

On the School-affiliation of the “Patna *Dhammapada*”

1. The Patna *Dhammapada*

One of the important Indian manuscripts photographed in Tibet in the 1930's by Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana is that known as the “Patna *Dhammapada*” (PDhp), now available in four editions.¹ The first two—those edited by N.S. Shukla and by Gustav Roth—appeared independently of each other in 1979 and 1980. The third and fourth—those edited by Margaret Cone and by Kōgen Mizuno—appeared independently of each other in 1989 and 1990. Both Cone and Mizuno take into account the readings of Shukla and Roth.²

The palm-leaf manuscript of the PDhp gives a complete text comprising 414 (Shukla, Cone, Mizuno) or 415 (Roth) verses in twenty-two chapters (*vargga*). The contents and arrangement differ from those

¹ The PDhp itself, in its verses, uses *dhamma* rather than *dharma*: the Sanskrit title *Dharmapada* occurs only in the colophon—see Cone (1989) 215; Shukla (1979) 44; Roth (1980) 135. This was noted by von Hinüber (1989:364): “As [in the PDhp] *-rm-* always develops into *-mm-* as in Pāli, the text should be called Patna *Dhammapada*...in spite of the Sanskrit colophon”. I therefore refer to the text as “Patna *Dhammapada*”, rather than *Dharmapada*.

² Shukla (1979), Roth (1980), Cone (1989), Mizuno (1990). Cone's edition is based on a new reading of a copy of the original photographs; unfortunately the editor fails to give chapter numbers or to supply the internal enumeration of verses within chapters. All four editors list parallels to the PDhp verses in related Indic literature; Mizuno adds parallels in Chinese not given by the others. (Since Mizuno's edition only came to my notice during the final revision of this paper, I refer to it in only a few instances.) von Hinüber & Norman (1994:x) list two indexes by T. Tabata: *Index to the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dharmapada* (N.S. Shukla Edition), Kyoto, 1981, and *Index to the Patna Dharmapada* (Gustav Roth Edition), Kyoto, 1982 (neither seen).

of other known *Dharmapadas*: the Pāli *Dhammapada* (Dhp) of the Theravādins,³ the North-western Prakrit “Gāndhārī *Dharmapada*” (GDhp) attributed to the Dharmaguptakas,⁴ two *Dharmapadas* preserved in Chinese translation, and the *Udānavargas* (Uv) of the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādins in Sanskrit and in Chinese and Tibetan translation.⁵

The language of the PDhp is quite different from that of the surviving Indic *Dharmapadas* or *Udānavargas*. In his “Notes on the Patna Dharmapada”, Norman (1989) discusses some of the linguistic problems posed by the text, and the discrepancies in the readings, the numbering of verses, and the distribution of *pādas* into verses in the editions of Shukla and Roth. He notes that despite the fact that they are based on a single manuscript, the two editions “show quite remarkable differences”. In his “Origin and Varieties of Buddhist Sanskrit”, von Hinüber (1989:362–66) makes several important observations regarding the language and school of the PDhp.

³ There have been numerous editions and translations: for an extensive bibliography see Russell Webb, “The Dhammapada—East and West”, *BSR* 6/2 (1989) 166–75. I refer here to von Hinüber & Norman (1994), which lists parallels to the verses in other versions, including the PDhp.

⁴ Brough (1962).

⁵ For Sanskrit *Udānavargas* see Bernhard (1965, 1968, with references to earlier studies and editions) and Nakatani (1987); for the Tibetan *Udānavarga* see Rockhill (1883) and Dietz & Zongste (1990); for the Tibetan commentary, Prajñāvarman’s *Udānavargavivaraṇa*, see Balk (1984, 1988). For the Chinese *Dharmapadas* and *Udānavargas* see Beal (1878), Lévi (1912), Brough (1962:34–41), Willemen (1973, 1974, 1978), and Nakatani (1984). For a study of the recensions of the *Udānavarga* see Schmithausen (1970); for comparative studies of the *Dhammapada*/*Udānavarga* literature see Mizuno (1979, 1984).

2. The date of the PDhp manuscript

Shukla (1979:v–vi) describes the script as “eastern proto-Bengali”, and dates it to the 11th century. Roth (1980:82) also describes the script as “proto-Bengali”. He associates the PDhp with a group of manuscripts belonging to the “Sāṅkrtyāyana collection”, and initially dates the group to the middle of the 12th century, since one of them bears a date equivalent to CE 1149. Later in the same article (p. 84), however, he dates one of these same manuscripts, that of the *Bhikṣuṇī-vinaya*, to the 11th century. In his edition of the latter, which appeared in 1970, he dates the *Bhikṣuṇī-vinaya* manuscript to “the 11th (latest 12th) century”.⁶ Cone (1989:103) concludes that the manuscript “can be dated in the second half of the 12th century”. For the purposes of this article it is sufficient to assume that the manuscript was written in the 11th or 12th century in one of the monasteries of Northern India, that is, ancient Madhyadeśa or the present Indian states of Bihar and West Bengal.⁷

3. The language of the PDhp

Shukla describes the language of the PDhp as “Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit” in his title, preface, and introduction, but does not discuss it in detail. Roth (1980:82) describes it as “more Prakritic and more homogeneous [than the language of the Lokottaravādins]” and “closely related to Pāli”. In the first part of his supplement on the PDhp (pp. 93–97) he deals with the peculiarities in some detail, concluding (p. 96) that “the general features of the language...bear the characteristic marks of a western type of Prakrit, which are very close to those of Pāli”. Mizuno (1984:168) remarks that “the language of this *Dharmapada* is totally unknown...it is intermediate between Buddhist Sanskrit and Pāli”, and

⁶ Roth (1970) xxiv, xxvii.

⁷ For the range of Madhyadeśa see *HBI* 9.

“is closer to Pāli than to any other Buddhist Prakrit language”. Norman (1989:433) observes that, like the Pāli texts, the PDhp “contains anomalous forms which confirm that earlier material from different Prakrits has been ‘translated’ into one fairly homogeneous whole”. von Hinüber (1989:365) states that “this language is certainly neither Pāli, to which it is near, nor any Buddhist Sanskrit known so far, but a new variety derived independently from Buddhist Middle Indic”.

It is doubtful whether the language, which Roth (p. 93) describes as the result of “a weak attempt...to render a Prakritic text into Sanskrit”, should be described as “Buddhist Hybrid”—or any other—Sanskrit. It would be less confusing to reserve the term “Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit” for Edgerton’s “Group 1”—primarily the texts of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins⁸—and “Group 2”—the language of the verses of a number of Mahāyāna sūtras such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*,⁹ and to use the term “Buddhist Sanskrit” for the language of Edgerton’s “Group 3”, which includes both sūtra and śāstra literature in a Sanskrit that is generally correct, but is distinguished by the use of a large number of specifically Buddhist forms derived from Prakrit, and of common Sanskrit terms with specific Buddhist usages.¹⁰ The language of the PDhp might be referred to as a Buddhist Prakrit or a Buddhist Middle Indic.

For present purposes the important point is one raised by von Hinüber: the PDhp is composed in a unique, slightly Sanskritized, Middle Indic, quite different from the languages of the Buddhist schools whose texts have survived in an Indic language. Since the *Dhammapada*

⁸ For a recent bibliography of this group, see von Hinüber (1989) 342–44 and nn.

⁹ See von Hinüber (1989) 344–47 and nn.

¹⁰ See von Hinüber (1989) 347–49 and nn.

is a canonical text, this language must be that of the canon of a specific school. Unfortunately the manuscript does not name the school of the PDhp, and there is no translation of the text into another language, or any other source, that does so. What, then, is the school of the PDhp?

4. The school of the PDhp

Neither Shukla nor Cone discuss the school-affiliation of the text. Nakatani (1984:137) describes it as unknown. Roth (1980:82) states that “the text is not ascribed to a particular school, but was certainly within the reach of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins, as it comes from the same region, indicated by the type of its script”. I do not understand what Roth means by “within the reach of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins”, but he seems to imply that the text was somehow affiliated with that school.¹¹

von Hinüber (1989:362) points out the inadequacy of such an affiliation, noting that “even a very superficial glance at the language of the PDhp reveals features alien to the known Mahāsāṃghika tradition”. After eliminating either a (Mūla)Sārvāstivādin or Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin provenance for the text, he goes on to say (p. 365): “Although it is easy to find a negative answer, it cannot be determined in any positive way, to which school the PDhp may belong, as no information seems to survive even on the schools flourishing during the very last phase of Buddhism in Eastern India”. Here I must disagree with the learned scholar, since I feel that we do indeed have information on the schools of the period in question: enough, perhaps, to divine the school of our text. Unfortunately this evidence is scattered, for the most part in

¹¹ In a later publication, Roth (1985:132) indeed includes the PDhp in a list of Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin texts. K.R. Norman has also described the PDhp as Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin (*Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden, 1983, p. 60).

Tibetan sources, most of which remain to be explored, and the subject begs for a monograph or even a book.¹² In the following I will present a preliminary sketch from readily accessible sources such as the works of Tāranātha (1575–1634).¹³ I will first discuss briefly the relation between language and school (§ 5), and then proceed to eliminate those schools which, for historical or geographical reasons, are unsuitable candidates for the transmission of the PDhp (§ 6). I will next present positive evidence for the existence of “Four Main Schools” in Madhyadeśa during our period (§ 7). After this anabasis, I will finally venture to suggest a school-affiliation for our text (§ 8).

5. The rise of the Buddhist schools: Vinaya, dialect, and region

Before the beginning of the Common Era, the Buddhist order had divided into a number of schools: eighteen according to a common count. Traditional sources present a number of reasons for the rise of these schools: differences in the interpretation of the Vinaya and in the use of language, combined with the influence of individual teachers and dispersal over a far-flung area. I-ching noted that “if we observe the differences among the four *nikāyas* carefully, the conspicuous differences are in the disciplinary practices”.¹⁴ Bangwei Wang remarks that “I-ching

¹² Among the problems that cannot be adequately addressed here are the dates of the persons mentioned in Tibetan sources, which are often related to the regnal dates of Indian kings, which are themselves controversial (see e.g. Huntington 1984:29–38 and accompanying tables for the complexities of Pāla chronology). Others include the spelling or correct form of these names, and the reading and dating of relevant inscriptions.

¹³ I do not doubt that important references await discovery in the vast Tibetan historiographical and bibliographical literature. A recent revelation from veteran *gter ston* Leonard van der Kuijp is mentioned below.

¹⁴ Wang (1994) 180, n. 61. The four *nikāyas* will be listed and discussed below.

talked a lot about *nikāyas*, but we have to notice that he talked about them always in connection with Vinaya. When I-ching spoke of ‘practice’, he meant the practice of disciplinary life, i.e. the Vinaya rules”.¹⁵ Nearly a thousand years later, Tāranātha remarked that “it is necessary to understand that the division into the four schools (*nikāya*) resulted from distinctions in the practice of Vinaya”.¹⁶ Vinitadeva states that the eighteen different schools arose from distinctions in region, exegesis, and teachers.¹⁷

The Indian scholar Śākyaprabha (8th century) and the Tibetan polymaths Bu ston (1290–1364) and Tāranātha point out that the use of regional dialects affected the transmission of the Buddhavacana from an early date, starting from the 2nd century after the Parinirvāṇa. Bu ston reports that the Buddhavacana came to be recited in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhraṃśa, and Paisācika by that time, and that this led to the birth of the eighteen schools.¹⁸ Śākyaprabha’s *Prabhāvatī*, representing a Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition, also attributes the rise of the schools to recitation in different languages.¹⁹ We need not, however, conclude that there were eighteen different languages (although according to the *Vimalaprabhā Laghukālacakratantrarājā-ṭikā* “even 96 languages are said to be found in Buddhist texts”).²⁰ A reasonable summary is given by mKhas grub rje (1385–1438): “According to one system, 160 years after

¹⁵ Wang (1994) 180 (see also 174–75, § 1.12.5).

¹⁶ Tāranātha, *History*, 209.4/342 *sde bži’i dbye ’byed kyañ ’dul ba’i spyod pa las dbye bar go dgos so*.

¹⁷ Vinitadeva, in *Tibetan Tripitaka*, Peking ed., No. 5641, Vol. 127, ‘*dul ba’i ’grel pa u*, 187b7 *yul don slob dpon bye brag gis, tha dad rnam pa bco brgyad gsuñs*.

¹⁸ Obermiller (1932) 96; Vogel (1985) 105; Yuyama (1980) 177. See also Tāranātha, *History*, 42.2/81.

¹⁹ Obermiller (1932) 98; Vogel (1985) 106 (*skad tha dad kyis ’don pas*).

²⁰ von Hinüber (1989) 361.

the Nirvāṇa of the Teacher, in the city of Me tog gis brgyan, the elders (*sthaviras*) of four saṃghas recited the Āgama in four different languages: Sanskrit, Apabhraṃśa, Prakrit, and Paiśācika. As a result the disciples had different views, and separated into the four basic schools. These in turn gave birth to internal subdivisions, giving rise to the division into eighteen schools”.²¹ Bu ston and others list the languages employed by each of the four schools:

(Mūla)Sarvāstivādins:	Sanskrit
Mahāsāṃghikas:	Prakrit
Sāmmatīyas:	Apabhraṃśa
Sthaviras:	Paiśācī.

While all sources agree that the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādins employed Sanskrit, they allot different languages to the other three schools.²² The important point is that rather than Sanskrit each used a recognizably different variety of Prakrit (taking the latter term in its broader sense).

²¹ Lessing & Wayman (1968) 66–67 *yañ lugs geig la ston pa mya ñan las 'das nas lo brgya dañ drug cu 'das pa ña, groñ khyer me tog gis brgyan zes bya bar dge 'dun gyi gnas brtan bži, skad mi mthun pa saṃ-skr-ta dañ, zur chag dañ, tha mal pa dañ, śa za 'i skad kyis luñ 'don pas slob ma rnams lta ba mi mthun par gyur pas, rtsa ba 'i sde pa bžir gyes so. de dag kyañ nañ gses kyis dbye ba so sor gyes pas sde pa bco brgyad du gyes so.* As Roth (1985:131) points out, the four languages are listed at Mvy §§ 4717–20.

²² Obermiller (1932) 99–100, also translated in Vogel (1985) 107–8 and discussed in Yuyama (1980) 175–81, Roth (1985) 127–37, and von Hinüber (1989) 361–62. An earlier discussion of the conflicting traditions as presented in European scholarship from the time of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös is given by Lin Li-kouang (1949) 176 foll. mKhas grub rje distributes the languages differently: Lessing & Wayman (1968) 68–69.

6. Regional and lesser schools

While some schools spread over a wide area, others arose in particular regions—perhaps around charismatic teachers—and are not known to have gained influence beyond their original areas. These include, for example, the “Mahāgiriya” schools of the Western Ghats—the Dharmottariyas, Bhadrānīyas, and Śaṅṅarīkas²³—and the “Andhakas” of present-day Andhra Pradesh—the Pūrva- or Uttaraśailas, the Aparāśailas, Rājagiriyas, and Siddhārthikas.²⁴ Other schools are obscure: known only from the occasional reference, they probably enjoyed only brief existences. We are concerned here with the Madhyadeśa: since these regional and lesser schools are not known to have had any foothold there, and since most or all of them had died out by our period, we may leave them out of consideration.²⁵

A fivefold division of schools—Sarvāstivādin, Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, Mahāsāṃghika (or Vātsīputriya),²⁶ Kāśyāpiya—was known

²³ Bareau (1955) 127–30.

²⁴ Bareau (1955) 89 and 99–109. A possible example of the Prakrit employed by the Pūrvaśailas is found in citation by Candrakīrti (late 6th or early 7th century) in his *Prasannapadā*: see de La Vallée Poussin’s edition p. 548.5, and Paul Harrison, “Sanskrit Fragments of a Lokottaravādin Tradition”, in L.A. Hercus *et al.* (ed.), *Indological and Buddhist Studies* (Volume in Honour of Professor J.W. de Jong on his Sixtieth Birthday), Delhi, 1982, pp. 225 foll. This Prakrit, as tentatively restored by Harrison, is quite different from the language of the PDhp (and also from that of the Lokottaravādins). Candrakīrti refers elsewhere to the seven Piṭakas of the Pūrva- and Aparāśailas: see Per K. Sorensen, *Candrakīrti, Triśaraṇasaptati, the Septuagint on the Three Refuges*, Vienna, 1986, pp. 51–53 (vv. 57–58).

²⁵ The demise of these schools can be determined from archaeological evidence (the abandonment of sites in the Western Ghats and Andhra Pradesh), and from the reports of the Chinese pilgrims and of Tibetan historians. See Bareau (1955) and *HBI* 600–1 for details.

²⁶ Various lists give one or the other, with a marked preference for the first.

in China during the first half of the first millennium of the Common Era.²⁷ This classification describes the situation in the far West, the North-west, and Central Asia, areas which had extensive contacts via the trade routes with the Middle Kingdom during the period. It would have never reflected the situation in the other parts of India, particularly Madhyadeśa, with which we are herein concerned. This was noted by I-ching: "I have never heard, in the West (India), of the division into five principal schools (*nikāya*), of which some Chinese make use".²⁸

I-ching also remarks that "not one of the three schools derived from the Sarvāstivādins—the Dharmaguptakas, the Mahīśāsakas, and the Kāśyapīyas—is practised in India. It is only in Uḍḍiyāna, Kutchā, and in Khotan that they have some adherents, mixed with those of other schools."²⁹ The same situation had already been described by Hsüan-tsang at the beginning of the 7th century, when he noted the presence of the three schools in Uḍḍiyāna, but not in India proper.³⁰ Tibetan sources do not give any indication that these schools were active in Madhyadeśa during our period.

²⁷ Lin Li-kouang (1949) 189–91; Bareau (1955) 22; *HBI* 593–94; Wang (1994) 173.

²⁸ Takakusu (1896) 8; Lin Li-kouang (1949) 191–92.

²⁹ Lin Li-kouang (1949) 191–92; Takakusu (1896) 20; Bareau (1955) 39–40, 182. Although the early lists show some confusion regarding the affiliation of these three schools to the other schools, by the time of I-ching they were grouped, rightly or wrongly, with the Sarvāstivādins. There are cogent reasons for accepting the thesis that the "Gāndhāri *Dharmapada*" belonged to the canon of the (early) Dharmaguptakas, although, like the PDhp, the manuscript does not identify its school.

³⁰ Since I-ching did not visit Uḍḍiyāna, his statement may have been based upon that of his illustrious predecessor. He was, however, a scrupulous investigator: at one point (Takakusu 1896:43) he says that "Although I, myself, did not see all these parts of India, I could nevertheless ascertain anything by careful inquiry". Since his main concern was the Vinaya and its proper and minute observance, we may rely on his testimony.

7. Schools contemporary to the PDhp manuscript

We may now turn to Madhyadeśa. A convenient starting point is the 7th century, for which we may turn to the eye-witness reports of the erudite Chinese pilgrims. Although Hsüan-tsang does not explicitly say so, an analysis of his remarks about the sectarian affiliation of monasteries reveals that only four *nikāyas* were active in Madhyadeśa in the second quarter of the century. Lamotte writes that "on constate qu'à l'époque de Hsüan-tsang quatre écoles hinayānistes seulement étaient encore représentés".³¹ I-ching is quite explicit about the situation at the end of the 7th century. He states that "in the five parts of India and in the islands in the South Sea, four *nikāyas* are spoken of everywhere".³² I-ching lists the four schools.³³

- (1) the Ārya-Mahāsāṃghika, with seven branches, unspecified;
- (2) the Ārya-Sthavira, with three branches, unspecified;
- (3) the Ārya-Mūlasarvāstivāda, with three branches;³⁴
- (4) the Ārya-Sāmmatiya, with four branches, unspecified.

Similar classifications are given in other sources, from Vinītadeva in the 8th century to the *Varṣāgraprachā*, translated into Tibetan in the 11th century, most of which list the branches in full.³⁵ In his *History of*

³¹ *HBI* 596–601; see also Bareau (1955) 38.

³² Wang (1994) 180; see also *HBI* 601.

³³ Takakusu (1896) 7–8; *HBI* 601–2; Bareau (1955) 24.

³⁴ I-ching lists these further on (Takakusu 1896:20) as (a) Dharmaguptaka, (b) Mahīśāsaka, (c) Kāśyapīya—schools already eliminated for the Madhyadeśa by I-ching himself (above, § 6).

³⁵ Bareau (1955) 24–26. The details of the lists (for which see *HBI* and Bareau 1955), which do not always agree, need not detain us here. (For the branches of the Sarvāstivādins see Skilling 1993, Table 7A; for the three branches of the Sthaviras, see *ibid* pp. 154–55 and Table 7C.)

Buddhism, Tāranātha refers several times to the basic fourfold division.³⁶ Our sources thus agree that in Northern and North-eastern India there were four main schools.

A common misconception, long disproven but regrettably not yet put to rest, is that during the Pāla-Sena period only the Mahāyāna, along with the Vajrayāna, survived in India. This assumption ignores the fundamental fact that there was no such thing as a Mahāyāna ordination (*upasampadā*): a monk, a *bhikṣu*, no matter what his philosophical preferences, had to ordain according to one of the Śrāvaka Vinaya lineages.³⁷ The relationship between ordination into the four schools and the Mahāyāna was noted by I-ching (Takakusu 1896:14–15): “both [Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna] adopt one and the same Vinaya”. He also remarked that “if one worships bodhisattvas and reads Mahāyāna scriptures, he will be called a Mahāyānist, otherwise a Hīnayānist”, and “among these four *nikāyas* some belong to Mahāyāna and some to Hīnayāna”.³⁸ Similarly, Tāranātha observed that “with the spread of the Mahāyāna, the entire Mahāyāna saṃgha belonged to these very schools (*sde pa, nikāya*), although they adhered to the tenets (*grub mtha', siddhānta*) of the Mahāyāna”.³⁹ A connection between the four schools and the Vajrayāna is seen from the fact that they are given a symbolic interpretation in the *Hevajra Tantra*.⁴⁰

³⁶ See especially Chap. 42, *sDe pa bži'i don la cuñ zad dpyad pa'i skabs* (tr. 339–42): some points are obscure, and a new translation is needed.

³⁷ There were, of course, bodhisattva and Vajrayāna vows, which could be undertaken either by monastics, on top of their Vinaya vows, or by lay-followers.

³⁸ Both citations are from Wang (1994) 181; cp. Takakusu (1896) 14–15, taking into account Wang's n. 64.

³⁹ Tāranātha, *History*, 208.21/342.

⁴⁰ D.L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study*, London, 1959 (London Oriental Series 6), Vol. II, pp. 4–7, 68–71 (vv. 58–60), with the commentary, *Yogaratanmālā*, 149.15; Charles Willemen (tr.), *The Chinese Hevajratāntra*, Leuven, n.d. (1982?) (Orientalia Gandensia VIII), pp. 38–39,

Continues...

Since monks and monasteries continued to exist throughout the Pāla-Sena period, Śrāvaka Vinaya lineages must also have survived unbroken. The existence of the four schools (*sde pa bži*, with only the Mahāsāṃghikas specified) at Nālandā in the time of Devapāla (9th century) is mentioned in passing by Abhayadatta (late 11th or early 12th century).⁴¹ The *Blue Annals* records that in the late 10th century Atiśa “listened to” most of the Three Piṭakas of the four schools (*sde pa bži'i sde snod gsum*).⁴² Atiśa's disciple Nag tsho, in his *Stotra of Eighty Ślokas*, says: “At Otantapuri, there were 53 monks. At Vikramaśila, there were about a hundred monks. All the four main schools were found among them”.⁴³ In his *History of Buddhism*, Tāranātha records that King Mahāpāla (early 11th century?), son and successor of Mahipāla, reigned for 41 years, and “mainly made offerings to the Śrāvaka saṃgha (*ñan thos kyi dge 'dun*) at the Odantapurī *vihāra*, maintaining 500 *bhikṣus* and 500 dharma-preachers. As a branch he built a *vihāra* called Uruvāsa, where he maintained 500 Sendhapa śrāvakas.”⁴⁴ He also actively supported Vikramaśilā, Nālandā, Somapurī, and other *vihāras*.⁴⁵ During the reign of Rāmapāla (late 11th or early 12th century) over 160 paṇḍitas and 1000 monks were permanent residents (*gtan du bžugs pa'i dge sloñ*) at Vikramaśilā; up to 5000 *pravrajitas* (*rab byuñ*) gathered from time to time for offerings (*mchod = pūjā*). At Vajrāsana the King maintained 40 Mahāyānist and 200 Śrāvaka *bhikṣus* as permanent residents; at times

97–98. Cf. also Tāranātha, *History*, 207.14/340 *de yañ rgyud sde du ma las rtsa ba'i sde pa bži yin par gsuñs śiñ*.

⁴¹ Acharya Sempa Dorje, *The Biography of Eighty-four Saints*, Sarnath, 1979, Tibetan text p. 144.1 *sde pa bži yod pa'i phal chen sde pa'i mkhan po*; Robinson (1979), Tibetan text 171.1 (mistranslated on p. 146).

⁴² *BA* I 298.16/I 243.

⁴³ Citation from *BA* (tr.) I 243, n. 2.

⁴⁴ For the Sendhapa śrāvakas see below.

⁴⁵ Tāranātha, *History*, 175.1/289. This may well be the Mahāpāla under whom, according to the *Seven Instruction Lineages* (632.4/60), mantra practices were banned for *bhikṣus*.

up to 10,000 Śrāvaka *bhikṣus* gathered there. At Odantapurī 1000 monks of both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna resided permanently, and at times 12,000 *pravrajitas* assembled.⁴⁶ In his *Seven Instruction Lineages*, Tāranātha states that Abhayākaragupta “became widely learned in the Vinayas of the four schools (*sde pa bzhi*), in most of the Śrāvaka Piṭakas” (apparently at Nālandā).⁴⁷ Abhayākaragupta, who flourished during the reign of Rāmapāla, composed works on Vinaya; he was highly regarded by the King, and became abbot of Vajrāsana, and later of Nālandā and Vikramaśilā.⁴⁸

These references establish the existence of the Śrāvaka Vinaya lineages of the four schools in the great monasteries of Madhyadeśa throughout the Pāla-Sena period. Our sources also make specific references to each of the schools.

The Mahāsāṃghikas

In his *History* Tāranātha refers to Ānandagarbha of Magadha and Vāgīśvarakīrti of Vārāṇasī, who ordained in the Mahāsāṃghika *nikāya* in the late Pāla period.⁴⁹ During the “period of the four Sena Kings” Buddhaśrī of Nepal acted as Sthavira of the Mahāsāṃghikas at Vikramaśilā for a time, before returning to Nepal; Ratnarakṣita ordained in that sect, and acted as Mantrācārya at Vikramaśilā.⁵⁰ In his *Seven Instruction Lineages* Tāranātha records that, during the reign of Dharmapāla (second half of the 8th century), Buddhaśrījñāna and his disciple Dīpaṃkarabhadra ordained in the Mahāsāṃghika tradition, the

⁴⁶ Tāranātha, *History*, 189.13/313.

⁴⁷ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 647.2/71.

⁴⁸ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 649.5/72; see also *History*, 189.10/313.

⁴⁹ Tāranātha, *History*, 172.9/285; 178.19/296.

⁵⁰ Tāranātha, *History*, 192.2/317.

former (and perhaps also the latter) at Nālandā.⁵¹ According to the *Blue Annals*, in the late 10th century Atiśa was ordained at the age of 29 by Śīlarakṣita, Sthavira of the Mahāsāṃghika school, belonging to the lineage of Buddhajñānapāda, at the Mativihāra at Vajrāsana.⁵² Abhayadatta refers to the Mahāsāṃghikas, probably at Somapura Mahāvihāra.⁵³

These references confirm that the Mahāsāṃghika ordination lineage survived in India until the Sena period. This no doubt explains why the Lokottaravādin *Mahāvastu* was preserved in Nepal, and why several Lokottaravādin Vinaya texts were carried to Tibet, despite the fact that the Mūlasarvāstivādin ordination lineage had held sway there since the 8th century.⁵⁴ The fact that the surviving Mahāsāṃghika texts, from both Nepal and Tibet, belong to the Lokottaravādins suggests that this branch represented the Mahāsāṃghikas in Madhyadeśa and Nepal during our period.

The (Mūla)Sarvāstivādins

I-tsing notes that “in Magadha the doctrines of the four *nikāyas* are generally in practice, yet the Sarvāstivāda *nikāya* flourishes the most”.⁵⁵ Tāranātha refers to Śāntipa, who ordained as a Sarvāstivādin at

⁵¹ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 626.2/56 and 632.4/60.

⁵² BA I 298.13/242–43. See also ‘Brom ston pa’s *stotra* to Dīpaṃkara, v. 4, in Alaka Chattopadhyaya, *Atiśa and Tibet: Life and Works of Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna in relation to the History and Religion of Tibet*, Calcutta, 1967, p. 372: “Dīpaṃkara-śrī...ordained a *bhikṣu* by the Mahāsāṃghika”.

⁵³ Sempa Dorje, *op. cit.*, Tibetan text 16.13, *phal chen sde pa’i dge ’dun*. The reference is uncertain since a variant reads “Sarvāstivādin samgha” (*yoḍ par smra ba’i dge ’dun*): Robinson (1979), Tibetan text p. 316, folio 17, line 5. The translation, pp. 31–32, omits the reference.

⁵⁴ For these texts see Roth (1980) 81 and von Hinüber (1989) 342–43.

⁵⁵ Takakusu (1896) 8; Bareau (1955) 39.

Odantapurī, mastered the entire Śrāvaka Tripiṭaka, and became abbot of Somapurī.⁵⁶ He also records that Ratigupta ordained in the Sarvāstivādin lineage.⁵⁷ The *Blue Annals* states that Karopa, disciple of Maitrīpa (11th century), was ordained by Mitratāra, the great scholar of the Sarvāstivāda at Vikramaśilā, where he studied the Luñ sde bzi with Vimalakośa, the great Vinayadhara.⁵⁸ The Mūlasarvāstivādins are mentioned as one of the four schools at Nālandā by Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1147–1216).⁵⁹ Inscriptions of the later period that mention the (Mūla)Sarovāstivādins are few. A bronze pedestal inscription from Nālandā, dated paleographically to the reign of Devapāladeva (9th century), extols a Sarvāstivādin *bhikṣu* from Nālandā named Mañjuśrivarman, who appears, from his name and the contents of the inscription, to have adhered to the Mahāyāna.⁶⁰ A stone inscription from Patna district, dated to the reign of Mahīpāla (late 10th or early 11th century), records the setting up of a *nāga* image by a Mūlasarvāstivādin.⁶¹ By our period the Sarvāstivādins had probably been superseded by the Mūlasarvāstivādins, and Tibetan references to the Sarvāstivādins may well be a shorthand for the Mūlasarvāstivādins.⁶²

The Sthaviras

We know from Indian inscriptions, from the chronicles of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam, and from Tāranātha that Sthavira or

⁵⁶ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 642.1/67.

⁵⁷ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 661.3/82.

⁵⁸ *BA* II 990–91/II 847.

⁵⁹ *Sa skya bka' 'bum*, Vol. 6 (*cha*), 684.1.

⁶⁰ Sastri (1942) 103.

⁶¹ Huntington (1984) § 34, pp. 225–26.

⁶² Tāranātha's reference to the Tāmraśāṭīyas as a surviving branch of the Sarvāstivādins is obscure. Very little is known of this school, and the reports of their affiliation to the other schools are conflicting: see Skilling (1993) 154–69 for a preliminary sketch of the problem.

Theravādin monks regularly visited and resided in the region, particularly at Bodh Gaya. In addition, the “Continental Sthaviras”—the Sthaviras based in India as opposed to those who came as visitors from either Śrī Laṅkā or South-east Asia—may have been represented in the area.⁶³ That Sthavira scriptures were preserved in Madhyadeśa during our period is shown by the *Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya*, a text most probably composed there in the 12th or 13th century.⁶⁴ The author, Daśabalaśrimitra, devotes three chapters (Chaps. 13–15) to their tenets, in the form of an abridged citation of the *Vimuttimaggā*. Outside of these chapters, he also cites from other Sthavira texts on ten occasions.⁶⁵

Lokottaravādins, (Mūla)Sarovāstivādins, Sthaviras and the PDhp

The three schools discussed so far may be rejected as candidates for the school of the PDhp on linguistic and textual grounds. The language of the PDhp is not that of the Mahāsāmghika-Lokottaravādins. Furthermore, the *Mahāvastu* of that school preserves a *Sahasravarga* (*dharmapadeṣu sahasravarga*): when compared with Chapter 21 of the PDhp, which bears the same title, one sees that the number (22 in PDhp, 24 in *Mahāvastu*) and sequence of verses is quite different.⁶⁶ Other

⁶³ For the problem of the “Continental Sthaviras”, see Skilling, *op. cit.*

⁶⁴ Cf. Skilling (1987) 3–23 for references.

⁶⁵ Cf. Skilling (1987) 4, 7–8.

⁶⁶ A similar set of verses, apparently described only as *gāthā*, occurs in the Chinese *Abhiṅṣkramaṇa-sūtra* summarized by Samuel Beal as *The Romantic Legend of Śākyā Buddha*, [London, 1875] Delhi, 1985, pp. 310–11. This seems to add one more *Sahasravarga* to those already available: that is, Dhap Chap. 8, *Sahasravarga*; GDhp Chap. 19 (title not available); PDhp Chap. 21, *Sahasravarga*; *Udānavarga* Chap. 24, *Peyālavarga*; and *Mahāvastu*. If the school of this *Abhiṅṣkramaṇa-sūtra* can be determined—Beal claims a Dharmaguptaka provenance, but this is uncertain—and the set of verses can be related to any of the existing *Dharmapadas* this would further add to our knowledge.

dharmapada verses cited here and there throughout the *Mahāvastu* belong to a different linguistic transmission.⁶⁷ The language of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins was Sanskrit, and their counterparts of the *Dharmapada* survive as their *Udānavargas*.⁶⁸ The PDhp differs in language, in arrangement of chapters, in inclusion or omission of verses, and within individual verses from the *Dhammapada* of the Mahāvihāravāsins Sthaviras of Ceylon.⁶⁹

This leaves one more school, the Sāmmatīyas, which we will examine in detail in the following section.

8. The Sāmmatīyas

At the time of Hsüan-tsang (second quarter of the 7th century), the Sāmmatīyas⁷⁰ were the most numerous sect: they were predominant in

⁶⁷ See e.g. Lévi (1912) 214–15 and Brough (1962) 35.

⁶⁸ As noted above, von Hinüber (1989) already rejected the possibility of a Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin or (Mūla)Sarvāstivādin affiliation. Philosophical trends or movements within the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādin fold—the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas—need not be considered, since they employed the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādin canon, and did not have their own separate collections.

⁶⁹ We may eliminate the other branches of the Ceylon Sthaviras—the Abhayagirivāsins and the Jetavaṇīyas—and also the “Continental Sthaviras”: their canons no doubt resembled that of the Mahāvihāravāsins, and we have no evidence of Sthavira texts being transmitted in any Indian language other than Pāli.

⁷⁰ There are two questions regarding the Indic form of the name of this school: whether the *a* of the first syllable should be long or short, and whether the vowel of the second syllable should be *a* or *i* (both short). I follow the spelling Sāmmatīya—with *vrddhi* in the first syllable and short *a* in the second—as attested in Yaśomitra’s *Kośavyākhyā* (Swami Dwarikadas Shastri [ed.], *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, Vol. 4, Varanasi, 1973, p. 1191, Vātsīputrīyā Ārya-sāmmatīyāḥ). The colophon to Ārya Vimuktasena’s *Abhisamayālamkāra-vṛtti* (Kaurukulla-ārya-saṃmatīya: see n. 74 below), *Mvy* § 9085, and a Sanskrit

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Western India (Sindh and Gujarat), and also represented in Magadha.⁷¹ A half-century later, I-ching remarked that the Sāmmatīyas were predominant in Lāṭa and Sindh.⁷² Bu ston and Tāranātha agree that the

manuscript from Nepal (see below, n. 76) have short *a* in the first and second syllables. The form with *a* in the second syllable (and, properly, with *vrddhi* in the first) is the basis of the two Tibetan translations Mañ pos bkur ba’i sde and Kun gyis bkur ba’i sde: it derives from the name of the school’s founder, Sammata, who presided over the fourth council (see Skilling 1982:41 and cp. *Mvy* § 3552, Mañ pos bkur ba = Mahāsaṃmata [here the first, elected King of Buddhist lore]).

But these might be later forms, since earlier records show *i* in second place. These include an inscription from Mathura (*EI* XIX, p. 67 *ācariyāna samitīyāna*) and Chinese transliterations (e.g. *KBC* 972 *San mi ti pu lun*) and translations (e.g. Takakusu 1896, p. 8, “Noble School of the Right Measure”). The Pāli forms vary: Sammitī (*Dīpavaṃsa* V, 46), Samitīyā (*Kathāvatthu-aṭṭhakathā*, Nālandā ed. pp. 4.24, 11.14), and Sammitīyā (*Mahāvāṃsa* V, 7, from *Vāṃsatthappakāsini*, PTS ed., Vol. I, p. 174.8, with the same in the commentary at line 17 and in the *Extended Mahāvāṃsa* published by Malalasekera in 1937). (See also *DPPN* II 1064, which also gives Sammatīya: I do not know if this form is in fact attested in Pāli.) Candrakīrti gives long *ā* in the first syllable, and *i* in the second: Sāmmatīyāḥ (*Prasannapadā*, ed. Louis de La Vallée Poussin, pp. 148.1, 192.8, 276.2). An inscription from Sarnath is not clear (*EI* VIII, Pl. 21, i.f. read at p. 172 as *ā[cā]rīyaṇaṃ sa[mmitī]tīyānaṃ*). Although the second syllable of the second word does not show the distinct *i* of other syllables, it is unclear (altered, or damaged?), and is hard to construe as simply a double *ma*. For the name see further the remarks at Bareau (1955) 121 and Skilling (1982) 45–46.

Literature on the Sāmmatīyas is scant: see Louis de La Vallée Poussin, “Sāmmatīyas”, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 11, 168–69; Bareau (1955) 121–26; Venkataramanan (1953); Skilling (1982, 1987); Thich Thien Chau (1987). La Vallée Poussin (*Prasannapadā*, 148, n. 1) makes the interesting remark that “les Sāmmatīyas représentent le Petit Véhicule dans la *Madhyamakavṛtti*”. We eagerly await the promised publication of the theses of Thich Thien Chau (translated from the French by Sarah Boin-Webb) and of Leonard Priestley (Toronto), which should add a great deal to our present meagre knowledge.

⁷¹ *HBI* 597–601; Bareau (1955) 121; Joshi (1977) 40–45.

⁷² Takakusu (1896) 9.

great logician Dignāga was ordained by a Vātsīputriya (the forerunner of the Sāmmatiyas) preceptor (*gnas ma bu'i sde pa'i mkhan po*); the latter adds that this occurred in the South, in the region of Kāñcī, and that the preceptor was named Nāgadatta.⁷³ Bu ston notes that Ārya Vimuktisena, author of a commentary on the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* according to the system of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, was ordained as a Kaurukulla Sāmmatiya, a statement confirmed by (or perhaps based upon) the colophon to that work, which is preserved in Sanskrit.⁷⁴ These two references, though earlier than our period, show that two important figures of Indian Mahāyāna held Vātsīputriya or Sāmmatiya ordination, although their own philosophical standpoints were scarcely compatible with that of the “Pudgalavāda”.

We have seen above that the Sāmmatiyas were one of the four schools represented throughout the Pāla-Sena period in the Madhyadeśa, at the great *vihāras* of Odantapurī, Vikramaśilā, and Nālandā. For the later period, Tāranātha, in his *Seven Instruction Lineages*, refers to Ācārya Jñānamitra, a *sūdra* of Tripura, who was ordained in the East at Jagaddala *vihāra*; he belonged to the Sāmmatiya school, and was learned in the Vinaya and Abhidharma Piṭakas according to their system.⁷⁵ A Sanskrit history of the Vajrayoginī cult from Nepal notes that the (future *siddha*) Maitrīgupta ordained as a Sāmmatiya at Vikramapura in the first half of the 11th century, and “listened to” the Sūtra, Abhidharma, and Vinaya.⁷⁶ In the late 12th century Vibhūticandra, from Varendra in

⁷³ Bu ston 159.1, Obermiller (1932) 149; Tāranātha, *History*, 102.1/181.

⁷⁴ Bu ston 162, ult, *'phags pa ku ru ku lle'i sde pa*, Obermiller (1932) 155. Corrado Pensa, *L'Abhisamayālaṃkāravṛtti di Ārya-Vimuktisena*, Primo Abhisamaya, Rome, 1967 (Serie Orientale Roma XXXVII), p. 1, n. 1.

⁷⁵ Tāranātha, *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 623.4/53.

⁷⁶ Sylvain Lévi, “Un nouveau document sur le bouddhisme de basse époque dans l'Inde”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* VI (1931), p. 423 penult; for the date see Mark Tatz, “The Life of the Siddha-Philosopher Maitrīgupta”,

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Eastern India, ordained with the Sāmmatiyas. He travelled several times to Tibet, and lived there for many years.⁷⁷ But the school continued even beyond that: in an extraordinary Tibetan record recently revealed to the scholarly world by van der Kuijp we find a Sāmmatiya monk from Eastern India named Lokottara, a student of Madhyamaka, Pramāṇa, and Vajrayāna, roaming from Kashmir to Central Tibet in the 1460's.⁷⁸

No identified text of the Sāmmatiyas has been preserved in an Indian language. Indeed, considering the numerical strength and geographical reach of the school reported by Hsüan-tsang and I-ching, it is remarkable that it seems to have left virtually no traces in India. Hsüan-tsang brought back to China fifteen works from the Tripiṭaka of the Sāmmatiyas, but unfortunately they were never translated.⁷⁹ I-ching notes that “the three Piṭakas of the [Sāmmatiyas] contain 200,000 stanzas, the Vinaya texts alone amounting to 30,000 stanzas”.⁸⁰ Only two Sāmmatiya works are preserved in Chinese—one dealing with doctrine and one with Vinaya.⁸¹ That the literature of this school was preserved in Northern

Journal of the American Oriental Society 107/4 [Oct.-Dec. 1987], pp. 695-711. I suppose that Vikramapura = Vikramaśilā.

⁷⁷ See Cyrus Stearns, “The Life and Tibetan Legacy of the Indian Mahāpaṇḍita Vibhūticandra”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19.1 (1996), pp. 128-29.

⁷⁸ Leonard W.J. van der Kuijp, “Some Indian and Sri Lankan Peregrinators in Central Tibet and Glo bo Smon thang during the Fifteenth Century”, paper read at the Seventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Seggau, Graz, 1995. I am grateful to Dr. van der Kuijp for giving me permission to refer to his paper, which will appear in the forthcoming proceedings.

⁷⁹ Lin Li-kouang (1949) 206.

⁸⁰ Takakusu (1896) 8.

⁸¹ That is, the **Sāmmiṭṭiyānikāya-śāstra* (Taishō 1649, *KBC* 972, translated in Venkataramanan [1953]) and the **Vinayadvīṃśatīvidyā-śāstra* (Taishō 1461, *KBC* 942); see Bareau (1955) 122, Wang (1994) 173, 175, Thich Thien Chau (1987:34, 43-4). Thich Thien Chau (p. 34) adds two more “Pudgalavāda” (Vātsīputriya?) works in Chinese (Taishō 1505 and 1506 = *KBC* 1019 and 965).

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India during our period is amply demonstrated by Daśabalaśrimitra in his *Samskṛtāsamskṛtaviniścaya*: he devotes six full chapters to the tenets of the Sāmmatīyas in the form of direct citation from their *Āgama* (*luñ*, in this case “tradition” in the sense of śāstra rather than sūtra). In addition, he cites their tenets in a number of other places. Daśabalaśrimitra’s citations and the two Chinese translations supply first-hand information about Sāmmatīya tenets, for which we also have information from references in non-Sāmmatīya works. (The London Tun huang collection preserves a short commentary on the *ye dharmā* verse entitled *Pratīyasamutpāda-gāthā-vyākhyāna* by Ācārya Vinayavarman of the Sāmmatīya school.⁸² Until the work is studied, we cannot determine whether it propounds any specific doctrines of the school, since Vinayavarman might also be a Mahāyānist belonging to the Sāmmatīya Vinaya lineage.)

The Sāmmatīyas and the PDhp

Although no part of the canon of the Sāmmatīyas has been preserved, we can deduce from citations in their śāstra literature that they transmitted counterparts of sūtras found in the canons of the other schools. The *Sāmmatīyanikāya-śāstra* contains many brief citations,

Wang (p. 173) mentions one other lost translation, a Vinaya text entitled **Sāmmatīya-sūtra*, known only from catalogues.

⁸² Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *Catalogue of the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tunhuang in the India Office Library*, Oxford, 1962, § 127.2, p. 50; Zuiho Yamaguchi *et al.*, *A Catalogue of the Tibetan Manuscripts collected by Sir Aurel Stein*, Part Two, The Toyo Bunko, Tokyo, 1978, pp. 51–52: (La Vallée Poussin’s transcription) *rten ciñ ’brel par ’byun ba’i tshigsu bchad pa’i rnam par bsad pa = phrad ti tya’ / sa mud pā da gā tha’ / byag khya na’*; colophon (from Yamaguchi *et al.*) *rten ciñ ’brel ba’i ’tshigsu bchad pa rnamś bsad pa / slob dpon kun gis bkur ba’i sde pa dul ba’i go chas mdzad pa rdzogs sho*. Present-day Tanjurs do not include the work, or any others by an author of that name.

including some described as *gāthā*, but very few are identified by title, and none attributed to a *Dharmapada*.⁸³ Daśabalaśrimitra’s citations include three partial verses which have parallels in the *Udānavarga*, but again the title of the source is not given. The first (156a6) is equivalent to the first three *pādas* of the famous *anityā bata samskārā verse* (Uv I, 3abc); the verse does not occur in other *Dharmapadas*, but is found elsewhere in sūtra literature. The second (157b1), equivalent to Uv XII, 6a, occurs at DhP 278a and GDhp 107a, but not in PDhp. Since the source of the Sāmmatīya citation is not given, it need not be from their *Dharmapada*; in Pāli, for example, the verse also occurs at *Theragāthā* 677. The third is given at 163a8:

śes rab med la bsam gtan med || bsam gtan med na śes rab mīn ||

This verse has parallels in all four Indic *Dharmapadas* and in the concluding verses of the *Bhikṣu Prātimokṣa* of the Lokottaravādins:⁸⁴

PDhp 62ab	<i>nāsti jhānam apramñassa / pramñā nāsti ajhāyato</i>
Dhp 372ab	<i>natthi jhānaṃ apaññassa / paññā natthi ajhāyato</i>
GDhp 58ab	<i>nasti jana apraṇasa / praṇa nasti ajayado</i>
Uv 32:25ab	<i>nāsty aprajñasya vai dhyānaṃ / prajñā nādhyāyato</i> <i>’sti ca</i>
<i>Prātimokṣa</i>	<i>nāsti dhyānam aprajñasya / prajñā nāsti</i> <i>adhyāyato.</i>

But since this verse is essentially the same in all versions, and since the source is not given, the citation simply proves that the Sāmmatīya canon also had the same verse.

⁸³ See Venkataramanan (1953) 153–243, with reference to *gāthās* on pp. 172, 185.

⁸⁴ Tatia (1975) 37.3.

Could the PDhp have been transmitted by the Sāmmtīyas? The traditions preserved in Tibetan on the languages of the four schools described above agree that the Sāmmtīyas did not use Sanskrit, and that they used a (Prakritic) language different from that of the Mahāsāṃghikas and the Sthaviras. This fits the language of the PDhp: it is certainly not Sanskrit; it is quite different from the Hybrid Sanskrit of the Lokottaravādins, and related to but different from the Pāli of the Sthaviras.

I have noted above that Roth describes the language of the PDhp as related to a western Prakrit and close to Pāli. von Hinüber (1989:365) comes to a similar conclusion, writing that “on the whole [the language of the PDhp] may be a western variety”, although he also suggests North-western and Eastern influence. The close relationship of the language of the PDhp to Pāli, and, along with it, Western India, suits a Sāmmtīya affiliation. The Vatsiputriyas, the “mother school” of the latter, were one of the earliest schools. Bhavya states that they were called Avantakas because they held a council at Avanti. The evidence Hsüan-tsang and I-ching shows that in the 7th century the Sāmmtīyas were predominant in Sindh, and well represented at Mālava and Valabhī. Bareau interprets the names of two branches, the Avantakas and Kurukulas, as referring to Avanti and Kurukṣetra.⁸⁵

The problem of the “Sendhapa Śrāvakas”

The predominance of the Sāmmtīyas in Western India raises the problem of the enigmatic “Sendhapa Śrāvakas”. Bu ston refers to a method of calculation of the years elapsed since the Parinirvāṇa according to the system of the Sendhapa Śrāvakas.⁸⁶ Tāranātha makes frequent

⁸⁵ Bareau (1955) 121–22.

⁸⁶ Bu ston 138.1, *rgya gar na ñan thos sen dha ba rnam*s, Obermiller II 107.

reference to these Śrāvakas,⁸⁷ often in connection with Vajrāsana⁸⁸ and Odantapurī;⁸⁹ they were evidently quite active and numerous in North-eastern India during the Pāla-Sena period. If we derive Sendhapa from Saindhava, “belonging to Sindh”, the term could refer to the Sāmmtīyas, who might have taken refuge in Magadha when Sindh fell to the Arabs, or simply have been described by the name of their “home country”⁹⁰ (as, from the 13th or 14th century, *bhikkhus* ordained in the reformed Theravāda in South-east Asia were said to belong to the Sīhala-varṃsa). Some references imply that the name refers to a specific *nikāya*: Tāranātha mentions a Jñānaśrimitra (late 10th century) who started out as a paṇḍita of the Sendhapa Śrāvakas, and became proficient in the Tripiṭaka according to their system, before gaining faith in the

⁸⁷ Tāranātha, *History*, 168.13/279; 208.15/342; *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 609.1,2/42, 680.3/95; *Tārā Tantra* 523.5 = Templeman (1981) 18, Willson (1986) 182.

⁸⁸ Tāranātha, *History*, 193.9/319; *Tārā Tantra* 528.5 foll. = Templeman (1981) 22–23, Willson (1986) 186–87.

⁸⁹ Tāranātha, *History*, 175.5/289; *Seven Instruction Lineages*, 631.1/59.

⁹⁰ A stone pedestal inscription from the area of Bihar Sharif in Patna District, from the reign of Mahendrapāla (the Pratihāra ruler, late 9th century), records a dedication to the Saindhavas (*saindhavānām dān[ā]rthe*, taking *saindhavānām* to be dative): Sastri (1942) 105–6; Huntington (1984) § 61, p. 240, and Fig. 39. Two inscriptions from Bodh Gaya record the setting up of Buddha images (*pratimā muneḥ*) by Śrī Dhārmabhīma of Sindh (*sindhudbhavo*) during the time of Gopāladeva II (CE 940–960): Ramaranjan Mukherji and Sachindra Kumar Maity, *Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions bearing on History and Civilization of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1967, nos. 23 and 25; Huntington (1984) § 27 (pp. 218–20). I do not know whether the presence, with connections with Bodh Gaya, of ruling families claiming a Sindhu origin has any bearing on the presence of Saindhava monks (see D.C. Sircar in *EI XXXV* 82, n. 1). For a different interpretation of Sendhapa, based on the variant Penda ba, see D. Seyfort Rugg, “Notes on some Indian and Tibetan Reckonings of the Buddha’s Nirvāṇa and the Duration of his Teaching”, in Heinz Bechert (ed.), *The Dating of the Historical Buddha*, Part 2, Göttingen, 1992, pp. 267–68 and nn.

Mahāyāna.⁹¹ Sometimes they opposed the Mahāyāna or Vajrayāna. While they are certainly Śrāvakas, the usage is otherwise not clear, and Tāranātha sometimes mentions Saindhava and Siṅhala Śrāvakas in the same breath, as if they were equivalent.⁹² I do not know of any evidence in Theravādin literature of a relationship between the Sthaviras of Ceylon and those of Sindh, and I suspect that Tāranātha conflated two different groups of Śrāvakas. Siṅhala might also be a mistaken reading of Saindhava. The question needs further investigation.⁹³

The Bhaikṣukī inscriptions

von Hinüber notes the existence of “epigraphical evidence of a language perhaps not too remote from that of the PDhp”.⁹⁴ These are inscriptions in the “Bhaikṣukī” (or “arrow-head” or “wedge-head”) script giving a brief prose canonical citation followed by the *ye dhammā* verse.⁹⁵ The text is known from seven inscriptions recovered from

⁹¹ Tāranātha, *History*, 183.17/302 *dañ por ñan thos sendha pa'i pañḍi ta, de'i lugs kyi sde snod gsum la śin tu mkhas pa cig yin pa la.*

⁹² Tāranātha, *History* 168.14/279 *siṅga gliṅ pa sogs ñan thos sendha pa; Seven Instruction Lineages*, 631.3/59 *sendha pa siṅ ga la mañ po; Tārā Tantra* 529.4 *siṅha la pa'i ñan thos sendha pa rnams; 529.5 siṅga gliṅ pa'i ñan thos rnams* = Templeman (1981) 23, 37; Willson (1986) 186–87); 546.7 = Templeman (1981) 37; Willson (1986) 202. The latter passage describes Śākyarakṣita, who was born in Ceylon (*siṅ ga la'i yul*) and studied in Haribhuñja (Lamphun, North Thailand) as a *ñan thos sendha pa*. Here the term must be equivalent to Siṅhala.

⁹³ So far as I know, the only scholars to identify Tāranātha's Saindhavas with the Sāmmaṭṭiyas have been R.C. Mitra, in his “The Decline of Buddhism in India”, *VBA* VI (1954), p. 84, and Willson (1986) 182 and n. 26, p. 396.

⁹⁴ von Hinüber (1989) 365, n. 62.

⁹⁵ “Bhaikṣukī lipi”, “the writing of *bhikṣus*”, was identified by Bendall as the script mentioned by al-Bīrūnī as “the writing of Buddha” used in Udunpūr in Pūrvaśāla—probably, according to Sircar, the Uḍḍandapura [or Odantapurī] *viḥāra* in Bihar Sharif near Patna. Sircar also notes that “although al-Bīrūnī seems to confine the use of the Bhaikṣukī script to the monks of

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District Monghyr (Munger), Bihar—three from Uren⁹⁶ and one each from Ghoshikuṇḍī (near Kiul),⁹⁷ Kajra,⁹⁸ Badhauri,⁹⁹ and Gurdih.¹⁰⁰ There is also a dedication in the same script, from Maldah in West Bengal, that gives the same recension of the *ye dhammā* verse.¹⁰¹

Sircar dates the Uren inscriptions to “between the ninth and the twelfth century, preferably to the latter half of this period”; Bendall dates his inscriptions to between the 7th and 10th centuries, but given the similarity of the script to that of the other Bhaikṣukī records a later date is likely.¹⁰² The language of the records—described by Bendall as “differing

Uḍḍandapura...the discovery of the Kara inscription in the Allahabad District of the U.P. and that of...one in the Maldah District of West Bengal appear to suggest a wider distribution”. See *EI* XXVIII 222, 225.

⁹⁶ D.C. Sircar, “Four Bhaikṣukī Inscriptions”, *EI* XXVIII 220–24. Inscription No. 1, dedicated by Śrī Pratinava Śrāda(vi)tapāla, is from “the base of a mutilated Buddhist image lying half buried by the side of the main road running through the village”. Sircar edited Inscriptions Nos. 2 and 3—which were on unspecified (stone?) “images”, the present whereabouts of which are unknown—from photographs published by L.A. Waddell in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* LXI (1892), Part i, Plate IV, Nos. 1 and 2 (not seen). For Uren see Sircar's remarks and Patil (1963) 583–86.

⁹⁷ Edited from impressions by D.C. Sircar, “Bhaikṣukī Inscription in Indian Museum”, *EI* XXXV 79–84: on the pedestal of an image of Jambhala dedicated by *bhadanta* Jayasena. For Kiul see Patil (1963) 209–10.

⁹⁸ *EI* XXXV, p. 84, Postscript, described as “on the lower part of a sculptured stone slab under a pipal tree near the Kajra railway station”.

⁹⁹ Bendall (1895) 153. The accompanying plate shows that the text is inscribed along the top of a sculptured stone base. Oddly enough, although Sircar (*EI* XXVIII 222, n. 1) refers to Bendall's article, he does not mention that this and the following inscription give the same text as his inscriptions.

¹⁰⁰ Bendall (1895) 154, edited from “an eye-copy of a longer inscription”. The nature of the inscribed object is not mentioned.

¹⁰¹ *EI* XXVIII 224–26: on the pedestal of an Avalokiteśvara image, dedicated by *bhadanta* Buddhapālita.

¹⁰² *EI* XXVIII:223; Bendall (1895) 155. Sircar suggests a mid-13th century date for the Jambhala inscription (*EI* XXXV:81). Although his reasoning—a

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in only a few details from the literary Pāli” and by Sircar as “Pāli which is, however, greatly influenced by Sanskrit”¹⁰³—is consistent, and indeed similar to that of the PDhp, as von Hinüber has noted. The *ye dhammā* verse differs from that of the Theravādins,¹⁰⁴ Mahāsāṃghikas,¹⁰⁵ and Sarvāstivādins.¹⁰⁶ We may note the following correspondences between the inscriptions and the Patna *Dhammapada* (Cone ed.):

<i>dhammā</i>	= PDhp <i>dhamma</i> , <i>passim</i>
<i>deśeti</i>	cp. PDhp 68b <i>deśanā</i> ; 36b, 363d <i>deśitaṃ</i>
<i>prabhavā</i>	cp. PDhp 1c <i>praduṣṭa</i> , 2c <i>prasanna</i> , etc., and von Hinüber (1989) 362–63
<i>tesāṃ</i>	PDhp 87d, 124a <i>tesāṃ</i> ; cp. 5d, 6d, 74c, 244c, 266d <i>tesaṃ</i>
<i>śamaṇo</i>	= PDhp 196d, ¹⁰⁷ 235a, d, 236d, 239d <i>śamaṇo</i> .

The same reasoning that has been applied above to the PDhp may be applied to the inscriptions: since they present a canonical passage in a unique and consistent form of Middle Indic, they must come from the

fascinating *vylet* that sets out from an obscure section of the dedicatory part inscription itself—seems somewhat speculative, that the image should date to that period it is not in itself impossible.

¹⁰³ Bendall (1895) 153; *EI* XXVIII 223.

¹⁰⁴ *Vinaya* (PTS) I 40.28.

¹⁰⁵ Radhagovinda Basak (ed., with Bengali translation), *Mahāvastu Avadāna*, Vol. III, Calcutta, 1968 (Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series LXIII), p. 83.3 (= Senart, 62.8); *Bhikṣuṇī Vinaya* in Roth (1970) 333.9; *Abhisamācārikā* (ed. B. Jinānanda, Patna, 1969, TSWS IX, 230.6); *Prātimokṣa* in Tatia (1975) 38.3.

¹⁰⁶ *Catuspariṣat-sūtra* (ed. Waldschmidt) 28c6.

¹⁰⁷ The reference at von Hinüber & Norman under Dhp 142 should be corrected from PDhp 16 to 196.

canon of one of the Buddhist schools.¹⁰⁸ The similarity of the language to that of the PDhp suggests that they belong to the same school as that text, the Sāmmatiyas, and in this case we have corroborating evidence. Hsüan-tsang visited a country between Nālandā and Champā called I-lan-na-po-fa-to, bordered by the Ganges River in the north and mountains in the south.¹⁰⁹ It possessed ten *saṃghārāmas* with about 4000 monks, most of whom belonged to the Sāmmatiya school.¹¹⁰ There were a number of sacred sites in the region, which Cunningham and Waddell identified

¹⁰⁸ It would be interesting to see whether there are any other *ye dhammā* inscriptions in the same language. The verse appearing on ten terracotta plaques from Nālandā seems the same: see Simon D. Lawson, *A Catalogue of Indian Buddhist Clay Sealings in British Museums* (thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford, 1982), pp. 429–39. I suspect there are others (see Lawson, pp. 153–54, for a tablet from Bodh Gaya in a language closer to Pāli). It is unfortunate that few scholars take the trouble to transcribe the verse; they regularly dismiss it as “the usual Buddhist creed”, thereby depriving us of a body of examples that would allow us to classify its forms. Sircar (*EI* XXVIII 221), for example, remarks that he “took impressions of altogether fourteen image inscriptions at Uren, many of which, however, contained nothing but the Buddhist formula *ye dhammā*, etc.” At Kiul Cunningham uncovered several thousands of lac seals with the figure of the Buddha, mostly inscribed with “the usual Buddhist creed formula in 10th or 11th century characters” (Patil 1963:209–10). (There is one other very brief “canonical” Bhaikṣukī inscription: a dedication “in correct Sanskrit” on a metal plate meant to fit into the base of an image, from Kara in Allahabad District, which opens with the phrase *nāmarūpaṃ anityaṃ*: *EI* XXII 37–39).

¹⁰⁹ Julien’s restoration of the name as Hiraṇyaparvata (Golden Mountain) was rejected by Watters (1904–5, II 179), who suggested Īraṇaparvata.

¹¹⁰ Beal (1884) II 186–91; Watters (1904–5) II 178–81; Bagchi (1959) 102–3. Not long before Hsüan-tsang’s visit, a “king of a border country” had seized power, and “built in the city two *saṃghārāmas*, each holding something less than 1000 priests. Both of them are attached to the Sarvāstivādin school”. Since the language of the inscriptions is not that of the Sarvāstivādins, the existence of these monasteries does not affect our argument. The report is interesting in that it suggests that different schools may have vied for the favour of rulers.

with the ruins in the area of Uren.¹¹¹ On the evidence of our peripatetic pilgrim, I-lan-na-po-fa-to seems to have been the main Sāmmtiṃya centre south of the Ganges, and to have boasted the largest concentration of monks of that school in Madhyadeśa after Vārāṇasī (which had 4500 monks, including those in Sarnath).¹¹² If one examines the pilgrim's itinerary, there can be little doubt that the identification of the extensive Uren sites—which are all close together, within a radius of ten miles¹¹³—with I-lan-na-po-fa-to is correct. We may therefore conclude that the Sāmmtiṃyas were responsible for the inscriptions, and that the language is that of their canon: that is, that Monghyr District was indeed the major Sāmmtiṃya centre (and as a corollary Maldah in West Bengal might have had a least one Sāmmtiṃya *vihāra*).¹¹⁴ Religious activity continued at Uren up to at least the reign of Rāmapāla (late 11th or early 12th century).¹¹⁵ One can only agree with Patil when he says, “The place does not seem to

¹¹¹ See Sircar (*EI* XXVIII) and Patil (1963) 278–79; 583–86.

¹¹² See *HBI* 599 (Vārāṇasī 3000 + Sarnath 1500) (= Beal 1884 II 44–45; Watters 1904–5 II 46–48; Bagchi 1959:71–72); Bareau (1955) 36.

¹¹³ Sircar (*EI* XXVIII:220–21) states that Uren is about seven miles from Kiul and 2 1/2 miles from Kajra. Bendall (1895:153–54) places Badhauri about five miles south-west of Uren, and Gurdih about ten miles south-west of Uren and opposite Husainpur on the Kiul River. Unfortunately Uren was blasted for railway materials and otherwise plundered by the end of the 19th century. Sircar (*EI* XXVIII) relates the sad tale of its fate.

¹¹⁴ Maldah would seem to have been in Puṇḍravardhana, which possessed about twenty *saṃghārāmas* with some 3000 monks who studied both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna: Beal (1884) II 194–95; Watters (1904–5) II 184–85; Bagchi (1959) 104. It was also near Karṇasuvarṇa, which had ten *saṃghārāmas* with about 2000 monks of the Sāmmtiṃya school: Beal (1884) II 201–4; Watters (1904–5) II 191–93; Bagchi (1959) 106. For Puṇḍravardhana, see Dilip K. Chakrabarti, *Ancient Bangladesh: A Study of the Archaeological Sources*, Delhi, 1992, pp. 22–23.

¹¹⁵ See for example the dedications at Huntington (1984) §§ 46, 48, pp. 231–33. These should be the inscriptions referred to by Sircar (*EI* XXVIII:221), especially the second, which agrees in dating from year 14 of Rāmapāla's reign.

have been examined by any archaeologist afterwards [since the end of the 19th century] and considering the large number of inscriptions and inscribed images, as reported by Waddell, further...exploration is certainly necessary”.¹¹⁶

Another canonical inscription that may be mentioned here is the *pratīyasamutpāda* inscription from Devnimori in Gujarat.¹¹⁷ Although the relationship to the language of the PDhp is not as close as that of the Monghyr inscriptions, it does bear some resemblance. Furthermore, as it probably dates from the late 4th or early 5th century, it is centuries older than either of the former. Once again, we meet with a “new” canonical Middle Indic that must be that of a particular school. Since Gujarat was one of the strongholds of the Sāmmtiṃyas, the inscription may represent an earlier phase of their canon, or that of their predecessors, the Vātsīputriyas. The Sāmmtiṃya *Āgama* cited by Daśabalaśrimitra relates that the school held several councils (*saṃgīti*). At these councils, the language of the canon might well have been revised: the Devnimori inscription might be drawn from an earlier recension of their canon, the PDhp and the Monghyr inscriptions from a later recension.¹¹⁸

9. Conclusions

The PDhp, transmitted in a distinct dialect of Buddhist Prakrit (or, less felicitously, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit), must have belonged to the canon of a Buddhist school. There is sufficient linguistic and textual evidence to

¹¹⁶ Patil (1963) 586.

¹¹⁷ See von Hinüber (1985).

¹¹⁸ von Hinüber (1985:193 foll.) deals with a second *pratīyasamutpāda* inscription from the 5th century from Ratnagiri in Orissa. The language is much closer to Pāli, and does not show any of the unique features of our inscriptions or the PDhp. The school affiliation of this inscription warrants further study.

eliminate as candidates three of the four main schools of the Madhyadeśa of the period of the manuscript (11th to 12th century): the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins, the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādins, and the Sthaviras. The remaining “lesser” schools and sub-schools may also be eliminated: either they had a limited geographical reach, or they did not survive into our period (in most cases both). By this process of elimination, the most likely candidate becomes the fourth of the four main schools, the Sāmmatiyas. The description of the canonical language of the Sāmmatiyas in Indo-Tibetan tradition as other than Sanskrit and different from that of the other schools suits the language of the PDhp. The Sāmmatiya ordination lineage was still active during the period of the PDhp manuscript (and indeed beyond), and Sāmmatiya texts were available in the library used by Daśabalaśrimitra. The inscriptions from Uren, a major Sāmmatiya centre at the time of Hsüan-tsang, are in a similar language, and should also belong to the Sāmmatiyas.¹¹⁹

The information presented in this article gives rise to a number of general reflections about the Sāmmatiyas, beyond the question of the affiliation of the PDhp. Many of the Buddhist monuments of India, particularly of Gujarat and Sindh, but also of Madhyadeśa, were undoubtedly Sāmmatiya centres. We must therefore recognize that that school played a significant role in the development of Buddhist art and architecture, and keep our eyes open for inscriptions, including the ye

¹¹⁹ Although Tāranātha’s *History* states that the Vātsīputriyas survived beyond our period, this is probably an anachronism: in their own *Āgama*, the Sāmmatiyas describe themselves as successors to that school. Tāranātha mentions the existence of another branch, the Kaurukullas, whose existence is confirmed by the colophon of Ārya Vimuktisena’s *Abhisamayālamkāra-vṛtti*, in Sanskrit and Tibetan. Since the colophon refers to the Kaurukulla-ārya-sāmmatiyas, the Kaurukullas were certainly Sāmmatiyas. There is no evidence that this branch, or perhaps, as Bareau suggests, geographical division, existed at the time of the PDhp manuscript.

dhammā verse, that may be related to the Sāmmatiyas. From the time of Ārya Vimuktisena, monks ordained in the Sāmmatiya lineage practised Mahāyāna, and from the Pāla-Sena period up to the 15th century, monks ordained in the Sāmmatiya lineage practised Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna. That is—and this is already quite clear from the statements of the Chinese pilgrims and from Tibetan sources—the Mahāyāna was not restricted to any single *nikāya*, and all four *nikāyas* participated in the development of Mahāyāna thought and practice.

The original draft of this article, written some years ago, ended here. I was not aware that Kōgen Mizuno had already independently concluded that the PDhp belonged to the Sāmmatiyas, for entirely different reasons. He writes: “The *nikāya* (school) which transmitted this *Dharmapada* is entirely unknown, but judging from the linguistic features, the language of the words and phrases of this *Dharmapada* seems to correspond to the transliteration of various technical terms concerning Vinaya which appear in the *Vinaya-dvāvīṃśati-prasannārtha-śāstra* (Nanjio 1139, Taishō Vol. 24, pp. 665–73) translated by Paramārtha in CE 568. Since this Vinaya text is regarded as a sacred book of the Sāmmatiya-vāda, it seems to me that this *Dharmapada* was transmitted by the same school.”¹²⁰ If Mizuno’s

¹²⁰ Mizuno (1984) 168 (I have corrected the misprinted *-prasammārtha-* to *-prasannārtha-*, after Nanjio’s Sanskrit form of the title of the work referred to above as the **Vinayadvāvīṃśativedyā-śāstra*). Mizuno remarks that in the other Sāmmatiya text preserved in Chinese, the **Sāmmatiyanikāya-śāstra*, “no linguistic distinction is shown”, and refers to his “Study of the SDHP” [= PDhp] in *Buddhist Studies* XI, Hamamatsu City, 1982, pp. 1–48 (not seen). Lin Likouang (1949:206) reached a similar conclusion regarding the *Sāmmatiyanikāya-śāstra*, noting that it contains over fifty transcriptions, which do not offer any conclusive information about the original language, except that “l’original...comprenait des mots dénotent une tendance au moyen-indien, comme on en trouve dans tant d’autres textes”.

findings can be confirmed, the Sāmmatiya affiliation of the PDhp becomes more than a hypothesis.

Nandapuri

Peter Skilling

Sources

In referring to Tibetan works and their translations, I give first the page and line number of the Tibetan text and then, separated by a stroke, the page number of the translation.

Abbreviations

<i>BA</i>	<i>Deb ther sñon po</i> of 'Gos lo tsa ba g'zön nu dpal, Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khañ, Chengdu, 1984; English translation in Roerich (1949)
<i>BSR</i>	<i>Buddhist Studies Review</i> (London)
<i>Dhp</i>	Pāli <i>Dhammapada</i> : see von Hinüber & Norman (1994)
<i>DPPN</i>	G.P. Malalasekera, <i>Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names</i> , [1937] New Delhi, 1983
<i>EI</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i>
<i>JPTS</i>	<i>Journal of the Pāli Text Society</i>
<i>GDhp</i>	Gāndhāri <i>Dharmapada</i> : see Brough (1962)
<i>HBI</i>	Étienne Lamotte, <i>Histoire du bouddhisme indien des origines à l'ère Śaka</i> , [Louvain, 1958] Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976
<i>KBC</i>	Lewis R. Lancaster with Sung-bae Park, <i>The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue</i> , Berkeley, 1979
<i>Mvy</i>	R. Sakaki (ed.), <i>Mahāvīyūtpatti</i> , 2 vols., Kyōto, 1926

<i>PDhp</i>	Patna <i>Dhammapada</i> : see Shukla (1979), Roth (1980), Cone (1989), Mizuno (1990)
<i>PTS</i>	roman script Pali Text Society edition
<i>TSWS</i>	Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series (Patna)
<i>Uv</i>	<i>Udānavarga</i> : see Bernhard (1965)
<i>VBA</i>	<i>Visva-Bharati Annals</i> (Santiniketan)

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New Pāli Inscriptions from South-east Asia

I. A RECENTLY DISCOVERED PĀLI INSCRIPTION FROM NAKHON PATHOM*

In October 1991 the Institute of Western Thai Culture, Silpakorn University, held an exhibition on “The Archaeological Sites in Western Thailand” at the Sanamchandra Palace, Nakhon Pathom. The exhibition catalogue included a brief note, in Thai and English, accompanied by photographs, on a “New inscription found from Dvāravatī site in Western Thailand”.¹ A reading of the inscription, with a Thai translation, was published in the same year by Naiyana Prongthura *et al.*, with larger and clearer plates.² According to the latter, the inscription was presented to Silpakorn University, Sanamchandra Palace Campus, by the abbot of Wat Taku (Amphoe Muang, Nakhon Pathom) in BE 2532 [CE 1989]. The abbot received it from a villager from district Nakhon Chaisi (Nakhon Pathom province); no further details regarding the nature of the find-spot or the date of discovery are available.

* An earlier version of this article was published under the title “Preliminary Report on a Recently Discovered Pāli Inscription” in the *Journal of the Office of the Supreme Patriarch's Secretary (Warasanchotmaikhao Samnaklekhanukansomdetphrasangharat)*, Vol. I, No. 1, (2535 [1992]), pp. 83–86. The earlier version was based only on the “exhibition catalogue” (see n. 1); the present revision takes into account the work of Naiyana *et al.* (see n. 2), and gives an improved reading of the inscription and some additional references.

¹ Phasook Indrawooth *et al.*, *Laeng boranakhadi nai phumiphak tawantok / The Archaeological Sites in Western Thailand*, Silpakorn University Press, Nakhon Pathom, 1991, pp. 112–13 and Pl. 67.

² Naiyana Prongthura *et al.*, “An inscription on a rectangular bar in the Pallava script in the Cultural Project Centre, Silpakorn University, Sanamchandra Palace Campus, Nakhon Pathom” (in Thai), in *Phasa-Charuk*, Part 3, published in celebration of the sixth cycle of Prof. Dr. Prasert Na Nagara, Silpakorn University, Bangkok, 2534 [1991], pp. 40–44.