

Sources for the Study of the *Maṅgala* and *Mora-suttas*

1) *Maṅgala-sutta*

In an earlier article I noted the existence of two Tibetan versions of the *Maṅgala-sutta*. The first, the *bKra śis chen po'i mdo* = *Mahāmaṅgala-sutta*, is a translation of a Theravādin version, included in the set of “13 new translations” done by Paṇḍita Ānandaśrī of Ceylon and Thar pa Lotsaba Ņi ma rgyal mtshan dPal bzañ po in about the first decade of the 14th century. The second is an anonymous translation of a version of an unknown school, bearing the title *Lhas žus pa'i bkra śis kyi tshigs su bcad pa* = *Devapariprcchā Maṅgalagāthā*.¹ These two versions have been translated side-by-side by Feer, who noted that “quoique [*Devapariprcchā Maṅgalagāthā*] renferme plus de stances que l'autre, et que l'ordre des stances y soit interverti, la commune origine des deux textes est facile à reconnaître”.² In addition to the two Tibetan parallels, there is a third version, preserved in Chinese translation. It is

¹ Peter Skilling, “Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation”, *JPTS* XIX (1993) 129–30, 183. Since the second version is anonymous, it cannot be dated with certainty. It is likely, however, that it was translated during the early diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet (the *sna dar*). The *lDan dkar Catalogue*, which dates to the early 9th century, lists a number of titles under the category *bKra śis kyi rnam grāns* = **Maṅgala-paryāya* (§ XVIII). Our text might be, for example, the *bKra śis kyi tshigs su bcad pa chen po* = **Mahāmaṅgala-gāthā* (no. 476, in 30 *ślokas*), or the *bKra śis kyi tshigs su bcad pa* = **Maṅgala-gāthā* (no. 478, in 26 *ślokas*) (references to Marcelle Lalou, “Les textes bouddhiques au temps du roi Khri-sron-Ido-bcan”, *Journal asiatique*, 1953). For *svasti-* or *maṅgala-gāthā* see Peter Skilling, “The Rakṣā Literature of the Śrāvakayāna”, *JPTS* XVI (1992) 129–37.

² Léon Feer, “Fragments extraits du Kandjour”, *Annales du Musée Guimet* V (1883) 224–27. For a translation of a Sinhalese commentary on the *Maṅgala-sutta* see Charles Hallisey, “Auspicious Things”, in Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (ed.), *Buddhism in Practice*, Princeton, 1995, pp. 412–26.

included in a recension of the *Dhammapada*, the *Fa chü p'i yü ching*, where it makes up the whole of Chapter 39 (the last), entitled *Mahāmaṅgala*.³ The correspondence was noted by Beal over a century ago. The prose *nidāna* is entirely different from that of the Pāli,⁴ and the order and contents of the verses also differ. In Beal's translation, I have found only four verses that immediately bring to mind Pāli counterparts, but many individual lines also correspond to the Pāli. The *Fa chü p'i yü ching* is an early witness, translated during the Western Chin dynasty (CE 290–306),⁵ and a new translation and comparative study of this short but important text is a desideratum.

In the **Maṅgala-varga*, Chapter 12 of his **Satyasiddhi* (or **Tattvasiddhi*) *Śāstra*, Harivarman cites three verses from the **Maṅgala-gāthā*.⁶

³ Taishō 211, Vol. 4; Lewis R. Lancaster with Sung-bae Park, *The Korean Buddhist Canon: A Descriptive Catalogue*, Berkeley, 1979 (= KBC), 1020; English translation in Samuel Beal, *Texts from the Buddhist Canon, Commonly known as Dhammapada, with accompanying Narratives*, [Boston, 1878] San Francisco, 1977, pp. 174–76. For the Chinese *Dharmapada* literature see Sylvain Lévi, “L'Apramāda-varga. Étude sur les recensions des Dharmapadas”, *Journal asiatique*, septembre-octobre 1912, pp. 203–94; Charles Willemen, “The Prefaces to the Chinese Dharmapadas, Fa-chü ching and Ch'u-yao ching”, *T'oung Pao* LIX (1973) 203–19; Charles Willemen, *Dharmapada: A Concordance to Udānavarga, Dharmapada, and the Chinese Dharmapada Literature*, Brussels, 1974.

⁴ Beal (*op. cit.*, p. 23) noted that the *nidānas* assigned to the verses of the *Fa chü p'i yü ching* are entirely different from those of the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā*.

⁵ Date from KBC 1020.

⁶ N. Aiyaswami Sastri, *Satyasiddhiśāstra of Harivarman*, Vol. I, Baroda, 1975 (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 159), p. 37 (translation from Chinese into Sanskrit); Vol. II (Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 165), Baroda, 1978, pp. 29–30 (English translation). The text is the *Ch'eng shih lun*, translated by Kumārajīva in 411–12: Taishō 1646, KBC 966.

So says the *Maṅgala-gāthā*:

The most auspicious is the Buddha
who is the highest teacher and the wisest leader
amongst men and gods.

The most auspicious is the person
who has firm faith in the Buddha
and keeps pure conduct.

The most auspicious is
to serve the learned, not to approach the ignorant
and [to] pay homage to the worthy of homage.

Aiyaswami Sastri notes that “of these three verses only the third agrees with the *Maṅgala-sutta*, verse 2”. The first two verses have no counterpart in the *Fa chü p'i yü ching*.

Verse 3 of the Pāli *Maṅgala-sutta* has a parallel in prose and verse in the *Cakka-sutta*, the first sutta of the *Cakka-vagga* of the *Catukka-nipāta* of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* (AN II 32).⁷ The Pāli *Maṅgala-sutta* reads as follows:⁸

patirūpadesavāso ca pubbe ca katapuññatā
attasammāpaṇidhi ca etaṃ maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

To live in a favourable place,
to have accomplished merit in the past,
to have a proper goal for oneself—
this is the highest auspiciousness.

⁷ The reference was noted by Dines Andersen and Helmer Smith in their edition of the *Sutta-nipāta*, originally published in 1913 (p. 46, n. 9). The title is from the *uddāna*, p. 44.13, *cakko*. Cf. also *Nettipakaraṇa*, p. 29.14–19.

⁸ *Suttanipāta* v. 260, p. 46; *Khuddaka-pāṭha* p. 3.5.

The Tibetan *Devapariprcchā-maṅgala-gāthā* reads:⁹

*yul bzan gnas dan grogs mchog dan//
sñon chad bsod nams byas pa dan//
sems ni legs par gtañ byas pa//
de ni bkra śis dam pa yin//*

To live in an auspicious place, to [have] excellent company,
to have accomplished merit in the past,
to have properly directed one's mind—
this is the highest auspiciousness.

The *Cakka-sutta* lists four “wheels” or “blessings” (*cakka*).¹⁰ Wheels number 1, 3, and 4 have counterparts in v. 3 of the Pāli *Maṅgalasutta*, and wheel no. 2 may be compared with the *paṇḍitānañ ca sevanā* of v. 2b. The Tibetan *Devapariprcchā-maṅgalagāthā* gives counterparts of all four *cakka*, in the order 1, 2, 4, 3, with a variant in 3, *citta* (*sems*) where the Pāli has *atta*.

⁹ Peking Tripiṭaka (Q) 442, Vol. 9, *rgyud tsha*, 318b1; Q721, Vol. 11, *rgyud ya*, 276a1; Q1053, Vol. 45, *'dul ba phe*, 315a3; Q5943, Vol. 150, *no mtshar mo*, 330a4; Derge Tanjur 4400, *sna tshogs ño*, 337b7. Note that in both the Peking and Derge Tanjur versions the text is entitled simply *Maṅgala-gāthā* = *bKra śis kyi tshigs su bcaḍ pa*.

¹⁰ For the significance of *cakka* in this context, cf. *Jātaka* V 114.27 *patirūpadesavāsādino kusalacakkassa bhañjani*, PED 259a (s.v. *cakka*), and Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. II, *Dictionary*, [New Haven, 1953] Delhi, 1972, p. 221a (s.v. *cakra*). The *Manorathapūraṇī* (Thai script Mahāmakutaṛājavidyālaya ed., II 378.17 has *cakkāniti sampattiyo, catucakkaṃ vattatīti cattāri sampatticakkāni vattanti ghattiyanti yevāti attho*. The *Anguttara-tikā* (Chatṭhasaṅgīti ed., II 280.8) and the *Sumaṅgalavilāsini* (Mahāmakutaṛājavidyālaya ed., III 328.1, commenting on the *Dasuttara* version) also interpret *cakka* as *sampatti-cakka*, without further explanation. Rendawa's commentary (reference below, n. 16) explains that “these four conditions are called ‘wheels’, for they are similar to the wheels of a carriage”.

cattār' imāni bhikkhave cakkāni yehi samannāgatānaṃ devamanussānaṃ catucakkaṃ pavattati, yehi samannāgatā devamanussā na cirass' eva mahantataṃ vepullataṃ pāpuṇanti bhogesu. katamāni cattāri?

- (1) *patirūpadesavāso*
- (2) *sappurisūpassayo*
- (3) *attasammāpanidhi*
- (4) *pubbe ca katapuññatā*.

imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri cakkāni yehi samannāgatānaṃ devamanussānaṃ catucakkaṃ pavattati, yehi samannāgatā devamanussā na cirass' eva mahantataṃ vepullataṃ pāpuṇanti bhogesu ti.

*patirūpe vase dese ariyamittakaro siyā
sammāpanidhisampanno pubbe puññakato naro
dhaññaṃ dhanam yaso kitti sukhañ c' etam adhivattati.*

There are, O monks, these four wheels: for gods and humans who possess them there occurs a fourfold blessing, by means of which gods and humans soon attain greatness and plenitude in wealth.¹¹ What are the four?

- (1) to live in a favourable environment
- (2) to associate with worthy persons
- (3) to have a proper goal for oneself, and
- (4) to have accomplished merit in the past.

¹¹ It is interesting that while the Pāli version refers to “wealth” (*bhoga*), the Sanskrit refers to “wholesome dharmas” (*kuśala-dharma*: see below).

These, O monks, are the four wheels...

The man who lives in a favourable place,
who makes friendship with the noble ones,
who possesses a proper goal,
and has made merit in the past—
grain, wealth, fame, honour, and happiness
come to him in abundance.¹²

A Sarvāstivādin counterpart of the *Cakka-sutta* is incorporated into the Sanskrit *Daśottara-sūtra* from Central Asia:¹³

catvāro dharmā bahukarāḥ, catvāri devamanuṣyāṇāṃ cakrāṇi yair deva... (text fragmentary)...yamānā vṛddhiṃ vaipulyam āpadyante kuśalair dharmaiḥ. katamāni catvāri?

- (1) *pratirūpo deśāvāsaḥ*
- (2) *satpuruṣāpaśraya*
- (3) *ātmanas ca samyakprañidhānam*
- (4) *pūrve ca kṛtapuṇyatā.*

A counterpart from a text of the Sāmmatiyas is cited in Daśabalaśrimitra's *Saṃskṛtāsamskṛta-viniścaya*:¹⁴

¹² Cf. *Manorathapūraṇi* II 379.6 *sukhañ c' etaṃ adhvattatīti sukhañ ca etaṃ puggalaṃ adhvattatīti avattharatīti attho.*

¹³ Kusum Mittal, *Dogmatische Begriffsreihen im älteren Buddhismus* (Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden IV), Berlin, 1957, § IV,1, p. 61. The parallel in the Pāli *Dasuttara-sutta* (DN III 276.5–8) gives only the bare list of the four, similarly described as *cattāro dhammā bahukārā*.

¹⁴ Daśabalaśrimitra (sTobs bcu dpal bśes gñen), 'Dus byas dañ 'dus ma byas rnam par nes pa, Q5865, Vol. 146, no mīshar bstan bcos ño, 162b8. For this text see Peter Skilling, "The Saṃskṛtāsamskṛta-viniścaya of Daśabalaśrimitra,

Continues...

'khor lo bzi zes bya ba ni/ 'khor lo chen po bzi ste/ 'di ltar/ mthun pa 'i yul du gnas pa dañ/ skyes bu dam pa la brten pa dañ/ bdag gi smon lam yañ dag pa dañ/ sñon bsod nams byas pa 'o// de dañ yañ dag par ldan pa 'o//

The four wheels: there are four great wheels (*mahācakra*): to live in a favourable environment, to associate with worthy persons, to have a proper aim for oneself, and to have accomplished merit in the past. He is endowed with these.

The four are listed in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, a Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon of the early 9th century, under the title "The four wheels of gods and humans" (*catvāri devamanuṣyāṇāṃ cakrāṇi, lha dañ mi 'i 'khor lo bzi 'i miñ*):¹⁵

- (1) *pratirūpadeśa-vāsaḥ, 'thun pa 'i yul na gnas pa*
- (2) *satpuruṣāpaśrayam, skyes bu dam pa la brten pa*
- (3) *ātmanas samyak prañidhānam, bdag ñid kyis yañ dag pa 'i smon lam btab pa*
- (4) *pūrve ca kṛtapuṇyatā, sñon yañ bsod nams byas pa 'o.*

The four *cakras* are given in verse in Nāgārjuna's *Suhrillekha* (v. 61):¹⁶

Buddhist Studies Review 4/1 (1987) 3–23, and "Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation", *JPTS* XIX (1993), pp. 140–42.

¹⁵ Mvy § LXXXIII, nos. 1603–7.

¹⁶ Venerable Lozang Jamspal, Venerable Ngawang Samten Chopel, and Peter Della Santina (tr.), *Nāgārjuna's Letter to King Gautamīputra*, Delhi, 1978, Tibetan text, p. 91 (translation p. 37). Cf. the translations and commentaries in Leslie Kawamura, *Golden Zephyr: Instructions from a Spiritual Friend*, Emeryville, 1975, p. 55; Geshe Lobsang Tharchin and Artemus B. Engle, *Nāgārjuna's Letter: Nāgārjuna's "Letter to a Friend" with a Commentary by the Venerable Rendawa, Zhön-nu Lo-drö, Dharamsala, 1979, pp. 93–94.*

mthun par gyur ba 'i yul na gnas pa dan//
skyes bu dam pa la ni brten pa dan//
bdag ñid legs smon snon yañ bsod nams bgyis//
'khor lo chen po bzi ni khyod la mña'//

You possess these four great wheels (*mahācakra*).¹⁷
 dwelling in a favourable environment,
 association with worthy persons,
 a proper goal for yourself,
 and accomplishment of merit in the past.

2) Mora-paritta

The Pāli *Jātaka* gives a prose story of a golden peacock twice, as the *Mora-jātaka* (No. 159) and the *Mahāmora-jātaka* (No. 491).¹⁸ The basic narrative has a parallel near the end of the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivādin *Vinaya*¹⁹ and in the *Mahāmāyūrī-vidyārājñī*.²⁰ A parallel to verse 2 of the *Mora-sutta* occurs in the *Mahāmāyūrī-vidyārājñī*, with additions and variants and with the lines in a different sequence.²¹

¹⁷ It is interesting that of the texts studied here, only the Sāmmatiya citation and Nāgārjuna describe the four wheels as “great” (*mahā*).

¹⁸ For references see Leslie Grey, *A Concordance of Buddhist Birth Stories*, Oxford, 1994, pp. 253, 218.

¹⁹ Nalinaksha Dutt (ed.), *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. III, Part 1, [Srinagar, 1947] Delhi, 1984, pp. 287.11–288.13. Cf. Jampa Losang Panglung, *Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya analysiert auf Grund der tibetischen Übersetzung*, Tokyo, 1981, p. 62.

²⁰ Shūyo Takubo (ed.), *Ārya-Mahā-Māyūrī Vidyā-Rājñī*, Tokyo, 1972, 7.9–9.18. Cf. the translation and discussion (which notes the relation to the Pāli *jātakas*) in A.F. Rudolf Hoernle, *The Bower Manuscript*, Calcutta, 1893–1912, pp. 240a–e.

²¹ Takubo, p. 6, ult; cf. also 38.17–39.1; 42.16–20.

*Mora-paritta*²²

Mahāmāyūrī

ye brāhmanā vedagū
sabbadhamme
te me namo te ca mam
pālayantu
nam' atthu buddhānaṃ
nam' atthu bodhiyā
namo vimuttānaṃ namo
vimuttiyā.

namo 'stu buddhāya namo 'stu bodhaye
namo 'stu muktāya namo 'stu muktaye
namo 'stu śāntāya namo 'stu śāntaye
namo vimuktāya namo vimuktaye
*ye brāhmanā vāhita-pāpa-dharmāḥ*²³
teṣāṃ namas te ca mama pālayantu.

The *Mahāmāyūrī* is a cumulative work that draws on diverse sources, and has parallels in the Mūlasarvāstivādin *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, the (Mūla)Sarvāstivādin *Upasena-sūtra*, and the Theravādin *Mora-jātaka*, *Khandavatta-jātaka* (No. 203), and *Vinaya*.²⁴ In the present case the prose narrative is close to, or derived from, the *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, but the verse, not found in the *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, resembles a verse of the Pāli *Mora-jātaka*.

Nandapurī

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²² *Jātaka* II 34.12.

²³ Cp. Franz Bernhard (ed.), *Udānavarga*, Vol. I (Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden X), Göttingen, 1965, 33:13a and Radhagovinda Basak (ed. with Bengali translation), *Mahāvastu Avadāna*, Vol. III, Calcutta, 1968, p. 430.13 *yo brāhmaṇo vāhitapāpadharmo*; *Udāna* 3.20, *Vinaya* I 3.5 *yo brāhmaṇo bāhitapāpadhammo*.

²⁴ Cf. Skilling, “Rakṣā Literature”, p. 140.