# Introduction

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## *1 Writing Buddhism and Buddhist writing*

For most of its history, the academic study of Buddhism has been dominated by the study of the written word, i.e., of texts, books and manuscripts. This holds especially true for the encounter with the Indian forms of Buddhism, often understood as the originals of those derived phenomena that later in the course of the religion's spread manifested as "Chinese Buddhism," "Tibetan Buddhism" and the like. The Indian forms were seen as representing a more pristine stage, undistorted by cultural and linguistic differences and much closer to the founder himself. The Western academic propensity to search for origins naturally directed the interest of scholars towards older forms, and older inevitably meant Indian. When Eugène Burnouf (1801–1852), one of the founding fathers of Buddhology, began to study Buddhism, he based his studies on written sources, among them the Sanskrit manuscripts which had been sent by Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800–1894) from Nepal to the Société Asiatique in 1837.[1] The Kathmandu Valley formed the last pocket on the whole subcontinent in which a form of Sanskrit Buddhism had survived into the modern age. It was transmitted exclusively within the ethnic group of the Newars, and although its constant interaction with Hinduism had led to very specific adaptations, it offered a singular window on late Indian Tantric Buddhism. Yet the eyes of scholars were caught less by its colourful rituals than by the manuscripts the Newars had faithfully preserved for a thousand years after the decline of Buddhism in India had set in. Those manuscripts became the focus of the scholars' gaze, and it took more than a century before the living Buddhism of the Newars eventually came into their field of vision — although even today it is sometimes overlooked.[2]

In more recent times it has been argued that the dominance of this preoccupation with literary sources has led to various misrepresentations in the reconstruction of Indian Buddhism.[3] This is certainly true, and for several reasons, one of them being that the sources themselves are by no means easy to interpret. As a natural consequence, interpretations vary greatly and tend to reflect the predilections or preoccupations of the interpreters.[4] Most of the literature preserved is normative in character, and it is nearly impossible to contextualize in time and place. Much of it is also anonymous, and there is no way of knowing when and where it was conceived or written down. It is equally impossible to know who conceived or wrote it, and nothing is known about those to whom it was addressed, its audience and the groups among which it continued to circulate. This state of

[1] Cf. J[an] W[illem] de Jong, *A Brief History of Buddhist Studies in Europe and America*, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, [2]1987: 19; Akira Yuyama, *Eugène Burnouf. The Background to his Research into the Lotus Sutra*, Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2000 (Bibliotheca Philologica et Philosophica Buddhica, 3); Christian K. Wedemeyer, "Tropes, Typologies and Turnarounds: A Brief Genealogy of the Historiography of Tantric Buddhism," *History of Religions* 40 (2001): 223–259, esp. pp. 235–242.

[2] See, e.g., David Gellner, "Himalayan Conundrum? A Puzzling Absence in Ronald M. Davidson's *Indian Esoteric Buddhism*," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27 (2004): 411–417.

[3] A notable statement of this argument is Gregory Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," *History of Religions* 31 (1991): 1–23; cf. also the discussion in Richard F. Nance, *Speaking for Buddhas: Scriptural Commentary in Indian Buddhism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012: 7–12, and, very recently, Michael Willis's review of Johannes Bronkhorst's book *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism* in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 76 (2013): 330–332.

[4] For a survey of ten distinct systemic assessments of early Indian Buddhism illustrating this point, cf. George Chatalian, "Early Indian Buddhism and the Nature of Philosophy: A Philosophical Investigation," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 11 (1983): 167–222.

affairs hardly improves when it comes to literature by named authors, such as commentaries or poetical works. Here it becomes easier to get at least a glimpse of the addressees and audiences, since these works often interact with others of the same genre, but the problem of time and place largely remains: the overwhelming majority of these works cannot be precisely dated and the place of their origin is unknown. Even famous authors like Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu or Aśvaghoṣa and Āryaśūra are hardly more than names: they remain shadowy figures of whom nothing is left but their works, and often enough even the actual authorship of these is disputed. All this said, and despite the many other difficulties they pose, the texts remain indispensable, even as Buddhist Studies moves to include archaeology, epigraphy, art history and anthropology in its disciplinary toolbox.

From whatever perspective they approach the religion, one of the greatest challenges confronting scholars of Buddhism is the sheer magnitude of its literature; for much of their history Buddhists were no strangers to the written word, and employed it prolifically, even though the means for encoding and transmitting the teachings of the Buddha went through several paradigmatic turns. For at least three centuries, we assume, the transmission was exclusively oral, and it was the brains and the memories of Gautama's followers which served as the repository and as the medium of reproduction. Writing appears to have been a rather late invention in India, and there is no solid proof that an indigenous script was in use before the rise of the Mauryan empire, or even before Aśoka, its most celebrated ruler, in the third century BCE. Very likely the new technique was introduced for worldy purposes like administration and business, and it is unknown when, and why, "religious" texts were written down for the first time. However, there are two indications from opposite ends of the Indian subcontinent that Buddhists were at least among the first — if they were not the very first — to initiate a fundamental turn to the new medium for transmitting and preserving their religious lore. A Ceylonese chronicle, the *Dīpavaṃsa* ("Chronicle of the Island"), compiled in the 4th century CE from older records, reports that in the 1st century BCE the monks in Sri Lanka assembled and, "in order that the religion might endure for a long time" (*ciraṭṭhitatthaṃ dhammassa*), wrote down the Tipiṭaka, the scriptures, and the Aṭṭhakathā, the commentaries.[5] This passage comprises only two verses; it does not mention any details of the form and contents of that Tipiṭaka, and it is difficult to establish the information as historical fact.[6] However, corroborative evidence has recently been supplied by the sensational manuscript finds of the last fifteen years in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Palaeographical considerations and some radiocarbon datings place the overwhelming majority of these finds in the first three centuries of the Common Era, but for two manuscripts a radiocarbon dating is reported which, if correct, would put them at least as far back as the first century BCE (cf. pp. 9 and 54). This would make them the oldest Buddhist — and at the same time oldest Indian — manuscripts known so far, and their antiquity lends credibility to the report of the Ceylonese chronicle.

Writing never superseded memorization and orality in the Buddhist world. Although it proved a more stable medium and allowed of many new possibilities, it also created new problems. The organic material of the manuscripts, be it birch bark or palm leaf, was not immune to deterioration, and especially under climatic conditions such as prevailed in most of India, manuscripts had to be copied again and again in order to preserve their contents. Copying had to be done manually by scribes, a process which was not only costly and time-consuming but also invited all sorts of mistakes, from simple misspellings to haplographies and dittographies, to name only the most common ones, which endanger

[5] Cf. Heinz Bechert, "The Writing Down of the Tripiṭaka in Pāli," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 36 (1992): 45–53.

[6] But cf. now Anālayo, "The Historical Value of the Pāli Discourses," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 55 (2012): 223–253.

accurate transmission and which now keep modern philologists busy in the attempt to reconstruct the originals.

After the acquisition of writing, Buddhists in India contented themselves with memory and manuscripts. It was only in East Asia that Buddhists proved once more to be the pioneers when it came to adopting a new technology for their specific needs of copying and multiplying texts: it appears that they were the first to use the new invention of printing with wooden blocks for preparing huge quantities of identical copies. The oldest preserved examples are *dhāraṇī* texts prepared in Japan in the 7th century CE, and the oldest dated printed book in the world is a Chinese scroll of the year 868 containing the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā*. It was found in the famous library cave at Dunhuang and is now exhibited in the British Museum, London. Although Buddhists in Central Asia learned the technique of printing from China and adapted it to their own purposes,[7] it did not reach India, probably because the Silk Road had already lost its function of keeping Central Asian Buddhism connected to its Indian origins. Whatever technology they used, however, there is no doubt that Buddhists themselves were from quite early on enthusiastic and prodigious generators of written texts, producing an ocean of literature so vast that no modern scholar could ever hope to explore its full expanse.

## *2 Recent Developments*

Nevertheless, scholars have risen to the challenge, and continue to do so. Indeed, the last two decades have witnessed an upsurge of research, in particular on Buddhist manuscripts in Indian languages. This has been partly to do with renewed efforts to make accessible the huge amount of manuscript fragments recovered from Central Asia by various expeditions at the beginning of the last century. More important, however, have been the sensational manuscript finds, sometimes called the "Dead Sea Scrolls of Buddhism," in Afghanistan and Pakistan during the nineties of the last century. They have attracted — and continue to attract — an unusually high level of public attention, which at least indirectly helped the scholars concerned in conveying the impression that they were involved in something very important. At roughly the same time, longstanding efforts to gain access to Sanskrit manuscripts preserved in Tibet yielded the first major results. All these developments provided scholars with fascinating new material and inspired a fresh interest in work on manuscripts, despite the tendency to be observed throughout the academic world to put a lower value on solid philological work.

The present volume attempts to provide a comprehensive overview of these recent developments and to bring together all the results achieved so far. It is the outcome of a conference held at Stanford in June 2009 — "Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: The State of the Field" — but as the work of identifying and publishing manuscripts goes on continuously, great care was taken to have the contributors include new information up until June 2013. The original inspiration of the Stanford meeting had been to bring together all projects dealing with Buddhist manuscripts in Indian languages (except Pali) and present the current state of research, but due to the sheer amount of material it proved impossible to achieve the same degree of thoroughness and completeness in all areas of the field. Beyond that, our contributors chose different approaches, and we thought it neither necessary nor profitable to insist on structural similarities. The papers address the field from a variety of perspectives: in some, a certain collection is described, while others combine collections

[7] Strangely enough, in view of the extremely small percentage of prints among the Indic material, the first publication of a Sanskrit text brought back to Berlin by the first Prussian Turfan expedition in March 1903 was devoted to fragments of a printed version of the *Saṃyuktāgama*; cf. Richard Pischel, "Bruchstücke des Sanskritkanons der Buddhisten aus Idykutšari, Chinesisch-Turkestān," *Sitzungsberichte der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin 1904: 807–827.

with script or language (e.g., Kharoṣṭhī and Gāndhārī). Again others take their starting point from the place where work on manuscripts from various find-spots is coordinated. The papers reflect different organizational structures, some the work of individuals, others the joint endeavours of a body of scholars (e.g., on the Schøyen Collection) or even the work of a study group meeting regularly to edit a specific manuscript (cf. especially the projects at Taisho University and the remarks on p. 329). In fact, it is this very diversity of material and of approaches which is characteristic of the field, and we did not wish to camouflage this or reduce it to a bland uniformity.

After the early European encounter with the manuscripts from Nepal, a succession of various finds advanced our knowledge of Indian Buddhist literature and helped in recovering an ever growing part of it, even though each new find also demonstrated — with equally growing clarity — how much of this incredibly rich and voluminous literature has been lost. The most recent finds from Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular indicate that the texts preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations most likely represent only a fraction of what was once available in India. In the following, the major finds of the last hundred years or so are briefly surveyed in chronological order and related to current research projects and the papers which deal with them.

### *3 Sanskrit Manuscripts from Central Asia (Xinjiang)*

When Western scholars started to recover the original texts of Indian Buddhism they had to rely on what was preserved in the two surviving traditions, the literature of the followers of the Vajrayāna in Nepal on the one hand and the scriptures of the Theravāda Buddhists of Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia on the other. The literary heritages of these two traditions could not have been more diverse; they had originated in very different times and held hardly anything in common. However, they pointed to the tremendous range of developments within Buddhist thought and literature, and gave a sense of what had been lost when Buddhism declined in India.

The situation changed dramatically when the first reports surfaced of Buddhist cultures once flourishing along the ancient Silk Road in Central Asia, cultures which had vanished after the intrusions of Islamic invaders. This news initiated the famous race to Eastern Turkestan for artifacts and manuscripts which started in the final years of the 19th century, lasted until just before the First World War, and yielded sensational findings. Although manuscripts in Indian languages were found in a large number of places which are widely separated — from Tumšuq in the west to Dunhuang in the east, and from Turfan in the north to Khotan in the south — it makes sense to treat them together, since they all belonged to the same cultural milieu, i.e., Central Asian Buddhism in its various manifestations, and they were all, with one exception, written in Buddhist Sanskrit and in forms of Indian and Central Asian Brāhmī. The exception was the famous *Dharmapada* manuscript, written on a very long birch-bark scroll in the Gāndhārī language and the Kharoṣṭhī script. It was apparently found in Khotan and in 1892 sold in two parts, one to N. F. Petrovskij, then the Russian Consul-General in Kashgar, and the other to the French traveler Jules-Léon Dutreuil du Rhins. Both parts were introduced to the scholarly world at the 11th International Congress of Orientalists in Paris in 1897, an event which contributed to the sudden interest in the archaeological remains hidden in the Tarim Basin.

The palaeographically oldest manuscripts must have been imported from India, since they are written on palm leaf, which was not available in Central Asia. Apart from the Khotanese *Dharmapada* there are a few other manuscripts on birch bark, but all in folio format; some of them were probably imported, but others were definitely written in Central Asia itself, since a later Central Asian variety of Brāhmī was used. The overwhelming majority, considerably more than 95%, are written on paper, a material invented in China and exceedingly popular in Eastern Turkestan too. The state of preservation is generally deplorable: fragments are the rule, undamaged folios the rare exception. Among the tens of thousands of fragments only one complete book, a composite manuscript of 54 folios, is preserved in the German collection.[8] There is a clear distinction between manuscripts found along the northern branch of the Silk Road and those from the southern branch: most of the Mahāyāna sūtras were found in the south, while nearly all of the texts coming from the north belong to the type of Buddhism we call "Mainstream" or "Śrāvakayāna."[9] It appears that the monks (and nuns?) of the monasteries along the northern branch followed the scriptures of the school of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins, once an important branch of Indian Buddhism, since most of the Vinaya and Āgama texts found there are of Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda provenance. Fragments of the scriptures of the Dharmaguptakas are very rare exceptions. Besides works of canonical origin, a wide variety of topics and literary genres is attested, from commentaries to works of poetry and treatises on such topics as grammar and medicine (cf. the thematically arranged index in Klaus Wille's contribution on the Turfan Collection in Berlin, pp. 193–209). Apart from such "scientific" works, non-Buddhist texts are extremely rare: there is a fragment of the *Laghucāṇakyarājanītiśāstra* in the Turfan Collection (cf. p. 209) and a fragment of the *Mahābhārata* in the Berezovsky Collection (cf. p. 247). This rarity seems to reflect a view preserved in a rule of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, namely that such books should be sold by the monks (cf. the contribution by Oskar von Hinüber, p. 82, where he quotes this rule in his discussion of a fragment of the *Tantrākhyāyika* in the Gilgit find).

The Central Asian manuscripts were recovered by individuals and expeditions from several European countries and from Japan, and today they are spread over a number of collections. More than a hundred years have passed since the manuscripts came to the attention of scholars, but the editorial work has not yet been completed. Recent years have seen a renewed endeavour to identify the fragments and make them available for further research, but it has become increasingly difficult to keep track of all the identifications, editions and re-editions. Therefore an attempt is made in this volume to bring together at least all the identifications in order to present for the first time a survey of the Sanskrit Buddhist literature of Central Asia and to allow scholars interested in a specific text to locate and scrutinize the manuscript evidence. The very rich German collection in Berlin is presented by Klaus Wille (pp. 187–211), the French collection in Paris by Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Klaus Wille (pp. 213–222), the British collection in London again by Wille (pp.

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[8] It was found in Qizil on the northern branch of the Silk Road, and for reconstructing the cultural history and the local practice of Tocharian Buddhism it is of considerable importance. Inexcusably, the first scholars working on the find separated the single texts of this book and integrated them into their own system of classification according to contents. We owe its reconstruction to Lore Sander, who also gave an overview of the texts it contains: Lore Sander, "Tocharische Dokumente im Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin," in Bernfried Schlerath, ed., *Tocharisch: Akten der Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft, Berlin, September 1990*, Reykjavík: Málvísindastofnun Háskóla Íslands, 1994: 93–104d. Folio 53, described as blank and missing in Sander, was found by Klaus Wille: it is included in the Tocharian collection as no. THT 295 and contains two more poems (published as no. 295 in Emil Sieg, Wolfgang Siegling, *Tocharische Sprachreste, Sprache B*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953).

[9] At the Stanford meeting there was sustained discussion of the various terms currently used for non-Mahāyāna varieties of Buddhism, and while — not surprisingly — no consensus was reached, it was generally agreed that all these terms have their problems, some more than others. Here we use "Mainstream Buddhism" with no particular confidence that it is significantly better than any of the other candidates. More importantly, however, it was also agreed that the application of such terms, and also of *nikāya* labels (Sarvāstivādin, Mahāsāṃghika, etc.), calls for extreme caution, as we may too readily assume that they actually correspond to things "on the ground," be they groups of people, institutions, clearly defined bodies of texts and so on, that is, we may be engaging in tendentious reification. Furthermore, *nikāya* affiliation and Mahāyāna orientation are not mutually exclusive: a member of the Saṅgha could, e.g., be ordained according to the Sarvāstivāda vinaya and also be a follower of the bodhisattva path, and thus the presence of Sarvāstivādin literature at a site is not in itself evidence for the absence of Mahāyāna.

223–246), parts of the Russian, the Japanese and the British collections by Shin'ichirō Hori (pp. 257–267), the fragments discovered in the area of ancient Khotan in recent years by DUAN Qing (pp. 269–278), and an overview of all collections and single fragments by Hartmann and Wille (pp. 247–255). When editing these papers, most of them furnished with separate and sometimes very long indexes, it became obvious that a digital tool which brings all these indexes together, facilitates searching and can easily be updated is an urgent desideratum.

The Central Asian manuscripts come from a region which was once under strong Buddhist influence, but they are archaeological finds. They represent historical documents, and they are no longer connected with any living tradition. The manuscripts from Eastern Turkestan were very poorly preserved, and what had survived was in an extremely fragmentary state, but they brought to light the Indian versions of works hitherto completely unknown or known only from translations into Chinese and Tibetan. These manuscripts came from a huge area and had been written during a long period of time, roughly between the 2nd and the 11th, if not even the 13th and 14th centuries.

### 4 *The Gilgit Find*

The situation was rather different with the next major manuscript find: it happened in one place, and it revealed a literature which was used in a much smaller area and in a shorter period of time. This was the famous Gilgit find in 1931 and 1938. All the manuscripts are written in Sanskrit and in two variants of the Brāhmī script, and, with one exception, all of them are written on birch bark, but on folios, not on scrolls; the one exception is written on palm leaf (the *Sarvadharmaguṇavyūharājasūtra*, cf. p. 114). On palaeographical grounds the manuscripts may be dated from the sixth to the eighth or even the ninth centuries. The state of preservation varies, but in general it is much better than that of the manuscripts from Central Asia: although most of the texts are not complete, there are many complete folios, and a number of texts can be reconstructed either fully or in large part. As far as they can be assigned to one of the *nikāyas*, they belong exclusively to the school of the Mūlasarvāstivādins. Besides "Mainstream Buddhist" works of this school, a fair number of Mahāyāna sūtras is represented. Works of the tantric tradition are rare, and so far only one small fragment of a work of the Buddhist epistemological school, namely of Dharmakīrti's *Hetubindu*, has been identified (cf. p. 113). The Gilgit find is treated in great detail in Oskar von Hinüber's contribution (pp. 79–135), which fully supersedes his previous ground-breaking study of 1979. Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Klaus Wille present related material which came to light only in the nineties of the last century, but may also go back to the Gilgit find (pp. 137–155).

### 5 *Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibet*

During the same decade that the Gilgit cache came to light, another very important find happened. Again it was located outside the Indian subcontinent, but this time there was no need for archaeological support, since the manuscripts were properly stored in accessible libraries. Moreover, these libraries belonged to monasteries of a living Buddhist tradition, a tradition, however, which had lost its original ability to make use of Sanskrit and Middle Indic books and to read the various Indian scripts. Therefore the manuscripts had become little more than age-old objects of veneration going back to the glory days of Buddhism's introduction into Tibet. For outsiders, however, they were to prove a powerful magnet. The Indian scholar and Buddhist Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana (1893–1963) had learned about the existence of Indian palm-leaf manuscripts in Tibetan monasteries, and this had roused his interest. Between 1934 and 1938 he undertook altogether four trips to Southern Tibet and visited several of the famous old monasteries in the province of gTsang, among them Sa-skya, Zhva-lu and Ngor, all of them former seats of Sanskrit learning and translation activity. During his trips Sāṅkṛtyāyana catalogued all the manuscripts he was able to see, copied some by hand, and photographed many others. He realized that this collection was priceless, and not simply because most of the manuscripts were complete and many of them were in rather good condition. Presumably they had been brought to Tibet by pious Tibetan pilgrims or by Indian refugee monks and scholars during a time when the second period of translating Indian literature into Tibetan had not yet come to an end and there was still continuous interaction between the Buddhists of India and those of Tibet. According to colophons and palaeography most of the manuscripts may be dated from the 11th to the 14th centuries, i.e., to the final phase of Buddhism in India. Sāṅkṛtyāyana saw more than 350 manuscripts altogether. Apparently most of them had not served as the exemplars for the corresponding Tibetan translations; at present, there is only one manuscript which can be proven to have been used by the translators.[10] Some of the texts listed by Sāṅkṛtyāyana had not been translated into Tibetan at all, and thus more works of Indian Buddhist literature surfaced whose existence had been forgotten for many centuries.

Most notable among them are texts of the vinaya of the Lokottaravādins, a sub-school of the Mahāsāṃghikas. An early Tibetan king had decreed that only works of the Mūlasarvāstivāda school be translated, and therefore the texts of the Lokottaravādins had been left untranslated, but at least the manuscripts were carefully preserved. No less sensational are the many texts of the epistemological school, practically unattested in all the other finds, but prominently represented among the Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet. Apart from them there are Mahāyāna sūtras, a large number of Tantric texts, commentaries, several Mainstream Buddhist works of one or more schools, and some poetical texts. These are all written in Sanskrit, with the exception of the texts of the Lokottaravādins and a *Dharmapada* the school affiliation of which is not yet finally settled. These latter works are characterized by a considerably more Prakritic language, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit in the narrower sense of the term.

Since in subsequent decades the originals remained inaccessible, scholars had to work with Sāṅkṛtyāyana's photographs, or those taken soon after by Giuseppe Tucci, both of which in many cases are far from perfect and in some simply resist every attempt at deciphering them. Any hope of an eventual improvement in the situation vanished when the Cultural Revolution went into full swing and Tibetan monasteries were razed to the ground in the thousands, and it was feared that all the manuscripts had been destroyed as well. However, it turned out that they had fared much better than most of their owners. This became known in the eighties of last century when a secret list started to circulate among Western scholars. It was a rather simple list, drafted by WANG Sen, of 259 Sanskrit manuscripts which had been brought around 1960–61 from Tibet to the Cultural Palace of Minorities in Beijing, and on closer inspection it was found to contain many titles already described by Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana.[11] The list confirmed what had already been known from Sāṅkṛtyāyana's reports: the Tibetans had preserved non-Buddhist texts as well. There

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[10] Cf. FAN Muyou, "Some Remarks on the Relationship between a Sanskrit Manuscript of the *Advayasamatāvijaya* from Tibet and its Tibetan Translation," *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 11 (2008): 375–380. For another possible case, the *Vinayasūtravṛttyabhidhānasvavyākhyāna*, see below, p. 298, note 25.

[11] WANG Sen's list is now published by Haiyan HU-von Hinüber as Appendix 1 of her paper "Some Remarks on the Sanskrit Manuscript of the Mūlasarvāstivāda-Prātimokṣasūtra Found in Tibet." In Ute Hüsken, Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Anne Peters, eds., *Jaina-itihāsa-ratna, Festschrift für Gustav Roth zum 90. Geburtstag* (Indica et Tibetica, 47), Marburg: Indica et Tibetica, 2006: 283–337. For further details see the remarks in Paul Harrison's contribution to this volume, pp. 279–290, which presents in one alphabetized list all the Sanskrit titles in WANG Sen's catalogue, as well as those inventoried by Sāṇkṛtyāyana and Tucci.

were works on medicine and grammar, which were normally used in Buddhist circles, but there were also copies of the *Bhagavadgītā*, non-Buddhist poetry and examples of narrative literature like the *Hitopadeśa*.[12]

Upon the news of the preservation of all this material, scholars breathed a sigh of relief and then set out on another manuscript hunt.[13] For various reasons it was not always entirely successful, but within the last two decades a steadily growing number of manuscripts has been studied and published, often as a result of collaboration between Chinese scholars and their Western or Japanese counterparts. To date there still exists no generally accessible catalogue of all the Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet — hence Paul Harrison's synoptic inventory on pp. 279–290 — but it has become very clear that neither Sāṅkṛtyāyana's nor WANG Sen's lists are exhaustive. A number of texts have been published which were not previously known from the available lists, as, e.g., the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, to mention only the best-known example. The present state of affairs is dealt with in several papers: Saerji describes in detail, first, the history of the cataloguing of the Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet and, second, the study of those manuscripts which are available as microfilms at Peking University (pp. 291–300); Helmut Krasser delineates the Sino-Austrian cooperation and its results (pp. 301–313); LUO Hong informs us about the history of the study of Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet and, from a more general perspective, about the various cooperative projects presently going on (pp. 315–321); Yoshiyasu Yonezawa and Jundō Nagashima sketch the trajectory of the Sanskrit Manuscript Research Project at Taisho University in Tokyo and review its results (pp. 323–332). By a slow process akin to drip-feeding, Buddhist manuscripts from Tibet have continued to be released, and these papers show the degree of progress made by international scholarship on research into them at the time of the Stanford conference and in the years immediately following.

Recently, however, a very surprising development was made public. Towards the end of 2012 several news programmes on Chinese television featured reports of a major project to locate and preserve Sanskrit manuscripts in the Tibetan Autonomous Region.[14] Backed by the local authorities, involving a large team of researchers, and running for six years (beginning in 2006), the project had culminated that year in the lavish printing of a 61-volume compendium of Sanskrit manuscripts in full-colour facsimile,[15] accompanied by four large catalogue volumes.[16] The technical quality of the reproductions appears to be extremely high. The reports spoke of the gathering of approximately 60,000 "pieces" (pre-

[12] The extremely interesting colophon of the Tibetan translation of the *Amarakośaṭīkā-kāmadhenu* mentions even the *Mahābhārata*, the *Harivaṃśa* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* among the works collected in sNe-gdong monastery, cf. below, p. 299, note 28.

[13] Some aspects of this quest, and what preceded it, are described in a very readable fashion in Ernst Steinkellner, *A Tale of Leaves: On Sanskrit Manuscripts in Tibet, their Past and their Future*, Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2004.

[14] At the time of writing, the reports were still accessible on the internet at the following urls: http://english.cntv.cn/program/china24/20120925/104046.shtml & http://english.cntv.cn/program/china24/20120925/107278.shtml (for segments of the CCTV English-language news programme "China 24," 25 September 2012); http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20120924/106890.shtml, http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20120925/106946.shtml & http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20120926/106462.shtml (for three reports on the CCTV English-language programme "Culture Express," 24, 25 & 26 September 2012), and http://tv.cntv.cn/video/C13425/0002ea84f1943dd-c209587de0a4e5c44 & http://tv.cntv.cn/video/C13425/99e0d3d4f7143ddc209587de0a4e5c44 (for two parts of a longer feature in Chinese, broadcast in the XZTV "Zai Xizang" ("In Tibet") series). We thank Kazunobu Matsuda for first drawing our attention to these reports.

[15] *Bod rang ljongs su nyar tshags byas pa'i ta la'i lo ma'i dpe cha kun btus par ma / Xizang zizhiqu zhencang beiyejing yingyin daquan* 西藏自治区珍藏贝叶经影印大全 (Chinese title: "Complete Collection of Photographic Reproductions of Palm-leaf Scriptures Preserved in the Tibet Autonomous Region").

[16] *Bod rang ljongs su nyar tshags byas pa'i ta la'i lo ma'i dpe cha bris ma'i dkar chag / Xizang zizhiqu zhencang beiyejing xieben zong mulu* 西藏自治区珍藏贝叶经写本总目录 (Chinese title: "General Catalogue of Palm-leaf Scripture Manuscripts Preserved in the Tibet Autonomous Region").

sumably 60,000 folios or folio fragments), inscribed with works relating to many branches of knowledge, both religious and secular, including astronomy, poetics, and grammar.[17] The manuscripts are said to cover the period from the 7th to the 17th centuries, and they are written in many different scripts. The international significance of the project is repeatedly emphasized in the reports, which state that the catalogue is meant to demonstrate to the world the contents of the collections, in order to enhance scholarship in the future.

The production of these handsome, large-format volumes represents a major step forward in research on Tibet's repositories of Indian manuscripts, a step we would hail more enthusiastically if it had been taken in broad daylight. Unfortunately, despite the abovementioned rhetoric, this publication is hardly one in any real sense of the word, since it is not public: at present the volumes are a closely-guarded secret, with access to them strictly limited. We have unconfirmed reports that the print-run was very small, and that few people are allowed to see them. Although some copies are held by institutions in Beijing, including the China Tibetology Research Center, to our knowledge no foreign scholar has yet been accorded the privilege of looking at them, let alone using them. This is obviously not a satisfactory state of affairs for all interested parties. While recognizing the rights of countries to control their own cultural property, at the same time we hope that eventually the fruits of all this industry will be shared with scholars outside the Peoples' Republic of China, in line with the open and free exchange of information that ought to be the norm in academia. This would be all the more appropriate, given that the manuscripts in question, produced in India and, by the vicissitudes of history, preserved in Tibet, are part of the heritage of the whole world.

## *6 The birch-bark scrolls in Kharoṣṭhī script from Greater Gandhāra*

The thirties of the last century witnessed not only the Gilgit find and the rediscovery of Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet, but they also saw the foreshadowing of the next major finds, which were once again to happen in the utmost northwestern corner of the Indian subcontinent and in a region with climatic conditions similarly favourable to the preservation of manuscripts as those in the Central Asian Tarim Basin. In 1932 Sylvain Lévi published a paper on fragments found by Joseph Hackin in 1930 in a cave in the Bamiyan Valley near the smaller of the two monumental Buddha statues.[18] The material was birch bark, and most of the fragments were written in various forms of Brāhmī ranging from the 3rd to the 8th centuries, with a few also in Kharoṣṭhī. This was a first hint at sizable remnants of Indian Buddhist literature in Afghanistan, a hint which was confirmed, unexpectedly and impressively, by the next finds about sixty years later.

In 1995 the British Library acquired several birch-bark scrolls reportedly discovered in eastern Afghanistan, in the area of Greater Gandhāra, as the region soon came to be referred to by scholars. These scrolls were found to contain texts written in Kharoṣṭhī script and in a little-known language, Gāndhārī, and it soon became evident that they not only formed part of a literature considered completely lost, but also represented the oldest Buddhist (and indeed Indian) manuscripts preserved so far. Very soon they were being called the "Dead Sea Scrolls of Buddhism" in the media, and although the claim implicit in this designation seemed exaggerated, at least in the beginning, it nevertheless aroused public interest and guaranteed high prices in the market. Both factors may have contributed to

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[17] From the reports one can catch only partial indications of the contents when the spines of the volumes are shown, e.g. vols. 9–12 contain Prajñāpāramitā mss (Sher phyin), 49–53 Language (sGra), 55 Poetics (sNyan ngag), 56 Lexicography (mNgon brjod), 58–60 Vedas (?) (Rig byed), and 61 Fragments (Thor bu).

[18] Sylvain Lévi, "Note sur des manuscrits sanscrits provenant de Bamiyan (Afghanistan), et de Gilgit (Cachemire)," *Journal asiatique* 220 (1932): 1–45. The first part of the paper deals with the fragments from Bamiyan (pp. 1–13) and includes photographs of four fragments.

further scrolls being preserved after their discovery by local people in Afghanistan and Pakistan. To date, approximately 77 scrolls are known, and their age and contents fully justify the importance for the history of Buddhism implied by their comparison to the Qumran find. As was to be expected, they contain canonical texts, but also a rich exegetical literature. Probably the biggest surprise they gave scholars was the existence of several Mahāyāna sūtras, one of them a version of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, often thought to be one of the earliest Mahāyāna sūtras of all.[19] So far, there are only two non-Buddhist texts, a legal document and a work of the Rājanīti/Arthaśāstra type which is written not in Gāndhārī, but in Sanskrit. The scrolls are distributed over various collections, described in the contributions by Richard Salomon (pp. 1–17), Mark Allon (pp. 19–33), and Harry Falk and Ingo Strauch (pp. 51–78). Collett Cox introduces a specific genre, the exegetical texts, which were an important development within Gandhāran Buddhism (pp. 35–49).

### *7 The Brāhmī manuscripts from Bamiyan*

Hackin's find in 1930 had already indicated the existence of Brāhmī manuscripts in Bamiyan, and this, too, was reconfirmed in the nineties. In 1996 the Norwegian manuscript collector Martin Schøyen acquired 108 fragments which reportedly came from a cave in Bamiyan, and this auspicious number formed the nucleus of a rapidly growing collection of such items, which finally contained several thousand sizable fragments and many more microfragments.[20] Although it is claimed that the manuscripts come from one place, the collection is extremely diverse; the material comprises palm leaf, leather and birch bark, but there are no scrolls. Judging from the palaeography, the fragments range from the 2nd to the 8th or even 9th centuries; the overwhelming majority are written in Brāhmī, but there are also several hundred Gāndhārī fragments in Kharoṣṭhī, and — what is very unusual — all of these are written on palm leaf. Among the Brāhmī fragments, many are in Sanskrit, but there are a fair number of manuscripts written in a language best described as Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit in the narrower sense of the term. Most of the manuscripts were sold in London, but some passed through the hands of dealers in Japan; therefore they are now distributed over at least four collections, three of them known — the Schøyen Collection in Norway, and the Hirayama and Hayashidera Collections in Japan — and one belonging to an anonymous collector in Europe.[21] Their common source is proven by the fact that fragments in the different collections can be shown to belong to the same manuscript or even the same folio.

Quite unlike the neighbouring Gilgit find, the Bamiyan manuscripts contain a surprisingly high number of fragments which have so far resisted any attempt at identification, although frequently enough text is preserved to allow a search for parallels in the existing

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[19] Until recently we had Kharoṣṭhī fragments of six Mahāyāna sūtras: *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, *Bhadrakalpika* (although the assignment of this text to the Mahāyāna is contested), *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*, *Sucitti*, *Sarvapuṇyasamuccayasamādhi*, and the Bajaur Mahāyāna sūtra described in this volume by Ingo Strauch. However, as we go to press, two more have been added to the number: an as yet unidentified text discovered by Kazunobu Matsuda and the *Pratyutpannabuddhasaṃmukhāvasthitasamādhi*, identified by Paul Harrison, Timothy Lenz and Richard Salomon. The total, now eight, is bound to increase.

[20] Buddhist manuscripts of this type constitute only one part of the Schøyen Collection as a whole.

[21] Provisionally termed "Collection of Private Ownership." It comprises six fragments, one of them probably from a *Bhikṣuprātimokṣavibhaṅga*, another one from a version of the *Dīrghilasūtra* (corresponding to the *Upakkilesasutta* in the *Majjhimanikāya* or to the relevant passage in the *Kosambakkhandhaka* of the *Mahāvagga*). A third fragment belongs to the *Sukhāvatīvyūha* manuscript published in Jens Braarvig *et al.*, eds., *Buddhist Manuscripts*, Vol. I (Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection I). Hermes Publishing: Oslo, 179–214, and preserves not only the end of this sūtra, but also the beginning of another, so far unknown, Mahāyāna sūtra, which opens with a dialogue between the Buddha and the bodhisattva Maitreya on the merit of producing a Buddha image. This fragment will be published in the next volume of the series Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection.

Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese and Tibetan corpora. Most probably none of these works is attested elsewhere, and this observation lends strong support to the image of the iceberg, of which we see only the topmost tip, i.e., we infer that only a tiny fraction of the Buddhist literature once existing in India has come down to us. Those manuscripts which have been identified contain works of Mainstream Buddhism, possibly of various schools; but among the vinaya texts those of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins prevail, which is consistent with Xuanzang's reports on the Bamiyan Saṅgha. There are a number of Mahāyāna sūtras, some of which were previously known — apart from short citations in other works — only from their Chinese and Tibetan translations, e.g., the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka*, the *Larger Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, the *Ajātaśatrukaukṛtyavinodanā*, and the *Śrīmālādevīsiṃhanādanirdeśa*. Fragments of commentaries are attested among the earlier manuscripts, but with very few exceptions it is difficult to identify them. Conspicuous is a folio of a work apparently written from a Mīmāṃsā standpoint, the only example so far of a non-Buddhist philosophical text from Bamiyan.

The Schøyen Collection is described by Jens Braarvig (pp. 157–164), the Hirayama and Hayashidera Collections by Kazunobu Matsuda (pp. 165–169). Lore Sander studies questions of palaeography from Greater Gandhāra to Central Asia and, in the second part of her paper, takes a closer look at the fragments found by Joseph Hackin in Bamiyan in 1930 and then preserved in the Kabul Museum until its sack by the Taliban (pp. 171–186).

## 8 *Manuscripts from Nepal*

By far the largest numbers of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts are preserved in Nepal. Today they are distributed over public and private collections in the Kathmandu Valley and in collections all over the world which obtained manuscripts from Nepal since the days of Brian Houghton Hodgson at the beginning of the 19th century. Among them a considerable number of palm-leaf manuscripts are preserved, which have been studied for their contents, for the historical data which their colophons contain,[22] for their illustrations,[23] and for many other purposes. The older among those which provide historical information generally date to the 11th and 12th centuries, but there is the famous manuscript of the *Skandapurāṇa*, possibly the oldest dated Nepalese manuscript, which goes back to 810 CE and indicates that libraries in Nepal, unlike those on the Indian subcontinent, offered conditions which allowed books to survive at least twelve hundred years.

In line with the religious practice of the Newars, the overwhelming majority of the manuscripts contain texts relating to Tantric Buddhism. With very few exceptions, Mainstream canonical works of the various schools are absent,[24] and the absence of Vinaya texts is conspicuous.[25] A number of Mahāyāna sūtras have been preserved in Nepal, especially the

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[22] Cf. Luciano Petech, *Mediaeval history of Nepal (c. 750–1480)*, Roma: Is.M.E.O., 1958 (Serie orientale Roma, 10.3): 10f.

[23] Cf. Pratapaditya Pal and Julia Meech-Pekarik , *Buddhist Book Illuminations*, Hong Kong etc.: Ravi Kumar Publ., 1988, and, more recently and with extensive bibliographical references, Karen Weissenborn, *Buchkunst aus Nālandā: Die Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā-Handschrift in der Royal Asiatic Society/London (Ms. Hodgson 1) und ihre Stellung in der Pāla-Buchmalerei des 11./12. Jahrhunderts*, Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Univ. Wien, 2012 (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, 77). See also Jinah Kim, *Receptacle of the Sacred: Illustrated Manuscripts and the Buddhist Book Cult in South Asia*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

[24] Notable exceptions include the famous *Mahāvastu* of the school of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins and a manuscript possibly from a *Madhyamāgama* containing part of the *Upālisūtra* edited already by Sylvain Lévi ("Notes indiennes," *Journal asiatique* 206 (1925): 26–35) and of the **Śikhālaka-/ *Sujātaka-sūtra* and the **Apramāda-/*Upamā* edited by Kazunobu Matsuda, "New Sanskrit Fragments of the *Madhyama-āgama* from the Cecil Bendall Manuscripts in the National Archives Collection, Kathmandu" (in Japanese), *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū* 44.2 (1996): 868–862.

[25] Two rare exceptions are the oldest surviving Pali manuscript (cf. Oskar von Hinüber, *The Oldest Pāli Manuscript: Four Folios of the Vinaya-Piṭaka from the National Archives, Kathmandu (Unter-*

so-called *nava dharmāḥ*, a famous group of nine sūtras, among them the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* already studied and translated by Eugène Burnouf. In the collections of manuscripts from Nepal there are texts of the epistemological school, there are commentaries, there are story collections of the Jātaka/Avadāna class, there are hymns (*stotra*) and there are poetical works of famous authors like Aśvaghoṣa and Haribhaṭṭa.

With the founding of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) in 1970 research on and documentation of the written heritage of the Kathmandu Valley entered a new phase. Within forty years more than 110,000 manuscripts in Sanskrit, Newari, Nepali and other Indian languages — Buddhist, Hindu and secular — in public and private collections were microfilmed, and thus a priceless treasure became accessible to scholars worldwide. In 2002, despite the fact that there were apparently still thousands of Sanskrit manuscripts in Nepal which had not been filmed, the NGMPP came to an end and was replaced by a new project, the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP), with the aim of preparing a detailed and comprehensive descriptive catalogue of all the Nepalese manuscripts which the NGMPP had recorded. Previously it had only been possible to prepare a filing card for each manuscript after a rather cursory study, but in recent years, due to the much more detailed cataloguing work, a number of important texts have unexpectedly come to light.

Although Harunaga Isaacson, the present director of the NGMCP, participated in the conference in Stanford, he was regrettably unable to contribute a paper on the present state of research on the Buddhist manuscripts in Nepal. However, there are various digital ways of informing oneself about the project as such, about the catalogue and about recent finds and studies.[26] Especially impressive is the list of publications based on manuscripts made available by the NGMPP/NGMCP.[27] To a certain extent the importance of the Nepalese manuscripts is also highlighted in Shin'ichirō Hori's discussion of their colophons (pp. 257–258) and also in Michael Hahn's contribution to this volume (pp. 333–346), which deals with a number of manuscripts from Nepal, mostly of poetical works, and illustrates how they contribute to establishing a philologically convincing text.

## 9 *Pali Manuscripts*

The study of Pali manuscripts goes back at least as far as that of Buddhist Sanskrit texts, and in 1826 the same Eugène Burnouf who studied the first Mahāyāna sūtra in an Indian language wrote also an important Pali grammar.[28] Since then the knowledge of Pali manuscripts has vastly expanded, and it is far beyond the scope of the present volume to cover this important subject. Since Pali Buddhism has survived until today even more vigorously than the Buddhism of the Newars, manuscript production continued well into the 20th century, and there is a tremendous amount of valuable palm-leaf manuscripts preserved in countless monasteries, temples, libraries and private residences throughout Sri Lanka and

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*suchungen zur Sprachgeschichte und Handschriftenkunde des Pāli II)*, Mainz: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991) and the so-called *Bhikṣuṇīkarmavācanā* manuscript of disputed school affiliation, edited already in 1920 by C. M. Ridding and L. de La Vallée Poussin and again in 1993 by Michael Schmidt ("Bhikṣuṇī-Karmavācanā. Die Handschrift Sansk. c.25(R) der Bodleian Library Oxford." In *Studien zur Indologie und Buddhismuskunde: Festgabe des Seminars für Indologie und Buddhismuskunde für Professor Dr. Heinz Bechert*, ed. R. Grünendahl, J.-U. Hartmann, P. Kieffer-Pülz, Bonn: Indica et Tibetica, 1993: 239–288; for remarks on the school affiliation cf. M. Schmidt, "Zur Schulzugehörigkeit einer nepalesischen Handschrift der Bhikṣu-Karmavācanā," *Untersuchungen zur buddhistischen Literatur*, bearbeitet von F. Bandurski *e. a.,* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994: 155–164).

[26] For a general overview see http://www.uni-hamburg.de/ngmcp/index_e.html; for the catalogue see http://catalogue.ngmcp.uni-hamburg.de/; for the *Newsletter of the NGMCP* see http://www.uni-hamburg.de/ngmcp/newsletter_e.html#nl6 (only nos. 3, 5 and 6 are available). (All pages last accessed on May 30, 2013).

[27] See http://www.uni-hamburg.de/ngmcp/publications_e.html (last accessed on May 30, 2013).

[28] Cf. de Jong 1987: 13f. (see above, note 1).

the Southeast Asian strongholds of Theravāda Buddhism. These texts urgently need to be listed and documented in order to prevent them from falling victim to the vicissitudes of climate, neglect and economic exploitation and to make them accessible for study and research. Better known and better preserved are the collections of Pali manuscripts in Western academic libraries,[29] but even here a lot still needs to be done.

Peter Skilling in his contribution (pp. 347–366) presents exemplary thoughts on the Pali literature of Thailand and on its materiality, and he suggested to us that we include another paper, by Bhikkhu Ñāṇatusita, on Pali manuscripts in Sri Lanka with a specific focus on the manuscripts imported to Ceylon from Buddhist centres in Southeast Asia (pp. 367–403). Both papers serve in a way as examples for what would be needed to do justice to the whole area of Pali Buddhism, and they highlight existing gaps rather than cover the field. Having to do with living traditions, they address present problems, for instance the oftentimes rather deplorable state of manuscript collections in Sri Lanka (pp. 370ff.) and the loss documented by comparison of present data with earlier surveys (p. 378). They also raise a number of interesting points worth reflecting on with regard to much earlier developments, such as the introduction of new scripts (p. 352), the change in meaning of the term Tripiṭaka (p. 361), and the ongoing impact of the imported literature in its new environment (p. 362). Skilling calls the Pali literature of Siam "doubly damned as a late literature preserved in even later manuscripts" (p. 364) and raises the intriguing — if not, to some, irritating — question (*ibidem*): "Which is more interesting or important, a seventeenth-century manuscript composed in Ayutthaya, or a second-century Gandhari fragment?" While the antiquities market has a ready and unambiguous economic answer to this question, scholars will take rather diverse views on questions of interest and importance. Looking at the papers of the present volume, readers may get the impression that their distribution tends to reflect the answer of the market. However, we would like to emphasize that this has not at all been our intention. The selection rather follows aspects of manageability, with a view to present the latest research and to stress collections which preserve singular material. For the understanding of a specific development at a given place and time, a late Pali manuscript may easily furnish more important information than a two-thousand-year-old manuscript fragment from Afghanistan.

## *10 Finding Texts*

From the above survey it becomes obvious that by no means all collections of Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts have been covered. There are simply too many private and public collections distributed all over the world and too many scholars studying them in order to list all the collections and describe all the recent contributions which have helped to advance our knowledge; thus, there must be important gaps besides the Pali manuscripts. One example would be the famous collection of Giuseppe Tucci in Italy, which was difficult to access until recent years, but is now, thanks to the efforts of Francesco Sferra, being made available to scholars in editions and excellent photographic reproductions.[30]

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[29] Cf., e.g., for German collections *Singhalesische Handschriften*, part 1 and 2, Wiesbaden 1969 and Stuttgart 1997 (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland XXII, 1 and 2) and *Burmese Manuscripts*, parts 1–7 (from part 5 with the title *Birmanische Handschriften*), Wiesbaden/Stuttgart 1979–2010 (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland XXIII, 1–7); for French collections *Catalogue des manuscrits palis des collections françaises fonds des bibliothèques publiques et privées*, établi par Jacqueline Filliozat, EFEO, Paris, et révisé par Jinadasa Liyanaratne et William Pruitt, Pali Text Society, Oxford (CD-Rom; 1972–2003); for English collections Tilman Frasch, "A Preliminary Survey of Burmese Manuscripts in Great Britain and Ireland," *SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2004; for Danish collections C. E. Godakumbura, assisted by U Tin Lwin, *Catalogue of Cambodian and Burmese Pali Manuscripts*, Copenhagen 1983 (Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts, Xylographs etc. in Danish collections, II, 1).

[30] Francesco Sferra (ed.), *Sanskrit Texts from Giuseppe Tucci's Collection*, Part I, Roma; Is.I.A.O.,

Descriptions, title lists or catalogues exist for many collections, and by now there are various resources for accessing them. Already in 1992 Akira Yuyama presented a very useful overview,[31] meanwhile updated in the bibliography prepared by Yasuhiro Sueki,[32] of which a further updated pdf file is available for download.[33]

For the collections that are dealt with in this volume, the contributions below present the latest state of research. For the material from Gandhara, Central Asia and Gilgit in particular, all the identifications of texts and all the manuscripts and, more often, manuscript fragments in which these texts are preserved are listed. These lists of identifications provide excellent research material, for instance for a history, still to be written, of Indian Buddhist literature in Central Asia. They also demonstrate how consistent the collections of manuscripts from the Northern Route of the Silk Road are with each other, a point made already twenty years ago with regard to the Hoernle and Turfan Collections (cf. below, p. 223). However, they also lead, especially in the case of the Central Asian collections, to several rather long and partly overlapping lists of texts which can be found in several collections. There is only one exception, namely the list of "Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna and related texts" on pp. 226–229, which unites Mahāyāna texts found in Khotan from all Central Asian collections. Some readers may find this tiresome, but we decided against collecting all the information into a general index or a general title list at the end of the volume, because the degree of completeness varies widely among the contributions, and because it is difficult to conceive how a reader could possibly benefit from an index which combines, e.g., Mahāyāna texts in the Stein Collection with the Pali texts listed by Bhikkhu Ñāṇatusita. Therefore, a scholar who is interested in a specific work and wants to establish whether its Indic text is extant will have to check the individual lists in each of the relevant contributions.

A certain degree of redundancy in this volume will be observed with the Sanskrit manuscripts from Tibet. Several scholars describe the history of and the research on this material from their specific viewpoints. Since the number of accessible texts is still rather limited, it is unavoidable that the same texts and the same editions are referred to in various places. However, in the light of recent developments (cf. above, pp. xiv–xv), we preferred to leave the contributions unaltered despite these overlaps, since, in a certain way, they illustrate not only the history, but also the politics of research and accessibility, which seemed to us no less interesting.

### *11 Closing Remarks*

Although the papers in this volume are mainly concerned with describing the various manuscript collections and the research devoted to them, they often raise interesting issues of broader relevance. For example, Helmut Krasser discusses the notion of an Urtext with regard to the commentarial genre he is concerned with, and he reaches the conclusion that the peculiarities of some commentaries are much better explained once these commentaries are understood as a kind of student's notes (pp. 305ff.). In such a case, one can still use this material to reconstruct a Sanskrit text, but reconstructing the Urtext of the work commented upon will become impossible. On p. 144 Jens-Uwe Hartmann mentions another important observation by Gudrun Melzer affording us for the first time a closer look at the actual practice of a scriptorium: modern technical means of reproduction and

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2008 (Manuscripta Buddhica, 1).

[31] *Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscript Collections. A Bibliographical Guide for the Use of Students in Buddhist Philology*, Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1992 (Bibliographia Indica et Buddhica, *Pamphlet*, No. 2).

[32] *Bibliographical Sources for Buddhist Studies from the Viewpoint of Buddhist Philology*, Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, [2]2008 (Bibliographia Indica et Buddhica, 3): 4–17.

[33] At http://www.icabs.ac.jp/english/library_e/bibliography_e.htm (last update April, 2013).

image manipulation provide much better images than earlier black and white copies and permit us to see marks which previously went unnoticed. This has led to the detection of a twofold pagination system in some manuscripts, revealing a copying process in which several scribes participated. Similarly, Michael Hahn draws attention to his discovery of a singular marking system in a manuscript of the *Kapphiṇābhyudaya* (p. 340).

A serious problem connected with the manuscripts' status as antiquities is addressed by Jens Braarvig (pp. 162–163). Old manuscripts frequently found and still find their way into foreign collections as a result of activity considered illegal under present international agreements. Indic manuscripts are no exception here, and this raises ethical issues in dealing with them. Roughly ten years ago, Martin Schøyen, the owner of the Schøyen Collection, and Jens Braarvig, as the leading researcher of the group of scholars studying the Bamiyan manuscripts in the collection, became the main targets of a heated campaign in Norway against the acquisition and study of such material. As a result, several bodies, among them the Board of the International Association for Buddhist Studies, affirmed the right of scholars to study such manuscripts and to document the results to the best of their abilities. Yet, the illegal trade — and the money earned through it — is probably both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, illegal raiders will be less inclined to throw away a manuscript or use it to fuel their camp fires once its monetary value is known, but on the other hand the knowledge of that value may provoke further searching, and such clandestine digging invariably destroys all the information about the find-spot and thus about the context of a manuscript, which for a scholar may be even more important than the manuscript itself. A similar tension between idealism and realism can be seen at the end of the chain which starts with the illegal excavation or the chance find in Afghanistan or Pakistan: once the manuscripts reach the dealers in London, Tokyo and elsewhere, they command such high prices that generally only wealthy collectors can afford to buy them, but for the most part, as far as we know, the manuscripts have not disappeared from view altogether, as they could well do. Many of these same collectors have shown themselves very sympathetic to scholarly concerns, and have been generous in allowing access to their collections and facilitating research on the items they have acquired. Thus knowledge advances, but not without cost. In a perfect world, perhaps, every such manuscript would be unearthed in the context of a scientific, properly documented archaeological excavation and then entrusted to the expert curatorial care of a public institution, preferably in the same country, offering open access to scholars — but alas we do not live in that world.[34]

To end on a less ambivalent and more positive note, one of the most encouraging features of work on Buddhist manuscripts over the last two decades has been its international and collaborative character. Although the aim of the Stanford conference was to bring together the principals of all the major manuscript projects currently underway, wherever in the world they might be located, these projects have tended in any case to run across national boundaries, with many researchers actively engaged in two or more of them. Although no discipline could be more closely identified with the humanities than classical philology, the *modus operandi* of Buddhist manuscript studies has come more and more to approximate that of the sciences. The solitary scholar poring over his or her manuscript in the lamplight has become a thing of the past, to be replaced by groups of researchers from many different countries working shoulder to shoulder, and, what is more, employing the latest technology. More often than not we find large numbers of people

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[34] For some recent reflections on these issues see, e.g., James Curo, ed., *Whose Culture? The Promise of Museums and the Debate over Antiquities*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, and, with particular reference to Afghanistan, Juliette van Krieken-Peters, ed., *Art and Archaeology of Afghanistan: Its Fall and Survival*, Leiden: Brill, 2006, especially the article by Atle Omland, "Claiming Gandhara: Legitimizing Ownership of Buddhist Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection, Norway," pp. 227–264, which takes a very critical perspective on some of the material dealt with in this volume.

sitting around a table looking at screens together, as they manipulate and examine digital images of the manuscripts, and the results of their high-tech investigations and the vigorous discussions that accompany them are published in books and papers in which joint authorship is becoming commonplace.[35] In this way the digital revolution has also revolutionized the study of manuscripts, and what those unnamed scribes wrote so painstakingly on birch bark and palm leaf, in some cases over two thousand years ago, in some cases also with no intention that it ever be read, is now being rapidly translated into code, for scholars the world over to access at the click of a mouse. Although we are not quite there yet, we look forward to the time when all this material, along with the research devoted to it, is freely available on the internet, and the barriers to the advancement of our knowledge of the rich literary heritage of Buddhism are cleared away.

In closing, we would like to acknowledge all those who made the 2009 conference which led to this volume possible. We are grateful to Dr Irene LIN and the Robert H. N. HO Family Foundation Center for Buddhist Studies at Stanford for organizing what proved to be a most stimulating and productive meeting. The enthusiastic participation of graduate student helpers Rafal Felbur, Chiew Hui HO and Nicholas Witkowski also helped things to run smoothly. As we prepared this volume for publication, we benefitted from the encouragement of Professor Ernst Steinkellner, and we thank the Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften for accepting it into their distinguished series. Finally, we must record our gratitude to the conference participants and contributors for their patience over the last few years, as unforeseen technical difficulties and the pressure of other commitments combined to slow down the editorial process, and we also thank them for the care with which they updated their contributions to reflect further developments and publications since 2009. Three times the Jacaranda mimosifolia which can be seen in full bloom in the conference group photograph has shed its purple blossoms over the paving of Stanford's Main Quad, and now, as it sheds them a fourth time, it is gratifying to see the conference at last bear fruit in this volume.

Paul Harrison (Stanford) Jens-Uwe Hartmann (Munich)

[35] For younger and less well-established scholars in the humanities, however, multiple authorship can still be a risky career gambit, and one fears that promotion and tenure committees are likely to be slow to adjust their criteria to the new situation.