A FRAGMENT OF THE BODHICARYĀVATĀRA
FROM Oلون SÜME

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At the present time there is known to us a considerable number of fragments of various Mongolian manuscripts representative of the preclassical period of the history of Written Mongolian. As most of them have never been studied, little can be said about their linguistic palaeographic or literary value. It is not even known what literary works most of these fragments represent. Therefore, their identification with well-known works of original Mongolian literature or with translations from other languages is important, because the number of different fragments of the same works might serve as important testimony to their popularity in the past.

Thus, recently it was discovered that the fragment of the ḤP'ags-pa xylograph found by MANNERHEIM is a fragment of the well-known didactic work Subhāṣītaraṇanidhi. This was the first fragment of a Mongolian book in ḤP'ags-pa script known to science and it gives evidence of the fact that the didactic work in question enjoyed so great a popularity in the Yuan period that it was chosen to be published in the new script introduced in 1269.

Another important work of the Yuan period is the Buddhist

1 G. J. RAMSTEDT, “Ein Fragment mongolischer Quadratschrift,” Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne XXVII:3 (1912); “A Fragment of Mongolian ‘Quadratic’ Script,” reprinted from C. G. MANNERHEIM, Across Asia from West to East in 1906-08, Helsinki, 1940.


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philosophic work *Bodhicaryāvatāra* of which several Mongolian editions are known.

A number of fragments of Mongolian manuscripts discovered by the Japanese expedition in Oolon Sūme ("Many Temples") was published in the valuable article of Professor Hattori Shirō. Professor Hattori reproduced the original Mongolian texts by photographic means, romanized them, and gave a Japanese translation. One of the fragments characterized by him as a fragment of a Buddhist text but left unidentified with any particular literary work proves to be a fragment of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.

I present a transcription of this fragment after a photograph published in Professor Hattori's article. (See Plate I.)
Jayun yurban

[1] nigen⁸ ber bügsen⁹ bügesii. yāyu ba nigen-eči ču

[2] ayuqu bolqu. bi kemekü nigeke be¹⁰ ügei-yin

⁷ Prof. Hattori’s transcription differs only slightly from mine. A few words which are not quite legible have been misread by him.

⁸ The numeral “one” is transcribed as nigen according to modern pronunciation. In Middle Mongolian, e.g., in the bHiags-pa script, it is nik’en. Cf. N. H. Poppe, Квадратная письменность, Москва-Ленинград, 1941, стр. 42, 154. For the Hua-i-i-yu nikän “one”, cf. Marian Lewicki, La langue mongole des transcriptions chinoises du X Ve siècle, Le Houa-qi yi-yu de 1389, Wroclaw, 1949, p. 107; cf. also Erich Haenisch, “Sino-mongolische Dokumente vom Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts,” Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst, Jahrgang 1950, Nr. 4, Berlin, 1952, p. 55. For the Mogol nikän, cf. G. J. Ramsdell, “Mogholica, Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Moghol-Sprache in Afghanistan,” Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne XXIII:4 (1906), p. 34. The Dagar ne’k’e also has k in intervocalic position in this word. Cf. N. H. Poppe, Дагурскоe наrcение, Ленинград, 1930, стр. 143. Therefore, the transcription niken might be preferable for preclassical texts. Vladimirsov’s text has nigeke (or nikeken) with diminutive suffix -ken. The diminutive forms of numerals have the meaning “only so and so many”, i.e., in this case “only one” or “only once, only one time.”

⁹ This is a rare form of the nomen perfecti of the defective verb bii- “to be.” It only occurs in a few texts. For the Secret History bügsen, cf. Paul Pelliot, Histoire secrète des Mongois, Paris, 1949, §155, where it occurs in the following context: egei čimu čima-dača sayin bügsen bii’esii eri’ülüye “if thine elder sister is more beautiful than thou, we shall let seek [her].” It is to be noted that the same construction bügsen bii’esii occurs in this context as in the Bodhicaryavatārā fragment. The form bügsen is found in Haenisch’s dictionary. Cf. Erich Haenisch, Wörterbuch zu Manghol un Nuca Toba’an (Yuan-ch’ao Pi-shi), Geheime Geschichte der Mongolen, Leipzig, 1939, p. 21. The nomen perfecti bügsen does not occur in classical Written Mongolian. It does not occur in the colloquial language either. The form bissq (Khalkha) “was, existed” has nothing in common with bügsen, because bissq is a development of bai ayqan “has been.” The compound form bügsen bügesii means “if he has been,” “if he had been” or “when he has (or had) been.” The form in question is missing in Vladimirsov’s text where only bügesii is found. The difference in meaning is not great, because bügesii means “if is” or “when is” (versus “if has been” or “when has been”).

¹⁰ Although at the present time this is read as nigeke ba “anyone”, the particle can also be transcribed as be, because in Middle Mongolian it complied with the rules of vowel harmony. Cf. Secret History, Pelliot, op. cit., §66: okin-iyen be öksi ků’un-iyen be gureget-te talbüjy ot “I shall give my daughter and leave [thou] thy son as a son-in-law and go.” Cleaves correctly transcribes this particle as be, e.g., kedun-te be “even many times.” Cf. F. W. Cleaves, “The Sino-Mongolian Inscription of 1388
tulada. ayuqchi tere ken buyu. sidun usun kimu-
sun bi busu. yasun cisin ber bi busu. nisun
nilbusun \[1\] ber [bi] busu sir-a usiin I' ugesiin ber [bi] busu
bui. egukiid \[2\] ber kolosiin ber bi busu. eligen
ayuski ber bi busu. kesel toyoriqui ber \[3\]

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in Memory of Jigüntei,“ HJAS 14 (1951) 55. The very precise hP'ags-pa script
renders this particle as be after front vocalic words. Cf. POPPE, op. cit., p. 84 et passim.
\[1\] This word is illegible. VLADIMIRTSOV'S text has siliisiin "saliva," but this looks like
nilbusun "spittle."
\[2\] Both in the fragment and in VLADIMIRTSOV'S edition we find sir-a usiin, but this is an obvious mistake for
sir-a usun, because sir-a usun means "yellow hair" (i.e., the hair on the body), while sir-a usun is "yellow water," i.e., "sanies, lymph, pus." Cf.
"pus sereux, pus, sang cortompu" (J. É. KOWALEWSKI, Dictionnaire mongol-russe-
français, Vol. II, Kasan, 1846, p. 1518). The latter meaning corresponds exactly to
the Tibetan 'e'u ser "serum." The corresponding lines in the Tibetan text read as
follows: snubs min bad kan ma yin te, 'e'u ser dan ni mag kaun min "the mucus and
the phlegm are not; the serum and the pus are not either." The expression
tesel toyoriqui corresponds here to Tibetan nañ grol "the intestines, bowels, entrails." The form kesel (or gesel ?) does not occur in the dictionaries and
known sources, but toyoriqui is a nomen futuri from toyor-"to circle around, to walk around, to encircle, etc.” In KOWALEWSKI’S dictionary (vol. III, p. 1815) there
is found the word toyoriqui "the thin intestines of pigs." In RINEŠE'S Khalkha-
Russian dictionary the corresponding form is torinçi id. Thus kesel (or gesel) toyoriqui means "entrails." VLADIMIRTSOV'S text has busud kesel (or gesel) "the
other intestines." The form kesel (gesel) is of unknown origin.
This fragment coincides almost verbatim with verses 56 to 60 of the IXth Chapter of the Mongolian text published by VLADIMIRTSOV. (See Plate II.) The verses in question in his edition read in transcription as follows: 20

56 kerbe bi nigeKen ber bugesü ele,
   yayuba nigen-ecē ētu ayuqu boldaqū.21
bi kemeği nigeken be ügei-yin tulada,
ayu'či tere ken buyu.

57 sidün üsün kimusun bi busu,
yasun çisun ber bi busu,
nisun silüsün ber bi busu,
sir-a üsün ügesün ber bi busu bui.

58 qorayun kılösün ber bi busu,
eligen ayaśkin ber bi busu,
busud kesel ber bi busu,
burtay sigesün ber bi busu.

59 miq-a arasun ber bi busu bui,
qalayun kei ber bi busu,
nükéd ber bi busu,[140]
teyigen büged jirayyan bilig ber bi busu.

60 kerbe dayun-u bilig möngke ele bügesü,
nasu čay-tur dayun sonosqu bolqu,
medegdekü ügei bügesü yayun-i medeküi kemebesi,
alin-iyar bilig kemen tüğilemü.

I translate the text of the Olon Süme fragment in the following manner:

[Translation]

[Translation]

[Folium] One Hundred Three.

[1] If only [I] had existed, I would be afraid of everyone.
[2] As there is no ego,
[3] who is that frightened one? The teeth, the hair, and the
[4] nails are not the ego. The bones and the blood are not the
ego. The mucus
[5] and the saliva are not [the ego]. The lymph and the pus
are not [the ego].
[6] The grease and the perspiration are not the ego. The liver
[7] and the lungs are not the ego. The bowels
[8] are not the ego. The excrements and the urine are not
the ego.
[9] The flesh 22 and the skin are not the ego. The heat

22 Mongolian miqan stands for “flesh” and “muscles” and corresponds to Tibetan ša “flesh, meat, surface of the body, muscle,” while the French translation of the Sanskrit text has “ni la chair, ni les muscles.”
[10] is not the ego. The orifices are not the ego. Thus,
[11] the six senses are not the ego. If
[12] the audition were eternal, the sound
[13] would always be heard. [As] there is no object of per-
ception, . . .

This fragment belongs to the ninth chapter of the Bodhicaryā-
vatāra, dealing with the perfect knowledge. The corresponding
passage in the Sanscrit text was translated by De La Vallée
Poussin in the following manner: 23

56) [Vous dites que l'idée de vacuité fait peur, et, de la sorte, fait obstacle
à la délivrance: cela est peut-être vrai au début, mais non pas quand on
réfléchit.] Qu'on ait peur de ce qui cause la douleur, c'est naturel; mais la
vacuité apaise la douleur: comment pourrait-elle effrayer?
57) Qu'on ait peur de ce qui est effrayant, et même de ce qui ne l'est pas,
c'est naturel aussi longtemps qu'on croit à la réalité du moi: mais quand [on

23 Bodhicaryāvatāra, Introduction à la pratique des futurs bouddhas. Poème de
Çàntideva, traduit du sanscrit et annoté par Louis de la Vallée Poussin. Extrait de
la Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse, t. X, XI, et XII, 1905, 1906, 1907, Paris,
Librairie Bloud et Cie, 1907, pp. 123-124. The English version published by L. D.
Barnett, M. A. Litt. D., The Path of Light, Rendered for the First Time into English
from the Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śānti-Deva, a Manual of Mahā-Yāna Buddhism, London,
1908, is of no use for my purpose, because it is only a brief digest. The verses in
question are missing there. For comparison the corresponding passage of the Tibetan
text, after Wellcker's edition (op. cit., p. 71) is reproduced here:
sait, par la doctrine de la vacuité, que] le moi n’est rien, qui pourrait avoir peur, [puisqu’il n’y a pas de moi]?

58-60) Ni les dents, ni les ongles, ni les os, ni le sang, ni le mucus, ni le phlegme, ni le pus, ni la salive, ni la graisse, ni la sueur, ni la lymphe, ni les viscères, ni les [124] boyaux, ni les excréments, ni l’urine, ni la chair, ni les muscles, ni la chaleur vitale, ni le souffle, ni les neuf ouvertures, ni les cinq connaissances sensibles, ni la connaissance intellectuelle ne sont le moi.

61) En effet, si la connaissance auditive était le moi, le son serait toujours perçu, puisque le moi est donné comme éternel. Si vous dites que la connaissance auditive est permanente, mais que son objet lui fait parfois défaut, que connaît-elle, à défaut d’objet, pour que vous la définissiez comme connaissance?

We have seen above that the Olon Süme fragment differs from the text published by Vladimirtsov in five instances (bügisen versus Zero, bolqu versus boldaqu, egüküd versus qorayun, kesel toyoriqi versus busud kesel, and bilge versus bilig). Thus, this is a fragment of a version different from the manuscript discovered by Kowalewski and published by Vladimirtsov, which is close to the Tanjur version of the Bodhicaryāvatāra. Unfortunately, the fragment is too small to enable us to determine exactly what version it is. However, it is beyond doubt that the fragment belonged to a preclassical text, probably not earlier than the middle of the XIVth century, possibly containing the same version as that published in 1312.
PLATE I

Bodhicaryāvatāra, Chapter IX, §§ 56–60
(Onon Sūne Fragment)

The Tōhō Gakuhō, No. 11, Part 2 (July, 1940)
PLATE II

Bodhicaryāvatāra, Chapter IX, §§ 56-60

Bibliotheca Buddhica XXVIII, pp. 139-140