A Preliminary Report on a Sanskrit Manuscript of the *Tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśa* or *Dhāraṇīśvararāja*

YE Shaoyong

1. Introduction

The Sanskrit manuscript presented here is cataloged as Bundle No. 59 in the collection of Sanskrit manuscripts preserved in the China Ethnic Library (CEL) in Beijing. The CEL collection was originally from Tibet. In 1993, except for three manuscripts, the entire collection was returned to Tibet and preserved in the Tibetan Museum in Lhasa.¹⁾ Our manuscript is among those three which are still preserved in CEL. Wang Sen's catalog described this bundle simply as "fragments of Buddhist scriptures, folio 1–12" (佛经残叶, 1–12 叶).²⁾ On the cover page (Folio 1 recto) of the manuscript, Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana's notation can be seen: "XXXVIII.6 sūtra (patra 11)." However, in his catalog (1935, 1937, 1938), there is no entry that accords with our manuscript. Therefore, it is unknown which monastery the manuscript came from originally, but it most likely came from Zha lu Ri phug.

The palm-leaf manuscript appears to be written in a variety of the Proto-Nāgarī script, which dates paleographically to around the 8th or 9th century. Today only twelve folios survive in this bundle. Each of the folios, measuring roughly 48 × 5 cm in dimension, has two string holes, and five to six lines of running text written on each side. The folio number

Folio 1 verso (Detail, Left)

is written in the left margin of the verso.

Although no title is found in the surviving fragments, the text preserved by them can be identified based on corresponding Chinese and Tibetan translations as the *Tathāgata-mahākaraṇīrdeśa* (TMN), an Mahāyāna sūtra also known as *Dhāraṇīśvararāja*.³⁾ The sūtra was translated twice into Chinese: first by Dharmarakṣa (竺法護) in 291 CE, titled *Da-ai jing* (大哀經, T no. 398), and then by Dharmakṣema (曇無讖) in the early 5th century. The latter translation was included as the first two chapters in the Chinese *Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra* (大集經, T no. 397). There is also a Tibetan translation by Ye shes sde (D Tōhoku no. 147, P Ōtani no. 814). Until now, except for some passages cited in the *Ratnagotravibhāga Mahāyānottaratantra* (RGV) under the title *Dhāraṇīśvararājasūtra*,⁴⁾ and in the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (MABh) under the title *Dhāraṇīśvararājaparipṛcchāsūtra*,⁵⁾ no Sanskrit text of this sūtra has been known. A concordance of Sanskrit folios with Chinese and Tibetan translations is shown below.

Folio no.	Translations		
	Ch1. (竺法護 Dharmarakṣa) T 13, no. 398	Ch2. (曇無讖 Dharmakṣema) T 13, no. 397	Tib. D Tōhoku no. 147, mdo sde, Pa
1	409a7–22	1a7–20	142a1–b3
2	409a22–b24	1a20–b17	142b3–143b2
3, 4 missing			
5	410b1–c18	2a5–b7	145b1–146b1
6	410c18–411b2	2b7–c7	146b1–147b3
7	411b2–c9	2c7–3a5	147b3–148b3
8	411c9–412a22	3a5–b8	148b3–149b5
9	412a22–b28	3b8–c5	149b5–150b5
10	412b28–413a3	3c5–c26	150b5–151b3
11 missing			
12	413b18–c25	4a27–b23	152b5–153b5
13–20 missing			
21	417c3–418a14	7a4–27	164a4–165a6
22	418a14–c20	7a27–?	165a6–166b2
23	418c20–419b20	?–9a16	166b2–167b6
24–? missing			

2. An Edition of Folios 1–2

- ( ) restored *akṣara*(s)
 [ ] *akṣara*(s) whose reading(s) is (are) uncertain
 < > omitted (part of) *akṣara*(s) without gap in the manuscript
 « » insertion
 { } superfluous *akṣara*(s)
 {{ }} deleted *akṣara*(s)
 * *virāma*
 ○ string hole

(1v1) *om* namaḥ sarvabuddhabodhisatvebhyaḥ ||

evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasmiṃ samaye bha○gavāṃ rājagrhe viharati sma | grddhrakūṭe pa-
 rvate | pūrvajināddhyuṣite | ○<ma>hācāitye | tathāgatādhi[ṣṭhā](nādhīṣṭhite dharaṇīmāṇḍe
 bodhisatvābhiṣṭe) (1v2) (dharm)āsane⁶⁾ | devanāgayakṣagandharvanamaskṛte
 pṛthivīpradeśe | kuśala○mūlasaṇcodane | tathāgataprabhave dharmamukhābhilapane | bo-
 dhisatvaprabha○ve | apramāṇaḥsaṃsamudgate tathāgatagocar(e) | (bhagavān sarvadharmā-
 samatā)(1v3)[bh]isambuddhaḥ supravartitadharmacakraḥ anantaśiṣyagaṇasuvīṇā⁷⁾ sarva○
 dharmavaśitāpṛptaḥ⁸⁾ sarvasatvāsayasuvīdhijñāḥ indriyaparamapārami○pṛptaḥ sarvasatva-
 vāsānānusandhisamudghātanaakuśalaḥ⁹⁾ (anābhogabuddha)(1v4)kāryāpratiprasrabdhaḥ¹⁰⁾
 mahatā bhikṣusaṃghena sārddham*¹¹⁾ | «ṣaṣṭābhikṣuśatasahasraiḥ¹²⁾ sarvair ājāneyaiḥ
 saṃmyagājñāsuvimuktaci[tt]aiḥ» sarvakleśavāsānānusa○ndhisamudghātitaḥ tathā-
 gatadharmanājaputraiḥ gambhīradharmavihāraakuśalaiḥ a○nupalambhadharmaniryātaiḥ
 prāsādikeryāpathasaṃpannaiḥ mahāda[kṣ]i(nīya)(1v5)bhūtaiḥ tathāgatājñāsupratipannaiḥ <|>

aprameyena ca bodhisatvasaṃghe○na sārddham¹³⁾ asaṅgagocarasarvajñātāniryātair
 bodhisatvaiḥ mahāsatvaiḥ mahāmaitrī○mahākaraṇādharmanameghavipaśyanāvidyāvīṃśi-
 vidyotit(aiḥ sudhā)(2r1)jaladharābhipravarṣaṇasaraṃvājagatsantarpayitṛbhiḥ¹⁴⁾ sarvasatvadharaṇīsa○
 macittaiḥ anuṇayapratigahvīgatāḥ vivīdhabodhipakṣyadharmā¹⁵⁾sasyasaṃprava○rdhayitṛbhiḥ
 sūryamaṇḍalātīrekaprajñāraśmīpramuktamohāndha[kā](ra)(2r2)vidhamanamārgālokapṛpta-
 sandarśanasatvapadmaṇḍalabodhanakuśala○mūlaparipācānatṛṣṇasāliḥloccaḥsaṃjñānakarmānta-
 prasthāpanamahābhi○jñārāmapathacāribhiḥ¹⁶⁾ candropamasaraṃvājagatsamacittābhiḥsa[ma](nā)-
 (2r3)śayasantoṣaṇopāyakaśalyahānīvrddhisandarśakaiḥ sumeruka○lpādhyāśayasupratīṣṭhitacatur-
 brāhmavihāraratnacatūpṛśvasarvaviśayavā○tāprakampya¹⁷⁾lokadharmābhyudgatasarvabuddha-
 kṣettrasandarśanāvabhāsa[ga](taiḥ)(2r4) mahāsamudrakalpa¹⁸⁾dhāraṇīsmṛtīvipulabhājanadharma-

salilapa○ripūrṇṇabodhisatvacaryāratnasarvajagadupajīvyaiḥ mṛgendravatsatyacarāṇa○pravṛ-
ddhamaitrīlāṅgūlaśamathavipaśyanālocanagambhīradharmānutr[ā](sa)_(2r5)sarvaparapravādi-
nirghātayatṛbhiḥ aparimita¹⁹⁾kalpaśatasa○hasrāparyantāpariniṣṭhitabodhisatvacaryāpratiprasa-
bdhasarvagūṇasamanvāgataiḥ²⁰⁾ |

[tadyathā sama](ntāvabhāsānāvaraṇadarśi)(nā ca nāma bodhi)_(2v1)satvena²¹⁾ mahāsatvena |
sarvakṣetrālampaṅkāvyūha○s(a)ndarśakena ca nāma bodhisatvena mahāsatvena |
tathāgatagotrāsambhāvācārama○tinā ca {{bodha}} bodhi[satvena] (mahāsatvena |
sarveryāpāthavinītāvikopanasam)_(2v2)darśakena²²⁾ ca nāma bodhisatvena mahāsatvena |
anantapratibhānaketu○dhvajavikurvitaḥṣeṇa ca nāma bodhisatvena mahāsatvena |
śubhakanakanici○taprabhātejoraśminā ca bodhisatvena mahāsatvena | prajñāvinīśc(aya)_(2v3)
padapratibhānena ca nāma bodhisatvena mahāsatvena | aparimita○punyajñānasambhāropa-
stambhōpacitena ca nāma bodhisatvena mahāsatvena | evaṃ○pramukhair aprameyair bodhi-
satvair mahāsatvaiḥ sārddhan tatra khalu bhagavāṃ bo(dhi)_(2v4)satvacaryā²³⁾pra-
sthānaniriyāñānāvaraṇamukhan nāma dharmaparyāyaṃ sampra○kāśayati sma |

atha khalu bhagavataḥ ṣoḍaśavarṣābhisambuddhasya brahmacaryavaistārikatām viditvā tañ
ca mahāntām bodhisatvasannipātām viditvā tathāgatadh(a)_(2v5)ṛmagañjadharā bateme bodhisatvāḥ
sannipatitāḥ iti viditvā etad abhavad ya<n> nv ahaṃ bhūyasyā mātrayā bodhisatvānuparigrahāya |
bodhisatvacaryāpra○sthānaniriyāñā<nā>varaṇamukhan nāma dharmaparyāyaṃ samprakāśayeyam |
mahatā ta_(2v6)thāgatavikurvitenā {} mahatā tathāgataprātibhāryeṇa{m} yaduta bodhi○satvānām
mahāsatvānām {} tathāgataviśayāvatāraṇatām upādāyeti | atha khalu○bhagavāṃs tasyām
velāyām buddhaviśayavikurvitaḥyathāvatśandarśa[nam]_(3r [missing]) (nāma tathāgatasamādhiṃ
samāpadyata)²⁴⁾

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Notes

- 1) See Steinkellner 2004, 23. Bundle Nos. 33, 59 and 244 are still preserved in CEL.
- 2) See Hu-von Hinüber 2006, 307.
- 3) For a brief introduction on this sūtra see Yonezawa 2018, 1115–1116; for an extensive overview, see Takasaki 1974, 639–672.
- 4) See *RGV* 3.16, 3.18–4.9, 22.6–7, 24.11–25.3, 5.9–6.7; for a comparison of these passages with Tibetan and Chinese translations, see Saerji 2019, 204–213.

- 5) For locations of these quotations from *TMN* in the Tibetan translation of the *MABh* (ed. La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912), see Yonezawa 2014, 101. Partial Sanskrit text is provided by Yonezawa (2019, 261–284; 275–284) based on the Potala manuscript of the *MABh*. These passages from *TMN* concern with 18 *āveṇīkabuddhadharmas* and 10 *balas*, and do not overlap with the surviving folios of our manuscript.
- 6) Reconstructed according to Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa'i byin gyi rlabs kyis brlabs pa sa'i snying po* | *byang chub sems dpas mngon par bstod pa* | *chos kyi gdan*.
- 7) See *RGV* 3.18–19: *bhagavān sarvadharmasamatābhisaṃbuddhaḥ supravartitadharmacakro 'nantaśiṣyagaṇasuvīṇita itī* |.
- 8) See *RGV* 3.21–4.1: *sarvadharmavaśītāprāpto bhavati*.
- 9) See *RGV* 4.3–4: *sarvasattvāśayasuvīdhijña indriyaparamapāramitāprāptaḥ sarvasattvakleśa-vāsanānusaṃdhisamudghātānakuśalo bhavati*.
- 10) Ms. °*kāryapratiprasrabdhah*; See *RGV* 4.5–6: *anābhogabuddhakāryāpratiprasrabdhho bhavati*.
- 11) See *RGV* 4.8: *mahatā bhikṣusaṃghena sārddham*.
- 12) For *ṣaṣṭibhikṣu*°?
- 13) See *RGV* 4.8–9: *aprameyeṇa ca bodhisattvaṇena sārddham*.
- 14) (*sudhā*)*jaladhara* is reconstructed according to Tib. *bdud rts'i chu'i rgyun*.
- 15) Ms. °*bodhipakṣyādharma*.
- 16) °*rāmapathacāribhīḥ*: Ch1. 遊於虛空, Ch2. 遊空 = °*khaḡapathacāribhīḥ/tārāpathacāribhīḥ*? Tib. *zhi gnas kyis rgyu ba* = °*śamathacāribhīḥ*?
- 17) Ms. °*prakalpya*; Tib. *sgul*.
- 18) Ms. °*kalpau*.
- 19) Ms. *aparamita*; Tib. *dpag tu med*.
- 20) See *RGV* 4.9: *evaṃguṇasamanvāgatair itī*.
- 21) Reconstructed according to Tib. *byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po kun nas snang zhing sgrib pa med par lta ba zhes bya ba*.
- 22) Reconstructed according to Tib. *spyod lam thams cad kyis 'dul ba mi 'khrugs pa kun tu ston pa*.
- 23) Ms. °*carya*; see 2v5.
- 24) Reconstructed according to Tib. *de bzhin gshegs pa'i ting nge 'dzin [...]* *zhes bya ba la snyoms par zhugs so*.

Abbreviations

- Ch1. Chinese translation of the *TMN* by Dharmarakṣa, T no. 398.
- Ch2. Chinese translation of the *TMN* by Dharmakṣema, T no. 397, [1]–[2].
- MABh* *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*, Tibetan translation ed. La Vallée Poussin 1907–1912.
- Ms. Sanskrit manuscript of the *TMN*.
- RGV* *Ratnagotravibhāga Mahāyānottaratantra*. See Johnston 1950.
- Tib. Tibetan translation of the *TMN*, D Tōhoku no. 147.
- TMN* *Tathāgatamahākaraṇīrdeśa*.

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(Associate Professor, Peking University)