Editorial and News from the NGMCP

The third number of our Newsletter has been delayed a little, for which I offer apologies to readers and contributors alike. In compensation, I am glad to be presenting an issue that is particularly rich in content, half as large again as either of its predecessors. Even at that, some contributions have had to be held over for the following issue, which should be available online by early May.

We begin this Newsletter with two reports. Dragomir Dimitrov presents an illustrated survey of the work and activities at the Nepal Research Centre in the period April 2005 to September 2006, while Dominic Goodall and Harunaga Isaacson report briefly on a workshop held in January 2007 which brought together scholars from all over the world to study one of the unique manuscripts in the National Archives, Kathmandu. There follow two contributions with critical editions. Oliver Hahn gives us the concluding part of his edition of Maheśvara’s Ūśnabheda; and it is a pleasure to welcome Csaba Dezső, of ELTE University, Budapest, to these pages for the first time with Part 1 of an edition of the hitherto unknown Nepalese recension of the first act of the play Kundamalā, in parallel with the South Indian recension of the same. We have an announcement of a recent book-publication, and a brief contribution by Diwakar Acharya drawing attention to a manuscript, not hitherto used, of Cundragonin’s Śigyalekha. This issue then concludes with another contribution by Dragomir Dimitrov, this time together with Kashinath Tamot: a fine piece on Kaiser Shamsher and the ‘Kaiser Library’.

This is an opportunity to thank Dr. Dragomir Dimitrov not only for his contributions to this Newsletter, but for his years of dedicated service to the NGMCP and NRC. As of February the 1st, 2007, he has been succeeded as Local Director of both institutions in Kathmandu by Dr. Albrecht Hanisch. I am happy to welcome Dr. Hanisch, already in station in Kathmandu, most warmly; and equally warmly wish Dr. Dimitrov all success. We anticipate that he will continue to stay in close contact with the NGMCP, and it is our hope that our readers will soon encounter him again in the Newsletter of the NGMCP.

Harunaga Isaacson

The Work at the Nepal Research Centre from April 2005 to September 2006

Dragomir Dimitrov

The activities of the Nepal Research Centre (NRC) carried out in the period from April 2005 to September 2006 were based on an agreement of cooperation between the Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, and the German Oriental Society, which was signed on August 30, 2002. In the recent period of turbulent and troublesome political developments, which repeatedly brought life in Nepal to a standstill, the NRC established itself as a safe haven where researchers involved in Nepalese studies were able to pursue their work undisturbed by the ongoing political imbroglio in the country.

Infrastructure At present the NRC is accommodated in a beautiful building situated in peaceful surroundings in Bahuwatar, in the northern part of Kathmandu (P.O.
Box 180, Icchunadi Marga 127, Baluwatar-4). The building houses the offices of the NRC, working rooms equipped with computers and microfilm readers, the library of the NRC, as well as a comfortable lounge. In the courtyard a nice garden was arranged in August 2005, which provides further space for studies and discussions in the open.

Staff
Until March 2006 Deputy Director General of the NRC was Prof. Michael Friedrich (University of Hamburg). In April 2006 Prof. Harunaga Isacson (University of Hamburg) took the position of Director General on a long-term basis. Acting Director of the NRC during the whole period was Dr. Dragomir Dimitrov. General Manager of the NRC was Navraj Gurung. Throughout this period many Nepalese and foreign scholars were affiliated with the NRC.

Progress Report of the NGMCP
(October 2006) By the beginning of October 2006 over 16,250 catalogue entries have been processed by the NGMCP. They are in various stages of completion, depending on the particular procedures involved. Over 8,070 entries may be termed completed. Approximately 400 entries are in process at any one time. Over 3,580 entries done by hand are now digitized and await further processing. Over 4,200 entries are still in a handwritten form. As a whole, the work is running smoothly and the project is doing good progress.

Activities
Support for the NGMCP Since April 2002 the NRC hosts the office of the Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) in Kathmandu. Serving as a base of support for this long-term academic project funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) is not only prestigious, but also vitally important for the NRC, since the NGMCP’s staff members contribute actively to maintaining and developing the services provided by the NRC. The NRC, on its part, ensures the best possible conditions for the realization of the NGMCP in Nepal. During the period under review a large number of catalogue entries were prepared by NGMCP’s personnel at the NRC.

Support for individual scholars Apart from hosting the NGMCP, the NRC endeavoured to provide as much assistance as possible to all visiting researchers by supplying working facilities, information and other help. Many Nepalese and foreign scholars, graduate and post-graduate students were welcomed and assisted at the NRC. Gergely Hidas, MA (University of Oxford) consulted Nepalese manuscripts of the Pañcaraksā. Astrid Krause, MA (Universität Leipzig) examined all the available Nepalese manuscripts of the Puṣpa-cintāmanī, while preparing a new critical edition of the text. Christof Zotter, MA (Universität Heidelberg) studied Nepalese manuscripts containing various texts about the Vrata bandha ritual. Kathleen Gögg, MA (Universität Heidelberg) researched on ritual texts such as the Lakṣmīpujaṇīvidhi, the Satyanārāyanapuṭṭīvādhi and others. Dr. Johanna Buss (Universität Heidelberg) focused her work on the Nepalese mortuary rites. The NRC assisted Isabell Johne, MA (Freie Universität Berlin) during her research stay dedicated to the Buddhist deity Vasundhara. Shaman Hatley, MA (University of Pennsylvania) was helped while studying texts of the Tantric Śaivism. Michael Slouber, MA (University of California, Berkeley) spent six weeks studying Classical Newari at the NRC and read texts such as the Agastyavrata kathā, the Haragaṇa kathā, the Nagasādhana vidyā, the Pratapa-mallaśāntipura-praveśī, the Kuṣopadesaśanītisāra and the Bālacikitsā. Dr. Alexandra Leduc-Pagel (School of Ori-
The Work at the Nepal Research Centre from April 2005 to September 2006

ental and African Studies, London) explored a Nepalese manuscript of the Tathāgataguhyaka. Prof. Gudrun Bühnemann (University of Wisconsin-Madison), a regular visitor of the NRC, continued her studies on Nepalese iconography. Yogesh Mishra, MSc. (Bhaktapur, Nepal) carried on his research on texts in Classical Newari.

During the period under review the NRC was visited by quite a large number of American PhD cadidates and holders of Fullbright fellowships. Jessica Birkenholtz, MA (University of Chicago) studied Sanskrit and Newari manuscripts of the Svasthānivratakathā and was assisted by Dr. Kashinath Tamot, an affiliated Newari specialist at the NRC. Nancy Lin, MA (University of California, Berkeley) conducted research towards her dissertation and examined Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs of texts in literary genres. Cameron David Warner, MA (Harvard University) studied Tibetan historiographical texts concerning the Jo-bo-Sākyamuni statue and explored the huge collection of Tibetan material microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP). In the course of his study on the Indrajatra festival, Michael Baltuis, MA (University of Iowa) consulted the vast collection of historical documents also microfilmed by the NGMPP.

Many other scholars, among them Prof. Paul Harrison (University of Canterbury), Dr. Anne MacDonal-d (Universität Wien), Prof. Patrick Olivelle (University of Texas), Prof. Sheldon Pollock (University of Columbia), Prof. Akira Saito (University of Tokyo) and Prof. Francesco Sferra (Universitá degli Studi di Napoli L’Orientale), were assisted in their search for copies of particular Nepalese manuscripts.

Besides this, the NRC further supplied its services in handling of orders for microfilm copies from the National Archives in Kathmandu. This service was particularly appreciated by scholars during the difficult times when the state institutions in Nepal could hardly function, crippled by political conflict and the unpredictable strikes. The NRC was successful in securing a speedy and reliable processing of the orders at the National Archives. More than fifty orders for microfilm copies were processed in this period.

Maintenance of the NRC Library The reference library of the NRC was well visited in the period under review. In order to ensure efficient and secure handling of the material kept in the library, specific rules for the use of the NRC Library were introduced. Due to the very limited funds available to the NRC, there were unfortunately only few new acquisitions. Nonetheless, some valuable publications were acquired, not least thanks to the donations by generous publishers and authors as well as owing to the book exchange programmes which the NRC is maintaining with other institutions.

Organization of lectures In August 2006 a new series of lectures was initiated at the NRC. Prof. Harunaga Isaacson delivered the first lecture entitled “Re-flections on the Candamahāroṣanatantra and its place in the history of Vajrayāna Buddhism”. In September 2006 Dr. Dragomir Dimitrov presented the second lecture entitled “Philological Archaeology (Notes on some recently discovered manuscripts of the Ratnasrīṭikā and the Vinśatypasargavṛtti)”. The third lecture in this series is due to be continued in 2007.
At a lecture in the NRC

**Publishing**  With the assistance of the NRC the next volume of the Nepalese National Bibliography (NBB) for the years 1997–1999 was published by the Tribhuvan University Central Library in 2005. In February 2006 a reprint of Klaus-Dieter Mathes’ book *Gos Lo tsā ba gzhon nu dpal’s Commentary on the Ratnagotravibhāgavāyākhyā* (Nepal Research Centre Publications, No. 24) was prepared at the NRC. In July 2006 Diwakar Acharya’s *Vācaspatimisra’s Tattvasamikṣā, The Earliest Commentary on Maṇḍanamisra’s Brahmasiddhi* (Nepal Research Centre Publications, Nr. 25) was published. Apart from this, the long-awaited new volume of the *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre* (vol. XIII) is well advanced in preparation and will appear in 2007.

**Collaboration**  The NRC maintained its traditionally good connections with the Department of Archaeology and the National Archives in Kathmandu. It also had contacts with the Valmiki Campus, the Sanskrit University, the Social Science Baha, the branch office of the South Asian Institute at the University of Heidelberg, the Guthi Samsthan, the National Library and some other institutions in Kathmandu. New contacts were established with Dr. Yoshiko Abe (Cultural Affairs Depart-

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**Workshop on the Niśvāsatattvasaṁhitā: The Earliest Surviving Śaiva Tantra?**

Dominic GOODALL and Harunaga ISAACSON

From 2nd to 12th January of this year, a *Workshop on Early Śaivism: the Testimony of the Niśvāsatattvasaṁhitā* was held in the Pondicherry Centre of the Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient (‘French School of Asian Studies’).

The *Niśvāsatattvasaṁhitā*, a fundamental tantra of the Śaiva Siddhānta, is a lengthy, unpublished, text of great antiquity that is full of unparalleled material of great importance for the early history of the Śaiva religion. The work is in many respects very different from the other ancient Siddhāntatantras, and is often difficult to interpret. It is now transmitted to us in a single beautiful Nepalese manuscript of perhaps the 9th century, one of the unique treasures of the National Archives, Kathmandu, microfilmed by the NGMPP (NGMPP A 41/14). But it was once widely known across the Indian subcontinent; and even beyond it, for it is mentioned in tenth-century inscriptions in Cambodia. We now have grounds for supposing the *Niśvāsatattvasaṁhitā* to be the earliest Saiddhāntika scripture to survive complete, and perhaps even the earliest surviving scripture of Tantric Śaivism. It is thus a source of major importance for the early history of Śaivism.

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1There are also two Nepalese apograph copies of the 20th century: NAK 5-2406, NGMPP A 159/18, and Wellcome Library MS Indic δ 41. These both reproduce the foliation of the original and often have a few more aksaras at the edges than now survive on the folios of the old manuscript.

2Cf. e.g. Sanderson 2001, pp. 23–24, n. 28.
of tantrism; but it also contains unparalleled information about more archaic forms of Śaivism followed by Pāṣupata groups.

Participants of the Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā Workshop

The two-week meeting in Pondicherry brought together scholars of Śaivism from around the world to study this important document. The workshop took the form of daily all-morning reading sessions, led by Alexis Sander-

son, in which we discussed the constitution and interpre-
tation of the text, followed by an afternoon lecture by one of the participants.

A complete electronic text of the Niśvāsa-corpus was circulated among the participants before the workshop, and we now plan a printed volume, to be ready in 2008, that will contain a first critical edition of the three oldest of the five major sections of the Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā, namely the Mūlasūtra, the Uttarāsūtra and the Naya-
sūtra. Introductory material, notes, and a few contextu-
alising essays—drawn from or drawing upon the lectures and discussions that took place at the workshop—will ac-
company the Sanskrit text.

3 On this information cf. especially Sanderson 2006.

4 The electronic text of the Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā was prepared over a number of years by Dominic Goodall, Peter Bischop (University of Groningen; now University of Edinburgh), Diwakar Acharya (NGMCP; now Kyoto University) and Nirajan Kafle (NGMCP). A voluminous “appendix” of uncertain date is men-
tioned in the last lines of the ancient manuscript and often cited from the tenth century onwards: the Niśvāsakārikā. This appen-
dix, which explains and elaborates the teachings of the Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā, is transmitted in three corrupt transcripts that are quite different from each other, preserved at the French Institute of Pondicherry (among the manuscript holdings there that have just been recognized by UNESCO as constituting a “Memory of the World” collection). Dr. S.A.S. Sarma, Dr. Nibedita Rout and Dr. R. Sathyararayanar (all of the Pondicherry Centre of the EFEO) prepared electronic transcripts of these sources (IFP T. 17, 127 and 150).

The peculiarities of the Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā adverted to in the course of the workshop are too numerous to discuss, but a few notable ones may be mentioned here.

• The Niśvāsa devotes more attention than any other known tantra to the Atimārga (i.e. Pāṣupata) context from which tantric Śaivism emerged, and reveals how close it is to this Pāṣupata milieu.

• Many of the lists of theologemes or other entities fall short of expectations formed by reading other Śaiva literature: thus, in the Niśvāsa, we encounter only 4 kalās where we expect 5, thirty-two tattvas where we expect thirty-six, 2 nādis where we expect minimally 3, and so forth.

• Several doctrinal positions that are now thought of as defining characteristics of the Śaiva Siddhānta are entirely absent from the text: there is no discussion about duality or non-duality, nor is there a single mention of the innate impurity (mala) that is held to cling to every soul, removable only by initiation.

• The Niśvāsa recognises itself as belonging to the Mantramārga (the ‘path’ of tantric Śaivism), but it does not declare itself to be a Siddhāntatantra or distinguish its own brand of tantric Śaivism from any other: it seems possible that the label ‘(Śaiva) Siddhānta’ was not known at the time of the redac-
tion of the text.

• An unusual, and seemingly primitive, classification of three levels of ādiṣṭhā, the attainment of which can be known by whether some object becomes warm, emits smoke, or bursts into flame, is shared by the Niśvāsa and, apparently alone among other Śaiva tantras, the Brahmayāmala (which like the Niśvāsa is as yet unpublished, but survives in an early Nepalese manuscript, microfilmed by the NGMPP on reel A 42/6); the same levels, and sometimes identi-
cal or nearly identical ādiṣṭhās associated with them, are found in some Buddhist tantras, such as the Mañjuśrīmālākalpa.
• Unlike most other Siddhāntatantras, and in a manner uncharacteristic of the Śaiva Siddhānta as idealised by its theologians, the Niśvāsa gives a great deal of space to magic recipes for attaining supernatural powers.

• The Eastern face of the five-faced Sādāśiva is, throughout the Śaiva traditions, almost invariably that of Tatpuruṣa, but in the Niśvāsa’s archaic iconography it is that of Ardhanārīśvara.

• The first chapter of the Niśvāsa’s Nayāsūtra explains how the sādhaka can shape his body to form the graphs for each of the letters of the Sanskrit syllabary: we agreed that the script presupposed appeared to be North Indian of between the 5th and 7th centuries AD.

On the basis of our reading so far, we are inclined to place the earlier parts of the text between 450–550 AD. Stratification was discussed intensively; a final conclusion has not been reached on this complex topic, but there was general agreement that the Miñāsūtra must be the most ancient core of the text.

The following papers were delivered:—

Alexis SANDERSON (All Souls College, Oxford) ‘The Niśvāsatattvasaṃhitā and its Śaiva Context’ (Wednesday 3rd January)

Dominic GOODALL (EFEO, Pondicherry), using summaries supplied by Kei KATAOKA (Kyushu University, Fukuoka) ‘The Structure of the Niśvāsa-corpus’ (Thursday 4th January)

Jun TAKASHIMA (Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) ‘Early History of Śaiva mathas—8th to 13th Century’ (Friday 5th January)

Harunaga ISAACSON (Asien-Afrika Institut, University of Hamburg) ‘Language and Formulae in the Niśvāsa-corpus’ (Monday 8th January)

Shaman HATLEY (University of Pennsylvania) ‘The Brahmavāyāmala and Early Śaiva Literature with Special Reference to the Niśvāsa’ (Tuesday 9th January)

Peter BISSCHOP (University of Edinburgh) ‘Purānic Topography in the Niśvāsa’ (Wednesday 10th January)

Andrea ACRI (University of Leiden) ‘Inclusivism in the Niśvāsa as illustrated by Chapter 12 of the Guhyasūtra’ (Thursday 11th January)

Diwakar ACHARYA (University of Kyoto) ‘Pratīṣṭhā in the Niśvāsa and in the Śvāyambhūva, an early unpublished source of the Pāñcarātra’ (Friday 12th January)

Bibliography


The Ŭśmabheda of Maheśvara (Part 2)

Oliver HAHN

In our last Newsletter (no. 2, October 2006) I presented the first part of a new edition of Maheśvara’s Ūśmabheda, based on two unpublished manuscripts from the NAK and KÜMMEL’s edition. This text – which teaches the correct spelling and pronunciation of words containing the sibilants (ūśman) śa, ʂa and sa – is the third of four sections constituting the Śabdabhedapraṇakāśa, a supplement to Maheśvara’s lexicographical work Viśvaprakāśa. Now the second part of the Ūśmabheda is presented, which covers the remaining sections of the text, listing words containing the sibilants ʂa and sa. These two portions can be analysed as follows:

i) ʂa as part of an initial, middle and final aksara of a word (1–13); ʂa and ʂa occurring in a word (14); ʂa and ʂa occurring in a word (15–16)

ii) ʂa as part of an initial, middle and final aksara of a word (1–15); ʂa in combination with consonants (16–17); twice ʂa in a word (18–19).

Thus, the words listed in the Ūśmabheda are ordered according to phonetic principles. Regarding the subject matter of this little kośa, it can be noticed that there is quite a number of rare or even “unknown” words. Moreover, many an unknown meaning we learn from Jñānavimalagani’s commentary. To mention a few examples: according to the commentator, the word ʂaṣṭa

5This text was composed in śakasamvat 1033, i.e. 1111 A.D. I should like to add a few facts about Mahēśvara’s life and background, as given in Vogel 1979 p. 329f.: “Maheśvara Kavi, son of Śrī Brāhma and grandson of Keśava alias Kṛṣṇa, traces his family back to one Haricandra, who was the court physician of King Śāhasāṅkika and author of a lost commentary on the Carakasaṃhitā; another forefather, Śrī Kṛṣṇa by name, served as doctor to the royal household at Gādhipura. Besides the present work, he wrote a Sāhasāṅkikacarita, which has not been handed down to us. His sources were Bhogīndra, Kātyāyana, Śāhasāṅkika, Vācaspati, Vyādi, Viṣvārūpa, the Amara- or Amalamāṅgala, Śubhāṅga, Vopālita, and Bhāgūrī.”

6Similarly, the other three parts of the Śabdabhedapraṇakāśa, namely the Dvīrūpadeśa (the Śabdabheda proper), the Oṣṭhyadantaṭāatyavākāraḥbheda, and the Liṅgaḥbheda, as well as the Viśvaprakāśa itself, are all arranged according to phonetic principles in the first place.

7Cf. Vogel, p. 331: “As the Śabdabhedapraṇakāśa seldom goes into details of meaning and the Viśvaprakāśa often does not help

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Out of the problems posed thereby, numerous passages would be quite unintelligible but for the excellent scholia of Jñanavimala Gani, a Śvetāmbara Jaina of the Kharataragaccha and disciple of Śāhānaku Gani, who lived at Vikramanagara or Bikaner under the reign of King Rājasaṅkar (1573–1611)." Moreover, Kūmèl (pp. 387–397) adds to her edition a useful index of words and meanings not occurring in the Petersburger Dictionary (and consequently not in Monier-Williams dictionary).

Cf. Kūmèl p. 156: kṣayate kṣīryate 'nena kṣābha, sāṅgā sāṁsārā όa. 8 
Cf. Kūmèl p. 161: kṛṣṭīā dhur dhīṣpāsām, kṛṣṭīā ṣir kṣīpyām. 9 
For this use of the word pāsa (technically called pāṣop) cf. also Pān 5.3.47. 10 
Cf. Kūmèl p. 182.: saravatāyā śdām sāravatam, ... tejo vijākaranaṃ ca. 11 
Cf. Kūmèl p. 126: śīryate 'nena śīrpām, ... dhīṣānti śōpanaḥbhāṣitām as well as p. 168: śīryate sārati vā prānaḥ, bhūya-ṃgama dhāvāyāndīśmaṇaḥbhāṣitatā ca. 12 
Cf. Kūmèl p. 166: sārati śāyāṭ, vājraṃ adityo 'nilo 'nāko 'gni ca. 13 
Examples besides the mentioned example, the substantial body of words in the Üṣmahēda representing botanical names and other materia medica, diseases and parts of the body, might indeed point to the medical background of Viśvesvēra's family.

The following abbreviations and symbols are used in the critical apparatus: N = Newari (A 18/6 and B 34/26); M = Mathūli (B 14/21); E = Edizione Kūmèl; a.c. = ante correctionem; p.c. = post correctionem. A single dot (.) represents an illegible or otherwise indeterminable part of an akṣara. For details regarding these manuscripts see part 1 of this edition (Newsletter no. 2, October 2006).

...śādavaḥ N] "śādava" E; "śādā" M. 14 
...gavaṣṭa E M nīvesaṭ N. 15 
...niṣamadhānusamāśikām E M niṣamadhānusamāśikāṃ N. 16 
...aṣudha" E N] "aṣudha" M. 17 
...drśattarāṣāduṣṭivasamaniṣedhāḥ 18 
...duḥṣedhahānasājaśakāsyaghoṣanāḥ 19 
...ṛṣikām ṛṣyaḥ ca viṣādaṃvāraṇāḥ 20 | 2 || 
...aṃśomatramahānīsādādhagopadām 21 
...ahūṃgaḥ 'nuṣaṅgaḥ ca duṣṭkham vādhravākṣa dīvaṃ 3 | 3 || 
...iṣikāḥ caṣakaḥ presyaḥ bhāyaṃ ca dhīṣāneṣaḥ 22 
...pratāḥ pariṣaḥ parṣaḥ tuṣārojarmaṇāyaḥ 4 | 4 || 
...vāstapakārdhivaṃsvadopāṇāḥ ca bhaiṣkṛtaṃ || nisktuṇāḥ 23 īṣkumastikṣāḥ 24 
...puṣkaraṃ duṣkareśvān | 5 || 
...tūrkuṣumāṣākṣīkāṃhaṇiṣkīlaṃakapaṇām | bastīṣkam boaṭkavalīyaḥ 25 ca laṭaṭṣṭapuṣṭastavaṇām 26 | 6 || 
...mādhyāmṛdhiṇāḥ || || 
...peyūṣayāṣāpīrāṇaṃgaṇṭūṣāṣāgigivipruṣapī 27 
...vāṭarōṣaśadām 28 ca kalūśarāṃśuprśaś 29 | 7 || 
...hanūṣaḥ kalūṣaḥ pūsa bhuṣāṣa cūṣa manṣiyāḥ || | 
...heṣa ḍreṣa jīgaḥ ca sūṣa manṣiyāyaḥ saḥa || 8 || 
...rohīṣaḥ mahiṣomāṃśapramoṣāmaṃṣaṃ 30 
...kalūṃṣaṃkalūṃsāṃṣaṃsaṃṣaṃsaṃ ṃrṣyaḥ 31 | 9 || 
...kīḷiṣaṃ kalūṣaṃ caṣaṭ tapiṣaṃ cāviṣaḥ 32 
...bhaviṣya 33 traṣāpiṣaṃvāṣaṭaṭuṣaṭiva 34 | 10 || 
...abhilaḥo bhauḥ 35 bhauḥ paḥuṣāyathīṣeṣeṣavāḥ 36 
...maṇḍiṣaḥ nīkṣaḥ doṣa dveṣa koṣaḥ 37 koṣaḥ kṛṣiya || 11 ||
A Parallel Edition of the Nepalese and South Indian Recensions of the First Act of the Kundamālā (Part I)

Csaba DEZSNÉ

The Manuscripts of the two Recensions The Kundamālā, a play in six acts based on the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Ramāyana, was first published by M. Ramakrishna Kavi and S. K. Ramanath Sastri in 1923. The editors used two manuscripts from Tanjore and two from Mysore, and they also consulted two more fragmentary manuscripts in private collections (these fragments, however, cannot be traced today). Four more editions appeared until 1955, all based on the edition princeps, and an English translation by A. C. Woolner was also published in 1935.

Kali Kumar Dutta’s critical edition was printed as No. XXVIII of the Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series in 1964 (reviewed by J. R. A. Loman in JAOS 86.2, 1966). For his edition Dutta could use the same manuscripts that had been available to the first editors (except for the two fragments that could not be located):

115aE N va M.
116 "samāsānāśa" E N "samāsānāśa" M.
117 “sīkāsakṣāṃśaṇā” M “sīkāsakṣāṃśaṇā” (which is unmetrical) E “sīkāsakṣāṃśaṇā” N.
118 aṃ dantyaḍvadvopetāḥ uṣmabheda ‘tra dārśitaḥ E M aṃ dantyaḍvadvopetāḥ uṣmabheda ‘tra dārśitaḥ N.
119 saṃpūraṇaḥ E M. The colophon of N reads thus: श्रेयो 45.14 वदविशालाकुटिको सांवते 15 तदेकाकृति परिवर्त्तिताः।
120 aṃ dantyaḍvadvopetāḥ uṣmabheda ‘tra dārśitaḥ E M.
121 aṃ dantyaḍvadvopetāḥ uṣmabheda ‘tra dārśitaḥ E M.
122 “sāsānā” E N “sāsānā” M.
123 “sāsānā” E N “sāsānā” M.
124 E N va M.

A Parallel Edition of the First Act of the Kundamālā (Pt. I)

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The draft of this paper.

KÜMMEL, Auguste


VOGEL, Claus

Both of the Tanjore mss lack the prastāvana and a portion of the first act. Dutta thinks the Telugu ms may be a copy of the Grantha one. The Mysore mss are also incomplete: the last part of the first act, the whole of the second and portions of the third and sixth acts are missing. The Kannada ms might be a copy of the Grantha one, or both might be copies of a third manuscript, at least according to Dutta.

In September 2000 I ordered microfilm copies of manuscripts of various dramas from the National Archives in Kathmandu. Among these was one entitled Kundamālā-lāmātaka (sic) (reel no. B 15/6), which turned out to be an incomplete manuscript of the first act of the Kundamālā. It is a palm-leaf ms written in Newari script, consisting of twelve folios (ff. 2–13; fol. 1 is missing) with four lines per page. It lacks most of the prastāvana, the last few words of the first act and the colophon (if there was one). I have given this manuscript the siglum N1.

There are two more relevant entries in the title-list of the NGMPP which escaped my attention in 2000: one Kundamālā (sic), reel A 1027/11, classified as stotra, and another one Kundamālā, reel A 24/13. When I was able to consult them a few months ago, it turned out that they are actually independent microfilms of the same palm-leaf manuscript in Newari script, which contains a bundle of various works written down by a scribe called Rāmagupta. A 24/13 has 63 folios (ff. 1–63), while A 1027/11 only contains the last fourteen leaves (ff. 50–63). The following works make up the manuscript: Bharthari’s Vārāgvasataka (ff. 1–18r), Mohanudda (ff. 18r–31r), Vyāsa–sukasāvādā (ff. 31r–50r), Kundamālā Act One (ff. 50r–60v), Hariharastava (ff. 60v–63r), and Paučavakratustuti (ff. 63r–63v). My siglum for this manuscript is N2.

Two separate colophons give us as the date in which Rāmagupta copied the ms N.S. 551 during the reign of Jayayakṣamalla in the town of Śikharā (Pharping), where Nāthasimha was the lord. He seems to have copied the first act of the Kundamālā upon the request of Nāthasimha.

Collation of the two manuscripts reveals them to be very closely related. In fact N2 may well be an apographe of N1; or both may have been copied from the same exemplar. Since N2 contains the closing words of Act One (which are missing from N1), but nothing after that, N1 (or their common hyparchetype, if they had one) might have only contained the first act of the play, which would mean that only the first and last folios of N1 are missing. Rāmagupta is not the most careful of scribes; he often omits one or two aksaras, but he also often corrects his mistakes. We should be grateful to him, however, for copying the text, since in this way the Prologue has been preserved, and as one expects in the case of a classical Indian drama, the prastāvana provides important details about both the play and the playwright.

The Author of the Play: Dhīranāga from Anurādhapura

The name of the author of the Kundamālā has been the subject of debate since the publication of the editio pinceps. According to the text of the Mysore ms the sātradhāra announces the play as follows: adīṣṭo 'ṣmi parisāda — tatraḥvavato 'rālapuravavastavaṣyas kaver Diṁnāgaṣya kṛtih Kundamālā nāma, să tvayā prayaṅktayeti This means the author was called Dinnāga, and he was from Arārlapura. On the strength of this reading, and on the basis of a manuscript of the Subhāṣītavali in which the vēvēvordhavāyipīVerse of the Kundamālā is quoted and attributed to Diṁnāga, Kavi and Sastri, the first editors of the play, concluded that the author’s name was Diṁnāga. Dutta also brings up exhaustive (though not necessarily convincing) arguments in favour of the name “Diṁnāga”.

Though the Prologue has not been preserved in the Tanjore mss, their colophons supply information about the author. The colophon of T1 reads: āndhrapurīṣṭha-śrī kaveḥ Diṁnāgaṣya kṛtāṃ Kundamālā nāma nāta-κaṃ samāptāṃ; T2 has the following colophon: anuva-ṛāhasya kaveddiḥṛānāgaṣya kṛtāṃ Kundamālā nāma nāta-κaṃ samāptāṃ. Following this evidence several scholars (P. P. S. Sastri, M. Krishnamacharia, A. C. Woolner, etc.) were inclined to ascribe the play to Dhīranāga.

As for Arārlapura, the first editors could not identify it with any known place, and, taking also into consideration the colophons of the Tanjore mss, they suggested that it might be an erroneous reading for Anurādhapura in Ceylon.

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1 Could collate this manuscript directly since a (not easily legible) microfilm copy is available to me. The readings of the other Southern mss I quote from Dutta’s apparatus. 

2Dutta p. 10.

3Dutta ibid.

4FF. 49r: nepāle vatsaragate kaśvānabhūte jyesthe: May–June 1431 A.D.; f. 60r: nepāle kaśvānabhulashte yate ca saṃvaśāya āyāhe: June–July 1431 A.D.

5FF. 49r: sri śrīnāyaṇa-ja yawākṣamalladevasa vajrapārye.

6FF. 49r: tasyāny nagaryān suvīśuddhakṛtiḥ (em. : svīśuddhakṛtiḥ ms.) sriNāthasimhaḥ madanaśvālāravāḥ...

7FF. 60v: ṛṇaśvānacanān ākāṣya (?) Nāthasimhaḥ nareṇvarāḥ

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[read: Nāthasimhaḥ nareṇvarāḥ?] likhitāṃ Rāmaguptena Śitaṃvāṣaśastrakam ||


9Kavi-Sastri p. iii.

10Dutta pp. 19ff.

11This is what Dutta reports. I can read (with difficulty) the following on the microfilm: anu(|)?|pavastha(?|)ya.

12One can perhaps see a h after kṛtā in the microfilm.

13Dutta’s ed., p. 110.

14Kavi-Sastri p. vi.
The matter is further complicated by the testimony of works which refer to or quote from the Kundamālā. The Subḥāṣītaratnakosā cites verse 20 of Act Four and ascribes it to Dhīranāgā. The Nātyadaraṇa mentions a Kundamālā “composed by Vīranāgā”[10]. The Saduktikārāṇāṃṛta quotes the juvalecordhūvaśirṣapāṇi-verse and attributes it to Ravināgā.[11] If we compare all these names, there is a possibility that through progressive corruption Dhīranāgā was changed to Ravināgā and that to Ravināgā.

Rāmagupta’s manuscript throws new light upon this matter. The above quoted sentence of the Prologue reads:

A Parallel Edition of the First Act of the Kundamālā (Pt. I)

The date of the Kundamālā has also been a subject of controversy. Since Bhoja quotes verse 20 of Act Four in his Śrīgāraprakāṣa,[12] the first half of the eleventh century might be regarded as a terminus ante quem.[13] Woolner and others (e.g. S. K. De, V. V. Mirashi) consider the Kundamālā later than Bhavabhūti’s Uttararāmacarita[22] Dutta, on the other hand, argues for a much earlier date and places Dhīranāgā in the fifth century.[22]

Differences Between the Two Recensions; the Prologue

In the title of this paper I refer to two recensions of the Kundamālā, which requires some comment. As the parallel edition will show, the text of the Kundamālā as transmitted by the Nepalese MSS differs in many places from the text as edited by Dutta on the basis of South Indian MSS. The majority of these differences cannot be explained away as mere corruptions resulting from scribal errors, and the parallel passages that diverge both in the choice and the arrangement of words stand as independently interpretable alternatives.

As Dutta’s edition is based on Grantha MSS and on other manuscripts written in Southern scripts probably based on them, we may regard his text as representing the Southern recension of the Kundamālā. The recension transmitted by N1 and N2 is termed “Nepalese”[23] in this paper. N1 is altogether a more reliable witness, and N2’s readings are of real use only for reconstructing the passages missing from N1, i.e. most of the Prologue and the last few words of the first act. In some cases I could not extract a satisfactory meaning from the text transmitted by the Nepalese MSS and had to suppose that N1 and N2 share an error or an omission: in such instances I resorted to emendation, taking into consideration the reading of the other recension.[23]

In two cases Dutta also rejected the readings offered by the manuscripts and adopted the readings of the testimonia as better ones: verse 1 (v. 2 in his numbering): “saha” instead of “sada”, and verse 5 (v. 6 in his numbering): “vairā” instead of “niśvara”. Since he aimed to reconstruct the text of the Kundamālā as its author had composed it, his decisions were probably justified. Nevertheless, since I am reproducing the text of the Kundamālā as it was transmitted in the South, in both cases I have restored the readings of the manuscripts, because they have an interpretable meaning. This policy is certainly debatable, especially since in each case it is not difficult to trace how the reading changed through mistakes made in the course of transmission, and thus it is possible that the reading of the manuscripts does not reflect the intention of the transmitters. On the other hand, even though these readings may well have resulted originally from scribal error, they are meaningful, and they might have been part of the text of the play as it was known in the South.

Since we are dealing with a literary work composed by a single author there is a question that necessarily arises: is it possible to determine which recension is closer to the

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[14] Saduktikārāṇāṃṛta (ed. Banerji) verse 56 (p. 18); this edition of the SKA reads Ṭarunāyusūr, which is probably a typo.
[15] F. W. Thomas, and, following him, K. K. Dutta also pointed out stylistic similarities between Kumārārāsa’s Jānākhāraṇa and the Kundamālā which might also suggest a Ceylonese authorship of the latter (cf. Dutta, p. 44f).
[17] An earlier testimony might be that of the Mahānātaka which quotes the same verse in both of its recensions. The date of the Mahānātaka, however, is also controversial, it might have been redacted in the court of king Bhoja.
text of the drama as it was composed by Dhiranāga? If we compare the texts of the two recensions with quotations from the play found in subhāṣita-collections and in works on dramaturgy and poetry we will find that the readings of these testimonia either agree with or are at least closer to the text of the Nepalese recension.24 This means that the text of the Nepalese recension is probably closer to the text of the Kundamālā as it was known to Vidyākara, the compiler of the Subhāṣitaratnakosa (c. 1100 A.D.), to Śrīdharadāsa, the compiler of the Sadukitkaranaūṛta (1205/6 A.D.), to Śarādātānaya, the author of the Bhāvaparakāṣa (13th century), to Śagararanandin, the author of the Nāṭakalaksanaratnakosa (13th century?), and to Viśvanātha, the author of the Śāhityadarpāna (14th century) than that of the Southern recension. Considering the places of composition of the above mentioned works their authors were possibly acquainted with a Northern / North-Eastern recension of the play, which was probably not far removed from the text of the Kundamālā as it was transmitted in Nepal. But this does not answer the question whether the Nepalese recension is closer to the original composition of a Ceylonese playwright than the other texts.

I am not certain that this question can be answered in a general way, but by comparing the texts of the two recensions we might make a few observations concerning certain passages. To begin with the Prologue, we find that the Nepalese recension conforms to the convention found mostly in manuscripts from the Northern regions of South Asia, inasmuch as it begins with a benedictory verse (jvalovardhvavisarpini . . .) which is followed by the stage direction nāndyante sātradharāḥ, recites the benedictory verse (jvalovardhvavisarpini . . .), and then continues without saying alam ativistaraṇa (he would actually cut short himself with this expression)25. What makes the Prologue of the Southern recension unusual is the presence of a verse before the stage direction nāndyante tataḥ praviśati sātradharāḥ. This verse, an invocation to Ganeśa, does not appear in the Nepalese recension and its introduction in the Mysore MSS (the Tanjore MSS are not available for this part) upset the expected structure of the Prologue. It seems conceivable that it was not part of Dhiranāga’s original work but was added later in the course of transmission; it might have been inserted by a scribe as a manīṅgala-verse appropriate at the commencement of his task.

To decide whether the Nepalese or the Southern version of the Prologue is Dhiranāga’s would involve a long digression into the vexed question of the origin and structure of the prastāvanā, which I would prefer to avoid in this paper. There is one additional point, however, which may be worth considering. The kind of Prologue we find in the Southern recension is usually called sāṭāpaṇa in other texts.26 Yet the Mysore MSS of the Kundamālā call it prastāvanā. This might suggest that an originally “prastāvanā-style” Prologue (like that of the Nepalese recension) was recast in the course of transmission according to the Southern conventions.

There are several Sanskrit passages after the Prologue which differ and are worth comparing in the two recensions, and I am going to return to some of them in the second part of this paper.

The Prakrit of the Two Recensions Sātā, in accordance with the rules of nāṭyasastra, speaks Sāurāsenī in the Kundamālā, but her Prakrit passages differ in several respects in the two recensions:

— The Nepalese MSS show certain features of Sāurāsenī to a greater extent than the Southern recension. In Old Sāurāsenī intervocalic -t- and -th- were not dropped27 similarly to Pali in which intervocalic mutes are retained.28 Unvoiced consonants in free positions are found in such forms as katham, sakaṇam and mettakaṇa in the Nepalese MSS, while the Southern recension reads kahaṁ and mettaena. The Prakrit grammarians prescribe

24 Cf. verse 1 (jvalovardhvavisarpini . . .) and 1+ (ko nu khalo āryāvaiśeṣaṁ . . .), 3+ (voccha Lakhana, adhissagaran . . .), verse 5 (vānena vāṇīram), verse 11 (gūṇāvītīḥ). Cf. however verse 1, where the Subhāṣitaratnakosa reads “tūrīya” instead of “toya” read by both recensions and by the Sadukitkaranaūṛta, and verse 2, where the reading of the Nāṭakalaksanaratnakosa (vajane vane ‘smin) differs from both recensions. It is interesting to note that the Nāṭakalaksanaratnakosa refers to the first act of the Kundamālā with the title Sītānirvāsa (§§ 1644, 3089f.), just as the colophon of N2 (f. 60v: Sītānirvāsaḥsāstrakam).

25 Cf. the northern recensions of Kālidāsa’s, Viśvikadatta’s, Haraṇa’s, and Bhavabhūti’s plays. As for the phrase alam ativistaraṇa, Šteinėr (p. 80) concludes that it was not part of the original text of the Nāgānanda (though it occurs in the Northern recension and can be traced in the Tibetan translation; the Nepalese MSS lacks this part); it is also missing from the oldest MSS of the Māhitāmadhava, and Coulson remarks (p. 234) that it is “a phrase which copyists might introduce even if it were not there”.26 Cf. for example the Prologues of the so-called Bhāsa-plays, the Caturbhāni, the Viṇūvāsavadatta, the Mattavilāsaprakāśa, as well as the Southern MSS of Kālidāsa’s plays, the Nāgānanda (cf. Šteinėr p. 77), etc.

27 There are exceptions, e.g. in certain MSS of the Kārnabhaṅga we find the term prastāvanā at the end of its Prologue (the other so-called Bhāsa-plays use sāṭāpaṇa). On the other hand, in other MSS of the same play the entire Prologue is omitted, and the Abhijñānāsakuntalacarī also confirms there was no introductory scene in the original Kārnabhaṅga (cf. UNNI, pp. 54f).

28 Cf. von Hinüber §86.

29 Cf. Geiger §35.
the change of Sanskrit intervocalic -t- and -th- into -d- and -dh- in Sāuraseni (cf. Pischel §203, (Pseudo-)VARARUCI 12.3, HEMACANDRA 4.260, 267). Accordingly we find forms like hhavadi, Bhaźradhi, s’ilalassa, jădo, tadhā, jadhā, kadhehi, anādha, *kosalădhiva in the Nepalese MSS, while in the Southern recension we read hhavani, Bhaźrai, s’ilalassa, jăo, taha, jaha, kahēhi, anāhi, kosalāhi. Hemacandra, however, also permits such forms as kahēdi, nāho and kahām (beside kadhēdi, yādho and kadhām), and in the Sāuraseni passages of the so-called Bhāsa-plays we also find e.g. kahēdi.

— Intervocalic consonants are often retained at the boundaries of words in compounds in the Nepalese MSS, e.g. jālakāni, ssaajan, uttara-kosalādhiva, pādāju-paraparissamassa.

— Another peculiarity of the Sāuraseni passages of the Nepalese MSS is the reappearance of an initial consonant group in an assimilated form at the beginning of a word e.g. ssaajan, ppavāso, ssadhamme, ppadimāgādo (in these cases the double consonants are preceded by short vowels or -o): the corresponding words begin with a single consonant in the Southern recension (saajan, sadahamme, padimāgādo). The same kind of double initial consonants can be observed in the Prakrit passages of the fourteenth-century palm-leaf MS in Newari script of the Rāmaikanātkā (reel no. C 6/9, NAK accession no. 9/73), a play written by Dharmagupta, a fourteenth-century Nepalese court-poet, at the fourteenth-century palm-leaf Newari script of the Sundarasena, a play probably written in Nepal in the same century. The same phenomenon can be observed in some compounds in both recensions, thus we read tatappadesado in the Nepalese recension and tadappapādādo in the Southern. This can be compared with Hemacandra’s optional rule (2.97), according to which both naiggāmo, kusumapaya, devatthu and naiggāmo, kusumapaya, devatthu are acceptable forms. Interestingly in one case it is the Southern recension which reads *pparissa while in the Nepalese MSS we find *parissa, though in the latter case it follows a word ending in a long vowel (*kaṇā) which might explain the lack of reduplication.

— Sanskrit eva becomes jjeva after -a and -a, and jeeva after -n in the Nepalese MSS of the Kundamālā, similarly to the Nepalese MS of the Cauḍakaṇāśika (written in Newari script in 1250 A.D.), the Nepalese MS of the Mudrārākṣasa (dating from 1376 A.D.), and the above mentioned fourteenth-century MS of the Rāmaikanātkā, which read jjeva in the majority of cases besides jeeva in a few instances. As for the Prakrit grammarians, Pseudo-Vararuci teaches in 12.23 evasva jjeva (v.l. jjeve), and Mārkandeya prescribes the form jjeva (9.153), or jeeva / jeeva when it follows and anusvāra (9.154). Hemacandra, Purusottama and Namisadhu, however, teach jyeve and the same form predominates in the twelfth-century Nepalese MS of the Nāgānanda as well as in the Jaina nāgāri MSS of the Agamadambā. Steiner considers jyeve as the older form, which, however, was gradually replaced by j(y)j(e)va, as the plays preserved in inscriptions dating from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, which only know the forms beginning with (j)yj, also indicate.

In the Southern recension of the Kundamālā we find evaa and eva in the Prakrit passages, which accords with Trivikrama’s (a Southern grammarian’s) rule evārthe eva (3.2.18). In the so-called Bhāsa-plays evaa prevails beside eva.

As Dutta reports (Part One, pp. 144ff., Appendix I, p.5) the Southern manuscripts actually write a small circle between two a-s. ‘aautassa’ stands evidently for the Skt. ‘āyaputraśya’, says Dutta, and continues: ‘Evidently this word represents either ‘aayuuta’ or ‘aajaauta’ available in Skt. dramas. But it is not clear which one was actually used by the playwright. Instead of running the risk of taking liberty with the text, we retained the word as it has been found in the ms. though apparently it seems to be meaningless.’ (Dutta, Appendix I, p.5.) Actually Dutta prints amaauta with an anusvāra in the text which is surely misleading. Esposito encountered the same orthographical peculiarity in the MSS of the so-called Bhāsa-plays, and pointed out the following: “Pischel §284 nimmt an, daß die Schreibweise a’s einen Laut zwischen aya und aya bezeichnen soll [. . .]. Die Lesart ayya für a’s kann aber durch die Schreibweise der ersten Art von Ms. als gesichert gelten.” (Esposito p. 95, note 17.) Accordingly I changed Dutta’s amaauta to ayyaautas in the text of the Southern recension.

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44 Cf. Steiner p. 175.
the play. On the other hand, the early thirteenth-century inscription of the Parijatamanjarī-nātīkā has onlyajaśītta, just as the Nepalese MSS of the Caudalakāṣṭhā from the same century and the above mentioned fourteenth-century Nepalese MSS of the Sundarasesa and Rāmānīkānātīkā. As Steiner points out, “Spätstens im 13. Jh. scheint sich jedoch — zumindest im Norden — -jj- im Schauspiel-Prakrit bzw. in dessen Überlieferung durchgesetzt zu haben.”

For Sanskrit ha dhik we find the standard Śauraseni form haddhi in the Southern recension of the Kundamālā. The Nepalese MSS, however, consistently write haddi, which might be another Nepalese peculiarity, since we find the same haddi in the above mentioned fourteenth-century MS of the Rāmānīkānātīkā (e.g., fol. 34r).

To sum up, both recensions seem to follow the characteristic features of the MSS of their provenance in the transmission of the Prakrit passages. I did not mention the practice of yaśruti in the above comparison since its occurrence or omission in a particular MS does not seem to depend on the age of the play or that of the MS or on the recension. There is a very close relation between the two Nepalese MSS of the Kundamālā, N2 is possibly a direct copy of N1, nevertheless N2 shows a distinct preference for yaśruti, while N1 avoids it. Since N1 (when available) practically always gives better readings, I have also adopted its “no yaśruti” policy.

Though it is difficult to say whether Dhāriṇāgā himself preferred ygeva to jjeva, kadhehi to kahehi, or ayya to aja, in some of the Prakrit passages we can determine which recension gives a better reading. In 3+ Dutta rejects kedēre, the reading of the Tanjore MSS and the Nātakaḷakāṣāparatnakosā, as “definitely a corrupt reading” The Nepalese MSS, however, also support kedēre, which is in fact a possible form on the analogy of kēccirāṃ, in which ke stands for Sanskrit kīya.

In 4+ Sītā says she has been refreshed by the wind blowing from the Ganges. The Nepalese recension reports her words as follows: sutṭhu vattaṃ, edassa jalakānīparisuṣhamidalassas Gaṇgāmarudassas avāramattaseva jjeva pāḍajuaparissamassa parikhkho jādo. This reading is simple and easily interpretable. In the Southern recension the corresponding passage runs as follows: sampadaṃ jāvanikaraprīparasussahatassas Bhāravairamgamā rudassas pariṣeṇā pariṣassamassa via pāvassa parikkhao jāo. This reading contains two comparisons: the wind from the Ganges is “as gentle and cool as the touch of a mother’s hand”, and due to the touch of the wind “misfortune, like fatigue, has dissolved”. The Southern MSS seem to offer a more poetic reading which might be regarded as more suitable for a good kavi. The readings jalakānī and jaṇanikara seem to be close enough to suppose that textual corruption (e.g. the transposition of the aksaras ka and ni/i) might have also taken part in the change of one reading to the other. The wind spraying around cool droplets has just been mentioned in the preceding verse (sītās tarangakaniṇā vikīrṇa, and later in verse 6 we again read about breezes cooled by droplets of water (saḷi-lakanikāsītamatarūtas / sajaḷakanikaḥ śītamatarūtas). Sītā’s words according to the Nepalese MSS would fit perfectly in this context. On the other hand, the simile of the Southern recension might also seem appropriate if we recall that Sītā is going to become a mother soon (it was her dohada to visit the Ganges).

The other comparison in the Southern recension (parissassamassa via pāvassas) is not as easy to interpret. The cool wind has relieved Sītā’s weariness, but what pāpa has it removed? Sītā is still unaware of her banishment. It is perhaps conceivable that pāvassa resulted from the change of a reading similar to the pāda of the Nepalese recension, the meaning of which suits the context well (“the weariness of my feet has been relieved”).

Thus refreshed, Sītā would like to descend to the river and asks Laksmana for help. Again the reading of the Nepalese MSS appears to be more logical: tä imado taṭpadadesādo jadhā aparissantā vāvdarāmi tadā ādeschē me maggam, vs. tä imado taṭpadapadādo jaha parissantā odarāmi taha ādeschē me maggam in the Southern recension.

When Laksmana finally comes forward with the message that Rāma has ordered someone to be banished (6+), Sītā most logically asks in the Nepalese recension whose banishment he is talking about (kassa?). Dutta follows the Mysore MSS in reading kahaṃ samādītho, but the Tanjore MSS have kampa which supports the reading of the Nepalese recension, especially if the circle read as ṣī by Dutta actually doubles the following s.

In 10+ vinā vi nāṇuyghida mhi, the reading of the Nepalese MSS, is again supported by the Tanjore MSS (vi-nāṇuyghida hmi T1, vināṇuyghidasi T2). Dutta probably adopted the reading of the Mysore MSS, but it is perhaps conceivable that viṇā niṣghida was a correction of vinā-
nugahida, which in turn had arisen through haplography from viṇā vi nānugahida.54

In verse 12 Lakṣmanā assures Sītā that she has been completely exonerated in front of the sages, guardian deities, her husband and Lakṣmanā himself, but there is still something which results in Sītā’s banishment and which, according to the Nepalese recension, he is ashamed to speak about (lajāṃ nātāyaği). Sītā presses him to tell her what this “but” is (kadhēki kiṃ kiṃ tu?), and finally Lakṣmanā blurts it out: “People are uncontrollable (loko nirankusāh).” In the Southern recension it is Sītā who appears to be ashamed when she urges Lakṣmanā, but her bashfulness does not really match her behaviour. On the other hand Lakṣmanā has every reason to be embarrassed and fall silent in mid-sentence.

In Sītā’s following lamentation the Nepalese recension reads vaccha, jai evam uvalāmbhi ajaivūtena pariccattā aham tā suṭṭhu pariccaṭṭa mhi, while the text of the Southern recension seems to be evam pariccattā supariccattā mmi. Dutta actually prints vaccha pariccaṭṭa! nu pariccaṭṭa mmi, but if we examine his apparatus we find some readings which, on the one hand, make more sense, and, on the other hand, are relatively closer to the Nepalese recension: the Tanjore mss also read vaccha as the first word of the sentence, and the Mysore mss have supariccattā, comparable with suṭṭhu pariccaṭṭa above.55 It is perhaps conceivable that Dirhanāga originally wrote something like vaccha, evam pariccaṭṭa suṭṭhu pariccaṭṭa mhi, which was later supplemented with what we have in the Nepalese recension, but this is just hypothesizing.56

According to the Nepalese recension Sītā considers it appropriate to give up her life once her husband has abandoned her, but then she thinks she should protect the child of that merciless man, and consequently spare her defamed self as well. In the Southern recension Sītā first seems hesitate whether it is appropriate to put an end to herself, and then she raises the question if she should spare her husband, but Laksmanā’s request should not be denied, at least she does not have the courage to refuse it, as the Nepalese recension reads: na hi Sīdāc dhīṭhaṭṭantam. This reading perhaps suits the context better than that of the Southern recension: na Sīdāc dhāṇṭṭantam, “Sītā is unfortunate”. In the Nepalese recension Sītā sends Rāma the following words: mam maṇḍabhāṇīṁ anuṣoanta vañṇāsammaṇaṁ apratīpaṁ aprīpamā mā bādekehi (conj. : bādehi N1, N2), “You are a very important person because you protect the [order of] castes and life-stages, so do not torment yourself with mourning me, an unfortunate woman.” In the Southern recension we read: maṃ maṇḍabhāṇīṁ anuṣoanta vañṇāsammaṇaṁ ahiṃghanti aṭṭāyaṁ na bādehi, “Do not torment yourself with mourning an unfortunate woman, thus frustrating the protection of the [order of] castes and life-stages”. The reading maṃ maṇḍabhāṇīṁ is perhaps better, the Southern version can be explained with haplography. As for the difference between mahaṅghaṁ appāṇaṁ and paarithaṁ paṭṭāyam, the readings of the Southern mss are worthwhile to have a closer look: T1 is hardly legible at this point, but perhaps it reads mahaṅghaṁ(? a(?))ṭṭāyam. Dutta reports T2 as mahābhāṣaṁ aṭṭāni, and M2 as mahānghatta, which all point in the direction of the Nepalese reading.57

54 Cf. Pischel, S. 564.
55 Dutta actually reports that the sentence nu pariccaṭṭa mmi is omitted in the Tanjore mss, which means that the reading he adopted might be his own emendation.
56 In the same passage ugghostadi, the reading of the Nepalese recension, is supported by the Tanjore mss ubhogostadi / uposadi (Dutta reads uvgostadi, probably with the Mysore mss).
57 This is the reading the Tanjore mss seem to suggest, but one could select differently from the nus and nas of the mss.
58 Cf. Dutta Appendix I, pp. 5f.
59 Dutta Appendix I, p. 6.
60 In the same sentence T1 reads sarīre with the Nepalese recension. Dutta prints sasarīre and reports no variants.
A Parallel Edition of the First Act of the Kundamālā (Pt. I)

In the following parallel edition of the first half of Act One of the Kundamālā (the second half will appear in the second part of this paper), the left column contains the text of the Nepalese recension and the right column the text of the Southern recension. From Dutta's critical apparatus I have only reproduced the testimonia and those variant manuscript readings which might be important for the reconstruction of Dhīranāga's work.

I have also pored over a microfilm copy of T1, one of the Tanjore mss. Unfortunately this manuscript has turned out to be full of errors and lacunae, and the copy I have is also not an easily legible one. Nevertheless I have noticed some readings which differ from what Dutta reports in his apparatus and which are comparable with the readings of the Nepalese recension: these are recorded in the apparatus below the text of the Southern recension. As for the readings of the other Southern mss I have relied upon Dutta's apparatus.

1 jvālevordhvavisarpinī pariṇata-syāntastapastejaso

Gaṅgātoyatarāṅgasarpavasatīr

valmīkalaks.mīr iva

sandhyevārdramṇālakomalatano

indoḥ sahaṣṭhāyinī

pāyād vas tārṇāṁruṇāṁśukapiśā

Śambhor jaṭāsamhatiḥ.

(nāndyante) 2 Sūtradhāraḥ:

alam ativistareṇa. ajñāpito 'smi pariṇadā — tatrabhavatī

'nurāḷapurāvāstavyasya kaver Dhīranāgasya kṛtiḥ

Kundamālā nāma, 8 sā tvayo prayaṅkavyetey. tad asya sandarbhasya sācyavyavidhāyinīṁ āryyām āhiya raṅgabhūmīṁ avatārāmī. (īti parikrāmati.)

(nepathyo:) ita ito 'vataratvāryā, ita itaḥ.

Sūtradhāraḥ (ākaranā):

aye! ko nūḥ khalv āryāḥvānena sāhāyakam iva me sampāda*yati (vilokya sakaruṇam) kaśṭham atikarunam varētate.

Laṅkaśvarasaya bhavane

sucirāṁ sthiteti

Rāmena lokarpāriya-

Jambhārimaulīndārāṁ mālīkāmadhucumbināḥ

pibeyur antarāyābdhiṁ

Herambapadāṁpāṇsavah. 0

(nāndyante tataḥ praviṣatī sūtradhāraḥ.)

Sūtradhāraḥ:

jvālevordhvavisarpinī pariṇata-syāntastapastejaso

Gaṅgātoyatarāṅgasarpavasatītī

valmīkalaks.mīr iva

sandhyevārdramṇālakomalatano

indoḥ sahaṣṭhāyinī
pāyād vas tārṇāṁruṇāṁśukapiśā

Śambhor jaṭāsamhatiḥ.

(ādīśṭo 'smi pariṇadā—tatrabhavato 'rālālapurāvāstavyasya kaver Diṅnāgasya kṛtiḥ Kundamālā nāma, sā tvayo prayaṅkavyetey, tad yāvad asya sandarbhasya prayaṅga-sācyvyavidhāyinīṁ āryyām āhiya raṅgabhūmīṁ avatārāmī.

(nepathyo:) ita ito 'vataratvāryā.

Sūtradhāraḥ:

aye! ko nūḥ khalv āryāḥvānena sāhāyakam iva me sampāda*yati? (vilokya) kaśṭham bhoh! kaśṭham bhoh! atikarunam varētate.

Laṅkaśvarasaya bhavane

sucirāṁ sthiteti

Rāmena lokarpāriya-

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Dabha-yakulena nirvāsitaṃ janapadād api gārba-ha-vṛtīni
Sītaṃ vanāya parīkṣaṇati Laksmaṇo 'yam.

(itī nisāṅkṛataḥ, praśṭavānā.)

(tatāh pravīśati sūtāḥ-dhisṭhitarathaḥ Sītaṃ āropya Laksmaṇah)

Laksmaṇah: ita ito 'vataraṭā āryā, ita itaḥ. etāṁ ni-tāṅgahanaṇaratāt-pāṙatānaṇaṁ ruddhatayā na rathapraveśāśayogyāni Bhāgirathikānānāṁ.


Laksmaṇah: ārya Sumantra, atirābhahasa-pravṛttadhavaṇaṁ tāya ālakṣiṣṭasamsa-vīṣaṁ tu*rāṅgamaṁ Gāṅgāprapāte kā-dā cīt syādānaṁ api pāṭayantī. tat tāraṅgamaniyam yatnāḥ kriyātām.


Laksmaṇah: tathāḥ sarvātmānaḥ kriyātām yatnāḥ.


(itī Sitā-Laksmaṇavān rathavaṇaṇāṃ nātayatāḥ)

Laksmaṇah: ārya Sumantra, dirghādhvaparīśāṁ tāraṅgāṃmaḥ, tad etāṁ viśrāmayaḥ. (iti samjñāṁdadāti.)

(Sumantraḥ rajjākāraṇaṃ abhinayaḥ.)

Laksmaṇah: eṣa sthitō rathāḥ. tad atavataramu devī[20]

(Sitā avatīrya parīkṛāmati.)

Laksmaṇah: Sumantra, dirghāmahaparīśāṁ tāraṅgāṃmaḥ, tad viśrāmayaṁtām.

Sumantraḥ: yad ājñāpayaḥ devāḥ. (iti ratham adhīrurya niṣkṛṇāḥ.)

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9. api garbhaguruṇaḥ] conj., adhigarvavaguruṇaḥ N1, N2
10. [Devanāgarī: N1, lakṣmaṇa N2]
11. [Devanāgarī: N1, samuddhara N2]
12. [Devanāgarī: N1, samāsthā N2]
13. [Devanāgarī: N1, N2]
14. [Devanāgarī: N1, N2]
15. kriyāmaṇam em., kriyāmaṇam N1, N2
16. ativartante N1, ativartate N2
17. [Devanāgarī: N1, kalaha N2]
18. [Devanāgarī: N1, N2]
19. yathājñāpayaḥ N1, yathājñāpati N2
20. [Devanāgarī: N1, N2]
LAKŞMAṆAḤ (parikramya atmagatam): samāḍiśto 'ham āryeṇa, athavā svāminē: “vatsa Laksmaṇa, devyah kila Sitāya Rāvaṇadhāvanavasthānād acārytṝya utpamman. tataḥ paurāṇāṁ anyādṛśa eva pralāpāḥ śrutiya. tuṁ na uktantā kalatramātṛasya kṛte śmaṇaṃ śaracandrānirmalasye kavācvakvāvahya kalayam utpādayitum. Sitāya cāraṃ gurvībhāvasubhambē ma dhahena Bhāgṛatādārasanāṁ pratya arthāthāṃ tasmāt tvaṁ annaiva vyājena Śuṃmatrādhiḥśitaratham āryopya kutra cid vanoddeṣaṃ tāṁ pariṣṭaya nivartavat.” so 'ham idaṁ mandaḥbhāyaḥ svajanaṁbhandhunirviṣaṅkanāṁ devṁ ādāya ghṛhāriṇīṁ iva vadhyaḥbhūṁṇiṃ pariṣṭayāya vanan am uṭpaṭaḥ.


LAKŞMAṆAḤ: ārye, nanv āṣamataramaṅtanī Gaṅgetī rathdād avatārītāi, tad alaṁ viṣādena. saṃprāptā eva vayam. paśya,

ādāya paṅkajavanān,
makaraṅgandhān[20] karaṇa[n], nītāntamadhurāṇa
kalahamsanādān
śītās tarāṅgakanīkā
vikiram upeto
Gaṅgānilas tava sabhājanānakāṅkṣayevo.

Sīṭā (sparśaṇ mātāya): sutṛṭṭha vuttam, odasā jalaḷaṅkaṇāparisahhasadala[22] Gaṅgāmarudassā avidamettacān jeva pādaṛuparissamaṣā[23] parikkhā ṣādo. tadāḥ vi dohadakudhāleṇa Gaṅgāvagāhane adhiṇaḥ samucchuḥhedi me sarīraṁ. tā īmā tathātapaḍeasyāḥ jadāḥ aparigṝ̄ntā vāvadārāmi tadāḥ ādesehi me maggam. (suṣṭhitam, etasā jalaḷaṅkaṅkāparisahhasadalamāḥ Gaṅgāmarudassā vidamettacān jeva pāḍaṛuparissamaṣā na apariprāśrāmi nā kṣayaḥ jāthā. tathāpi dohadakudhāleṇatva Gaṅgāvagāhane adhiṇaḥ samutsukayati (?) me sarīramāḥ. tad asmat tataḥ-pradesād yāḥ apariprāśrantā vyāvatraṇī (?) tathādēṣaya me mārgam.)


LAKŞMAṆAḤ: nanv āṣamānaiva bhagavati Bhāgṛthī, tad alaṁ viṣādena. saṃprāptā eva vayam. paśya,

ādāya paṅkajavanān,
makaraṅgandhān karaṇa[n] nītāntamadhurāṇa kalahamsanādān śītās tarāṅgakanīkā vikiram upeto Gaṅgānilas tava sabhājanānakāṅkṣayevo.


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30praty arthātāḥ M₂, pratyasṭhitāḥ (?) T₁, prāṛthātāḥ DUTTA (M₁ T₂?)

12praty arthātāḥ M₂, pratyasṭhitāḥ (?) T₁, prāṛthātāḥ DUTTA (M₁ T₂?)

13vakcha. . . cf. NLRK (quoted by DUTTA): vacca Lakkhaṇa, adisaṁgaruṃ gāmbhārāram vahanachānaḥ na (v.l. vahanam maceha / manthapā (?) na) vaḥanti me caṇāna. tā āṛgdo bhaviḥ nirūvehi dāva kṛde khyāvadda Bhārādīti tti.

14adisaṁda[20] DUTTA (M₁ M₂ T₂?), adisa[21] T₁

15kṣiḍaṇḍa[20] DUTTA (M₁?), kṛde T₁ T₂, kṛde-T₂ M₂

16samptadā[20] DUTTA (M₁ M₂ T₂?), ettha T₁

17pariprāśrāmaya[30] DUTTA (M₁ M₂ T₂?), "pariṣpaṃ" T₁

18"sīlā" . . . pāṣaṇa DUTTA (M₁ M₂ T₂?), "sīlā u a sa vi pāṣaṇa (p cancelled?) v T₁

19jha pariṣpaṃṭaḥ DUTTA (M₁ M₂ T₂?), jahāpari u T₁

30"jaya" N₁, "juyala" N₂

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LAKŚMAṆAHA (puro nirdīśya): ārye, atyantaviśrūṇtamanuṣyaṃasaṃcāra-
tayā duravatāras taṭapradēśāḥ, tasmāt prapadam āsthā-
ya samyak
vāmena nāvīraṁ iṃaṇaṁ kareṇa
duravatāram śāmālimbaya ca daksīṇena
padē pade me padam ādadhānā
śaṅāiś śaṅāair etu muhūrtam āryā,

N2:52v  vāmena vānīram īmaṇaṁ kareṇa
jānuma samālāmbya ca daksīṇena
pade pade me padam ādadhānā
śaṅāiś śaṅāair etu muhūrtam āryā.

SĪTĀ (yathoktam aṭavīrya): suṣṭhutaram paṭissaṁtaṁ
mhi, ta pādavade me muhuttam uavāsī,
(suṣṭhutaram paṭiṣrāntamsi, tat pādapatam muhūrtakam
upavīśa viśrāmiyāmi.)

LAKŚMAṆAHA: yaś abhirucitaṁ devyai
(ity ubhāve upaviśatāh. Sītā viśrānam nātayati.)

N1:4v  LAKŚMAṆAHA: aḥo! āsaṁhārayaparicchādaḥ sukṛtinaṁ.
tathā hi,
taraṅgā vijante
salilalaṅkaṇikāśītamarutas,
tathāte saṅgītaṃ
dadhati kalaḥaṁśāḥ kalagirāḥ,
sakhīva cchāyeṇaṃ
ramayati pariṣṭhāṁ.

LAKŚMAṆAHA (sevaṭaṁ): eṣa viśrānta sukhopaviṣṭā devi.
tad ayam evāvasaraḥ. bhavattu, yathāśtatām āvedayāmi.

N2:53v  (i*ti pādyoḥ pranipatya prakāśaṁ) ayam anavātasaṃvajja-
apravāsāduḥkhasaṁvībhāgānirākṣaṇa Laksmaṇo viṣhā-
payati, tat sīthrikiyātāṃ ādhīyaṃ.

N1:5v  SĪTĀ (sasambhramam): vaccha, avi kusalaṁ ājajītta-
ssa? (vatsa, api kuṣalaṁ ārjavātrasya?)

LAKŚMAṆAHA (nirdīśya): aṭyaḥ tikvānviśrūntamanuṣyaṃasaṃcāra-
tayā duravatāras taṭapradēśāḥ, tasmāt prapadam āsthā-
ya samyak
vāmena nāvīraṁ iṃaṇaṁ kareṇa
jānuma samālāmbya ca daksīṇena
pade pade me padam ādadhānā
śaṅāiś śaṅāair etu muhūrtam āryā,

SĪTĀ (yathoktam avatīrya): vaccha suṣṭhū pariṣṣantaṁ.
etassāṁ pāvavacchāyaṁ muhuttam uavāsī vī-
samissāṁ.

LAKŚMAṆAHA: yaś abhirucitaṁ devyai
(Sītā upaviśya viśrāntaṁ nātayati.)

LAKŚMAṆAHA: aḥo! āsaṁhārayaparicchādaḥ sukṛtinaṁ.
tathā hi,
taraṅgā vijante,
sajalalaṅkaṇikā śītamarutas,
tathāte saṅgītaṃ
dadhati kalaḥaṁśāḥ kalagirāḥ,
sakhīva cchāyeṇaṃ
ramayati pariṣṭhāṁ.

LAKŚMAṆAHA (śrīmukham): evam gate kīḍaṁ kuśa-
laṁ ārjasya?

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A Parallel Edition of the First Act of the Kundamāla (Pt. I)
Laksmanaḥ (vanaṁ nirddīya): evaṁ gate kidṛśaṁ kuśalam āryasya?

Sītā: kiṁ puno vi samādiṭṭho vanavāso ambāe Kekaṁ?
(kiṁ punar api samādiṣṭho vanavāso 'mbayā Kaikeyya?)
Laksmanaḥ: samādiṣṭho vanavāso, na punar ambayā.

Sītā: keṇa uṇa?
(kena punaḥ?)
Laksmanaḥ: āryena.
Sītā: kassā?
(kasya?)
Laksmanaḥ (bāpastambhaṁ nātayitvā):
āryasyādeśa ity eva
vaktum ichāṁ yatnataḥ
taveti hṛdayam gatvā
kaṭhaṁ badnāt bhārati.
Sītā: vaccha, kiṁ mama samādiṭṭho vanavāso?
(vatsa, kiṁ mama samādiṣṭo vanavāsah?)
Laksmanaḥ: na kevalaṁ tavātmano 'pi.
Sītā: katham via?
(katham iva?)
Laksmanaḥ:
prakāmabhuktakṣitiṣṭtatāpyaṁ
suhrjanenāhitayāgavahanaṁ
āryasya ramye bhavane 'pi vāsaṁ
tava prāvāse vanavāsa eva.

Sītā: paripphuṁ*daṁ kadhehi, *kadhaṁ mama vanavāso
aajaittassa ppavāso tī.  7
(paripṣhtubhātya, kathaṁ mama vanavāśa āryaputraśya pravāsa iti.)
Laksmanaḥ: ārye, kiṁ apaṁraṁ kathayāṁ manda-bhāgyaḥ.

parityaktā tvam āryena,
cāritragunamāśalīni,
mayā ca kilā gantavyam

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20 A PARALLEL EDITION OF THE FIRST ACT OF THE KUNDAMĀLĀ (Pt. I)

25 Laksmanaḥ: samādiṣṭo vanavāso, na punar ambayā.

44|kidṛśaṁ| N₁, kidṛśa N₂
45|āryasya| N₁, rāmasya N₂
46|laksmanaḥ| N₁, om. N₂
47|ambayā| N₁, ambāya N₂
48|evaṁ| N₁, eva N₂
49|kaṭhaṁ| N₁, kaṭha N₂
50|badnāt| N₁, N₂, badnā N₂
51|bhukta-| conj., "bhukti" N₁ N₂
52|vahana| N₁, N₂, "vahana N₂
53|pi| N₁, N₂, om. N₂
54|vāsaṁ| N₁, vāsa N₂
55|apaṁraṁ| N₁, N₂, arām N₂
56|bhāgyaḥ| N₁, "bhāga N₂

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tyaktva\[34\] tvam iha kānane.

Sītā (sasrama\[35\]): hā tāda, hā Uttarakosalādhiva, ajja uvarado si. (hā tāta, hā Uttarakosalādhipa, adyoparato 'śi.) (iti moham upagatā.)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ (sasambhramam\[36\]): hā hā dhik kaṣṭham. nirghātapatādarunenāmānā tyāgavārtāśravāṇaṇā nāmam uparata devi. tat ko nu khalu samāśvāsane 'bhyupāyah? (visādaṁ nātāgati,)

Sītā samāśeṣaśi.\[37\]

Lakṣmaṇaḥ (Sītām dyṛtvā saharṣaṁ):

Bhāgurathśikaraśītalena
samāvijayamāṇā vanamārūtena
madbhāgyasyeṣeṇa ca bodhyamāṇā
pratyāgata rājasaṭūtā katham śit.

N1:6r Sītā: *vaccha Lakṣkhaṇa! kiṁ gado si?
(vatsa Lakṣmaṇa! kiṁ gato 'śi?*)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ: ārye, eṣa tiṣṭhāmi mandabhāgyaḥ.

Sītā (utthāopaarchitecture): vaccha Lakṣkhaṇa, kiti uvālaṁbhia ajaiśuttaṇa aham paricitcattā?
(vatsa Lakṣmaṇa, kiṁ ity upālabhyāryapurtenāḥaṁ paricitktyaṁ—)

N2:54r *Lakṣmaṇaḥ: kidṛṣo devya upālaṁbhaḥ?

Sītā: aho me adhaṁnattanaṁ janena[38] ci uvālaṁbhametattakeṇa viṁi vī niṇṇagglihida mhi. vaccha, atthi mama kiṁ pi tena samṛdiṣṭhan?
(aho me 'dhanyatvam! kiṁ upālabhamati?)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ: astī.

Sītā: kadhehi.
(kathaya,)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ:
tulyānvayety anuguneti guṇānviteti
dūkhe suke ca sucirāṁ sahavāsīṁ[39]
jānāmi, kevalam aham janavādabhītyā
Sīte tyajāmi bhavatiṁ na caritrodaśat.

Sītā: janāvavādadbaheṇa? kiṁ vaṇṇaṁ pi me atthi?
(janāpavādaṭbhayaṇeṇa? kiṁ vacaniyaṁ api me 'sti?)

Sītā: hā tāda, ayya\[40\] Kosalāhiva, ajja uvarado si. (hā tāta, ārya Koṣalādhiva, adyoparato 'śi.) (moham gacchaṁ
tī.)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ (sasambhramam\[41\]): kaṣṭaṁ bhoh! kaṣṭaṁ bhoh! nirghātapatādaruṇenānena prarupagāvartāśravaṇena nāmam uparata devi. (nirvarṇya) diṣṭyā śvāsiti. tat ko nu khalv asyaḥ pratyānayane 'bhyupāyah? (visādaṁ nātāgati.)

Sītā samāśeṣaśi.

Bhāgurathśikaraśītalena
sambhāvyamāṇā mrudunānilena
madbhāgyasyeṣeṇa ca bodhyamāṇā
pratyāgata rājasaṭūtā katham śit.

Sītā: vaccha Lakṣkhaṇa! kiṁ gado si?
(vatsa Lakṣmaṇa! kiṁ gato 'śi?)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ: ājñāpayya, tiṣṭhāmy eṣa mandabhāgyaḥ.

Sītā: kiṁ uvālaṁbhia āṃmi paricitkattā?
(kiṁ upālabhyāśmi prarupagāvartāktyaā—)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ: kidṛṣo devya upālaṁbhaḥ?

Sītā: aho me adhaṁnattanaṁ? kiṁ[42] uvālabhametattakeṇa viṁi niṅṇagglihida mhi. kiṁ atthi kiṁ vi deva samṛdiṣṭham?
(aho me 'dhanyatvam! kiṁ uvālabhamatetreṇa viṁi niṅṇghitiśmi.) kiṁ astī kiṁ api tena samṛdiṣṭam?)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ: astī.

Sītā: kahehi kahehi.
(kathaya kathaya,)

Lakṣmaṇaḥ:
tulyānvayety anuguneti guṇānviteti
dūkhe suke ca sucirāṁ sahavāsīṁ[43]
jānāmi, kevalam aham janavādabhītyā
Sīte tyajāmi bhavatiṁ na tu bhāvadosat.

Sītā: kahāṁ janavādabhaheṇeti? kiṁ vi vaṇṇaṁ me atthi?
(katham janavādabhayaṇeti? kiṁ api vacaniyaṁ me 'sti?)

\[57\]tyaktva\[34\] N1, tyaktvas N2
\[58\]samāśvāsī\[35\] N1, samāśvāsīyatī N2
\[59\]bhāgaya\[36\] N1, "bhāgya N2
\[60\]adhana[\[\]
[61\]jan\[\] N1, jin N2
\[62\]kena[\[\]
[63\]saha[\[\]
[64\]N1, saṁha[\[\]

Newsletter of the NGMCP Number 3
LAKŚMANĀH: kidṛṣṭaṃ devyā vacanīyam?

SĪṬĀ: kadhehi kiṃ kiṃ tu?

LAKŚMANĀH: — loko nirānukūṣaḥ.

[...]

LAKŚMANĀH: anugṛho ’ṣmi. idam aparam āśrayāṭiṣṭaṃ āśyāt.

[...] LAKŚMANĀH: tvauḥ devi cītanihiṭā
gṛhadevatā me, svapne tathā śayanama-
dhyagatā sākhī tvam, dārāntarāharaṇanī-
spṛhamānasasyāḥ
yāge ‘pi te pratikṛtur
dama dharmapatnī.

LAKŚMANĀH: anugṛho ’ṣmi. utthāya prāṇamatati. idam aparam āśrayena sandiṣṭaṃ.

[...] LAKŚMANĀH: tvauḥ devi cītanihiṭā
gṛhadevatā me, svapnāgatā śayanama-
dhyasakhī tvauḥ eva
dārāntarāharaṇani-
spṛhamānasasyāḥ
yāge tava pratikṛtur

34[kehi kiṃ| DUTTA (Mī Mā), kehi kehi previous eds., om. T1, “T2 reads: Sīṭā (lajjāṃ nātayati) loko nirānukūṣaḥ, and then again begins with Sīṭā’s speech.” (DUTTA)]
35[uvvāḍiad[i | DUTTA (Mī Mā), ubbasiadi T1, uposadi T2]
36[mahīlattanāṇa] DUTTA (Mī Mā), mahakānnaṇa.
37[ubbosiadi]
38[kiṃ] DUTTA (Mī Mā), ‘pi kehi previous eds., om. T1 “Tvauḥ devi cītanihiṭā”
39[spṛhamānasasyāḥ]
40[yāge tava pratikṛtur]
Sītā: evam sandīsaṇṭeṇa paricīcādūkkhaṃ api me avaṇḍitaṃ. na tadā aññātāṃ pañño itthiāṇassa dūkkhaṃ uppādaṇṭi jadha aññāsattā.

(evam sandīsātā purityāgaṇḍūkkhaṃ api me ‘paniṭṭhaṃ. na tathā anyāyattāḥ patayaḥ striyānasya dūkkhaṃ utpādaṇṭi yathānayaṃ)
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UNNI, N. P.
Early Śaivism and the Skandapurāṇa: Sects and Centres.

For quite some time now, a group of scholars at the University of Groningen and elsewhere has been working on the earliest known work that identified itself as the Skandapurāṇa. In its oldest surviving manuscripts, all Nepalese, this work calls itself simply that; manuscripts of what appear to be two later (closely related) recensions call themselves respectively the Revākhaṇḍa (R) of the Skandapurāṇa and the Ambikākhaṇḍa (A) of the Skandapurāṇa. Two volumes of a new critical edition of this text (first published by Krśna Prasāda Bhaṭṭārāṇī in 1988) have been published so far, in 1998 (eds. R. Adriænæn, H.T. Bakker, and H. Isaacson) and 2004 (eds. H.T. Bakker and H. Isaacson), as supplement volumes to the Groningen Oriental Series; numerous articles have also been dedicated to the work (some are collected in Origin and growth of the purāṇic text corpus: with special reference to the Skandapurāṇa, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2004. Papers of the 12th World Sanskrit Conference, Vol. 3,2, while others have appeared in various journals and felicitation or other collective volumes). Peter Bisschop (currently Lecturer in Sanskrit Studies at the University of Edinburgh) has now published a monograph (revised from his doctoral dissertation at the University of Groningen, 2004) containing a detailed study of the evidence of the Skandapurāṇa for the sacred topography of early Śaivism. The core of the book is again a critical edition, this time of chapter 167 of the text, which contains a list of Śiva’s sanctuaries (āyatana). New is that in fact not one but two editions of the same chapter are presented: one gives the recension represented by the early Nepalese manuscripts (two are available for this chapter, $S_1 = NAK 2–229 = NGMPP B 11/4; S_2 = NAK 1–831 = NGMPP B 12/3), while the other is based on the manuscripts of the R and A recensions, attempting to reconstruct a common ancestor thereof. Each edition receives its own synopsis, and its own detailed annotation.

The choice to present two editions is discussed in detail (see especially pp. 47–49); it is chiefly justified by the fact that in this chapter the R and A recensions contain much additional matter, including an additional frame story and more elaborate accounts of most of the sacred places. Since the manuscripts of these recensions are in the main rather bad, reconstructing an intelligible text was no easy task. The tentative nature of this second edition is clear from the numerous crux marks and wavy lines. Further progress should be possible in the future; but Bisschop’s edition makes available for the first time some material of considerable interest (not included in the edition of the Skandapurāṇa published by Bhaṭṭārāṇī), and his extensive annotation, discussing both the (numerous) textual difficulties and the significance of the revisions and additions that we find in the R and A recensions, will doubtless be appreciated.

It is clear that much more remains to be done on the old Skandapurāṇa, a work which might have languished unpublished and unknown to scholars had it not been for the fortunate circumstance that it survived in old Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts first noticed more than a century ago by Haraprasad Shastri. This handsomely produced and well-indexed book gives a good example, particularly in its rich annotation of the edited text, of the fruits that can be won from the careful study of this text. The importance of this ancient Purāṇa, not merely for our understanding of the processes by which Purāṇic literature was composed and transmitted, but also as a remarkable source for the study of the history of Indian religions, in particular Śaivism, is becoming steadily clearer.

(Harunaga Isaacson)

One more Manuscript of the Śiṣyalekha
Diwakar Acharya

One more paper manuscript of the Śiṣyalekha of Candragomin not known to the editor and translator of the text, Prof. Michael Hahn, has been found in the National Archives, Kathmandu. It is a copy of the origi-
nal Nepalese palm-leaf manuscript now preserved at Cambridge. This manuscript appears older than the other two paper manuscripts known to the editor, as the scribe has apparently read one or two extra aksaras at the damaged edges of the original palm-leaves. It bears manuscript no. 5-7848, and has been microfilmed on NGMPP reel no. B 315/11.

I checked the edition against this new manuscript in places where the editor uses brackets in order to suggest that the text is lost, dropped or partially damaged in the manuscript, or an asterisk to mark his emendation to the text. I present here the cases where the new reading might necessitate a reconsideration of the text.

Verse | Edition | New Manuscript
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7c | tāpā(pu)(hāri pa)ra)(r)(v)(ṛ)t(ś-kāranaṃ ca) | tāpāpanodanam iva . . .
8c | ( . . . hrađāya || . . . b || |
11a | śikṣā(padeṣa) | śikṣābalaṇa
16b | nīrāya ca ghorāḥ | nīrāya(!) sughorā(!)
21b | ba(ba)loga* | babaloga*
22b | *bhī(āvaḥ) | *bhāvaḥ
23d | ba(ba)ta(n) | lalitaṃ
25a | balā(d a)nicchataḥ | balād anicchataḥ
26c | (karot)i | karoti
28a | (tato) 'śya | tato 'śya
29c | upa(ga)cchati | upagacchati
31a | iti (ce)(t) ca | iti ceti ca
32c | vijhāti (niṣaṃ) | vijhaṭā niṣaṃ
d | tāvatsalāḥ | tannis.phala
39a | *tuhinānālo 'pi | tuhinānalo pi
41a | caicca*jatānakara* | camcačcaṭā(!)nakara*
42d | *hāsa'nicitāntaka* | *hāsanicitāntaka*
51c | *kartum kartum |
54c | *sakalāvali* | sakalāvali
57c | *ghaṭitaṃ | ghaṭitaṃ
63b | *āropayanti *śivam | āropayanti subham
uttama*bodhi | ananatatabodi* (unmetrical)
97c | *tā vatsalāḥ* | tananiphalah
100a | (na yāṇaḥ) (kṣem-air) naiva ca | na yāṇaiḥ na ca(!)
109a | *nityākārṇān | nityākārṇān
110d | (bhava)bhava" | bhavaabhava'
114b | *kamalī(ṇī)" | *kamalī"

Most of the above cases confirm the editor’s restorations and emendations, but the instances of 7c, 8c, 11a, 57c, 63b, 97c and 100a are different. In verse 7c, it seems that the author used apanodana not apahārin. In verse 11a, śikṣābalaṇa might possibly be considered, though this reading may ultimately be unsatisfactory. In verse 57c, ghaṭitaṃ fits well and gives a little more alliteration. In 63b, it is possible to accept subham as found in the new manuscript. In 97c, the palm-leaf manuscript reads tannisphalahaḥ, and the new manuscript further drops the visarga. Both of these readings are corrupt, but perhaps the original might have been tannirbhārāḥ. In 100a, the reading of the new manuscript does not fit in the context but might help to guess at the original reading, for which na yāṇair nodyānair na ca may be a possibility. The two aksaras at the broken edge of the palm-leaf are closer to dyānair in the new manuscript, and cannot be read kṣemair as in the edition.

References

Kaiser Shamsher, his Library and his Manuscript Collection
Dragomir Dimitrov and Kashinath Tamot (Kathmandu)

Kaiser Shamsher Kaiser Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana (1892–1964) was one of those bright minds in the era of the much disparaged Rana regime (1846–1951) in Nepal who made significant contributions to the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of Nepal.

Kaiser Shamsher was born as the third son of the Rana prime minister Chandra Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana (1863–1929) and Loka Bhakta Lakshmi Devi (1867–1905) on 8 January 1892 at Thapathali in Kathmandu. He received his education at the Durbar High School. In 1908 Kaiser Shamsher went to Britain together with his father and remained there for a year—an experience which made a deep impression on his young mind.

During his lifetime Kaiser Shamsher occupied various posts and had many responsibilities both in the civil and the military administration. In 1901 he was appointed major general. In 1920 Kaiser Shamsher became a lieutenant general. In 1922–30 he served as the chairman of the Kathmandu municipality. Later he was the southern commanding general (1934–45) and eastern commanding general (1945–47). Kaiser Shamsher worked as director general of various institutions, such as the Royal Museum (1928–39), the Archaeology Department (1931–39), and

1There is a minor typo in the edition; brackets are wrongly placed. It should be tāpā(pa)(hāri para)na(r)(v)(ṛ)t(ś-kāranaṃ ca)

2See Raj 1994, pp. 46–48 for photographs of young Kaiser Shamsher from the early 1900s.

the Foreign Affairs Department (1932–37). As a foreign minister of Nepal, he attended the coronation ceremony of George VI on 12 May 1937 at Westminster Abbey in London. In 1947–48 Kaiser Shamsher was appointed as Nepal’s ambassador to Britain. In 1951–53 he was commander-in-chief. He also served as minister of defence (1951–55) and minister of finance and administration (1952–53). In 1956 Kaiser Shamsher was promoted to field marshal.

For his good services Kaiser Shamsher received various orders and awards. He was decorated with the Star of the Sacred scriptures and arranged the marriage of his eldest daughter to the son of a British nobleman. In 1943 Kaiser Shamsher married Krishna Chandra Devi, daughter of Mukunda Bahadur Singh of Bajura. Kaiser Shamsher was undoubtedly a remarkable intellectual who was deeply respected by his contemporaries. Perceval Landon, the author of a two-volume work on the history of Nepal published in 1928 during the rule of Chandra Shamsher (1901–29), was highly impressed by Kaiser Shamsher:

The third son is General Kaiser, who combines an astonishing width of reading, knowledge of the world, and general culture with a reputation as a first-class shot and an expert knowledge of the fauna of Nepal. He has been commissioned to make the arrangements for the great big game shoots which take place from time to time in honour of distinguished visitors, and if the organization of the camps and general sporting strategy of that which was attended by the Prince of Wales in 1922 is an indication of General Kaiser’s capacity, his future career will be watched with no little interest not only by India, but by Western Asia.

Kaiser Shamsher had a keen interest in zoology. His contributions on the study of rhinoceroses were published in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society. He also collected animals for research purposes. In this connection Landon remarks:

General Kaiser had been chiefly concerned with making this collection, and King George expressed to him his great pleasure and satisfaction in becoming thus the owner of so many of the animals that were destined to fill needed gaps in the collection in the Zoological Gardens in London.

Kaiser Shamsher was also interested in astronomy. His correspondence with the pundit Hemraj Sharma in the 1920s includes queries about the subject.

Further, Kaiser Shamsher had notable literary contributions to his credit. He translated Kalidasa’s play Vikramorvasi in 1925 and published it himself. This is one of the earliest translations of Sanskrit literature in modern Nepali. The language was corrected by Hemraj Sharma, the prescriptive grammarian of Nepali whose grammar Candrikā (Gorakhabhāṣā-vyākaraṇa) was published in 1912. Kaiser Shamsher is also known for his contributions in the field of Nepalese historical literature. In 1951–64 he was patron and treasurer of the Nepāla-Saṃskṛtika

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4Cf. Kārki 1979, p. 104; here the year is given misleadingly as 1934.
5See Kārki 1979, p. 134.
6See Kārki 1979, p. 105.
7Cf. D. Pant 1999, p. 23 (No. 344).
8See Garzilli 2001, p. 132.
12See N. Pant 1967, pp. 78-88.
Kaiser Shamsher, his Library and his Manuscript Collection

Parisad (Nepal Cultural Council), which brought out a number of publications with his support.14 Kaiser Shamsher was, then, a man of varied interests. As Saphalya AMATYA remarks, “[t]he Late Kaiser was essentially a man of artistic taste. He was very much interested in paintings, photographs and gardening. He himself was a good photographer and a competent gardener.”15 Mahes Raj PANT rightfully describes him as “the great connoisseur of books”16 Salil SUBEDI and Anagha NEELAKANTAN sum him up in the following words: “By all records, Keshar Sumsher loved the good life, books, botany, good food and wine, and beautiful women”.17

Kaiser Shamsher passed away on 7 June 1964 at the age of 72.

The Kaiser Library The most significant legacy left by Kaiser Shamsher is undoubtedly his private library, which embodies its owner’s passionate and lifelong efforts in collecting books from both Europe and Asia. From his trips to Britain Kaiser Shamsher, a bibliophile par excellence, inevitably brought back many new books for his own collection. He also used his good connections and high positions to gain access to rare printed and handwritten material from Nepal and India. The history of the library can be traced back to 1909, when Kaiser Shamsher started putting his own stamp on the books in his possession.18 Within about half a century the number of his books grew to such an extent that it may now safely be considered one of the largest private libraries in South Asia, and certainly the largest one in Nepal. The collections kept in this library, though neglected for a long time, are of great importance and deserve much more attention and closer study.

Since its beginnings the library has been accommodated in a building which was constructed in 1895 by order of Bir Shamsher and which Chandra Shamsher purchased in 1908 for his son. After Kaiser Shamsher’s demise in 1964, in accordance with her husband’s will his second wife Krishna Chandra Devi donated 190 ropanis (9.67 hectares) of land to His Majesty’s Government of Nepal, at a special ceremony on 11 September 1968.19 The donation consisted of the Kaiser Mahal (the Kaiser Palace), the Kaiser Pustakalaya (the Kaiser Library) and the Kaiser Bagha (the Kaiser Garden, recently reopened under the name of “Garden of Dreams”). Each of these assets has its own glorious history. Here we are concerned, however, only with the Kaiser Library.

When it was donated, Kaiser Shamsher’s private library contained approximately twenty-eight thousand printed books in various languages and covering a large number of subjects, such as history, religion, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, hunting, gardening, and travelling.20 The Kaiser Library is very important for its early “Nepal Collection”. In 1974 Thakurlal MANANDHAR published a detailed bibliography of the works on Nepal in the Kaiser Library. One highlight of this library is its collection of rare English books, especially publications from the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Among scholars, the Kaiser Library is particularly famous for its collection of Nepalese manuscripts. Besides this, many noteworthy paintings, photographs, sculptures, maps and press cuttings are also part of the library and attract public interest. The portraits of various Nepalese and foreign personalities are especially worth seeing. As AMATYA points out, the Kaiser Library is “not a mere library but also a rich art gallery” and “a small Museum by itself”.21

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14These are the first five volumes of the Nepāla-Sāṃskṛtika Parisad Patrikā (Journal of the Nepal Cultural Council), vol. 1 (1952), vol. 2 (1953), vol. 3 (1957; Aitihāsika Patrasangraha, part 1), vols. 4–5 (1964; Aitihāsika Patrasangraha, part 2), the Ja-yatrānākaraṇātāka (1957) and the Tirātunmaundaryagāthā (1962).
16M. PANT 1993, p. 18.
17SUBEDI/NEELAKANTAN 2001, p. 10.
18See AMATYA 1989, p. 147.
19See AMATYA 1991, p. 95.
20As AMATYA notes, people started referring to the Kaiser Library under this name only after 1951 (see AMATYA 1989, p. 147).
21According to AMATYA, in the 1980s the Kaiser Library contained approximately 35,000 books, 2,000 issues of periodicals, 4,000 back numbers of daily newspapers, 50 press cuttings, 10 photo albums, and 700 manuscripts. About 90% of the books are considered to be in English (see AMATYA 1989, pp. 148–151). The library is estimated to have nowadays more than fifty thousand volumes.
The Kaiser Library in 2006

Indeed, no visitor of Kathmandu interested in Nepal’s history and culture should miss the chance to visit this extraordinary library-cum-museum, “the perfect souvenir of a rather bizarre chapter in the history of Nepal Mandala, a chapter not without residual values nor altogether without charm, as Kaisher Mahal attests”.

Azhar Abidi, an Australian writer of Pakistani origin, who did not miss his chance to admire the riches of the Kaiser Library, gives the following report of his recent visit to this treasure house:

I WRITE my address in the clerk’s register and enter, with trepidation. The library of Kaiser Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana is the oldest library in Kathmandu—and it is pickled in time. The reading room has a Railway and Canal Map of India drawn by George Philip and Son Ltd, 32 Fleet Street, London. Railways have been updated to October 1906, canals to August 1905. There is a rolled-up map of Africa, a map of Asia, and a ‘heliozincographed’ map of Nepal, printed by the Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, and based on a 1924–25 survey. Mt Everest is shown here as 29,002 feet high.

Eyes agape, I walk down the hall. Timber floor, high ceiling, musty smell. On the walls, black and white photographs of dead nobles. Two portraits of glaring British Army officers. A stuffed Bengal tiger with a spider web between its jaws. Further down, there is a bust of Napoleon and a painting of an Englishwoman. The newer titles include hardbacks by Alistair Maclean, Irwin Shaw, Jean Renoir and Anthony Burgess. They are over forty years old. [...]

I return to my oak table. I have a leather-bound volume of Dante’s *Inferno*, illustrated in ink by Gustave Doré, printed by Cassell and Company, 1912, and a notepad. There are no other visitors. So I spend the rest of the afternoon planning the great Kaiser Library Robbery.

Initially Kaiser Shamsher’s collection was accessible only to members of his family and some other notable Nepalese and foreign visitors. Eventually, though, Kaiser Shamsher actually allowed the interested public access to his private library even during his lifetime. It all began on 12 May 1951, when the Nepal Cultural Council was established under his patronage. At the first meeting held in the house of the Poet Laureate Lekhnath Paudyal, the historian Balchandra Sharma proposed Kaiser Shamsher as

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24 Abidi 2003, pp. 49–51.
25 Kaiser Shamsher provided selfless support to the Nepal Cultural Council. He donated one hundred thousand rupees to the Nepal Cultural Council and offered it a house within his own compound, and even a motorcar (see Barâla 1952, p. 56). In an entry dated VS 2008, 12 Mangsir [i.e. 27 November 1951] in his diary, Naya Raj Pant, a contemporary of Kaiser Shamsher and renowned scholar, praised the benefactor’s great generosity in three verses composed in Sanskrit (see N. Pant 2003, p. 61; M. Pant 2006, p. 57 offers a Nepali translation of these verses):

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Chairperson and introduced him with the following words:

“Although among us who attend [this meeting] there are many experts in a particular field, it is now hard to find somebody else like the Honourable Kaiser [Shamsher] who is expert equally in every field.” (BARALA 1952, p. 53).

At the end of the meeting, Kaiser Shamsher graciously remarked:

“I am extremely happy that thanks to your great efforts the literary and art materials which I have been collecting during all my life will be actively used and will become objects of national utilization as well.” (BARALA 1952, p. 55).

In this way Kaiser Shamsher opened his library to the scholars affiliated to the Nepal Cultural Council. The general public was given access to the valuable collections only later, at the end of 1968. Since then the Kaiser Library has continued to be used as a reference library, and is open to all readers and visitors. Nowadays, the library operates under the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Government of Nepal, which occupies a few wings of the same building.

The Kaiser Manuscript Collection  The most valuable treasure stored in the Kaiser Library is its collection of old and rare Nepalese manuscripts. In his pursuit of collecting manuscripts, Kaiser Shamsher was inspired by Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800–1896), who in 1820–43, during his stay at the British Residency in Kathmandu, did pioneer scholarly research and collected over five thousand Nepalese manuscripts, now kept in the British Library. Kaiser Shamsher was also influenced by the efforts of other early researchers, in particular by Cecil BENDALL (1856–1906) and Haraprasāda ŚASTRĪ (1853–1931). Kaiser Shamsher saw scholars coming to Nepal in search of the lost ‘Indian’ civilization, and he came into personal contact with many of them. He had friendly relationship with Sylvain LÉVI (1863–1935) and was well acquainted with Giuseppe Tucci (1894–1984). Portraits of both scholars are still hanging on the walls in the Kaiser Library. Kaiser Shamsher enabled LÉVI, Tucci and other scholars to gain access to many valuable Nepalese manuscripts and significantly facilitated their scholarly work.

Thus, for example, Luciano PETECH, who in the late 1950s came to Nepal to do research on the history of medieval Nepal, discovered in Kaiser Shamsher’s collection a very important Sanskrit chronicle, which he appended in his Medieval History of Nepal (1958), naming it “the Kaisher fragment of ‘Vamśavalli’ (Kaiser Library, n. 171).” PETECH considered the discovery of this manuscript very fortunate. The text trans-
Portrait of Sylvan Lévi

The NRC edition of the Gopalarājaavaṃsāvālī

mittened in the manuscript is now famous as “the Kaiser Vamsāvalī”. Interestingly, it was Kaiser Shamsher who originally intended to publish the Gopalarājaavaṃsāvālī for the first time and commissioned the work on it in 1959. Five researchers from the Nepal Cultural Council studied the text on each Saturday for six months. However, the text could not be published during Kaiser Shamsher’s lifetime. About twenty years later, the seed of the plan for a publication of the Gopalarājaavaṃsāvālī sown by Kaiser Shamsher was helped along by Dhanava-jra Vajrācārya, who in 1980–81 initiated a project on the Gopalarājaavaṃsāvālī at the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies of the Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu. The fruit was eventually reaped in 1985 when Vajrācārya and Kamal P. Malla published the edition of the Gopalarājaavaṃsāvālī in the series of the Nepal Research Centre.

The high value of Kaiser Shamsher’s manuscripts was obvious to scholars, so it was quite natural that the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) decided to include the collection within the scope of its activities. The NGMPP microfilmed the whole collection of manuscripts housed in the Kaiser Library under the reel letter C. The microfilming activities at the Kaiser Library took place in two phases. The first phase was initiated on 28 October 1975 beginning with reel no. C 1/1, and it lasted until 31 August 1976. Seven years later, on 30 October 1983 the second phase started, and the work was completed on 31 January 1984, finishing at reel no. C 124/6. On altogether 124 microfilm reels 1,168 manuscripts with more than 100,000 folios containing approximately 1,350 separate texts were microfilmed.

The original negative films are kept at the National Archives in Kathmandu, together with a set of positive copies. Another complete set of positive copies is stored at the State Library in Berlin. At the time of microfilming, the NGMPP prepared index cards for each processed manuscript. The information from these index cards was incorporated into the “Preliminary List of Manuscripts, Blockprints and Historical Documents Microfilmed by the NGMPP, Part 1 (excluding Tibetan Material and Historical Documents)” published on a CD in June 2003. The NGMPP database, which includes the relevant information concerning the manuscripts at the Kaiser Library, has meanwhile become easily available over the Internet. A preliminary descriptive catalogue of Kaiser Shamsher’s manuscripts has been prepared by Dinesh Raj Pant and Yogesh Mishra; however, this catalogue has not been published yet. Within the ongoing Nepalese-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) funded by the German Research Foundation a comprehensive descriptive catalogue of these manuscripts is being prepared.

By the beginning of October 2006 more than one hundred manuscripts had been described in full detail. About forty percent of the material collected by Kaiser Shamsher are old palm-leaf manuscripts (486 MSS). Two thirds of the manuscripts in the collection are written in various forms of the Newari script (868 MSS). There are also manuscripts written in Devanagari script, and a few more in Bengali, Maithili, Tibetan and Kutila (Transitional Gupta) scripts. The bulk of the manuscripts con-

35 See Tewari 1964.

37 See http://134.100.72.204:3000
38 See http://www.uni-hamburg.de/ngmcp
A damaged palm-leaf manuscript in the Kaiser Library

tain texts in Sanskrit. Apart from them, the collection includes texts in Newari and Nepali, and some few in Hindi, Maithili and Prakrit. The texts are devoted to various subjects. Most widely represented is the hymnal literature (268 MSS); there are many Buddhist texts on various subjects (218 MSS), ritual texts (176 MSS), tantric texts (130 MSS), and astronomical texts (98 MSS).

The manuscript collection housed in the Kaiser Library is extremely valuable, not least because the codices kept there have been selected specifically on the basis of their importance. There are hardly any accidental acquisitions, and generally there are not many copies of the same title. The core of the material was formed probably around a traditional Rana collection, to which Kaiser Shamsher zealously added many more manuscripts. The older generation of Newar scholars used to talk about rare pieces of art and manuscripts which Kaiser Shamsher collected from local intellectuals. By acquiring the manuscripts for his own library, Kaiser Shamsher has prevented invaluable cultural items of Nepal from being irreversibly lost or illegally taken out of the country. The majority of the manuscripts acquired by Kaiser Shamsher for his collection are still available in the Kaiser Library, although some precious documents have unfortunately been lost. Apart from this, from a note written by Ramesh Prasad Dhungana on 28 April 1971 it is known that before Kaiser Shamsher’s collection was handed over to His Majesty’s Government of Nepal, 42 manuscripts from the Kaiser collection were taken on loan by the Bir Library. It is difficult to establish how many manuscripts exactly were available in 1968 when ownership of the Kaiser Library was transferred.

39 Garzilli’s note that “Kaiser Shamsher gave 600 palm-leaf manuscripts to the Royal Library, which in 1976 were filmed by Michael Witzel for the NGMPP on films numbered C1 et seqq.” (Garzilli 2001, p. 120, fn. 18) is not very accurate. All manuscripts microfilmed by the NGMPP on C reels, with the exception of those lost or stolen, are still kept at the Kaiser Library.
Kaiser Shamsher’s collection includes many remarkable and truly unique manuscripts. It may suffice here to mention only a few rarities to give an impression of the great importance of this exquisite depository. A very old incomplete palm-leaf manuscript of the Jatarāpiśākā, the earliest commentary on the Amaṇakoṣa, dated NS 239 [AD 1119] is preserved in Kaiser Shamsher’s collection (NGMPP, C 121/1). A palm-leaf manuscript dated NS 494 [AD 1374] was found in it which contains the earliest known Newari translation of the Sanskrit version of the Haramekhalā, a medical work in Prakrit (NGMPP, C 80/11 = C 106/5). Historians have repeatedly been denying the story told in the vernacular chronicles about an attack on the Kathmandu Valley by Mukunda Sena, the king of Palpa in Western Nepal. In Kaiser Shamsher’s collection a manuscript of the Naradasmṛti (NGMPP, C 40/2a) dated NS 631 [AD 1511] was found, which contains undeniable evidence that Mukunda Sena did indeed attack the Kathmandu Valley in NS 645 and 646 [AD 1525 and 1526]. We know about the Licchavi King Mānadeva IV from a very old palm-leaf manuscript of the Suṣrutasamhitā, a medical treatise, which was copied in Deopatan (Gvala) in MS 301 [AD 877] and is now kept in the Kaiser Library (NGMPP, C 80/7). Only recently an old palm-leaf manuscript of the Nyayavikāśā, a Newari commentary on the Nāradasnārti written by Manjika in NS 500 [AD 1380], was identified in the Kaiser manuscript collection (NGMPP, C 5/2). This codex was copied in NS 672 [AD 1552] at the time of the Patan king Visnuśimha (1536–58). Until now only a modern copy of this old manuscript was known to exist (NGMPP, B 415/20 and a better retake in A 1313/14).

In the first half of the twentieth century a number of erudite private collectors and institutions in Kathmandu were competing with each other in collecting Nepalese manuscripts. Among those particularly active, besides Kaiser Shamsher, was Hemraj Sharma, who established an even bigger collection, which he kept in his private house, the Bharatī Bhavan, at Dhoka Tole in the centre of Kathmandu. There the second biggest manuscript collection in Nepal of the time was accommodated. The largest collection of Nepalese manuscripts was stored in the Bir Library. The Bir Library was first called Nepāla Rājakiya Pustakālaya (Royal Nepalese Library) and was established at the time of King Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah Dev (1797–1816) in 1812. It became popular un-

der the name Bir Pustakālaya (Bir Library) when in 1900 Bir Shamsher (1852–1901) moved the library to the newly constructed Ghantaghar and reorganised it. In 1967, when the National Archives in Kathmandu was established within the Department of Archaeology, itself founded in 1952, the library was transferred to its present location at Ram Shah Path near Babar Mahal. The collection contains now more than 35,000 manuscripts and documents.

Hemraj Sharma and the custodians of the Bir Library were aware that Kaiser Shamsher was in possession of extremely rare and important manuscripts embellishing his superb library, and made efforts to arrange modern copies for their own collections. Hemraj Sharma, in particular, had many occasions to explore Kaiser Shamsher’s collection and commission new copies. Both intellectuals were well-acquainted, moreover Kaiser Shamsher esteemed Hemraj Sharma and even called him respectfully his guru. Kaiser Shamsher’s old manuscript of the Trībhhūmakavidyāpīṭha dated NS 406 [AD 1286] was copied in VS 1980 [AD 1923], and the Devanagari copy was included in Hemraj Sharma’s collection under the title Trībhhūmakvidyā. Later this modern copy came into the possession of the National Library of Nepal and eventually was brought to the National Archives (Acc. No. 5/2231). The NGMPP

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44 A letter from Kaiser Shamsher is preserved in which it becomes clear that he was involved in the nomination of his learned contemporary for the prestigious title Vidvacchironami ‘Crest-jewel of the Learned Persons’. The decoration was offered to Hemraj Sharma at the suggestion of Kaiser Shamsher or at least with his active support. The letter dated VS 1992, 10 Baishakh [22 April 1935] reads:

Dear Sir, ([the title] Vidvacchironami ‘Crest-jewel of the Learned Persons’ seems to be better, though Pandjītārāj ‘Respectable Scholar’ it seems better [to say] Pandjītārāja ‘King of Scholars’. It is a good idea to offer [the title] Pandjītārāja to the foremost learned person in the Kingdom, as is the case with [the title] Poet Laureate. I hope you will reach Jawalakhel Durbar at 12 o’clock today. Let us discuss then which [title] will be better, Pandjītārāja or Vidvachchironami. I have returned the directory. Your student forever, Kaiser.” (See RAJ 1978, p. 98, Appendix 9 where a facsimile of this letter in Kaiser Shamsher’s own handwriting can be seen.)

The nomination took place on the occasion of the sixty-first birthday of the then prime minister Juddha Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana (1874–1952); the Lalmohar of the title, however, was provided only four years later in VS 1996, 16 Bhaadra [1 September 1939] (see RAJ 1978, Appendix 1).

45 Cf. REGMI 1965, p. 232. PETECH had access to these manuscripts and referred to the text under the title Kumārāpijāvīdhāna. This title was extracted from the sub-colophon of the last chapter.
microfilmed both manuscripts, Kaiser Shamsher’s old one under the title Vidyāpīthapratisthāhavīdhi (NGMPP, C 106/3) and the modern copy under the title Tribhūnikavidyāpīthapratisthā (NGMPP, A 865/2, A 1231/8, B 520/4).

Another noteworthy example is Kaiser Shamsher’s manuscript of Ratnamati’s sub-commentary on Dharmadīsa’s Čandravṛtti on the Čandravyākāraṇa, Candragomin’s famous Sanskrit grammar. The importance of this old manuscript dated NS 363 [AD 1243], of which only 79 folios are preserved, was clearly recognized by Kaiser Shamsher. The National Archives owns two modern copies of two different parts of the old manuscript. Both modern copies were prepared by order of Kaiser Shamsher’s nephew Mrgendra Shamsher (1906–?), who was at the time Chief of the Department of Education. The first copy was written by Divyaratna Vajrācārya in VS 1989 [AD 1932], while the second copy was prepared by Yajñananda Vajrācārya (1917–1997), most probably years after Divyaratna Vajrācārya copied his part. The NGMPP microfilmed all three manuscripts, the old one in the Kaiser Library (NGMPP, C 2/9) and the two modern copies in the National Archives (NGMPP, A 1286/14 and B 460/16).

In this way, even when there were no microfilms, photocopying machines, scanners or digital cameras, enthusiastic and praiseworthy efforts were being made to preserve the invaluable knowledge contained in the Nepalese manuscripts by safely storing them and preparing modern copies on their basis. Thanks to the huge technological advancements at the turn of the twenty-first century, it has become now significantly easier to preserve manuscript material in a very efficient and economical way. At the same time, even when the manuscripts are locked in a storage room under proper conditions, images of them can easily be made available in digital form, so that researchers and the interested public all over the world can have immediate online access to the contents of the manuscripts. The responsibility of today’s generation of scholars and conservators is all the more greater to make every possible effort to ensure proper preservation and study of the material which has survived the whims of past centuries.

Despite the efforts of some few individuals, it is no secret that since Kaiser Shamsher’s private collection was handed over to the public in 1968, no significant improvements have been made in the preservation of the precious manuscript collection. On the contrary, since 1968 the manuscripts, which are kept bound in cloth and piled on shelves in ordinary metal cupboards placed in an environmentally unmonitored room, have been exposed to ever more risk of damage and loss. Not only creatures such as insects, mice and irresponsible humans may get access of the text (see PETECH 1984, p. 98).
to the material, but also fungus and the increasing atmospheric pollution in Kathmandu are irreparably affecting the material. Not even the fact that the collection has been microfilmed by the NGMPP and the contents of the manuscripts are thus preserved can serve as a consolation, for some of the microfilms prepared at the Kaiser Library are unfortunately of poor quality and either hardly or not legible at all. Further, the microfilms which are more than thirty years old are already showing the ravages of time, and it is not certain for how much longer they will last.

Until very recently another of Kaiser Shamsher’s legacies, the Kaiser Bāga, an exquisite English-style Edwardian garden built in the 1920s was lying in ruins, neglected for decades. It is only thanks to a project funded by the Austrian Development Aid and directed by the Austrian architect Götz Hagemüller that the Kaiser Garden was rescued from imminent demolition. After six years of restoration and renovation the garden was triumphally reopened on 8 October 2006.\(^{46}\)

The unsuitable “manuscript room” where Kaiser Shamsher’s unique collection of Nepalese manuscripts is currently kept, is only a one-minute walk from the “Garden of Dreams”. It will be unpardonable not to follow the example set by the restorers of the Kaiser Garden. The establishment of an environmentally controlled storage room for the safe preservation of the invaluable manuscripts in the Kaiser Library is an urgent need and should not be postponed any further. The first necessary step has already been taken by the Nepal Research Centre, which is working on a proposal for a new project at the Kaiser Library. The Kaiser Library Manuscript Collection Project will try to establish a modern storage room, a professional conservation studio and a fully equipped reading room. Within this project the manuscript collection of the Kaiser Library will be digitized by means of the newest technology and reorganized in accordance with the comprehensive descriptive catalogue being prepared by the NGMCP. It remains to be seen whether the Nepal Research Centre will be able to overcome all the obstacles lying ahead so as to allow the Kaiser Library Manuscript Collection Project to be started in the near future. Its successful completion will not only save one of Nepal’s most remarkable manuscript collections from damage and loss, but should also serve as a model for the preservation of many other invaluable textual witnesses and bearers of Nepal’s great immaterial wealth.

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