

A Preliminary Study of a Newly Discovered Sanskrit Manuscript of the *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi*

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1. Introduction The *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi* (hereafter MVA) is one of the foundational scriptures of Esoteric Buddhism. Modern scholars generally agree that the MVA was established in the mid-seventh century and consider it, along with the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, as hallmarks of the formal establishment of Esoteric Buddhism. However, with the rapid growth of Indian Esoteric Buddhism, the MVA was not given the same level of attention as the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, and the former was considered, by the later classification, as a lower level, that is, the *caryā* (ritual performance) stage of Esoteric Buddhism. The less attention a text receives, the less chance its Sanskrit manuscripts have of surviving, which may explain the lack of the discoveries of the Sanskrit manuscript of the MVA until recent times. During a survey of palm-leaf manuscripts in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) conducted by Zhang Meifang in 2020, one single folio of the palm-leaf manuscript of the MVA was identified. The present paper aims to present our preliminary study of this folio, including a table of its scripts and a comparison of the Sanskrit transcription with the Tibetan translation of the MVA.

This palm-leaf, written in the *Nāgarī* scripts, measures about 53.5cm by 4.3cm in size. Its perimeter suffers severe fibrillation and deformation. Both sides of the palm-leaf comprise six lines divided into two columns by two string holes. The string hole on the right side is located in the middle of the right column, and the text wraps around the string hole. Its folio number is written on the left margin of the verso side. Due to the breakage of the palm-leaf, we could not know whether the extant number 23 is complete or not.

The MVA was translated by Śubhakarasiṃha (637–735) into Chinese in 724. The manuscript used by Śubhakarasiṃha came from the famous pilgrim Wu-xing (無行), who spent eight years in India until his death there in 674. The Chinese translation of the MVA (T848) consists of 31 chapters and comes with an appendix containing 5 chapters. The MVA was translated into Tibetan by dPal brtsegs and Śilendrabodhi before the

compilation of the *Denkar-Ma Catalogue* in 812 (Hodge 2003, 17). This Tibetan translation (D494; P126; N447; C129; H462) contains a *Mūlatantra* consisting of 29 chapters and an *Uttaratantra* consisting of 7 chapters.

This *Uttaratantra* part of the MVA, has not yet been translated into Chinese. This implies that the *Uttaratantra* of the MVA was not established until at least after Wu-xing's death in 674. Hodge (2012, 72) hypothesized that the *Uttaratantra* was composed in 711 based on the rituals mentioning the motion cycle of Saturn. According to Hodge (2012, 71), "the *Vairocanābhisambodhi Uttaratantra* was intended originally as a short manual summarising the main rituals of the *Vairocanābhisambodhi*, perhaps for the convenience of the ācāryas... then it was probably intended to be somewhat ephemeral although it has now achieved canonical status." Our newly discovered folio of the MVA belongs to the last chapter of the *Uttaratantra* titled "de bzhin gshegs pa 'byung ba zhes bya ba'i dkyil 'khor chen po byin gyis rlob pa."

The content of this Sanskrit manuscript corresponds to the D255b6–257b2 or P220b6–222a8 of the Tibetan translation. Since in Tibetan translation the last chapter of the *Uttaratantra* ends on the folio D260a7 or P226b2, we could guess that this Sanskrit folio should be the penultimate or antepenult folio of the entire Sanskrit manuscript.

2. Table of Scripts Most scripts, such as *pa*, *ma*, *ya*, etc., have a closed top with a straight horizontal line, and the horizontal line of each script has not been connected with each other yet. We have tentatively dated this manuscript to the 11–12th century.

अ (a) आ (ā) इ (i) ए (e) उ (u) व (v)
 वा (ka) ख (kha) ग (ga) घ (gha) ङ (ṅa)
 च (ca) छ (ccha) ज (ja) झ (jā) ञ (jñā) ऋ (ṛ) ॠ (ṝ)
 ऌ (ḷ) ए (ḥ) ऒ (ṇa)
 त (ta) थ (tha) द (da) ध (dha) न (na)
 प (pa) ब (ba) म (bha) य (ma)

23a3: satvacaryāmukhe śikṣitukāmena bodhisatvena iha mahāsamayāvatāre (')bhiyogaḥ karaṇīya ○ iti || śṛṇu guhyakādhipate bodhicittaṃ yena cittena samanvāgatā bodhisatvā jātā bhavanti tathāgatakule pra○tiṣṭhitā bhavanty atītānāgatapratyutpannānām buddhānām bhagavatām jñāne | atha vajrapāṇi bhagavantam etad a-

MVA_{Tib}: sems dpa'i spyad pa'i sgo 'di la slob par 'dod pa'i byang chub sems dpas (*byang chub sems dpas*) *D*; *byang chub sems dpa' P*) dam tshig chen po la 'jug pa 'di la mngon par brtson par bya'o || gsang ba pa'i bdag po byang chub sems dpa' sems gang dang ldan na de (P221a4) bzhin (D256a4) gshegs pa'i rigs su skyes shing 'das pa dang ma byon pa dang | da ltar byung ba'i sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rnams kyi ye shes rab tu gnas par 'gyur ba'i byang chub kyi sems de yang nyon cig | de nas bcom ldan (P221a5) 'das la phyag na rdo rjes 'di skad

23a4: vocat* | deśayatu bhagavān asmākam anukampām upādāya tad bodhicittaṃ | evam ukte bhagavān vajra|○pāṇiguhyakādhipatim etad avocat* | tatra guhyakādhipate bodhiḥ katamā | bodhir ākāśam ākāśam cārūpyāni ○ darśanam agrāhyaṃ yallakṣaṇā ca bodhiḥ tallakṣaṇaṃ ca cittaṃ iti hi guhyakādhipate cittaṃ cākāśaṃ ca

MVA_{Tib}: gsol (D256a5) to || bcom ldan 'das bdag cag la thugs brtse ba'i slad du byang chub kyi sems de bshad du gsol | de skad ces gsol pa dang | bcom ldan 'das kyis gsang ba pa'i bdag po phyag (P221a6) na rdo rje la 'di skad ces bka' stsal to || gsang ba pa'i bdag po de (D256a6) la byang chub gang zhe na | byang chub ni nam mkha'i ngo bo nyid do || nam mkha' yang gzugs med bstan du med gzung du med pa'o || byang chub kyi mtshan nyid gang yin (P221a7) pa sems kyi mtshan nyid kyang de yin no || gsang ba pa'i bdag po de lta bas na sems dang (D256a7) nam mkha' dang

23a5: bo<dhi>m cādvayam e(ta)t* | yā cātra samatānubodhā dharmāṇām dharmadhātor adhigamaḥ sānuttarā samyaksam ○ bodhiḥ | tasmin ya(c) citta(m) utpadyate (') ṇpādayogenānupalambhayo(ge) na idam ucyate guhyakādhipate bodhicittaṃ | api tu guhyakādhipate paṃcabhir avasthānapadair bodhisatvā bodhim abhisambudhyante | katameḥ paṃcabhiḥ |

MVA_{Tib}: byang chub 'di dag ni gnyis su med do || 'di la chos rnams mnyam pa nyid du rtogs pa chos kyi dbyings khong du chud pa gang (P221a8) yin pa de ni bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub yin no || de la mi (*mi*) *D*; *om. P*) skye ba'i tshul dang mi (*mi*) *D*; *om. P*) dmigs pa'i tshul gyis (D256b1) sems skye ba gang yin pa de ni | gsang ba pa'i bdag po byang chub kyi sems zhes bya'o || gsang ba pa'i (P221b1) bdag po gzhan yang byang

chub sems dpa' gnas kyi gzhi lngas byang chub mngon par rtogs par 'gyur te | lnga gang zhe na |

23a6: iha guhyakādhīpate bodhisatvāḥ sarvabhāvavigatam abhisambudhyante | kecit punaḥ skandhadhātāvāyata ○ nāgrāhyagrāhakavigatam śūnyam māyopamam ity abhisambudhyante | kecid dharmālambanatayā | api tu guhyakādhīpate mantramukhabodhisatvacaryācārīṇā bodhisatvenaivam abhisambodhavyam || sarvabhāvavigatam skandhadhātāvāyatanagrāhyagrā-

MVA_{Tib}: gsang ba pa'i bdag (D256b2) po 'di la byang chub sems dpa' rnam dngos po thams cad dang bral bar mngon (P221b2) par rtogs par 'gyur ro || kha cig ni phung po dang | kham dang | skye mched dang | gzung ba dang | 'dzin pa rnam par spangs pa stong pa sgyu ma lta bur mngon par rtogs (D256b3) par 'gyur ro || kha cig ni chos la dmigs pas (*dmigs pas*) *D*; *dmigs pa P*) so || gsang ba pa'i (P221b3) bdag po 'on kyang byang chub sems dpa' gsang sngags kyi sgo nas | byang chub sems dpa'i spyad pa spyod pas | 'di ltar dngos po thams cad dang bral ba phung po dang kham (D256b4) dang | skye mched dang | gzung ba dang |

23b1: havivarjitam • dharmanairātmyasa[mata]yā svacittam ādyanutpanna[m] śūnyatāsvabhāvam iti ||¹⁾ tatra guhyakādhīpa ○ te sarvabhāvavigatam iti laukika-mārgaparityāga eva tathāgatena sandarśitaḥ | na punar atrātmā satvo jantur vā manujo vā saṃvidyate | api tu skandhadhātāvāyatanādīni | skandhadhātāvāyatanagrāhyagrāhavivarjitam iti | [śrāvaka]-

MVA_{Tib}: 'dzin pa rnam par (P221b4) spangs pa chos bdag med pa mnyam pa nyid kyi rang gi sems thog ma nas ma skyes pa stong pa nyid kyi ngo bo nyid du rtogs par bya'o || gsang ba pa'i bdag po de la dngos po thams cad (D256b5) dang bral ba zhes bya ba de ni de bzhin gshegs (P221b5) pas 'di la bdag gam | sems can nam | skye ba'am | shed las skyes pa yod pa ma yin gyi phung po dang | kham dang | skye mched tsam du zad do zhes 'jig rten pa'i lam yongs su spang par (*spang par*) *D*; *spangs par P*) bstan (D256b6) pa yin no || phung po kham dang | (P221b6) skye mched dang | gzung ba dang | 'dzin pa rnam par spangs pa zhes bya ba ni nyan thos kyi

23b2: mārgābhisamayaparijñānāmukhena bodhisatvānām mahāyānābhisamayavyavasthāpitaḥ | dharmanairā ○ tmyasamatayā tu mantramukhabodhisatvacaryācārīṇo bodhisatvāḥ svacittam ādyanutpannam paśyantaḥ śūnyatāsvabhāvam adravyam alakṣaṇam abhisambudhyante | tasmā tarhi guhyakādhīpate bodhisatvenānālayānāvarena-sarvapa[pa]-

MVA_{Tib}: lam mngon par rtogs pa yongs su shes pa'i sgo nas | byang chub sems dpa' rnam ki theg pa chen po mngon par ^(D256b7) rtogs pa rnam par gzha pa ^(P221b7) yin no || chos bdag med pa mnyam pa nyid kyis ni byang chub sems dpa' gsang sngags kyis sgo nas | byang chub sems dpa'i spyad pa spyod pa rnam rang gi sems thog ma nas ma skyes par mthong zhing stong pa nyid kyis ^(D257a1) ngo bo nyid rdzas med ^(P221b8) pa mtshan nyid med par mngon par rtogs par 'gyur ro || gsang ba pa'i bdag po de lta bas na | byang chub sems dpas (*sems dpas*] *D*; *sems dpa' P*) gnas med pa sgrub pa med pa spros pa thams cad

23b3: nīcarahitaṃ cittam utpārayivyaṃ | tad anenāpi te guhyakādhipate paryāyeṇaiva veditavyaṃ | ☉ yathā nāsti mahāyānābhisamprasthitānāṃ bodhisatvānāṃ mantracaryā-nayanirhāravimokṣamukhaṃ muktva anuttarāyāḥ ☉ samyaksambodher upakārī vedita-vyaḥ tat kasmād dhetoḥ yad anekān ka<lpā>n bodhisatvā ghaṭanto vyāyacchanto

MVA_{Tib}: dang (*dang*] *D*; *om. P*) bral ba'i sems bskyed bar bya'o || ^(D257a2) gsang ba pa'i bdag po rnam ^(P222a1) grangs 'dis kyang 'di ltar theg pa chen po la yang dag par gnas pa'i byang chub sems dpa' rnam la gsang sngags spyad pa'i tshul sgrub pa rnam par thar pa'i sgo ma gtogs par bla na med pa yang dag ^(P222a2) par rdzogs pa'i byang chub ^(D257a3) la phan 'dogs pa med par rig par bya'o || de ci'i phyir zhe na | byang chub sems dpa' rnam bskal pa du mar 'bad cing btsal (*btsal*] *D*; *btsal P*) te |

23b4: duṣkaraparityāgāni kurvanto na bodhim abhisambudhyante | ta<d i>haiva janmani mantramukhabodhi ☉ satvacaryācāriṇo bodhisatvā anuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisambu (dhya) nte | tat kasmād dhetoḥ janma iti guhya ☉ kādhipate utpādasyeṣā sa (ṃ) j[ñ]ā kṛtā tathāgatena | tan teṣāṃ bodhisatvānāṃ sā samjñā prathamataram eva

MVA_{Tib}: gtang dka' ba rnam kyang byas pas byang chub mngon par rdzogs ^(P222a3) par 'tshang rgya bar 'gyur ba de byang chub sems ^(D257a4) dpa' gsang sngags kyis sgo nas | byang chub sems dpa'i spyad pa spyod pa rnam kyis tshe 'di nyid la bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub mngon par rdzogs par 'tshang ^(P222a4) rgya bar 'gyur ro || de yang ci'i phyir zhe na | gsang ba pa'i bdag po tshe ^(D257a5) zhes bya ba de ni de bzhin gshegs pas sbye ba la 'du shes su bya bar zad do || byang chub sems dpa' de rnam kyis 'du shes de yang

23b5: niruddhā sarvadharmasvabhāve (')<dhi>gamāyāḥ samādheḥ pratilambhād iti || ☉ || atha bhagavān vairo ☉ canaḥ punar api vajrapāṇiṃ guhyakādhipatiṃ āmantrayate sma | iha guhyakādhipate guhyasāramudrāmaṇḍalasamayam avatartukāmena bodhisatvena paṃcadharmāḥ dūrataḥ parivarjayitavyāḥ | katame paṃca | mātṛsāryaṃ satveṣv ā-

MVA_{Tib}: chos thams cad kyi ngo bo ^(P222a5) nyid khong du chud pa'i ting nge 'dzin thob pa'i sngon rol nyid du 'gags ('gags] *D*; 'gag *P*) pa'i phyir ro || de nas yang bcom ldan ^(D257a6) 'das rnam par snang mdzad kyis gsang ba pa'i bdag po phyag na rdo rje la bka' stsal pa | gsang ba pa'i bdag po gsang ^(P222a6) ba'i snying po'i dkyil 'khor dang | phyag rgya'i dam tshig 'di la 'jug par 'dod pa'i byang chub sems dpa' chos lnga rgyang ring du spang bar bya'o || ^(D257a7) lnga gang zhe na | ser sna dang sems can la

23b6: ghātaḥ vicikitsā | ālasya | m agauravatā mantrādiṣu || ete dharmā guhyakādhipate ihaḥ ☉ va janmani lokottarāṃ pratipadam avatartukāmair bodhisatvair ete dūrataḥ parivarjayitavyāḥ | nāhaṃ guhyakādhipate tasya bodhisatvasya eṣu dharmeṣu sthitasya svalpām api bodhisatvacaryāparipūrim vadāmi | tat kasmād dhetoṛ ma-

MVA_{Tib}: gnod pa dang | the tsom dang le lo dang ^(P222a7) gsang sngags la sogs pa la ma gus pa ste | gsang ba pa'i bdag po chos 'di lnga ni byang chub sems dpa' tshe 'di nyid la 'jig rten las 'das pa'i lam du 'jug par ^(D257b1) 'dod pa rnams kyis rgyang ring du spang par ^(P222a8) bya'o || gsang ba pa'i bdag po chos 'di rnams la gnas pa'i byang chub sems dpa' de la | byang chub kyi spyad pa cung zad kyang yongs su rdzogs par nga mi smra'o || gsang ba pa'i bdag po | de ci'i phyir ^(D257b2) zhe na |

Note

1) cf. GSS: sarvabhāvavigatam skandhadhātāvāyatanagrāhyagrāhakavarjitam | dharmanairātm-yasamatayā svacittam ādyanutpannam sūnyatābhāvam | Matsunaga (1973, 10) cf. 是中增加句言。菩提心，離一切物。謂蘊界處能執所執捨故法無有我自心平等本來不生如大空自性如佛世尊及諸菩薩發菩提心乃至菩提道場我亦如是發菩提心。(T848.18.46b23–26)

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(Supported by The National Social Science Fund of China (No. 20FZJB002) and Key Project of Philosophy and Social Science Research of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China in 2019 (No.19JZD040).)

Key words *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi*, *Uttaratantra*, Sanskrit Manuscript

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