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AN OYRAT VAJRACCHEDIKĀ FRAGMENT FROM TURFAN

by

NICHOLAS POPPE

Seattle

One of the items of the Turfan collection is a slightly damaged leaf of an Oyrat manuscript. Its registration number is T II D 422. For some reasons, this fragment was not included by Professor Haenisch in his otherwise complete edition of Mongolian fragments brought by the German Turfan Expedition,[1] although he had mentioned it in his list.[2] No mention of this fragment is found, however, in Heissig's union catalogue of Mongolian and Oyrat manuscripts in German libraries.[3]

A photostat of this fragment which, together with some other items of the same collection, belongs to the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin was brought by Dr. H. F. Schurmann and transmitted to Professor F. W. Cleaves who, in his turn, put it very kindly at the disposal of the author of these lines.

The Oyrat fragment in question is an excellent specimen of old Oyrat writing, very clear and executed in a perfectly calligraphic manner. It is probably not much younger than the beginning of the XVIII century and displays orthographic features characteristic of the "golden age" of Oyrat literature, i.e., the XVIII and the first half of the XIX century. A comparison of the handwriting in this fragment and that in the letter of Galdan Boshoktu to the Tsar of Russia (1691)[4] or in the *History of Manuhari Okin Tenggeri* (probably of the beginning of the XVIII cen-

[1] Erich Haenisch, "Mongolica der Berliner Turfan-Sammlung II, Mongolische Texte der Berliner Turfan-Sammlung in Faksimile", *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Klasse für Sprachen, Literatur und Kunst*, Jahrgang 1959, No. 1 (Berlin).

[2] Erich Haenisch, "Mongolica der Berliner Turfan-Sammlung I, Ein buddhistisches Druckfragment vom Jahre 1312", *ibid.*, Jhg. 1953, No. 3 (Berlin 1954) p. 4.

[3] *Mongolische Handschriften, Blockdrucke, Landkarten*, Beschrieben von Walter Heissig unter Mitarbeit von Klaus Sagaster (Wiesbaden 1961) p. 490-91.

[4] Н. П. Шастина, Русско-монгольские посольские отношения XVII века. (Москва, 1958). See photograph opposite p.170.

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tury)[5] leads to the conclusion that the item under discussion is a fragment of a manuscript written some time during the first half of the XVIII century.

An important orthographic feature of manuscripts of the period between the middle of the XVII and the beginning of the XIX century is that ancient **egü* is rendered by *öü* and ancient **ayu* as *ou*, cf. here in the fragment *Recto* 3 and 13 *töüni*, *Verso* 29 *öüni*, *V* 9 *dousuqsan*. In later manuscripts the ancient syllables **ayu* and **egü* are represented as *uu* and *üü* respectively

In conclusion of the description of this fragment, it should be remarked that the number of lines is 30 on each page, but not 25, 25, 18 as Haenisch says.[6]

It should also be added that *Recto* is not the page bearing the call number.

After these preliminary remarks, we shall give the transcription of the text and its translation.

TRANSCRIPTION

Recto

1. .....kerbe
2. .....boluqsan ali ǰarim ami-
3. tani tonilγoxulā: töüni tögünčilen
4. boluqsan bidü barixu boluyu: amitan-
5. du barin amin-du barin budγali-du
6. barixu boluyu: subudi bidü barixu
7. kemēkü:: töüni barixu ügegüye tögün-
8. čilen boluqsan nomloxulā: terečü
9. nilxa öbörö törölkitön barixu:
10. subudi nilxa öbörö törölkitön
11. kemēkü: törölkitön tedeni ügei
12. kemēn tögünčilen boluqsan nomloboi:
13. töüni tula nilxa öbörö törölki-
14. tön kemēn ögüülekü:: subudi öün-
15. dü you sedkikü: belge xotolo tögü-

[5] Heissig, *op. cit.*, p. 94, for photograph *vide* plate IV. The manuscript was brought between 1781 and 1795: Heissig, *op. cit.*, p. XII.

[6] Haenisch, *l.c.* There must have occurred an error in counting to which a misprint was added, because 25, 25, 18 can only be interpreted as numbers of lines on three pages: two pages each of which has 25 lines and one page with 18 lines.

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16. süqsen-yēr tögünčilen boluqsan-du
17. üǰen üyiledkü kemēkü buyu: subudi
18. ayiladxabai ilaγun tögüsün üleqsen
19. teyimi busu: belge xotolo tögüsüq-
20. sen-yēr tögünčilen boluqsan-du üǰen
21. üyiledkü busu: burxan ǰarliq bolboi:
22. subudi tere tögünčilen tere tögünči-
23. lenkü: belge xotolo tögüsüqsen-yēr
24. tögünčilen boluqsan-du üǰen ülü üyiled-
25. kü: subudi kerbe belge xotolo tögü-
26. süqsen-yēr tögünčilen boluqsan-du üǰen
27. üyiledkülē kürdü orčiuluqči xān ču
28. tögünčilen boluqsan bolxu: töüni tula belge
29. xotolo tögüsüqsen-yēr tögünčilen
30. boluqsan-du.....

Verso

1. čin: bur[xan].....
2. törölkitön tede namai.....
3. burxan-noγoud nomiyin činar xaraxu:
4. uduriduqčin nomiyin beye: nomiyin
5. činar meden üyiledkü busuyin tula: töü-
6. ni teyin meden ülü čidaxu: subudi öün-
7. dü you sedkikü: belge xotolo tögüsüq-
8. sen-yēr tögünčilen boluqsan dayini darun
9. sayitur dousuqsan bodhi-du ilerkei
10. dousun burxan bolbo kemēn sedkin barixu
11. bögōsü: subudi či tere metü sedkin bü üyiled:
12. subudi belge xotolo tögüsüqsen-yēr
13. tögünčilen boluqsan dayini darun sayitur
14. dousuqsan bodhi-du ilerkei dousun
15. burxan boluqsan ügei: subudi či eyin
16. kemēn bodhi-sadwa-nariyin kölgön-dü sayi-
17. tur oroqsod: nom ali ǰarimi teyin
18. kü ebdeqsen buyu tasurxaya xadaqsan
19. bui kemēn sedkikü bögōsü: subudi töü-
20. ni tere metü sedkin bü uyiled: bodhi-
21. sadwa-nariyin kölgön-dü sayitur oroqsodi
22. ali nom teyin kü ebdeqsen buyu tasurxa-

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fig. 1

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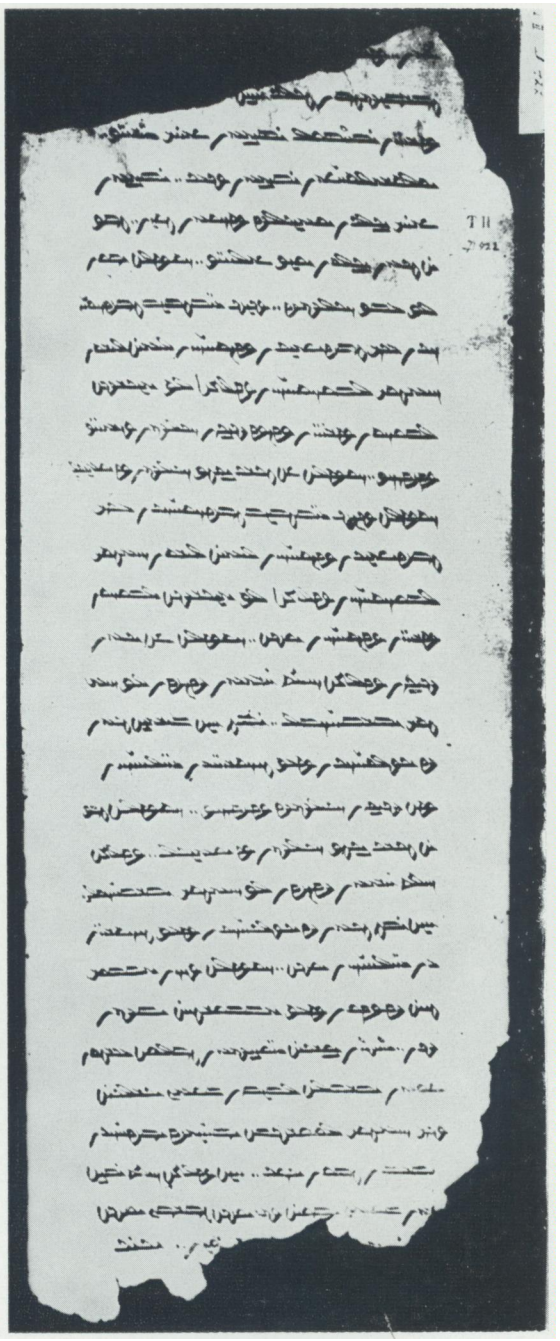


fig. 2

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23. ya xadaqsan ügei: subudi basa iǰour-
24. tani köböün buyu iǰourtani okin
25. ken: γangγa müreni xumakiyin tödüi yertün-
26. čüyin orodi dolōn ǰüyil erdeni-
27. bēr sayitur düürgeǰi öqligö ögüqsen
28. oron töün-ēče: ali bodhi-sadwa nomi-
29. yin ǰüyil öüni bi ügei töröl ügei
30. .....ulā: ene

TRANSLATION

Recto

'If he saved some living creature which..., the Tathāgata would grasp at the *Ego*. Grasping at a being, grasping at life, he would grasp at the *putgala* (person). Subhuti, this is what is called the grasping at the *Ego*. Whereas the Tathāgata preaches without grasping at it, those unintelligent inferior people [do] grasp.

Subhuti, as for what is called the unintelligent inferior people, the Tathāgata preached about those beings that they do not exist. For this reason they are spoken about as unintelligent inferior people.

Subhuti, what do you think about this? Would you say that he is seen as the Tathāgata because of being perfectly provided with marks?

Subhuti spoke reverently: "Buddha, it is not so. He is not seen as the Tathāgata in consequence of being perfectly provided with marks."

Buddha spoke: "Subhuti, that is so, that is exactly so. He is not seen as the Tathāgata because of being perfectly provided with marks. Subhuti, if he were seen as the Tathāgata because of being perfectly provided with marks the King who turns the Wheel (i.e., *Cakravartin*) would also be a Tathāgata. Therefore [he is not seen] as a Tathāgata because of being perfectly provided with marks.

Verso

...Buddha [spoke: "Those] beings [do not see] me. As for the Buddhas, one should look at the [true] nature of the *dharma*. The Leaders [are] the dharmabodies (*dharmakāya*). Because the [true] nature of the *dharma* cannot be recognized, it is not possible to be conscious of it.

Subhuti, what do you think about it? If you think that the Tathāgata, suppressing the foe and being manifestly accomplished in the enlightenment which is well-accomplished, has become a Buddha because he is

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perfectly provided with marks, you should not, Subhuti, think like that.

Subhuti, the Tathāgata did not become Buddha, suppressing the foe and being manifestly accomplished in the enlightenment which is well-accomplished, because he is perfectly provided with marks.

Subhuti, if you think so, if you think that those who have entered in a good manner the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas have thus broken or severed some *dharma*, you must not, Subhuti, think about it like that.

Those who have entered in a good manner the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas have not broken thus any dharma, nor severed it.

Again, Subhuti, [if] some Bodhissatva [obtains the patient acquiescence] in the kinds of dharmas, in these which do not have an *Ego* and which do not have a birth [he will give birth to much more incalculable and immeasurable accumulations of *puṇya*] than the country in which a son of noble descent or a daughter of noble descent, filling with jewels of seven kinds the countries of as many worlds as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, has given alms."

This fragment does not contain anything that might enable the investigator to identify it with any known Buddhist work. No title of the work concerned and no title of a chapter or any other subdivision is mentioned here. When reading it, however, the author of these lines found that it looked somewhat familiar to him and resembled the *Vajracchedikā* more than any other sūtra known to him. Comparison of the fragment with the text of the sūtra mentioned resulted in the conclusion that it really represents a passage from the *Vajracchedikā*.

For the purpose of corroborating this conclusion, the corresponding passage from the Mongolian Kanjur will be given here. The *Vajracchedikāsūtra* is found in the volume *Cha* of the section *Eldeb bilig baramid*, fol. 192 v - fol. 209 v of the Peking edition.[7] As for the exact location of the corresponding passage it is fol. 206 v (line 27)—fol. 207 v (line 25).

The passage from the Kanjur is given here without translation.

Fol. 206 v.
26. ügei-yin tulada buyu: subudi a ker ber tegünčilen
27. iregsen ked be: amitan-i tonilγaqui bolbasu ele:
28. tegünčilen iregsed ber bi kemen barimtalaqui boluyu:amitan
29. kemen barimtalaqui: amin kemen barimtalaqui: budgali kemen
30. barimtalaqui boluyu: subudi a bi kemen sedkiküi kemegdeküi
31. kemebesü: tegün-i sedkiküi ügei kemen tegünčilen iregsed

[7] Louis Ligeti, *Catalogue du Kanjur mongol imprimé, vol. I, Catalogue* (Budapest 1942-44), p. 186 (*vide* no. 771).

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Fol 207 r

1. nomlaǰu bügetele: tegün-i ber bertegčin amitan-nuγud
2. eǰelen barimui: subudi a bertegčin amitan-nuγud
3. kemegdekü kemebesü: tedeger amitan ügei kü kemen
4. tegünčilen iregsed nomlaǰuqui: tegüber bertegčin
5. aran kemegdeyü: subudi a egüni ker kemen sedkimüyü:
6. tegüs sayin lakšan-tu-yin tula tegünčilen iregsen kemen
7. üǰegdekü kemen sedkimüyü:: subudi öčir-ün:
8. ilaǰu tegüs nögčigsen a tere busu buyu: tegüs
9. sayin lakšan-tu-yin siltaγ-a-bar tegünčilen iregsen
10. kemen ülü kü üǰegdekü buyu: ilaǰu tegüs nögčigsen
11. ǰarliγ bolur-un: subudi a tere tegünčilen kü buyu
12. tere tegünčilen kü bolumui: tegüs sayin lakšan-tu-yin
13. siltaγ-a-bar tegünčilen iregsen kemen ülü kü
14. üǰegdekü: subudi a ker ber tegüs sayin lakšan-
15. tu-yin tula tegünčilen iregsen kemen üǰegdekü
16. bolbasu ele: čakrawarti qaγan ber tegünčilen iregsen
17. bolqu boluyu: tegüber tegüs sayin lakšan-tu-yin
18. siltaγ-a-bar tegünčilen iregsen kemen ülü üǰegdekü::
19. tendeče ilaǰu tegüs nögčigsen-e amin qabiy-a-tu
20. subudi eyin kemen öčibei: ilaǰu tegüs nögčigsen a
21. ker nomlaγsan-u udq-a-yi inu nadur medegdegsen
22. metü-ber bolbasu tegüs sayin lakšan-tu-yin siltaγ-a-bar
23. tegünčilen iregsen kemen ülü üǰegdekü: tendeče
24. ilaǰu tegüs nögčigsen tere čaγ-tur edeger
25. silüg-üd-i nomlabai: ked be namayi öngge kemen
26. üǰeǰu: ked be namayi daγun kemen medebesü:
27. buruγu alǰiyas-un mör-tür oroldуγsan buyu:
28. tedeger aran namayi ülü üǰen bui: burqan-nuγud
29. nom-un činar-i üǰegsen qamuγ uduriduγčid nom-un
30. bey-e-tü nom-un činar medegdekü-e busu-yin
31. tulada: tegün-i teyin büged meden ülü čidayu:

Fol. 207 v

1. subudi a egüni ker kemen sedkimüi: tegüs sayin
2. lakšan-iyar tegünčilen iregsen dayini daruγsan ünen
3. tegüs tuγuluγsan bodhi qutuγ-i iledde tegüsken
4. burqan bolqu kemen sedkibesü ele: subudi či tegün-i
5. teyin kü ülü sedkigdekü: subudi a lakšan qotala
6. tegüsügsen-iyer tegünčilen iregsen dayini daruγsan üneger

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7. tuγuluγsan burqan ber tengsel ügei üneger
8. tuγuluγsan bodhi qutuγ-i iledde
9. tegüsken burqan boluγsan ügei bolai: subudi a egüni
10. ker kemen sedkimüi: bodhi-saduwa-nar-un kölgen-dür
11. ünen-iyer oroldуγsad ked be ali ba nom-ud-i
12. teyin büged ebdegsen ba tasurqai-a qomuslaγčin
13. kemen sedkibesü ele: subudi a tegün-i teyin ülü
14. sedkigdekü buyu: bodhi-saduwa-nar-un kölgen-dür
15. ünen-iyer oroγsad nigeken ber nom-i teyin büged
16. ebdegsen ba: tasurqai-a qomuslaγčin ügei bolai
17. subudi basa iǰaγur-tan-u köbegüd ba: iǰaγur-tan
18. ökid ked be gangga mören-ü qumaki-yin toγatan
19. yirtinčü-yin ulus-i doloγan ǰüil erdenis-iyer
20. sayitur dügürgeǰü: öglige öggügsen-eče: ken
21. tere bodhi-saduwa-nar-un nom-ud-i bi ügei
22. boluγad töröl ügei-dür küličenggü olbasu ele:
23. tere büged tere siltaγan-ača asuru olan toγ-a
24. tomsi ügei: čaγlasi ügei: buyan-u čoγčas-i
25. törögülüyü: .....

For the purpose of comparison, an excerpt from the English translation of the Sanskrit original of the *Vajracchedikāsūtra* is given, which represents the passage corresponding to the preserved portion of the Oyrat text.

25. What do you think, Subhuti, does it occur to a Tathagata, "by me have beings been set free"? Not thus should you see it, Subhuti! And why? There is not any being whom the Tathagata has set free. Again, if there had been any being whom the Tathagata had set free, then surely there would have been on the part of the Tathagata a seizing of a self, of a being, of a soul, of a person. "Seizing of a self", as a non-seizing, Subhuti, has that been taught by the Tathagata. And yet the foolish common people have seized upon it. "Foolish common people", Subhuti, as really no people have been taught by the Tathagata. Therefore are they called "foolish common people".

26. What do you think Subhuti, is the Tathagata to be seen by means of his possession of marks? – Subhuti replied: No indeed, O Lord. – The Lord said: If, Subhuti, the Tathagata could be recognized by his possession of marks, then also the universal monarch would be a Tathagata.

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Therefore the Tathagata is not to be seen by means of his possession of marks.—Subhuti then said: As I, O Lord, understand the Lord's teaching, the Tathagata is not to be seen through his possession of marks.

Further the Lord taught on that occasion the following stanzas:

Those who by my form did see me,
And those who followed me by voice
Wrong the efforts they engaged in,
Me those people will not see.

26b. From the Dharma should one see the Buddhas,
From the Dharmabodies comes their guidance.
Yet Dharma's true nature cannot be discerned,
And no one can be conscious of it as an object.

27. What do you think, Subhuti, has the Tathagata fully known the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment through his possession of marks? Not so should you see it, Subhuti. And why? Because the Tathagata could surely not have fully known the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment through his possession of marks.

Nor should anyone, Subhuti, say to you, "those who have set out in the Bodhisattva-vehicle have conceived the destruction of a dharma, or its annihilation". Not so should you see it, Subhuti! For those who have set out in the Bodhisattva-vehicle have not conceived the destruction of a dharma, or its annihilation.

28. And again, Subhuti, if a son or daughter of good family had filled with the seven precious things as many world systems as there are grains of sand in the river Ganges, and gave them as a gift to the Tathagatas, Arhats, fully Enlightened Ones, – and if on the other hand a Bodhisattva would gain the patient acquiescence in dharmas which are nothing of themselves and which fail to be produced, then this latter would on the strength of that beget a greater heap of merit, immeasurable and incalculable.[8]

In conclusion, it should be remarked that there are several different

[8] This translation, almost identical with that given in Edward Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā, Edited and translated with introduction and glossary* (=*Serie Orientale Roma* XIII) (1957), p. 88-90, is quoted, by courteous permission of the publishers, Messrs George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, and the distributors, the Macmillan Co., New York, from *Buddhist Wisdom Books Containing The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra*, Translated and Explained by Edward Conze (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London 1958), p. 62-63.

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Mongolian translations of the *Vajracchedikā*.[9] There are also numerous Oyrat manuscripts of this work[10] which may be different versions, and the London School of Oriental and African Studies has a copy of a printed Oyrat edition which was published by the Prince of the Torgut.[11] No copies of Kalmuck (Oyrat) versions being available to the author, no attempt has been made to identify the fragment investigated with any particular Oyrat version.

[9] Walther Heissig, *Die Pekinger lamaistischen Blockdrucke in mongolischer Sprache* (Wiesbaden, 1954), p. 155.
[10] Heissig, *Mongolische Handschriften, Blockdrucke, Landkarten*, p. 145–151.
[11] Conze, *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā*, p. 18.

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