

Preface

One day in 1993, I received a set of fine color photographs of the Lotus Sutra manuscript (no. 4-21) kept in the collection of the National Archives of Nepal from Noriyoshi Mizufune, a researcher in charge of manuscript studies at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy (IOP).

I had previously had a chance to see a copy of the same manuscript in 1981 at the Seminar für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde of the University of Göttingen. I perused the whole text along with copies of two other palm-leaf manuscripts from the National Archives. Before returning home after completing my tenure, I submitted a report consisting of a detailed text concordance concerning these three manuscripts to Prof. Heinz Bechert at the Seminar.

At that time, I was unable to read copies of these manuscripts with detailed precision due to technical limitations. However, the color photographs provided by the IOP enabled me to read through the manuscript very smoothly, and I completed a handwritten romanized draft in October 1994. During the course of events, the project to publish this transliterated version was formally inaugurated in April 1994 according to a proposal from the IOP. In March 1997, I finalized the typed script for printing.

In order to prepare photographs fit for the facsimile edition of the manuscript and to reconfirm the original for better reading, I traveled to the Indian subcontinent, with a stopover in Calcutta and flight over the Himalayan mountains, setting foot in Kathmandu, the capital of the Kingdom of Nepal, on the evening of November 1, 1997. Thanks to the efforts of Shoichi Matsuoka, one of Japan's finest photographers, three palm-leaf manuscripts stored at the National Archives were successfully photographed with high definition. In consultation with the originals, I was able to clarify the readings of indistinct portions which I could not have determined otherwise. It is hard to describe the feeling of actually observing the manuscripts I had dreamed of seeing since I was a visiting professor in Germany. I vividly remember my sojourn in the bosom of the snow-crowned Himalayas as a time of bliss.

The first volume of this romanized text of the Sanskrit Lotus Sutra manuscript (no. 4-21)¹ from the National Archives of Nepal contains fols. 1b-90b, 1, i.e., Rāhulabhadra's Saddharmapuṇḍarīkastavaḥ and chapters 1-10; and the second volume fols. 90b, 1-179a, 2, i.e., chapters 11-27. This manuscript consists of two textual portions: fols. 1-176, fol. 178b (Text A), and fols. 177, 178a, 179a (Text B), totaling 179 folios.²

Both fol. 176a and fol. 177a begin with “nayutaśatasahasrā(*sic*)samudānitāṃ” (Kern-Nanjio's edition: 484.8), and both fol. 8a and fol. 179a start with “mānuṣaṃ

jinasya muktā iha ekaraśminā (Text B: ekarasmi vā) / .”³ This suggests that Text B is a partial duplication of Text A. Though duplicated, Text B has an added colophon lacking in Text A. This reads: “nepālavatsaraśatadvitaye prayāte ekādhi(ka)saptatisamāyu(kte) [ji] caitramāse / ānandadevanṛpateḥ parivarddhamāne rājye vipakṣabaladālanacaṇḍanīteḥ //” (178a, 2). In effect, it was copied in the Chaitra month (March-April) of the year 271 (1151 C.E.) in the Nepal calendar,⁴ under the strong reign of King Ānandadeva. L. Petech identifies the reign of King Ānandadeva as 1147-1167 C.E.,⁵ which infers that the copy date of Text A falls on the same period as Text B or earlier, i.e., approximately the first half of the 12th century. The text redundancy on the final part of the script also appears on a Lotus Sutra manuscript (Add. no. 2197)⁶ in the collection of the Cambridge University Library. The style of the colophon added to the Nepalese manuscript resembles that added to the first text of this Cambridge manuscript (131b, 3).⁷

The colophon to Text B includes the “Verse on the Law of Dependent Origination” (Pratītyasamutpādagāthā).⁸ This verse also appears in the manuscript kept at the Library of the Cultural Palace of the Nationalities, Beijing,⁹ (no. 0004, fol. 137a, 3), that at the British Library (Or. no. 2204, estimated to have been copied in the 12th-13th centuries, fol. 176a, 5) and that at the National Archives of Nepal (no. 3-678, fol. 139b, 2).

The title of chapter 27 reads in Text A (fol. 178b, 1) and Text B (fol. 178a, 1) “... sa[mā]ptāviṃśatimaḥ yathāsukhavihārārocanaparivarttaś cēti,” which corresponds to the manuscript at the Cambridge University Library (Add. no. 1683, fol. 140b, 1) and the Beijing manuscript (fol. 137a, 1). This title means “the chapter telling [Buddhas] may live peacefully, the 27th,” named after the content of the second half of the chapter. On the other hand, “anuparīndanāparivarttaḥ,” or “the entrustment chapter,” appearing in the manuscripts at the Cambridge University Library (Add. no. 1684, fol. 156b, 4 , and Add. no. 2197, Texts A, B (i.e., 131b, 2, 132b, 1)),¹⁰ was named after the content of the first half of the chapter. In terms of the texts, the present writer has read, no manuscripts other than these mentioned have a written title for this chapter.¹¹

It may safely be said that the text of this manuscript resembles those of the Cambridge manuscript Add. no. 1683 and the Beijing manuscript for the most part. When reading the text of this manuscript, one needs to take the Cambridge manuscript Add. no. 1682 into account, because, in the view of the present writer, the text of Add. no. 1682 preserves an older and better reading than other Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts.¹² Also, the texts of this manuscript and the above-mentioned three copies are important as they are deemed to be among the most ancient Nepalese palm-leaf Lotus Sutra copies.

In addition, one ought to take note of the fact that this National Archives

manuscript has not a few errors and omissions as well as disorders in text and folios. The following folios and text portions should be transposed for orderly reading: 40/127; 46/133; 60/147; 72/159; 83/170; 60a/60b; 113a/113b; 116a/116b; 122a/122b; 143a/143b; 155a/155b; 158a/158b; 168a/168b. Fol. 87 should be interposed after “...kuladuhitā vā imam” on fol. 99a, 3c; then the text jumps to the beginning words “aṣṭavarṣā jātyā” on fol. 100a, 1a, and continues to “mahāprājñe ...”¹³ on fol. 99a, 3c. The text portion of chapter 7 on fol. 62b, 4, corresponding to 160.7-165.9 of Kern-Nanjio’s edition, is missing. In spite of such shortcomings, research on this manuscript is indispensable for the elucidation of Nepalese Lotus Sutra manuscript texts.

The script used in this manuscript is categorized as Rañjanā in the catalogue of the National Archives of Nepal.¹⁴

I would like to conclude with some acknowledgments. First, I must express my utmost appreciation to Prof. Heinz Bechert, who took the trouble to obtain and provide to me a copy of this Nepalese manuscript from Berlin when I was studying at the Seminar für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde of the University of Göttingen from 1980 to 1981.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Ms. Sanimaiya Rana, then chief of the National Archives of Nepal and now deputy director-general of the Department of Archaeology, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture of the Kingdom of Nepal, and research officer Shukdev Sharma Gyanwali of the National Archives, who lent me their kind offices when I visited in November 1997 to conduct a reconfirming examination of the original manuscript. I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to IOP officials who dispatched me to Kathmandu. In particular, I wish to thank Noriyoshi Mizufune who cooperated extensively in this publication project. Also, I am grateful to Ms. Yoshiko Kawamura and Keshab B. Shrestha for their kind assistance and collaboration in Nepal.

Furthermore, I would like here to express my heartfelt respect to the Kingdom of Nepal and its people, who, under the noble guidance of **His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev**, have preserved so many precious materials and documents. The manuscript studies I have so far conducted are greatly benefited from materials which have been handed down in the Himalayan kingdom. Nothing would give me greater joy than to hope that this volume is able to contribute to the promotion of science and culture in Nepal and to bilateral friendship between Nepal and Japan.

Hirofumi Toda
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Notes

1. *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21), Facsimile Edition*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series, 2-1, published by the Soka Gakkai in cooperation with the National Archives of Nepal, Tokyo 1998.

Sūcīpatra, (*Buddha viṣayakā hastalikhita granthaharūko*), bhāg-1, (Abhilekha Prakāśanamālā-5), Rāṣṭriya Abhilekhālaya (National Archives of Nepal), 2054 (1997 C.E.), p. 67, no. 85. See also nos. 84, 86.

Claus Vogel, “The Dated Nepalese Manuscripts of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra,” *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, I. Philologisch-historische Klasse*, Göttingen, Jahrgang 1974, Nr. 5, p. 199.

Sanskrit Manuscripts of Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, Collected from Nepal, Kashmir and Central Asia, Romanized Text and Index, vol. 1, Tokyo 1986, p. (12), (12)-13), p. (37), N1 (table). Descriptions here may need to be reconsidered.

2. Text A ends with fol. 178b.

3. Except for this MS, this passage appears only in no. 412 (palm-leaf MS) and no. 409 (paper MS) in the collection of the Tokyo University Library. The first half of the text of no. 409 corresponds to that of no. 412.

4. Jiang Zhongxin, *A Sanskrit Manuscript of Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, Kept in the Library of the Cultural Palace of the Nationalities, Beijing, Romanized Text*, China Social Sciences Publishing House, Beijing 1988, Introduction, pp. 9-11.

5. Luciano Petech, *Mediaeval History of Nepal (c. 750-1482)*, Serie Orientale Roma, LIV, second, thoroughly revised edition, Rome 1984, pp. 61-67.

6. Willy Baruch, *Beiträge zum Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*, Leiden 1938, p. 2 Cf. The MS (Cf) seems to have been copied by several scribes. In addition, the text in seven folios written in Newari script (fols. 7, 43, 57, 75, 115, 121, 122) bears a close resemblance to that of Add. no. 1683 in the collection of the Cambridge University Library.

7. Vogel (1974), p. 201, (5), Petech (1984), p. 49, 3).

8. Akira Yuyama, “‘Jūniinnen ju’ oboegaki” (Notes on the *Pratītyasamutpāda-gāthā*), *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* (Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies), 20-1, pp. (48)-(52).

Keishō Tsukamoto, *Indo bukkyō himei no kenkyū* (A Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions), I, Text, Note, Japanese translation, Kyoto 1999.

9. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra, a Sanskrit Palm-leaf Manuscript Kept in the Library of the Cultural Palace of the Nationalities* (facsimile edition), Beijing 1984. Hereafter referred to as the Beijing manuscript.

10. Text portions on Add. no. 2197, fols. 76-78, 83ff. (except fols. 115, 121, 122), are parallel with those on Add. no. 1684.

11. The Tibetan version holds the chapter title “yoṅs su gtad pa” (Skt. anuparīdanā-). See Jiang

Zhongxin (1988) Introduction, p. 11. The description “in all other Sanskrit manuscripts of the Lotus Sūtra we have seen so far, this chapter is, without exception entitled anuparīdanā” may need to be reconsidered.

12. Hendrik Kern, trans., *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, or The Lotus of the True Law*, SBE, vol. XXI (1884), pp. xxxviii-xxxix. Though this volume reads here “London codices” inferring plural MSS, in actuality it should be a single MS: no. 6 at the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London, which is referred to as “A” in Kern-Nanjio’s edition (1908-1912). So H. Kern’s account here is incorrect. See notes on Burnouf’s French translation (1852), pp. 356, 418. Kern-Nanjio’s “A,” a paper MS, is genealogically different from and apparently discords with Add. no. 1683 (“the former manuscript”) and Add. no. 1682 (“the second Cambridge MS.”), both palm-leaf MSS. Thus, Kern’s understanding that “No. 1683 has much in common with the London codices” is incorrect.

“The Paris MS.” referred to by Kern means no. 2 in the collection of the Société Asiatique, which E. Burnouf used as the basic text for translation. At the same time, Burnouf made reference to the Tibetan version for completing his French translation. “Les deux manuscrits de M. Hodgson” in the notes to the French translation indicate a couple of handwritten copies, nos. 140-141 (“le premier manuscrit de M. Hodgson” for Burnouf’s translation; W. Baruch: Pb) and nos. 138-139 (“le second manuscrit de M. Hodgson” for Burnouf’s translation; Baruch: Pa), in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. See Burnouf’s translation, p. 418. The Société Asiatique MS and the two copies at the Bibliothèque Nationale are on different branches of transmission, so their textual contents do not necessarily accord with each other. The Société Asiatique MS falls on a different branch of genealogy from the two counterparts at the Bibliothèque Nationale, which can be regarded as two copies of the same version as they hold an identical text. See Baruch (1938), p. 4, Pa, Pb.

The same is true in the case of Add. no. 1032 (Cd) and Add. no. 1324 (Ce) in the collection of the Cambridge University Library. It is also the case of no. B7 (Aa) and no. 4199 (Ac) in The Asiatic Society, Calcutta. See Baruch (1938), p. 2, Cd, Ce, pp. 3-4, Aa, Ac. Though W. Baruch indicates that Cd and Ce belong to a certain group along with Aa and Ac, one can find that they do not necessarily accord with one another if strict perusal is carefully undertaken. Rather, Aa and Ac resemble no. 6 at the Royal Asiatic Society, London, (W. Baruch: R, Kern-Nanjio: A). Therefore, W. Baruch’s description that R belongs to one group along with Aa, Ac, Cd and Ce is incorrect in the strictest meaning.

13. In regard to the Facsimile Edition, p. xix, Notes on the Use of This Edition (2), “mahāprajñe ...” should be read “°prā°.”

14. *Sūcīpatra*, p. 67, no. 85. See Burnouf’s translation, p. 373. Described as “Kuṭīla” in C. Bendall Catalogue, p. xxi.