



## DHARMAŚARĪRA-SŪTRA

**DHARMAŚARĪRA-SŪTRA**, a short Buddhist text belonging to the Mahāyānist tradition. Two different versions of the Sanskrit text, a fragment of the Khotanese version, and a Chinese translation have been published so far.

One folio belonging to the German Turfan collection with the complete Sanskrit text in North Turkestan Brāhmī (formerly called “the slanting type”) was published by Stöner. Part of the same text is also found on a fragment published as Nr. 893 in Waldschmidt. A different text in the St. Petersburg (Leningrad) collection, also bearing the title “Dharmaśarīra-sūtra” but twice as long as the Turfan text, was published by G. M. Bongard-Levin and M. I. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya (1985, pp. 66-76). This is written in South Turkestan Brāhmī (formerly called “the upright type”) on five folios. The Khotanese version is found on two folios numbered 6 and 7 in the St. Petersburg collection, also in the upright type of Brāhmī, and was published by G. M. Bongard-Levin and E. N. Tyomkin. The Chinese text (late 10th century C.E.) is in the *Taishō Tripiṭaka* (XVII, no. 766; XII, no. 356 with a similar title translated in the 2nd century C.E. is a different text).

The main part of the sutra is a list of qualities leading to or attained by Enlightenment. These qualities are classified according to number (e.g., eight salvations) and arranged generally in ascending order. Sometimes details of an item are given. The list is preceded by a prologue and followed by an epilogue.

Of the two versions of the Sanskrit text, the shorter one from Turfan seems



more primitive. Most of its qualities generally reappear in the same order in the longer Leningrad text. The Chinese version represents the more developed form and is by far the longest. The Khotanese version, on the other hand, is different in that the list in the extant text is extremely short, mentioning only a few items. A passage which praises itself as the essence of the doctrines of other major Mahāyāna sutras, such as the *Prajñāpāramitā* and *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, is absent from any other version. The Khotanese version is more like an abbreviated paraphrase of the sutra than the translation of a Sanskrit text not yet discovered.

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