñāpāramitā*) — one of the most important Mahāyāna concepts, closely related to the understanding of emptiness as the true nature of reality and human existence. Sanskrit texts of Prajñāpāramitā in the Serindia Collection are represented by a large number of separate folios and fragments (more than 60 items), indicating the un-

doubtful popularity of texts of this category in Serindia, in general, and particularly in Khotan. Among them the manuscripts of *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, or “Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom in 25 000 lines” are predominant. Mentioning the number of lines in the titles of prose texts of the *Prajñāpāramitā* series can be considered a convention that helps to distinguish these works from one another, since the texts are largely repetitive and contain the same formulations regarding the emptiness of all dharmas (elements of existence). This applies particularly to Sūtras in 18 000, 25 000, and 100 000 lines, which are regarded as variants of a single text — *Mahāprajñāpāramitā*, or the “Larger *Prajñāpāramitā*”.¹ Sometimes it is not possible to clearly correlate a manuscript with a specific *Prajñāpāramitā* work, since sūtras often repeat each other verbatim, and most of the fragments contain very brief passages. Nevertheless, the manuscript fragments under study were identified quite accurately, and the identification of the fragments with *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* was facilitated by the analysis of the manuscripts’ external characteristics.

Description of the fragments

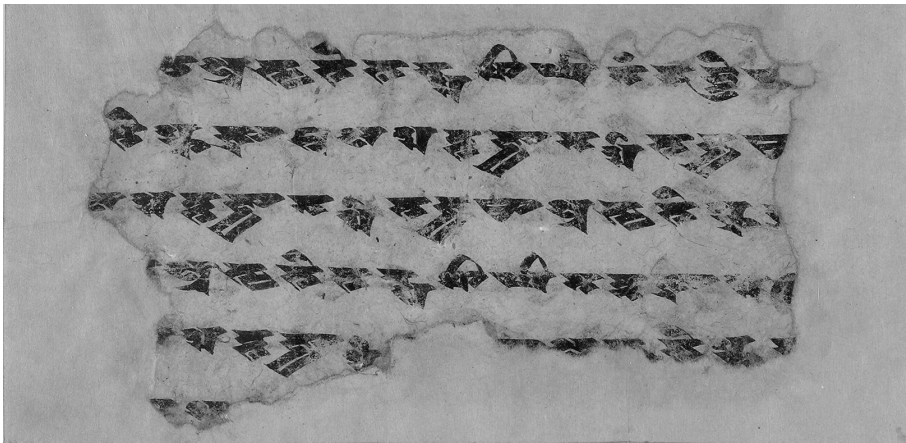
The vast majority of the Sanskrit Serindia materials was obtained with the assistance of Russian officials in Central Asia. Among them, of outstanding importance are the Consul General in Kashgar Nicolai F. Petrovsky (1837–1908) and the Secretary of the Consulate in Kashgar Mikhail I. Lavrov (1877–1934). Their collections were accumulated through acquisition of manuscripts discovered in the southern part of Serindia, so the area of circulation of the manuscripts under study is considered to be the southern branch of the Great Silk Road, primarily the city-oasis of Khotan, the stronghold of Mahāyāna in the 5th–9th cc. AD. This is confirmed by the varieties of Brāhmī script attested in these Sanskrit Buddhist fragments, and paleography makes it possible to attribute the manuscripts to specific periods in the history of Buddhism in Khotan.²

¹ CONZE 1978: 10.

² For further information about the stages of the spread of Buddhism in Khotan in correlation to the changes of external characteristics of Sanskrit manuscripts see: MESHEZNIKOV 2023.

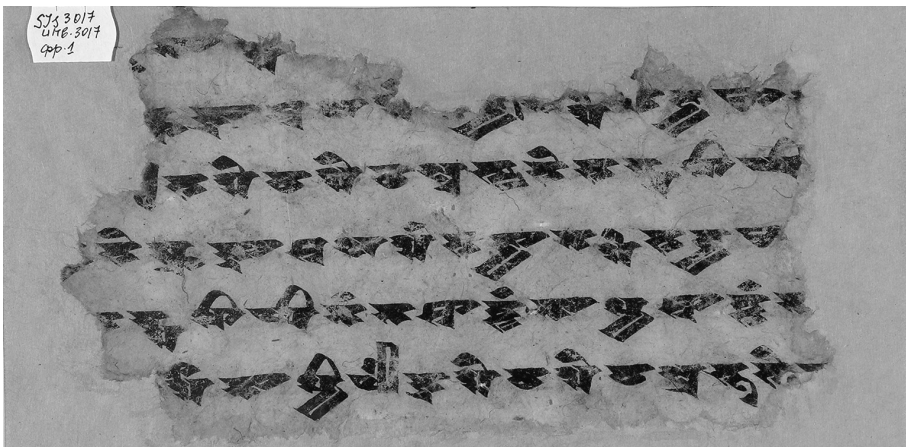
Fragments SI 3017 + SI 2097.

SI 3017 — fragment 1 (Pl. 1a–b) and fragment 2 (Pl. 2a–b) are written on light yellowish-brown laid paper in South Turkestan Brāhmī script, dating to the 8th–9th cc. based on paleography. Fragment 1 (12.3×21.7 cm) belongs to the right part of a pothi-folio, containing 6 lines on both sides with equal line spacing (1.9 cm). Fragment 2 (15.5×13.4 cm) presents the left part of the folio, which preserved 8 lines on each side with the same distance between lines (1.9 cm), its left margin (2.5 cm) and pagination (“140”) on the recto-side.



Pl. 1a:

SI 3017 fragment 1 (recto), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 1b:

SI 3017 fragment 1 (verso), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 2a:

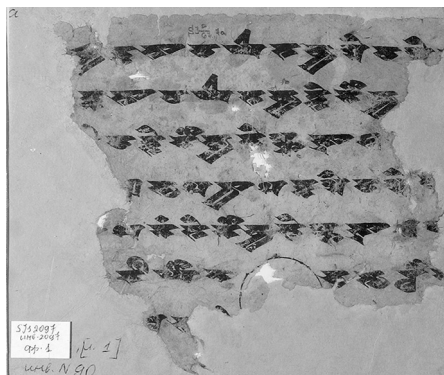
SI 3017 fragment 2 (recto), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 2b:

SI 3017 fragment 2 (verso), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.

SI 2097 fragment (Pl. 3a–b) 15.5×16.9 cm in size presents the central part of the leaf, containing a partially preserved decorative circle with diameter ≈ 3.7 cm. Judging from the preserved number of lines (7 on both sides) and the decorative circle, generally placed at an equal distance from the upper and lower edges of the leaf, it can be assumed that the manuscript initially included 12 lines. All the external features are similar to those of the fragments SI 3017: the lower edge of the folio (when viewed from the recto-side) is damaged, the text is copied on light yellowish-brown paper in South Turkestan Brāhmī script, the line-spacing measures 1.9 cm. Based on the set of external characteristics and the analysis of their contents, SI 2097 and the fragments SI 3017 should be considered three parts of a single pothi-folio with dimensions 15×45 cm (Pl. 4a–b).



Pl. 3a:

SI 2097 (recto), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



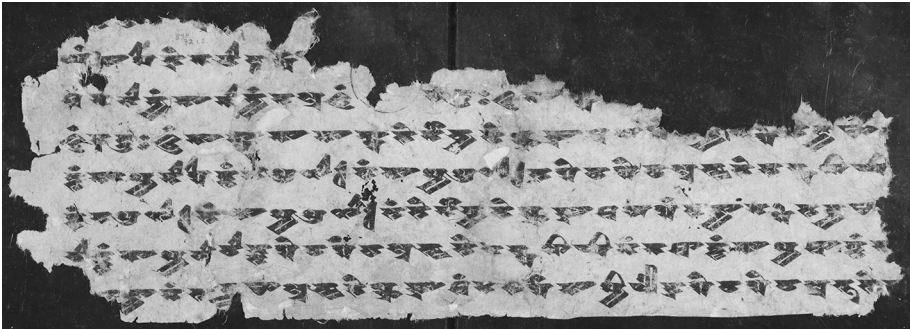
Pl. 3b:

SI 2097 (verso), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 4a:

Fragments SI 3017 + SI 2019 (recto), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 4b:

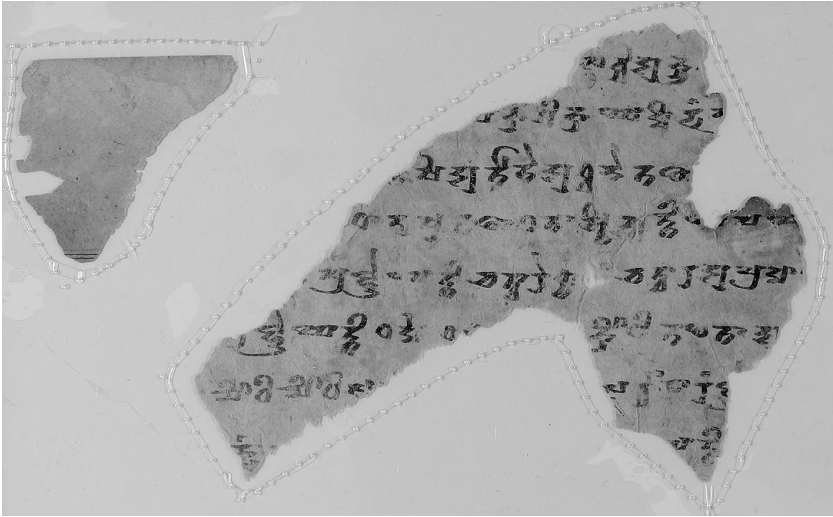
Fragments SI 3017 + SI 2019 (verso), Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.

Fragment SI 3331-5

SI 3331-5 fragment (Pl. 5a–b) 11.4×14.7 cm in size is written in Early Turkestan Brāhmī (type 2) — graphic variation of the Indian Brāhmī script, which was in use in the 5th–6th cc. AD for recording texts in Sanskrit and the local Khotanese-Saka language on paper. The formation of Early Turkestan Brāhmī coincided with the beginning of active use of paper as the main writing material in Serindia. The introduction of paper in Serindia eliminated the need to import manuscripts and writing materials (birch bark and palm leaf) from India to Khotan. Production of local writing material, Central Asian paper, stimulated the development of book culture in Khotan and led to the formation of Central Asian varieties of Brāhmī. As a consequence, Early Turkestan Brāhmī became the earliest Central Asian variety of Brāhmī in Khotan. Thus, fragment SI 3331-5 belongs to the most ancient examples

of Sanskrit texts copied directly in Khotan and, therefore, to the oldest manuscripts of the Prajñāpāramitā written in Brāhmī script on paper.

SI 3331-5 fragment constitutes the central part of a pothi folio.³ Part of a decorative roundel with a colorful miniature (Buddha image) has been preserved on the verso-side; ≈ 5.6 cm in diameter. The text is written on a pale brown paper: the fragment bears 8 lines of writing on both sides with the same interlinear distance (1.3 cm). Given the textual and external similarities, it is possible to assume that the fragment under study could belong to the same manuscript as several other Prajñāpāramitā fragments kept in the Serindia Collection (SI 2019, Pl. 6),⁴ (SI 3650, Pl. 7)⁵ and in the British Library Collections (Or.8212/174, Pl. 8),⁶ (Or.15001/6, Pl. 9),⁷ which will be discussed below.⁸



Pl. 5a:

SI 3331-5 (recto) Serindia Collection, Lavrov Subcollection, IOM RAS.

³ Besides the Prajñāpāramitā fragment there is a small piece of paper under the same call number SI 3331-5. It does not contain any traces of akṣara signs or any other information to link it to the fragment under study.

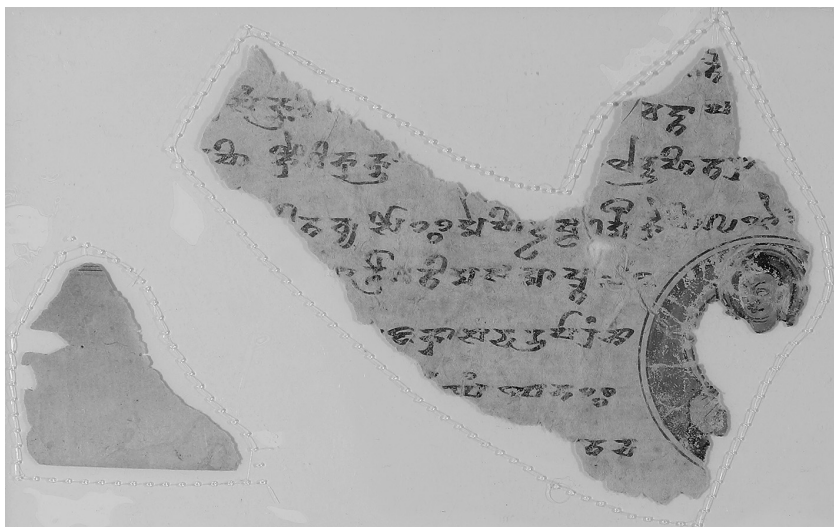
⁴ Published in: BONGARD-LEVIN & VOROBYOVA-DESYATOVSAKAYA & TIOMKIN 2004: 221–243.

⁵ The study of the fragment is presented in: MESHEZNIKOV 2024.

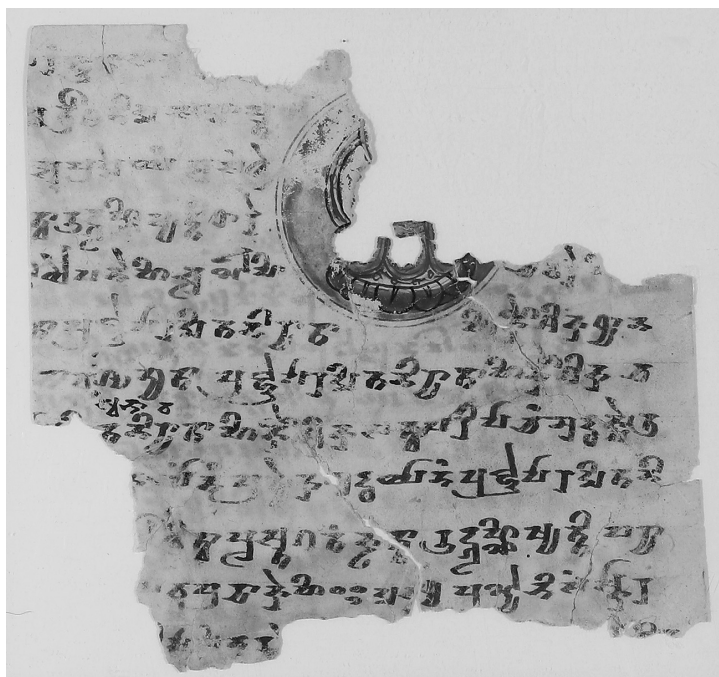
⁶ ZWALF 1985: 57; BONGARD-LEVIN & VOROBYOVA-DESYATOVSAKAYA & TIOMKIN 2004: 211–212.

⁷ KARASHIMA & WILLE 2009: 36–37.

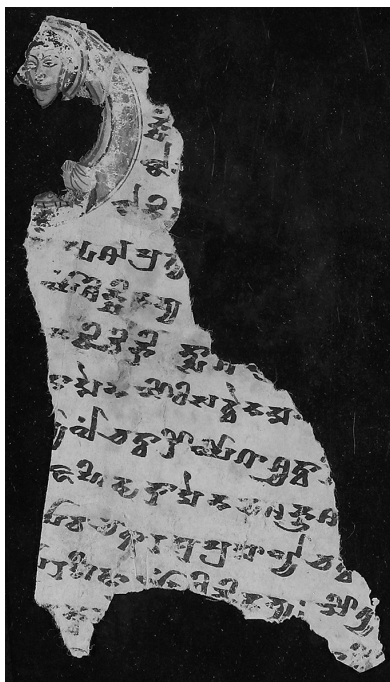
⁸ The digital images of the British Library Sanskrit fragments were taken from the International Dunhuang Project database.



Pl. 5b:
SI 3331-5 (verso) Serindia Collection, Lavrov Subcollection, IOM RAS.

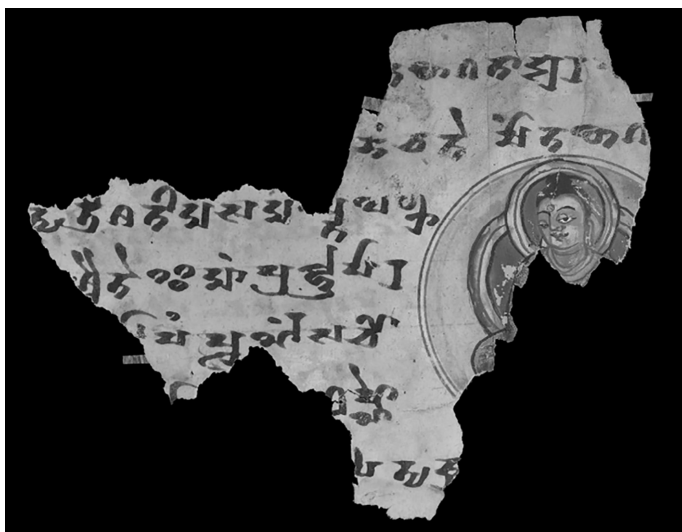


Pl. 6:
SI 2019 from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



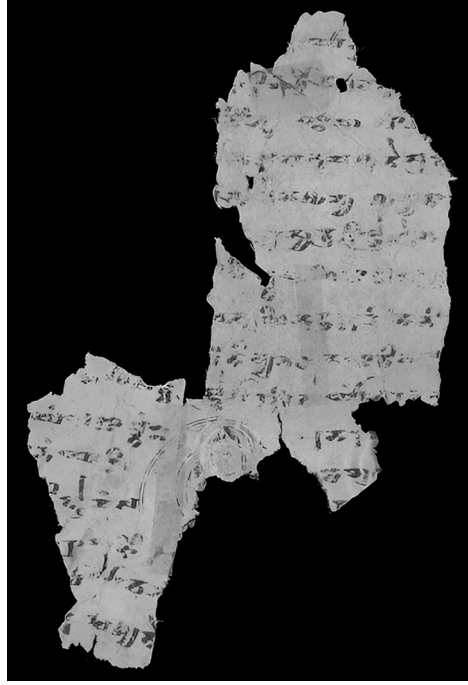
Pl. 7:

SI 3650 from the Serindia Collection, Petrovsky Subcollection, IOM RAS.



Pl. 8:

Or.8212/174 from the British Library Stein Collection.



Pl. 9:
Or.15001/6 from the British Library Hoernle Collection.

Contents of the fragments

The examined fragments were identified with Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra with the help of two groups of Sanskrit texts representing different versions of the Sūtra. Various versions of the Sanskrit Mahā-prajñāpāramitā (conventionally designated as ‘revised’ and ‘not revised’) represent different stages of the text’s development. The ‘revised’ version is attested in the later Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal, which form the basis for T. Kimura’s edition,⁹ and represents a newer, optimized variant of the Sūtra: its text is rearranged to conform to the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*¹⁰ and,

⁹ Kimura T. Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā I–VIII. Tokyo: Sankibo Busshorin 1986–2009.

¹⁰ *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* (“Ornament of/for Realization[s]”), which is said to have been compiled by Asaṅga in the 4th c. AD, is a commentary treatise expounding the essence of the Sūtras on Perfect Wisdom. In terms of the order of the topic’s presentation, this treatise is most closely related to the Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā. (KARASHIMA 2016: ix).

thus, is divided into eight extensive chapters, or topics including subtopics. The second version did not undergo revisions in accordance with the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* and contains the older variant of the Sūtra, preserved in the 7th c. AD birch bark manuscripts from Gilgit. The inner structure of the Gilgit manuscripts is somewhat different and the text consists of over 80 chapters.

According to the ‘revised’ version, the fragment SI 3331-5 corresponds to the text in the middle of the 2nd chapter (topic) *Mārgākārajñatā* (“Knowledge of the Paths”) within the 6th subtopic *Adhimukti* (“Resolute faith”). However, in terms of dating and, presumably, in terms of the text’s structure, manuscript SI 3331-5 is closer to the ‘not revised’ Sanskrit version. The fragment from Khotan coincides with a passage at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th chapter in the Gilgit manuscript.¹¹ In the Gilgit text, at the end of the 19th chapter (the 9th line on the verso-side of the f. 147), there is the ending marker: the chapter’s number (“19”) written in Brāhmī numerals is put between two chakra (disc) symbols enclosed with double daṇḍas (punctuation marks). Such a marker is a shortened alternative variant of the standard final phrase that can be found at the end of other chapters in the Gilgit text, for example: *prajñāpāramitāyāñ caturthaḥ parivartaḥ* (“[Thus ends] the 4th chapter of the Prajñāpāramitā”).¹² These phrasal units, marking the end of chapters, are missing in the ‘revised’ Prajñāpāramitā text of the T. Kimura’s edition.

In the Khotanese manuscript SI 3331-5 the principle of dividing the text into chapters appears closer to the Gilgit version. The examined fragment contains the abovementioned decorative roundel and the ending phrase indicating the chapter’s number on the 5th line of the verso-side: *(dv)[ā]trīṣatima samāpta 32* (“Thus ends the 32nd [chapter]”). Therefore, we know that the fragment includes excerpts from the 32nd and 33rd chapters. Moreover, such a rare codicological detail as a colorful miniature in the Serindia Sanskrit manuscripts served as an indicator of one chapter’s end and the next one’s beginning. This is confirmed by the above mentioned Prajñāpāramitā fragments (SI 2019, SI 3650, Or.8212/174, Or.15001/6) decorated with Buddha images in circles, since all of them contain transitions between two different chapters. It should be especially emphasized that all five fragments (including SI 3331-5) are written in Early Turkestan Brāhmī (type 2) dating back to the 5th–6th cc. AD. Considering that colorful illustrations are

¹¹ KARASHIMA 2016: 144.

¹² KARASHIMA 2016: 57.

practically not found in Sanskrit manuscripts of this period of time, it is reasonable to assume that these 5 fragments (3 from the Serindia Collection IOM RAS and 2 from the British Library) could be parts of the same manuscript copy of *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.

The Gilgit and Khotanese manuscripts contain only chapter numbers and the chapters are untitled. However, the titles of chapters identical in content are preserved in *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*: as translated by E. Conze,¹³ the Gilgit's 19th chapter (the 32nd chapter in SI 3331-5 fragment) can be titled "The proclamation of a Bodhisattva's qualities" and the 20th chapter (the 33rd chapter in the fragment under discussion) — "The heretics".¹⁴ As for their contents, the chapter 19 (32) indicates beneficial properties of the text itself, as is common in Mahāyāna sūtras. Those living beings who aspire to attain Buddhahood following the Bodhisattva path will receive manifold good qualities for performing various kinds of actions with the Sūtra of Perfect Wisdom (reading aloud, memorizing, copying, etc.). Some of these qualities are mentioned in the fragment presented below. The next chapter, 20 (33), begins with a hundred wanderers, followers of other religious sects (*parivrajakas*), going towards Buddha with some evil intentions. Noticing the approach of *parivrajakas*, the leader of the gods, Śakra (Indra), remembered and repeated what he had learned from Buddha in the sermon on *Prajñāpāramitā*; he repeated this sermon many times in order to hinder those wanderers. At last *parivrajakas* respectfully saluted Bhagavān and went on their way. This can be understood to mean that the followers of the *Prajñāpāramitā* doctrine are invincible to followers of other sects.

As for the folio compiled of three fragments (SI 3017 fragment 2 + SI 2097 + SI 3017 fragment 1), it contains excerpts of the text belonging to the first chapter (topic) *Sarvākārajñatā* ("Knowledge of all modes") in the 'revised' version of the Sūtra, specifically to the 10th subtopic *Niryāṇa-pratipatti* ("The action of going forth"). Regarding the Gilgit manuscript, the examined fragment corresponds to the text of the 11th chapter.¹⁵ According to the E. Conze's translation of *Aṣṭādaśasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* chapters, the text in question belongs to the chapter entitled "Surpassing".¹⁶ This chap-

¹³ CONZE 1975: xiv, 236–242.

¹⁴ What E. Conze translates as "The heretics" is called in Sanskrit by the term *parivrājaka* ("a wandering religious mendicant"), that is, itinerant preaching monks of ancient India, religious teachers holding views of a Brahmanist or anti-Brahmanist orientation.

¹⁵ KARASHIMA 2016: 99–105.

¹⁶ CONZE 1975: xiii, 182–187.

ter, and the examined manuscript in particular, speaks of the highest knowledge (attainable by a Bodhisattva), which enables one to surpass other living beings, including men, Gods, Asuras, etc., and lies in the principle that all the elements of existence (dharma) are the same in essence. *Niryāṇapratipatti* signifies the final aspect of *Sarvākārajñatā*, which makes a Bodhisattva understand the intimate nature of things and the sameness of the universe. Thus, this fragment lists various common features to underline the sameness of space and of the Great Vehicle.

Conclusion

Any comprehensive research on the functioning of original Buddhist texts and the history of Northern Buddhism in the ancient and early medieval periods is not possible without taking into account Sanskrit manuscript materials from Serindia. Central Asian written texts kept at the St. Petersburg manuscript collection of the IOM RAS contain highly valuable textual sources, and their introduction into scientific circulation is very important in the context of the study of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the history of which still has significant gaps. Thus, publication of the new fragments of *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* makes it possible to fill the lacunas and confirm the readings of its notable editions and already published manuscript texts, and helps researchers move forward in the study of the written heritage of the Mahāyāna tradition in Central Asia. The publication of fragments SI 3331-5 and SI 3017 + SI 2097 provides researchers with new material for analyzing Serindia written monuments of the Larger *Prajñāpāramitā* from the textological and codicological points of view. It offers additional data for development of problematics of the source studies on the history of Northern Buddhism related not only to reconstruction of Khotanese versions of Mahāyāna works, but also to the study of the functioning of the local Buddhist manuscript tradition.

A comprehensive study of the published manuscripts, taking into account their external features and the analysis of the textual repertoire, makes it possible to establish that the three fragments (two of them under the call number SI 3017 and the third one — SI 2097) not only constitute a single manuscript copy, but can also be united into a single paper folio with the text written in South Turkestan Brāhmī in Khotan and dated (on paleographic grounds) to the 8th–9th cc. AD. The folio corresponds to the textual excerpts from the

10th subtopic of the first chapter (topic) *Sarvākārajñatā* (“Knowledge of all modes”) in the ‘revised’ version of Pañcavimśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā.

The other fragment under study (call number SI 3331-5) copied in Early Turkestan Brāhmī (type 2) represents one of the oldest paper manuscripts of the Sanskrit Mahāprajñāpāramitā written in Central Asia. Moreover, the fragment possesses some external and textual similarities with four other Prajñāpāramitā fragments kept in the Serindia Collection and the British Library, so that all the five fragments may have once been parts of a single manuscript. The examined fragment contains the text from the 6th subtopic of the second chapter *Mārgākārajñatā* (“Knowledge of the Paths”).

A transliteration of the fragments, English translation, correspondences to the T. Kimura’s critical Sanskrit text, and a facsimile of manuscripts are provided below.

Transliteration, correspondences, and English translation

Symbols used

- () — restored akṣara(s) in the parts lost or utterly illegible
- [] — damaged akṣara(s) or uncertain readings
- — a lost akṣara
- .. — an illegible akṣara
- . — a single element of an illegible akṣara
- /// — beginning or end of a fragment when broken off
- — punctuation mark
- — decorative circle marking the hole for binding
- ◎ — a circle with miniature marking the end of a chapter

SI 3017 fragment 2 + SI 2097 (*in italics*) + SI 3017 fragment 1 (*in bold italics*)

Recto (pagination 140)

1. /// [s](ā)kṣīkarta(v)[y](a)n na bhāvayitavyam evam eva **subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na jñe[y](aṃ) ///**
2. sāksīkartavyan na bhāvayitavyan tenocyate ākāśasaman tad **yānaṃ* tadyathā ///**
3. rmi • peyālaṃ yāvat tenocyate ākāśasaman tad **yānaṃ* tadyāthā subhūte ā[k](ā) ///**

4. ryāpannan nārūpyadhātuparyāpannam evam eva **subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na kāmādhā** ///

5. rūpyadhātuparyāpanam tenocyate ākāśa(sa)man tad yām* + + **thās(u)(bhū)te ā[k](ā)** ///

6. na dvitīyo na tṛtīyo na ○ caturtho na **pa** ///

7. cyate • evam eva [su]bh(ū)(t)e ○ ///

8. /// .e.. (t)e(n)o(cya)(t)[e] ///

PvsP(K)1–2, 124–125:¹⁷ (*Śāriputra:*) tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśam na jñeyam nājñeyam na pariññeyam na pariññātavyam na prahātavyam na **sākṣātkartavyam na bhāvayitavyam, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na jñeyam nājñeyam na pariññeyam na pariññātavyam na prahātavyam na sākṣātkartavyam na bhāvayitavyam tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam** iti.

tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśam na vipāko na vipākadharmi, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na vipāko na vipākadharmi **tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam** iti.

tadyathāpi nāma **subhūte ākāśam** na kāmādhātuparyāpannam na rūpadhātuparyāpannam nārūpyadhātuparyāpannam, **evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na kāmādhātuparyāpannam na rūpadhātuparyāpannam nārūpyadhātuparyāpannam tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam** iti.

tadyathāpi nāma **subhūte ākāśe** na prathamacittotpādo na dvitīyo na tṛtīyo na caturtho na pañcamo na ṣaṣṭho na saptamo nāṣṭamo na navamo na daśamaś cittotpādaḥ, **evam eva subhūte** tatra mahāyāne na prathamacittotpādo na dvitīyo na tṛtīyo na caturtho na pañcamo na ṣaṣṭho na saptamo nāṣṭamo na navamo na daśamaś cittotpādas **tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam** iti.

Translation

(*Śāriputra:*) “Just as, Subhūti, space is not cognizable, not uncognizable, not comprehensible, not to be fully known, not to be forsaken, **not to be realized, not to be cultivated, in the same way, Subhūti, the Great Vehicle is not cognizable**, not uncognizable, not comprehensible, not to be fully

¹⁷ Hereinafter, the examined fragments are compared with the e-text of T. Kimura’s Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā edition (PvsP(K)) found in the “Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages” (<http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/>). Since there are some losses in the texts of the published fragments, all omitted parts have been translated based on T. Kimura’s edition. The correspondences of the fragments under discussion with this critical edition are highlighted in bold.

known, not to be forsaken, not **to be realized, not to be cultivated. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.**

Just as space is neither the result of karma, nor has the nature to lead to karmic results, in the same way the Great Vehicle is neither the result of karma, nor has the nature to lead to karmic results. Therefore, it is said: **“The same as space is this Vehicle”.**

Just as space is not **included in** the world of desire, the world of form, or the world of formlessness, in the same way the Great Vehicle is not **included in the world of desire, the world of form, or the world of formlessness. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.**

Just as in space there is no first production of the mind of bodhi, **no second, no third, no fourth, no fifth,** no sixth, no seventh, no eighth, no ninth, and no tenth production of the mind of bodhi, **in the same way** in the Great Vehicle there is no first production of the mind of bodhi, no second, no third, no fourth, no fifth, no sixth, no seventh, no eighth, no ninth, and no tenth production of the mind of bodhi. **Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”...**

Verso

5. /// t. .. + + .. + ///

6. yaṃ nāpi kenacid dharma .. ///

7. śaṃ na nityaṃ nānityaṃ na sukhaṃ ○ na duḥkhaṃ nātm(ā) ///

8. khaṃ na duḥkhaṃ nā[tm](ā) nānātmā tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ [t](a)d yānam* tadyāthā .. ///

9. ttaṃ nāpyanimittaṃ [n](a) praṇidhitaṃ nāpy apraṇidhitaṃ eva eva subhūte tan mahāyā ///

10. ttaṃ na praṇidhitaṃ nāpy apraṇidhitaṃ tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam* tadyāth(ā) ///

11. viktaṃ nāpy aviviktaṃ eva eva subhūte [ta]n mahāyānaṃ na śāntaṃ nāpy aśāntaṃ n(a) ///

12. /// [ta]d yānaṃ tadyathā subhūte ākāśaṃ n. t. mo nāpyālokaṃ eva eva subhūte (ta) ///

PvsP(K)1–2, 125–126: tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśaṃ na nityaṃ nānityaṃ na sukhaṃ na duḥkhaṃ nātmā nānātmā na śāntaṃ nāśāntaṃ, eva eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na nityaṃ nānityaṃ na sukhaṃ na duḥkhaṃ nātmā nānātmā na śāntaṃ nāśāntaṃ tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam iti,

tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśaṃ na śūnyaṃ nāśūnyaṃ na nimittaṃ nānimittaṃ na praṇihitaṃ nāpraṇihitaṃ, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na śūnyaṃ nāśūnyaṃ na nimittaṃ nānimittaṃ na praṇihitaṃ nāpraṇihitaṃ tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam iti,

tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśaṃ na viviktaṃ nāviviktaṃ nāloko nāndhakāraḥ, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na viviktaṃ nāviviktaṃ nāloko nāndhakāras tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam iti,

tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśaṃ na labhyate nopalabhyate, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na labhyate nopalabhyate tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam iti,

tadyathāpi nāma subhūte ākāśaṃ na pravyāhāro nāpravyāhāraḥ, evam eva subhūte tan mahāyānaṃ na pravyāhāro nāpravyāhāras tenocyate ākāśasamaṃ tad yānam.

iti samatāniryāṇam

Translation

Subhūti, just as **space is not permanent or impermanent, pleasure or suffering, self or selfless, calm or uncalm**, in the same way the Great Vehicle is not permanent or impermanent, **pleasure or suffering, self or selfless, calm or uncalm**. **Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.**

Just as space is not empty or non-empty, with a sign or signless, with purpose or purposeless, in the same way the Great Vehicle is not empty or non-empty, with a sign or signless, with purpose or purposeless. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.

Just as space is neither isolated nor not isolated, neither light nor darkness, in the same way the Great Vehicle is neither isolated nor not isolated, neither light nor darkness. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.

Just as space is neither attainable nor perceivable, in the same way the Great Vehicle is neither attainable nor perceivable. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.

Just as space is neither expressible nor inexpressible, in the same way the Great Vehicle is neither expressible nor inexpressible. Therefore, it is said: “The same as space is this Vehicle”.

Such is the going forth through sameness.

SI 3331/5

Recto

- a. /// sarvva aku ///
- b. /// .. k[au]śika ‘yam idam [pr](a) ///
- c. /// .. śā atīte adhvane tathā ///
- d. /// dhātuṣu tathāgatā sthāpanti [y](ā)pa[y](a) ///
- e. /// prajñāyanti catvāre dhyā(nām) catvāra apramā ///
- f. /// (p)[r](a)jñāyanti dharmadhā +++ koṭitathatā [a] ///
- g. /// bodhi bodhisa /// - /// sarvākāraṃ [jñ](a) ///
- h. /// kṣaṃ /// - /// [y]anti ///

PvsP(K)2–3, 70–72: (*śakra:*) <...> prajñāpāramitāyā mārṣā udgrahītayā dhāritayā vācītayā paryavāptayā **sarve** ‘**kuśalā** dharmāḥ parihīyante kuśalā dharmā vivardhante. <...>

atha khalu bhagavān śakraṃ devānām indram etad avocat: udgrahāṇa tvam kauśika prajñāpāramitām dhāraya vācaya paryavāpnuhi tvam kauśika prajñāpāramitām. tat kasya hetor? yadā kauśika asurāṇām evaṃ samudācārā bhaviṣyanti devais trāyastriṃśaiḥ sārddham saṃgrāmayiṣyāma iti tadā tvam **kauśika imāṃ prajñāpāramitām** samanvāhareḥ svādhyāyeh evaṃ teṣāṃ asurāṇām te samudācārā antardhāsyanti. <...>

(*śakra:*) <...> ye ‘**tīte** ‘**dhvani tathāgatā** arhantaḥ samyaksambuddhā abhūvan, yeṣāṃ śrāvakā nirupadhiṣeṣe nirvāṇadhātau pratiṣṭhitās te ‘pīmām eva prajñāpāramitām āgamyānuttarām samyaksambodhim abhisambuddhāḥ. <...> ye ‘pi caitarhi daśadiśi loke pratyutpanne ‘dhvani **tathāgatā** arhantaḥ samyaksambuddhā bhagavantaḥ sa śrāvakasamghās **tiṣṭhanti** dhriyante **yāpayanti** sarve te ihaiva prajñāpāramitāyām śikṣitvānuttarām samyaksambodhim abhisambudhyante.

(*bhagavān:*) <...> imāṃ eva prajñāpāramitām āgamyā daśakuśalāḥ karmapathāḥ **prajñāyante**, **catvāri dhyānāni catvāry apramāṇāni** <...> ‘ṣṭadaśāveṇikā buddhadharmāḥ **prajñāyante**. trīṇi vimokṣamukhāni aṣṭa vimokṣā navānupūrvavāhārasamāpattayaḥ ṣaḍ abhijñā **dharmadhātur** bhūta**koṭitathatā** <...> loke prajñāyate.

<...> **bodhisattvaṃ** punaḥ kauśikāgamyā daśa kuśalāḥ karmapathā loke prabhāvyante <...> **sarvākārajñatā** loke prajñāyate.

Translation

(Śakra addressed the deities of the retinue of the Four Great Kings, and the other gods of the great trichiliocosm:) “O friends, when the Prajñāpāramitā is taken up, retained, recited, and mastered, **all the unwholesome** dharmas diminish, and the wholesome dharmas increase”. <...>

Then, indeed, Bhagavān said this to Śakra, the lord of gods: “Kauśika, take up the Prajñāpāramitā, retain it, recite it, master it. For what reason? **Kauśika**, when the Asuras have intentions of fighting with the Thirty-three gods, then, if you apply yourself **to this Prajñāpāramitā** and contemplate it, those intentions will disappear”. <...>

(Śakra:) “Those, who **in the past period** were Tathāgatas, Arhats, Samyaksambuddhas and their disciples, they, by relying upon this very Prajñāpāramitā, established in the realm of Nirvāṇa with no remainder left and awakened to the unsurpassed and complete enlightenment. <...> And those **Tathāgatas**, Arhats, Samyaksambuddhas with their congregation of disciples, who at the present time **dwel**, remain, **maintain** themselves in the ten directions of the world, all of them, having trained in this very Prajñāpāramitā, awake to the unsurpassed and complete enlightenment”.

(Bhagavān:) Thanks to this very Prajñāpāramitā, the ten wholesome ways of action, **the four trances, the four Unlimited** <...> and the eighteen unique qualities of a Buddha **are known**.¹⁸ The three doors to deliverance, the eight deliverances, the nine successive meditative attainments, the six superknowledges, **the single emptiness, the culmination of reality, the suchness** are known in the world. <...>

Kauśika, also by relying on **the bodhisattvas**, the ten wholesome ways of action are brought about <...> and so is **the knowledge of all modes...**”

Verso

- a. /// .t. ///
- b. /// saṃkkra[m]. /// - /// vantā pa ///
- c. /// .. hi kauśika ku /// - /// laduhitarā ///
- d. /// +itavya so imehi dṛṣṭadharmikehi guṇe.. ///
- e. /// (dv)ātrī[ś]atima samāpta 32 ◎ ///
- f. /// jakā sada upāraṃbhā ◎ ///
- g. /// .. yaṃ yana i ◎ ///
- h. /// tad a ◎ ///

¹⁸ For numerical lists with basic concepts of Buddhism appearing in the Prajñāpāramitā text see: CONZE 1975: 667–671.

PvsP(K)2-3, 74: (*bhagavān*.) <...> sa ākāṅkṣaṃ buddhakṣetreṇa buddhakṣetraṃ **saṃkramaṣyati**, tān buddhān bhagavataḥ **paryupāsitaṃ** dharmam ca śrotaṃ buddhakṣetreṇa buddhakṣetraṃ saṃkrāman sattvāṃś ca paripācayati, buddhakṣetraṃ ca pariśodhayiṣyati.

tasmāt tarhi **kauśika** kulaputreṇa vā kuladuhitrā vā prajñāpāramitā udgrhītavyā dhārayitavyā vācayitavyā paryavāptavyā yonīśaś ca manasikar-tavyā sarvajñatācittena cāviraḥitena bhavitavyaṃ. **sa etair dṛṣṭadhārmikair guṇaiḥ** sāṃparāyikair guṇair avirahito bhaviṣyati yāvan nānuttarā samyaksambodhir abhisambudhyate iti.

atha khalv anyatīrthikānāṃ parivrājakānāṃ **śatam upārambhābhiprāyāṇāṃ** yena bhagavāṃś tenopasaṃkrāmati sma.

Translation

(*Bhagavān*.) “As he (*the Bodhisattva*) plans, **he will travel** from Buddha-field to Buddha-field, in order **to honor** the Buddhas, **the Blessed Ones**, and to hear the Dharma. Moving from Buddha-field to Buddha-field he will bring to perfection living beings and purify the Buddha-field.

Therefore then, Kauśika, a son **or a daughter of good family** should take up the Prajñāpāramitā, retain it, recite it, master it, keep it in mind properly, and **should** not lack the thought about the knowledge of all modes. They will not lack **the benefits in this very lifetime** and in the future life, until they awake to the unsurpassed and complete enlightenment”.

Thereupon, indeed, **a hundred** adherents of other sects, **wandering religious mendicants, intending to cause trouble**, were approaching to where Bhagavān was.

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