



JĀTAKASTAVA

JĀTAKASTAVA, a Khotanese religious poem in praise (Skt. *stava*-) of the Buddha's former births (Skt. *jātaka*-). It is entirely preserved in a single manuscript that was recovered from the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas (Qianfodong) near Dunhuang (q.v. at *iranica.com*) in northwestern China and is now kept in the British Library. The text, written in formal Late South Turkestan Brāhmī (q.v.) script, occupies fols. 1v-39r and is followed by a colophon in cursive script on fol. 39 (ms. Ch. 00274: Bailey, *KT I*, pp. 198-219; facs. of fol. 1v and 39r in Stein, 1921, pl. cl; complete facs. in Bailey, 1938, pp. 145-83; ed. Dresden, 1955, with tr., grammatical sketch, survey of parallels of the stories and gloss.; corrections and additions in Dresden, *IJJ* 14/1-2 1972, pp. 104-6; cf. Emmerick, 1992, p. 24).

The work, which is written in Late Khotanese and whose title is known from the text itself (stanza 3 and colophon, fol. 39r2), is dedicated to the well-being of the Khotanese King Viśa' Śūrrā (st. 5) and must thus date from this king's reign (967-78 C.E.). Its aim is to extol the virtues of the Buddha by means of extremely concise summaries (one to five stanzas each) of fifty-two edifying episodes from fifty-one *jātaka* stories (two episodes are taken from the story of Prince Viśvantara, sts. 141-43 and 161-63); for most of the stories, parallels have been traced elsewhere in Buddhist narrative literature. The Khotanese *Jātakastava* is presumably an original composition based on Indian sources and not a real translation, though it is presented as such (cf. Dresden, 1955, pp. 402-3). No precise parallel text has been identified: the Sanskrit *Jātakastava* of Jñānayaśas belongs to the same literary genre but is a different text (Sanskrit



and Tibetan texts in Bailey, 1939; rev. Sanskrit and tr. in Shackleton Bailey, 1954).

The praise of the *jātakas* that forms the main body of the work is preceded by a prologue (sts. 1-10) and followed by an epilogue (sts. 164-69). Most of the summaries close with such short formulas of praise as “Therefore, to you then homage more than a hundred myriad times” (v. 15d), or “Therefore to you, O good being, from me at your feet homage” (v. 29d) and the like, but occasionally the praise extends to half a stanza or to a whole stanza, as in st. 19. Accordingly, the two stanzas that follow the fifty-first story—the future Buddha’s gift of his own flesh to ransom a pigeon—are also best regarded as the relevant, otherwise missing, praise (sts. 159-60) and not as an “interlude” as suggested by M. J. Dresden (1955, pp. 401, 444).

The colophon informs us that the text was copied or ordered to be copied by a follower of Vajrayāna (Diamond Vehicle) Buddhism called Cā Kīmā-śanā (i.e., Chinese *Zhang Jinshan*), whose name also occurs in the Khotanese Vajrayanist poems of ms. Ch. i.0021b of the year 971 C.E. (see Skjærvø, 2002, pp. 550-56) and in the Chinese devotional text of ms. Ch. i.0021a of the year 982 C.E. (see Bailey, 1944, p. 11; for the datings see Hamilton, 1979, p. 51). His signature is found in Sogdian script at the end of the colophon (*kymśi’n* without the family name) as well as in the last preserved folio of the Khotanese version of the medical text *Siddhasāra* by Ravigupta (*cw kymś’n*, ms. Ch. ii.002, fol. 156v: see Bailey, 1938, p. 67). The Kīma-śanā mentioned without a family name in the burlesque poem of ms. P 2745 (Bailey, *KT* II, pp. 92-93; ed. Kumamoto, 1995, pp. 243-45, with tr. and comm.) could be the same person.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

D. R. Shackleton Bailey, “The Jātakastava of Jñānayaśas,” in *Asiatica: Festschrift Friedrich Weller zum 65. Geburtstag gewidmet von seinen Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern*, ed. J. Schubert and U. Schneider, Leipzig, 1954, pp. 22-29.



H. W. Bailey, *Codices Khotanenses: India Office Library Ch. ii 002, Ch. ii 003, Ch. 00274 Reproduced in Facsimile with an Introduction*, Copenhagen, 1938.

Idem, "The Jātaka-stava of Jñānayaśas," *BSOS* 9/4, 1939, pp. 851-59.

Idem, "The Colophon of the *Jātaka-stava*," *Journal of the Greater India Society* 11/1, 1944, pp. 10-12.

Idem, *Khotanese Texts [KT] I-VII*, Cambridge, 1945-85 (several reprs. with corrections).

M. J. Dresden, *The Jātakastava or "Praise of the Buddha's Former Births": Indo-Scythian (Khotanese) Text, English Translation, Grammatical Notes and Glossaries*, Philadelphia, 1955.

R. E. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan*, 2nd ed., Tokyo, 1992.

J. Hamilton, "Les règnes khotanais entre 851 et 1001," in *Contributions aux études sur Touen-houang*, ed. M. Soyumié, Genève, 1979, pp. 49-54.

H. Kumamoto, "Miscellaneous Khotanese Documents from the Pelliot Collection," *Tokyo University Linguistics Papers* 14, 1995, pp. 229-58.

P. O. Skjærvø, *Khotanese Manuscripts from Chinese Turkestan in The British Library: A Complete Catalogue with Texts and Translations*, with contributions by U. Sims-Williams, *Corpus Inscr. Iran. II/V/Texts VI*, London, 2002.

M. A. Stein, *Serindia: Detailed Report of Explorations in Central Asia and Westernmost China*, Oxford, 1921, 5 vols.