

## Comptes rendus

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Shayne CLARKE (éd.), *Vinaya Texts*, New Delhi, The National Archives of India/Tokyo, The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2014 (Gilgit Manuscripts in the National Archives of India, Facsimile Edition, Volume I), xiv + 80 pages, 277 planches – ISBN 978-4-904234-08-2.

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The history of the so-called Gilgit manuscripts has been told many times, though important details surrounding their discovery and subsequent fate remain unknown. Following and augmenting the outline given in the book under review (pp. xi–xiii), in 1931 two cowherds searching for firewood opened the ruin of a building at Naupur near Gilgit and brought to light a box containing numerous manuscripts on birch bark (cf. also Jettmar 1981, not in the bibliography of the present volume, and von Hinüber 1979, 2014). A new scholarly consensus appears to have formed that the building in question was not (as originally assumed) a stūpa, with alternative suggestions ranging from the living quarters of a small group of monks (Fussman 2004, accepted on p. xi and in von Hinüber 2014: 79–80) to a Buddhist scriptorium and ‘genizah’ (Schopen 2009). The local government was soon alerted and took possession of some of the manuscripts. Soon after the discovery, Aurel Stein (returning from his last Central Asian expedition) and Joseph Hackin (as part of the Mission Citroën) passed through Gilgit and acquired some manuscript leaves that the villagers had retained (now kept in the British Library in London and in Paris – note Lévi 1932: 16). In 1938, Madhusudan Koul carried out a more formal excavation of the Naupur building and brought to light further manuscripts on birch bark and one on palm leaf (now kept at the Central Asian Museum of the University of Srinagar). A third set of manuscript leaves from the Naupur building was acquired and photographed by Giuseppe Tucci in Rawalpindi in 1956, then given to the National Museum of Pakistan in Karachi (p. 29 fn. 68, cf. Sferra 2008: 25, 29, 52, 73; 2009: 267). The greater part of the Naupur finds reached the National Archives of India – and it is the material kept there that forms the primary subject matter of the present volume. In addition to the Delhi, London, Paris, Srinagar and Karachi folios, smaller parts of the Naupur finds are now preserved at the Scindia Oriental Research Institute of Vikram University in Ujjain, at the Heras Institute of St. Xavier’s College in Mumbai and in the private Yada collection in Tokyo.

Today, eighty-seven years after the original discovery of these manuscripts, the majority of them are still not accessible in good photographic

reproductions.<sup>1</sup> The one substantial existing facsimile edition is that of almost all material in the Delhi collection, brought out by Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra from 1959 to 1974; apart from this, only small sample illustrations have been published, such as the fragments in Lévi's introductory article and in Gnoli's edition. The Delhi facsimile edition, unfortunately, suffered from the low quality of its black-and-white reproductions, so that even with its help many editorial questions had to remain unanswered. Of better quality was a set of microfilms produced by the National Archives of India and distributed to select research institutes where, however, it enjoyed only limited accessibility. The photographs and microfilms of the Karachi collection produced by Tucci likewise remained very much an in-house resource, and only very recently has an initiative been undertaken to publish them (Sferra 2008: 25, 29, 52, 73; 2009: 267–268), unfortunately endangered almost immediately by the closing of IsIAO, the institution spearheading it, in 2012. Photographs of several of the smaller collections of Gilgit manuscripts are in the private possession of individual scholars. The publication of high-quality reproductions of the entirety of the Gilgit manuscript finds, and the scholarly reunification of these manuscripts, now scattered among their various holding places, thus remains an urgent desideratum.

The publication under review represents a major step towards this goal. It is the first volume in a new series “Gilgit Manuscripts in the National Archives of India, Facsimile Edition”, co-produced by the National Archives and the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism of Soka University under the general editorship of Oskar von Hinüber, Seishi Karashima and Noriyuki Kudo and inspired by the 2012 standalone facsimile edition of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra manuscripts from the Gilgit finds (p. xiv). In his General Introduction, von Hinüber lays out the overall plan for the series (p. xiii), which is being carried out with some modifications: Mahāyāna texts are published in volume II (apparently in four parts, two of which have appeared in 2016 and 2017), Avadānas and miscellaneous texts in volume III (2017). The inaugural volume I on Vinaya texts is edited by Shayne Clarke and covers the Gilgit manuscript of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu, three Prātimokṣa manuscripts, one Karmavācanā manuscript, and one manuscript combining Prātimokṣa and Karmavācanā.

Readers familiar with von Hinüber's 1979 survey of the Gilgit manuscripts, but not the more recent history of research, may wonder why his serial number 5 (listed as Vinayavibhaṅga) is not included in the present publication. The reason, as mentioned in passing (p. 8 fn. 30), is that the folios in question turned out to belong to a manuscript of the Dharmaskandha. Similarly, Fussman 2004: 125 speaks of two – not one – Gilgit manuscripts of the

1. This is not the place to discuss textual studies of the Gilgit manuscripts, for which von Hinüber 2014 provides an excellent overview. Two editions should be mentioned, however, if only because they underline the need for comprehensive photographic documentation: that of almost all of the Delhi collection by Nalinaksha Dutt 1939–1959, and that of three sections of the Vinayavastu manuscript in Karachi by Raniero Gnoli in 1977 and 1978.

Vinayavastu, “dont un de 532 folios”. The number appears to be a mistake for 523 (clearly the last folio of the Naupur manuscript, reproduced on plate 228 of the present publication), and the idea of two Naupur Vinayavastus may go back to a misreading of folio numbers in the first facsimile edition (p. 8 fn. 30) and an earlier misidentification of serial number 4d as part of the Vinayavastu, corrected to Karmavācanā in Wille 1990: 129–130 and published as “Karmavācanā (manuscript 2)” in the present volume. However, fragments of a new manuscript of the Vinayavibhaṅga and of two new Vinayavastu manuscripts, apparently from the Gilgit region but not the Naupur site, have very recently found their way into private and museum collections and are now being studied (Wille in Hartmann & Wille 2014: 145–146).

The book is structured as follows: the series introduction is followed by a volume introduction (pp. 1–4), an introduction to the Sanskrit-Tibetan-Chinese concordance compiled by Clarke in collaboration with Fumi Yao and Masahiro Shōno (pp. 5–15), a bibliographical survey and bibliography of research on all extant folios (not only those kept in Delhi) of the manuscripts (pp. 16–45), the aforementioned concordance (pp. 46–79), a note by Noriyuki Kudo on the procedure followed in photographing the manuscripts in the National Archives (p. 80) and finally the facsimiles themselves on 277 colour plates.

All parts of the book are produced to the highest scholarly and technical standards, and often provide valuable insights going beyond the immediate purpose of the book. Clarke discovered, for instance, that the majority of copies of what is usually considered the first edition (1939–1959) of Dutt’s *Gilgit Manuscripts* already incorporate silent corrections and were preceded by two earlier, now rare print runs that should be considered the true first edition (pp. 9–10). The bibliographical survey is a true treasure trove of information about the current state of study of each folio of the Gilgit Vinaya manuscripts, and taken together with von Hinüber 2014 forms the basis from which all future research must proceed. It might have been good to avoid slightly misleading folio-range indications such as “315–318” for the Śayanāsanavastu (p. 28), but at least for the careful reader there should be no danger since immediately to the right on the same page, the more precise information is given that the *vastu* in question actually begins in “314r5.” The concordance provides hitherto unprecedented access to all parts of the texts in question in manuscript form as well as in their Chinese and Tibetan translations and will greatly facilitate all future studies of these texts. Clarke and his collaborators have taken particular and commendable care to document all steps of their work and their division of labour for the reader.

The facsimile section that makes up the bulk of the book contains several folios that were omitted from the earlier black-and-white facsimile edition of the Delhi collection and are now for the first time available for public inspection (for instance, folios 226 and 227). The plates present the folios as currently preserved, and no attempt has been made at digital reconstruction. As a result, in one case fragments of the Vinayavastu that belonged to different folios (8/398) but were erroneously combined in preservation are

illustrated on the same plate, and the illustration is repeated in the proper place for each fragment. Inversely, in the case of sixteen folios (12, 81, 85–86, 201–206, 218–219 and 222–225), two fragments each might preferably have been combined on the same plate but are illustrated separately because this is how they are preserved. In an edition that pays as painstaking attention to manuscriptological detail as this one, one also wonders about the decision to present folios arranged strictly by text content, which leads to the separation of the folios of *Prātimokṣa* no. 3 and *Karmavācanā* no. 1, although originally, and presumably with reason, they formed a single manuscript together.<sup>2</sup>

The individual facsimiles are presented in high-quality print on glossy paper, at a reduced scale ranging from 51% of the original (in the case of the *Vinayavastu*) to 81% (the “*Karmavācanā* (manuscript 1)” portion of the combined *Prātimokṣa*-*Karmavācanā* manuscript). The facsimile section concludes with fourteen plates of photographic enlargements which are duly signalled in the appropriate places in the general plates, though no criteria for their selection (or the points of particular interest in them) are given. Each plate includes a suitably sized ruler indicating the original size of the folio in question. The inclusion of colour charts (which were employed during photography; p. 80) would have increased the objectivity of the reproductions even further. The colour photography reveals many details of the surface structure of the manuscripts that were invisible in the earlier black-and-white facsimile edition (p. 3), though in some places the earlier photographs (at least in their microfilm form) remain more legible (p. 8 fn. 33) and are thus not rendered entirely superfluous by the present publication – quite apart from the fact that they document a state of the manuscripts prior to any damage they incurred in the last decades. We know, for instance, that in the National Archives, the folios were stabilized by gluing a thin layer of transparent gauze over their surface, and von Hinüber 1979: 332–333 voiced concern about a deterioration of the folios due to chemical action of the glue. The present publication does not mention whether this gauze is still attached to the folios, nor is this apparent from inspection of the plates.

These are all minor points. More problematic is the fact that none of the images in this book have been made available in the original digital files, nor does this appear to have formed part of the publication agreement between the National Archives and IRIAB (p. 80). In the history of Gilgit manuscript studies, already the original black-and-white facsimile edition underlined the necessity of access to best-quality original photographs (then represented by the rare sets of microfilms that scholars often had to travel far to consult; p. 3). In fact, even Clarke himself does not appear to have had access to the original digital images, but only to printouts mailed to him from Japan (p. 6). This is puzzling, and scholarship would greatly benefit if the National Archives made the images freely available online, maybe in

2. Cf. von Hinüber 2014, p. 80 on the general necessity of reuniting the original books of the Gilgit find, and on Fussmann 2004's initial attempts in this direction.

cooperation with IRIAB (who operate under a similar arrangement with the International Dunhuang Project for their Buddhist Manuscripts from Central Asia: The British Library Sanskrit Fragments series) or another partner, in a number of ways: first, the public availability of the digital images would contribute to their preservation for future generations; second, scholars using them would be able to study the manuscripts and their writing in finer detail and at greater ease; and third, it would become possible to digitally reunite the folios of the Vinayavastu held in Delhi with those held in other locations. In the last sense in particular, the publication under review is a major and invaluable, but still only intermediate, step. A clear desideratum is the integration of the Vinayavastu folios in the National Archives with those of the same manuscript in the British Library (folios 43–53), in the Heras Institute (left side of folio 79) and those in the National Museum of Pakistan (the middle of folio (22)[8] and folios 323–511). For the British Library folios at least, print reproduction in a future volume of the series is planned (p. 4). But it is the public availability of digital images and the ability to reuse them freely that would truly facilitate the reconstitution of this important manuscript. Two comparable manuscript collections that can serve as examples in this matter are the Central Asian Sanskrit manuscripts available online through the International Dunhuang Project, and the Buddhist manuscripts of the Schøyen Collection, which recently became available on the Bibliotheca Polyglotta website.<sup>3</sup>

This recommendation should not detract, however, from the monumental achievement that the volume under review constitutes, and its authors as well as the general editors of the new series are to be congratulated. The meticulous scholarship on display here is complemented by a very high standard of production. Paper, printing and binding are all excellent, and the book, in spite of its large format and considerable weight, should hold up well physically, even under the heavy use that it deserves and is likely to see. Only a very small number of misprints and similar issues were noted:

xii: Josef Hackin → Joseph Hackin.

1 fn. 1: The link <http://tinyurl.com/UNESCO-Gilgit> no longer works.

2: top lefthand corner → top righthand corner.

7: to 12 lines → and 12 lines.

9: The link <http://www.dli.gov.in/> no longer works. It is now more convenient to access the Digital Library of India through the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/>).

10: Seminar für Indologie → Seminar für Indologie und Tibetologie.

13: be accident → by accident.

16: to any Tibetan → in any Tibetan.

3. Of less urgency, but still desirable, would be the parallel free availability of a digitization of the old black-and-white microfilms (which already seems to exist locally in the de Jong collection: p. 2 fn. 13).

17 fn. 63: end of one folio → end of one *vastu*.

18: Sahityabhūṣaṇa → Sāhityabhūṣaṇa.

18: produced in Dutt 1942 → reproduced in Dutt 1942.

plate 197: The title and concordance data for the first page of the Pudgalavastu are erroneously printed on the right side of this plate; they should instead appear on the left side of plate 198.

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