1. MIDDLE INDIC FORMS FOUND IN THE LŪSHUN FRAGMENTS

In the Sanskrit fragments of the Central Asian manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra, preserved in the Lūshun Museum (abbr. Lū), of which photographs along with its transcription have been recently published by Prof. Jiang, we find some peculiar forms in prose parts as well as in verses. As these fragments are thought to date back to the fifth or sixth century based on paleographical evidence, they are much older than any extant Nepalese MSS. (not earlier than the eleventh century), the Gilgit MSS. (not earlier than the seventh century) and so-called the Kashgar Manuscript (later than the ninth century) of the Lotus Sutra.

Some examples of outstanding forms, found in these fragments are as follows:

1.1. bhiks.ave (voc. pl.)

The only voc. pl. of the Skt. bhiks. u, which appears in the Nepalese, Gilgit and the Kashgar MSS., is the Classical Sanskrit form bhiksavah (“o monks!”), whereas in the Lūshun fragments the form bhiks.ave is predominantly seen.1

K.156.5. bhiks. avas (= O etc.) / Lū (B-6.Recto 2).///
K.157.2. bhiksavas (= O etc.) / Lū (B-6.Recto 6). bhiksavave
K.200.6. bhiksavas (= O etc.) / Lū (B-7.Verso 3). bhiksave

Is bhiksave a scribal error? I assume not. In the Pali Canon, we find quite often bhikkhave as the voc. pl. of Pā. bhikkhu along with another such pl. bhikkhavo, which corresponds to the Classical Sanskrit form bhiksavah. Bhikkhave is assumed to be one of Eastern forms, or “Magadhisms” as occasionally called, which are regarded as the remnants of the language used by the historical Buddha.

In the Pali Canon, bhikkhave occurs exclusively in addresses of the Buddha towards his disciples. This archaic form of the Buddha’s address, presumably representing Śākyamuni’s own accent, is retained even in some
Pali canonical and post-canonical texts, which were apparently composed after the Buddha’s death.

We may assume that the archaic voc. form bhikkhave or its Sanskritised one bhiksave was used in addresses of the Buddha in an earlier version of the Lotus Sutra presumably with the purpose of showing its authenticity as his own words, and that the Lüshun fragments retain this archaic form.

Presumably, redactors of the Sutra in a later period, who may have had a sound knowledge of Classical Sanskrit, could not overlook this dialectal form and, therefore corrected it to the classical form bhiksavah, which we, at present, find in the Nepal, the Gilgit and the Kashgar MSS.

It must be pointed out that the above cited occurrences of bhiksave are all from the prose parts. When we read the manuscripts from Nepal, Gilgit and Kashgar, we soon notice that the prose parts of the Lotus Sutra are composed in a more Classical Sanskrit style than the verses, which contain many Middle Indic forms. Considering that the above mentioned Middle Indic form bhiksave is from the prose parts of the Lüshun fragments, we may assume, therefore, that earlier recensions of the Sutra contained more Middle Indic features in prose parts as well as in verses than any of the extant manuscripts.

1.2. sād-yathā, syād-yathā

Middle Indic or quasi-Middle Indic forms which might retain linguistic features of earlier recensions of the Sutra, are not limited to bhiksave.

For example, where other manuscripts read tad yathā (“namely, to wit”), the Lüshun fragments read sādyathāpī nāma or syādyathēdāṃ; e.g.

K.156.5. tad yathā (= O etc.) / Lü (B-6.Recto 2). sādyathāpī nāma
K.239.7. tad yathā (= O etc.) / Lü (B-11.Recto 4). syādyathēdāṃ
K.361.3. tad yathā (= O etc.) / Lü (B-14.Recto 1). syādyathēdāṃ
K.398.4. tad yathā (the Kashgar Manuscript is broken here) / Lü (B-18.Recto 8). syādyathē[da]l[ṃ]
K.401.2. tad yathā (the Kashgar Manuscript is broken here) / Lü (B-18.Verso 9). (syādyathē)dam.

Sādyathā and syādyathā, which appear in the prose parts of these fragments, might be a Sanskritised form of a Māgadhism seyyathā (se + yathā < Skt. tad + yathā).²

The same Sanskritised form syādyathēdam is seen also in the Prātimokṣasūtra of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school.³ Other Sanskritisations of the Eastern form seyyathā (+ idam, + api) are found in the Mahāvastu and Bhikṣunīvinaya of the same school, namely sayyathīdam, sayyathāpi, saṃyathīdam, saṃyyathīdam and
SOME FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE SADHARMAPUNDARÍKASŪTRA

sadyathidam.⁴ Apart from these texts, similar forms, namely syādyathedam, samyayathidam, saryathidam etc.,⁵ are found in some mantra texts, being used as introductory phrases to mantras. Also, the form sanyathedam with the variant samyathidam is found in the Mahāmāyūri.⁶

The above mentioned sādyathā and syādyathā are hyperforms, presumably produced by redactors who knew that -dy- sometimes developed into -yy-.⁷ They, therefore, backformed from seyyathā to sādyathā and syādyathā. Alternatively, we could assume that seyyathā had once changed to *sejyathā (or *sejyahā)⁸ and then redactors back-formed this to sādyathā etc. incorrectly.

We shall see, later, other similarities between Middle Indic features, found in texts of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school and those of the Lotus Sutra.

1.3. tāyām (loc. sg. fem.)

Where other manuscripts read tasyām velāyām (“at that time”), the Lūshun fragments and a Central Asian one in the Hoernle Collection (abbr. H[1988]) read tāyām velāyām(ṇ):

K.217.7. tasyām velāyām (= O etc.) / Lū (B-9 Verso 10). tāyām velāyām
K.303.2. tasyām velāyām (= O etc.) / Lū (A-12.Recto 6). tāyām velāyā
K.104.3. tasyām velāyām (= O etc.) / Lū (B-4.Recto 2). tāyām velāyā, H(1988). tāyāṃ velā(yā)m

etc. Also, one finds the form tāya velāya sporadically used in both the Kashgar and the Farhād-Bēg(abbr. F) manuscripts:

K.69.14. tasyām velāyām / O. tāya ca velāya
K.108.14. evaṃ ca vicintayet (v.l. cintayet) / O. tāya ca velāya evaṃ cintayet
K.215.1. tasyām velāyām / O. tasyām velāyām . . . tāya velāya ca
K.106.4. atha khalu sa grhapatiḥ svakān nivesanād avatīrya / F. tam dṛṣṭā pasāṭāvā ca tāya ca velā<ya> . . .

The phrases tāyām velāyā(m) and tāya velāya might be related to the Pāli form tāyaṃ velāyam (e.g. Vinayapiṭaka, I, 2.2, 12, 22).⁹

1.4. dīrṇa (~ < dīṇa)

Where the Nepalese, Gilgit and the Kashgar MSS. read datta (“given”), a fragmentary manuscript from the Lūshun Museum and that in the Hoernle Collection read dīrṇa:
K.75.11. *alam ma eśām kumā rakāṇaṁ anyair* (D1, D3, Pk, etc. nyūnair = Tib.; cf. Kṛṣṇ.67) yānair dattair iti (D3.--) (“I should not give other carts to these sons”)  
O. *alam ma eteśām kumā rakāṇaṁ anyonyair yānair dattais* (“I should not give various sorts of carts to these sons”)  
H(1988). *alam ma eteśām*₁₀ *kumā rakāṇaṁ khudākakebhir yyānebhi dīrṇebhis* (“Tiny, torn carts have no meaning to these sons of mine”)  
Lū(B-1.V3). + + *tesām kumā rakā(nā)ṁ khudākakabhī yānebhi dīrṇebhī* (“Tiny, torn carriages [have no meaning to] these sons [of mine]”)

The form *dīrṇa* here might be a hyperform of the Middle Indic *dinṇa* (“given”, past participle of the root √*dā*).¹¹ Probably, at an early stage of transmission, the form *dinṇa* (“given”) had stood here, but later some redactors replaced it with the Sanskrit form *datta* (“given”), while others “corrected” the former wrongly to Skt. *dīrṇa* (“torn”, past participle of the root √*dṛ*.),¹² as its Middle Indic equivalent is also *dinṇa*.

We can also assume, with greater probability, that *dinṇa* was spelt as *dirṇa* at a certain stage of transmission in North-Western India under the influence of Gāndhārī, in which a geminate was occasionally marked by the insertion of a non-historic *r* before an *aksara*.¹³ This Gāndhārī form was finally Sanskritised to *dīrṇa*.

In any case, we may assume that the hypersanskrit form *dīrṇa* in the Central Asian fragments partly retains an older linguistic feature of an earlier recension of the Sutra.

1.5. *tāvatrīśa—*

Where other manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra read *trāyastriṁśa* (“the Thirty Three”), a Lūshun fragment reads *tāvatrīśa*:

K.159.8. *devais trāyastriṁsair* (v.l. *trāyastriṁsair*) mahāśimhaśanaṁ praṇaṭpam abhiḥś (“the gods of the Thirty Three prepared a magnificent royal throne”)  
O. *devebhis trāvastriṁsēbhī simhaśanaṁ praṇaṭpam babhūva*  
Lū(B-6.Verso 10). (deve)hi *tāvatreśehi*¹⁴ mahāśimhaśana praṇaṭpam abhiḥś)[r]

I assume that *tāvatrīśa* is a partly Sanskritised form of the Ardhamāgadhī *tāvatrīśa* or Pali *tavatimśa*. These are Eastern forms of Skt. *trāyastriṁśa*,¹⁵ showing a phonetic development -y- > -v-, which is peculiar to that dialect.¹⁶ Presumably, *tāvatrīśa* is one of the remnants of Middle Indic elements of an older recension of the Lotus Sutra.
1.6. bhāpa

Where other manuscripts read tāta (“daddy”), the Central Asian fragments of the Lūshun Museum and the Hoernle Collection read bhāpa (“papa”).

K.75.3~4. dehi nas tāta tāni vividhāni kṛdāpanakāni ramanīyāni (“Daddy, give us those various toys to play with”)

O. dadāhy asmākaṃ tāta dadāhy asmākaṃ tāta iti tāni vividhāni kkrīḍāpanakāni ramanīyakāni (“Give us, daddy! Give us, daddy, those various toys to play with”)

H(1988). dehi asmākaṃ bhāpa17 dehi asmākaṃ tāta tāni vividhāni kkrīḍāpanakāni (“Give us, papa! Give us, daddy, those various toys to play with”)

Lū(1. Recto 9). (dehi asmākaṃ bhāpa de(h)i (a)s(m)ā(ka)m (tā)ta tāni vividhāni kkrīḍāpanakān) (“Give us, papa! Give us, daddy, those various toys to play with”)

The word bhāpa is found neither in the literature of Classical Sanskrit nor Middle Indic, but apparently it corresponds with Pkt. bappa (“papa!”).18

I assume that in earlier recensions of the Lotus Sutra the words bhāpa (“papa!”) tāta (“daddy!”) stood here side by side just like in the two Central Asian fragments. Presumably, redactors of the Sutra in a later period who could not overlook the dialectal form bhāpa or could not understand its meaning, either replaced it with the classical form tāta (like in the Kashgar Manuscript), or simply deleted it (like in the other manuscripts).

These examples, all cited from the prose parts, may aptly illustrate that the old fragments are much more Middle Indic in nature than other manuscripts.

As some of these show the peculiarities of Eastern dialects, I am inclined to agree with the hypothesis of H. Lüders and Prof. Ji Xianlin (or Dschi Hiän-lin) that “the original text of the Saddharma-puṇḍarīka was written, if not in pure Māgadhī, in a ‘mixed Sanskrit’ which was based on that dialect”.19

2. PRESUMED MIDDLE INDIC FORMS IN EARLIER VERSIONS OF THE LOTUS SUTRA

Apart from Middle Indic forms, found in the old fragments of the Lotus Sutra, there are many discrepancies between the Nepalese/Gilgit and the Central Asian MSS., which might betray that the original version of the Sutra was transmitted in a much Middle Indic language.
2.1. khalu / bho / ho

Where the manuscripts from Nepal, Gilgit read khalu, Central Asian manuscripts quite frequently read bho, bho, ho: e.g.\(^{20}\)


Presumably, the Middle Indic form ho stood here in an earlier version of the text, but later some replaced it with the Sanskrit form khalu (“indeed”), while others took ho for a dialectal form of Skt. bho (“O! Ho!”) and replaced it with the latter.\(^{21}\) The Old Central Asian fragment, however, retains the original Middle Indic form.

2.2. arya / adya

We find some confusion between arya (“noble”) and adya (“now”) in one of the Śloka verses.

K.70.5–6. anumodāma mahāvīra (v.l. “modāmahe vīra = tib.) samāhābhāsyām mahārṣiṇām / yathāryo vyākṛto hy esa Śāripuro viśāradah // (= the Nepalese and Gilgit MSS.) (“We receive with gratitude, O great hero, the mysterious speech of the great Sages, such as this prediction regarding the self-possessed Ārya Śāriputra.”\(^{22}\))

O. anumodāma vayaṁ hy etat sandhābhāsyām mahārṣiṇāḥ / yathā vyākṛta-m-esādyā Śāripuro viśāradah // (“We receive with gratitude this mysterious speech of the great Sages, namely the self-possessed Śāriputra is now predicted.”)

Presumably, the discrepancy resulted from different interpretations of the word ajja, which is a Middle Indic form of both Skt. ārya and Skt. adya.\(^{23}\) I assume that ārya in the Nepal and Gilgit MSS. here is a wrong Sanskritism, considering the context.\(^{24}\)

2.3. prasthita / prarthita

There are two examples of a discrepancy between pra√sthā (“advances towards, proceeds”) and pra√arth (“wishes for”) in the manuscripts of the Sutra.

K.303.12. parivāro bodhisattvasya sarve bodhāya prasthitāh (O, Lü.A12. Recto9, prāsth) (“All the suite of bodhisattvas set out for the purpose of enlightenment”)

F. parivāro bodhisattvasya sarve bodhāya prārthitā (“All the suite of bodhisattvas are longing for enlightenment”) and
K.38.6. *asmāḍṛśā dvādaś ime śatāś ca ye cāpi* (v.l. tatrāpi) *te prasthita agrabodhayā* (“The twelve hundred, my equals, and those who set out for the purpose of superior enlightenment . . . ”)

O, R2 (No. 43). *asmadvidhā dvādaśa 'me sahasrā ye cânvi prārthent' iha agrabodhim* (“The twelve thousand, my equals, and others, who long for superior enlightenment, . . . ”)

Presumably, at an earlier stage of transmission, the Middle Indic forms of (*p*at.t.hita) and (*p*at.thenti) had stood in these verses, but later, some redactors Sanskritised them correctly to *prārthita*– and *prārthenti*, as we find now in the Central Asian manuscripts, while other redactors back-formed them wrongly to *prasthita*–.25

2.4. sūkṣma / sumukha

In the prose parts of Chapter 17 of the Sutra, we find the following description of good merit acquired by hearing the scripture.

K.350.11. *api tu khalv Ajita sūkṣmasujātajihvādantōṣṭho bhavaty āyatanāsah praṇīta- (v.l. praṇīta-mukhamaṇḍalāh. . . . (“On the contrary, Ajita, his tongue, teeth, and lips will be delicate and well-shaped; his nose long; his face [or mouth] will be perfectly round. . . .”)

The Nepalese and Gilgit MSS. read in the same way, while the Kashgar manuscript has a slightly different reading:

O. *api tu khalv Ajita sumukho bhavati, sujātajihva-samu jiha-samasa-hitadanto bhavati, bimbōṣṭhaḥ ca bhavati āyatanāsō bhavati . . . paripraṇītamukhamaṇḍalō bhavati* (“On the contrary, Ajita, he shall have an excellent face [or mouth], a well-shaped tongue, a thin tongue, even teeth; his lips will be red like a Bimba fruit; his nose long; his round face will be smiling. . . .”)

*Sūkṣma* (“delicate”) in the Nepalese and Gilgit MSS. corresponds to *sumukha* (“an excellent face [or mouth]”) and *tanu* (“thin”) in the Central Asian MS. It is rather difficult to tell which of the *sūkṣma* or *sumukha* is closer to the original reading and which is secondary. If *sūkṣma* (Pkt. suhuma, Pā. sukhuma) retains the original meaning, then we may assume that *su(k)huma-sujātajihvā* (“delicate, well-shaped tongue”) had stood here at a certain stage of transmission instead of the present reading *sūkṣmasujātajihvā*, then *su(k)huma-* changed to *sumu(k)ha-* by a metathesis of consonants, and finally someone Sanskritised it to *sumukha*. On the contrary, if *sumukha* (Pkt. sumuha) stood here first, then the process of change is in reverse: *sumukha (> sumuha) > su(k)huma > sūkṣma.*
In any case, the discrepancy between sūksma and sumukha reveals that the Middle Indic word su(k)huma stood here in the original text or at a certain stage of transmission.

2.5. mama / mahat

Verse 37 of the Stūpasamāndarśanāparivarta reads as follows in the Nepalese and Gilgit MSS.

K.255.13. mahat (v.l. mahā) priya (D2. vayam) kṛtaṃ bhoti lokanāthāna sarvaśaḥ /
durādhāram idaṃ sūtraṃ dhārayed yo muhūrtakaṃ (“If one would keep for a moment this Sutra which is difficult to keep, he gains great affection of all the Lords of the world.”)

The Kashgar and Farhād-Bēg manuscripts read in the first half-verse as follows instead:

O. mama priya kṛtaṃ bhavati lokanātheśu sarvisu / (“He gains affection of mine [i.e. the Buddha] and all the Lords of the world.”)
F. mama priyam kṛtaṃ bhavati lokanāthena sarvisu / (“He gains affection of mine and all the Lords of the world.”)

Where the Nepalese and Gilgit MSS. read mahat or mahā (“great”), the Central Asian ones read mama (“to me, mine”). Presumably, what stood here in the earliest stage was neither mahat, mahā nor mama, but maha(m). Middle Indic maha(m) corresponds both to Skt. mahat (“great”) and to Skt. mahyam (“to me”). Considering the context, presumably maha(m) was used here originally to mean “to me”, but later someone Sanskritised it to mahat (“great”) or mahā (do.) incorrectly. Another redactor, interpreting maha(m) correctly as a genitive-dative form of the personal pronoun in the first person, replaced it, not with the Classical Sanskrit dative form mahyam because of metrical requirements, but with the genitive mama, which is the reading we find now in the Central Asian manuscripts.

2.6. -d-ugra / durga

We find some confusion between ugra (“formidable, dreadful”) and durga (“impassable”) in this Sutra’s manuscripts:

K.195.7. yathātavī ugra bhaveya dārurū ( = R, B, T2, 6, 7, 8, N1, 2, A1) (“Suppose there were a dreadful, terrific forest . . . .”)
D1, D (Toda 1988), K’, C3, 4, 5, 6. yathāpi (K’. ‘ha) atavī bhavi (D1. ’e) ugra dārūrū (“Suppose there were a dreadful, terrific forest . . . .”)
Pk. yathāpi atavī bhavi-d-agra dārūrū
SOME FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE SADHARMAPUNDARIKASūTRA 215

O. yathāpi aṭāvī bhavi durga dāraṇā (“Suppose there were an impassable, terrific forest . . .”)

As durga is more suitable to this context than ugra, one may assume that the wording *bhavi dugga (< Skt. durga) had stood here at an earlier stage, which some reductor in a later period, misunderstanding the consonant d- as a sandhi-consonant, back-formed to bhavi ugra, after which other redactors in a much later period, who presumably wanted to avoid resolved syllables,29 rearranged the wording, and consequently the reading yathātavī ugra bhaveya dāraṇā was formed.

2.7. jñāna / yāna

As I have discussed in detail elsewhere,30 there are at least seventeen instances in which the Nepal and Gilgit manuscripts read jñāna and (buddha-, tathāgata-, sarvajñā-)jñāna, while the Central Asian ones read yāna (buddha-, tathāgata-, sarvajnā-)yāna instead, e.g.:31

K.45.11. upāyam etam kurute svayambhūr buddhasya jñānasya prabodhanārtham (“The self-born one uses such means to manifest Buddha-knowledge”32)

O. upāyam etat kurute svayambhūr bodhasmi yānasmi praveśārtham (“The Self-Born One uses such means to lead to the Buddha-vehicle”)

And

K.198.5–6. janetha viśram paramaṃ udāram / sarvajñajñānasya kṛtena yāyam (“Rouse to the utmost your lofty energy for the sake of the knowledge of the All-Knowing”)33

O. janetha viśram paramaṃ hy udāraṃ sarvajñavānasya kṛtena yāyam (“Rouse to the utmost your lofty energy for the sake of the vehicle of the All-Knowing”)

I have assumed that, in the earliest stage of transmission of the Lotus Sutra, Middle Indic form jāna or *jāna (= Pkt. < Skt. jñāna, yāna)34 had stood in these places, and that later some redactors back-formed it to jñāna (“knowledge”), while others Sanskritised it to yāna (“vehicle”).

I have also assumed, further, that the Mahāyānist terms ‘buddha-yāna’ (“the Buddha vehicle”), ‘mahāyāna’ (“the great vehicle”), ‘hīnayāna’ (“the inferior vehicle”) meant originally ‘buddha-jñāna’ (“buddha-knowledge”), ‘mahājñāna’ (“great knowledge”), ‘hīnajñāna’ (“inferior knowledge”) respectively.

Also, one can see a word play between jñāna (“knowledge”) and yāna (“vehicle”) in the Aupamyaparivarta of the Lotus Sutra, especially in the famous parable of the burning house, found in this chapter. In the parable,
the master of the burning house, after having promised his children to
give them three different sorts of carts (yāna) in order to coax them out
of the burning house, gave each of them excellent bullock-carts (yāna)
of one kind, as they came out safely (verse 71–84). The Buddha said:
“Employing an expedient device, I have formerly told people, who were
suffering in the triple worlds, of the three vehicles, but now I am showing
the single Buddha-vehicle (eka-buddha-yāna) to my disciples, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas who are equally my sons. That (tad) knowledge of
buddhas (buddhāna jñānaṃ [O. yānam]) is most excellent, most exalted
in the world” (verse 85–92). In the prosal parts of the parable, the word
play between jñāna and yāna is obvious. For example, bodhisattvas who
are desirous of the knowledge of the All-Knowing (sarvajña-jñāna), the
Buddha-knowledge (buddha-jñāna), the knowledge of the ‘Self-Born One’
(svayaṁbhu-jñāna) and the knowledge without a master (anācāryaka-
jñāna) and long for the great vehicle (mahāyāna; O. tathāgata-yāna), are
likened to sons who fled from the burning house desiring to get cow-
carts (go-ratha) (K.80.11–81.6). Also, the Buddha, likening himself to the
father who decided to give all his sons great vehicles (K.76.3. mahāyānāni)
equally, thought: “I am the father of these sentient beings. I must save them
from suffering and give them the immeasurable, inconceivable bliss of the
Buddha-knowledge (buddha-yāna); but O, Hṣ [283]. buddha-yāna), with
which they shall enjoy themselves” (K.78.6–9).

I assumed, therefore, that the term mahāyāna namely mahājñāna (“the
great knowledge”) meant originally “buddha-knowledge”, and what the
Lotus Sutra in origin proclaimed was that everyone could obtain buddha-
knowledge equally and should aim at obtaining it. Such a view must have
been a complete antithesis of Nikāya Buddhism, in which knowledge of
the Buddha, that of pratyekabuddhas and śrāvakas were strictly graded. In
support of my assumption, we find a passage in the Central Asian MSS.
and the Chinese translations of the Sutra, which proclaims that the Sutra is
a scripture which shows equality of the great knowledge (mahājñāna):

K.240.3. sādhu sādhu bhagavān Śākyamune (= the Nepalese MSS. The
Gilgit MSS. are missing here)

O. sādhu sādhu bhagavān cchākyamuner) yad imaṁ bodhisattva-
saṁgrahaṁ mahājñāna-samatā-nirdeśaṁ sarvabuddha-parigṛhitāṁ
dharmaparāyānau deśayasi samprakāśayantī (read ‘kāśayasi’) (“It
is excellent, excellent, Lord Śākyamuni, that you show and
expound this religious discourse which is a compendium for
bodhisattvas, an elucidation of equality of the great knowledge, and
which all buddhas embrace.”)
SOME FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE SADDHARMAPUNDARIKASŪTRA

2.8. -ebhis / -ebhyas / -esu

We find many cases in which the endings of the instrumental, ablative, locative plurals are confused amongst the Nepalese, Gilgit and the Central Asian manuscripts. Some of outstanding examples are as follows:

2.8.1. instrumental (-ebhis) / locative (-esu)

(1) Verse 34 of Ch. 3:

K.13.8. paśyāmy ahu bodhisattvān ... bālān sahāyān parivarjayītāvā āryesuṃ samsargaratāṃ samāhitān (“I see bodhisattvas, ... after having avoided unwise friends, delight in intercourse with noble men and stay composed.”)

O. paśyāmy ahu bodhisatvā ... bālān sahāyān parivarjayītāvā āryebhiṃ samsargaratāḥ samāhitāḥ

H3(265. Stein Collection). ... (ā)ryebhiṃ samsargaratāḥ samāhitāḥ

Despite of the discrepancy of the case endings, there is no difference in the meaning of the sentences in these manuscripts.
(2) The later half of verse 66. of Ch. 2:
K.48.8. *te naiva śrṇvantī su* (read ‘mu < imaṁ with D3) *buddhaghoṣam kadāci pi jātisasra-koṭiṣṭha* (read with v.l. jāti) (“They do not hear this Buddha-voice, not once in kotis of births”)
O. *na ca śrutas te (< Skt. taiḥ) ima buddhaghoṣam kadāci no jātisasra-koṭiṣṭhiḥ* (“They have not heard this Buddha-voice, not once in kotis of births”)

(3) The first half of verse 80 of Ch. 2:
K.50.7. *ye cāpi śaileṣu karontī stūpān ye candanānām agarusya* (v.l. agarusya) kecit (v.l. cāpi) (“Also, those who make stūpas from stone [śaileṣu], those who [make stūpas] from sandalwood or Aloe-wood, ...
O. *ye cāpi śailebhī karinsu stūpān ye candanasya agarusya cāpi* (“Also, those who made stūpas from stone, those who [made stūpas] from sandalwood or Aloe-wood, ...

(4) The prose part of Ch. 3:
K.60.11∼12. *tes. v eva vayam. bhagavan dharmes. u niryātāḥ. syāma* (“O Lord, we were adept in these teachings”)
O. *tebhiṣ caiva vayam. bhagava dharmabhir niryā(yitā) bhavema* (“O Lord, we were presented with these teachings”)

(5) The first half of verse 148. of Ch. 3:
K.99.3. *anyes. usūtres. u na kadāci cintālo kāyataiḥ anyataraiṣ ṣaṣṭraiḥ* (“[He] never pays attention to other sūtras nor to books of the Lokāyata or other [schools]”)∗
Here, it is remarkable that the locative plural “anyes. usūtres. u” and the instrumental one “lokāyataiḥ anyataraiṣ ca sāstraḥ” stand side by side as objects of cintā (“attention”). The Kashgar MS. reads here as follows:
O. *anyeṣaḥ śūtreṣaḥ na tasya cintā, lokāyatam naiva kadāci cintayī (“He does not pay attention to other sūtras. [He] never directs his attention to the Lokāyata at all.”)

(6) The latter half of verse 117. of Ch. 3:
K.94.10. *dandesu samtrāsita tatra tatra kṣudha-pipāsāhata* (D2. -pipāsāya ca) *ṣuṣkagārāḥ* (= C1, C2, C3, C6, B, R, T4, T5, T7, T8, T9, A2, A3, N2, D2) (“Everywhere [they] are terrified with sticks, afflicted with hunger and thirst, and their bodies are emaciated.”)
O. *da[m]ndena samtrāsita tatra tatra kṣudāpipāsā(ya) ca ṣuṣkagārāḥ(h)* (∼ Pk, K, C4, C5, P1, P2, T2, T3, T6, A1, N1) (“Everywhere
[they] are terrified with a stick, hunger and thirst, and their bodies are emaciated.")

The difference of construction between danḍeṣu and danḍena must have arisen from a Middle Indic instrumental plural form danḍehi, which some redactors misunderstood as a locative and replaced it with danḍeṣu, while others changed it to a singular form danḍena.37

(7) The first half of verse 46. of Ch. 2:
K.45.9. ye bhonti hinābhīrata avidvasū acīrnacaryā bahubuddhakoṭisu
(“Those who are ignorant, delight in inferior matters and have not pursued the course of conduct under many koṭis of buddhas, . . .”)
O. ye satva hinābhīrata avidvasā acīrnacaryā bahubuddhakoṭibhiṣu (read either “koṭibhiṣu” or “koṭibhiṣu”) (“Sentient beings who are ignorant, delight in inferior matters and have not pursued the course of conduct under many koṭis of buddhas, . . .”)

Bahubuddhakoṭibhiṣu in the Kashgar MS. shows an extraordinary mixture of an instrumental plural ending and a locative one. Presumably, redactors of the Central Asian recension consulted different manuscripts and in one, the instrumental form bahubuddhakoṭibhiṣu stood, while in others, the locative bahubuddhakoṭisu. These redactors consequently made up this strange form as a compromise between the two readings. Such unusual endings are found in the Nepalese and Central Asian MSS. on occasions. We will see later one such example.

Some other examples of the confusion between the two cases found in the manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra are pointed out in Hinüber 1982: xii.

2.8.2. ablative (-ebhyas) / locative (-eṣu)
The following are examples of the confusion between the ablative plural ending and the locative plural one.

(1) The latter half of verse 30 of Ch. 1:
K.12.16. abhyuddharanto narakeṣu satvāms . . . (“[Others . . .] are saving sentient beings in the hells”)
O. abhyudharam tī narakebhya satvās (“[Others . . .] are saving sentient beings from the hells”)
The reading of the Kashgar manuscript agrees with those of the fragmentary manuscripts from Khadalik and Domoko (both now in the Stein Collection).
H3 (265. Khadalik). abhyoddaranti narakabhya satvā
H4 (269. Domoko). abhyuddharant(ī) (nara)k(e)bhya satbās

(2) The first half of verse 115 of Ch. 3:

K.94.5. yadā ca narakesu cyutā bhavanti tataś ca tiryakṣu vrajaṁi bhūyaḥ

(“And, as they vanish from the hells, they further become animals”)

O. yadā ca narakēbhya cyutā bhavantī tiryā(g)tāau te punar eva yānti

(“And, as they vanish from the hells, they again further attain the animal state of existence”)

2.8.3. -ebhis, -ebhyas, -eṣu (fem. -ābhis, -ābhyās, -āsu) > -ehi(m) (fem. -āhi[m])

Why were the plural endings -ebhis, -ebhyas and -eṣu so often confused amongst the manuscripts of the Lotus Sutra?

In Middle Indic, both Vedic instrumental plural -ebhis (fem. -ābhis) and Sanskrit dative-ablative plural -ebhyas (fem. -ābhyās) become -ehi(m) (fem. -āhi[m]).38 This instrumental plural in -ehi (fem. -āhi) is very common also in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit.39

The principal locative ending form in Middle Indic is -eṣu (fem. -āsu), besides which sometimes -ehi(m) (fem. -āhi[m]) is found in Pāli and Ardhamaṅgadhi.40 Consequently, these three endings were sometimes identical in Middle Indic.

In Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, we find many instances of the locative plural in -ehi (fem. -āhi) in the literature of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school, namely the Mahāvastu,41 Bhiksūṇīvinaya42 and the Ābhisaṃcārīkā,43 apart from which we know just a single example in the Lalitavistara.44

Some scholars deem the locative plural in -ehi (fem. -āhi) as an Eastern form,45 while others maintain that here we are handling the instrumental forms, used in locative functions.46 Actually, various forms of instrumental, used for locative, are attested in epic and Upaniṣad literature.47

In any case, locative (or in instrumental in locative functions) in -ehi (fem. -āhi) was quite common in languages like Pāli Ardhamaṅgadhi, and that of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school.

Presumably, also in the language of the original version of the Lotus Sutra, instrumental, dative-ablative and locative plural endings merged into -ehi (fem. -āhi), so that one could discern its sense only from the context.

As people in a later period felt the necessity to Sanskritise the version, filled with many Middle Indic elements, various branches of the tradition treated this ending in different ways. Some replaced it with -ebhis (fem. -ābhis), recognising it as an instrumental; others thought it was a dative-
ablative and replaced it with -ebhyas (fem. -ābhyaś); others recognised it was a locative and replaced it with -ēṣu (fem. -āṣu). As a result, we find discrepancies of the case endings in the manuscripts, as we have just seen above.

Also, I want to draw attention to the similarity between the language of the supposed Urtext of the Lotus Sutra and that of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin school, which I have already noted at (1.2) concerning sād-yathā, syād-yathā.

2.8.4. Verse 10 of the Tathāgatayuspramāṇaparivarta
There is a remarkable verse which becomes understandable, only when one presumes that instrumental, ablative and locative plural endings merged in the Urtext. The 10th verse of the Tathāgatayuspramāṇaparivarta of the Sutra reads as follows:

K.324.11. sadādhis. t.hānam. mama etad īdr. ōsam. acintiyā kalpa-sahasrakot.yah / na ca cyav āmi itu (v.l. iha) grdvra. ṣāyayasanakot.ibhiṣ ca ||

Burnouf and Kern translated this verse as follows, respectively:

“Ma bénédiction a toujours été telle que je viens de la dire, depuis un nombre inconcevable de milliers de kōtīs de Kalpas, et je ne sors pas d’ici, du sommet du Gridhrakūṭa, pour aller m’asseoir sur des myriades d’autres sièges et d’autres lits” (Burnouf 1852: 197).

“Such has always been my firm resolve during an inconceivable number of thousands of kotis of Æons, and I have not left this Gridhrakūṭa for other abodes” (Kern 1884: 308)

It is hard to interpret the grammatical structure of the passage anyāṣu śāyāsanakotibhiṣ ca, in which a locative word and an instrumental one stand side by side. The modern translators seem to have recognised both words as used in a dative sense. However, it is quite strange that Śākyamuni states he has spent all his life long only on Mt. Gridhrakūṭa, in spite of the fact that he had stayed also in many other lodgings or abodes (śāyāsanana),48 such as Venuvana, Jetavana, Isipatana Migadaya and so on. I think, therefore, we need to reconsider the meaning of the latter half of the verse.

We shall begin with an investigation on readings of the extant manuscripts.49

As to the reading of the second foot of the latter half-verse, the Kern-Nanjio edition agrees with the Nepalese MSS. K’, C1, C2, C4, P1, P2, P3, T2, T3, T8, A3, N1, Pk and the Gilgit MS. D2, though the other Nepalese MSS. read differently.
These four readings show a locative construction of the foot.

The following three readings in the Nepalese manuscripts show a strange mixture of an instrumental plural ending and a locative one, just the same with the form bahubuddhakotibhiṣu in the Kashgar MS., as shown above (2.8.1.[7]).

Supposedly, this bizarre ending -ibhiṣu was made up by a redactor who was at a loss which reading to adopt, namely either “anyāsu śayyāsanakoṭiṣṭu ca” or “anyāsu śayyāsanakoṭiṣṭu ca”.

Then, how did the two different readings just mentioned originate? Presumably, the original reading was something like “*anyāsu śayyāsanakoṭiṣṭha (or “koṭihim”) ca*. The feminine ending -ihiṣ (or -m) could be taken as instrumental, dative-ablative or locative plural theoretically, just like its masculine counterpart -ehi. Here, in agreement with the preceding locative form anyāsu, the word śayyāsanakoṭiṣṭha (or -m) must be a locative form. Its sense is, however, ablative, as it is combined with the verb √cyu (“falls from, falls away”) which is normally associated with an ablative. In a later period, some recognised correctly it was a locative and replaced it with śayyāsanakoṭiṣṭu, while others misunderstood it as an instrumental and replaced it with śayyāsanakoṭibhiṣu.

Therefore, the meaning of the verse is as follows:

“I possess always such supernatural power, that I shall not vanish from here Grdhraṁkāta and other koṭiś of lodgings during an inconceivable number of thousands of koṭiś of kalpa”}

**CONCLUSION**

In the first part of this paper, we saw that the Central Asian fragments, preserved in Lushun, retain many Middle Indic forms, some of which are apparently earlier Eastern forms and they could not have been later inventions, produced in Central Asia or elsewhere.
The Nepalese, Gilgit and Kashgar manuscripts, on the other hand, are much more Sanskritised in appearance, but when we minutely compare readings in various manuscripts, their discrepancies reveal underlying Middle Indic forms from the original version, examples of which we have seen in the latter part of this paper.

Therefore, in conclusion, we may assume that the Lotus Sutra had been transmitted originally, if not in pure Middle Indic, in a Middle Indic-cum-Sanskrit which contained many Middle Indic forms including those of an Eastern dialect, but later these were gradually replaced by (Buddhist) Sanskrit ones.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SIGNS

Abbreviations of the Sanskrit MSS. of the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra* are as in *Krsh.* 16–18.

Other abbreviations:

{A} = A is to be deleted

A < B = the form A comes from B

A’s = the language of the Inscriptions of Aśoka

BHS = Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

BHS(D, G) = Edgerton 1953

CDIAL = *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*

EWAia = *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*

F = the Farhād-Bēg Manuscripts of the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra*

GDhp = Brough 1962


K = H. Kern and B. Nanjio 1908–1912

Krsh. = Karashima 1992

Lü = Jiang 1997

O = Petrovsky Manuscripts of the *Saddharmapundarikasūtra* discovered in Kashgar

Pā. = Pāli

Pkt. = Prākrit


Skt. = Sanskrit

Tib. = Tibetan
° = except for letters, following or preceding the sign, the word is the same as the preceding one.
– = stem of a word, e.g. dharma–.
- = (before or after a Sanskrit word) the word is a member of a compound, e.g. dharma- (the first member of a compound), -dharma- (the last member of a compound).

NOTES

* This is a revised version of a paper delivered at the XIIth IABS Conference, Lausanne, 24th August 1999. Here I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Oskar von Hinüber, Prof. Boris Oguibénine, Mr. Peter Skilling, and other scholars for their valuable comments on this paper during the conference. Also, thanks are due to Mr. Peter Lait, who took the trouble to check my unidiomatic English.

1 The voc. pl. bhiksavah occurs only once in the whole of the Lüshun fragments; K.157.1. bhiksavah (= O etc.) / Lü. B-6 Recto 5. bhiksavah.


3 E.g. Tatia 1976: 8. 20, 23 etc.

4 Cf. BHSD, s.vv. yathāpi, say-yathādam; Roth 1970: §36. 1A.7.3. sayyathādam; do. §46.B1.7.7. samyathādam (= do. §62.2B1.4); do. §9.B1.3.1. samyyathādam (= do. §10.B1.3.2).

5 Cf. Peter Skilling “The Raksā Literature of the Śrāvakayāna” in: Journal of the Pali Text Society, vol. XVI (1992), p. 152. I thank Mr. Skilling for having informed me of the existence of these forms at the conference in Lausanne.


7 E.g. Skt. udāna > Aśoka, Pā. uyyāna; Śaurusenī uyyāna; cf. v. Hinüber 1986: §249.

8 The development of -yy- > -jj- was quite common in Middle Indo-Aryan, cf. v. Hinüber 1986: §213.

9 Cf. also BHSG §21.23.

10 Toda transcribed here etasām wrongly.

11 Cf. Pāli dinna; BHS. dinna (cf. BHSG §34.16), Gândhārī Dharmapada diṇa (= diṇa; cf. GDhp §45); cf. further CDIAL.6140.5. *diṇa-; Emeneau 1988: 189; EWAia, p. 715.

12 Presumably this hyperformation was influenced by the word khaṭṭikṣaka (“little, tiny”) which precedes it.

13 Cf. Salomon 1999: 122–123. I am grateful to Prof. O. von Hinüber for pointing this idea out to me and providing me with information on it.

14 Dr. Jiang mistakenly divided the word into two: tāva triśeṣi.

15 Cf. BHS. trāyastrimśa, trāyastrimśa; Amg. tāyattīsa.


17 Prof. Toda transliterated tāpa wrongly here. I thank him here for having taken the trouble to check his own photo of the fragment and ascertained the reading bhāpa.
SOME FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE SADDHARMAPUNDARĪKASŪTRA 225

18 Cf. Ratna Chandra, An Illustrated Ardha-Māgadhī Dictionary, s.v. bappa; Pātisaddhamaṅgavāro, s.v. bappa; CDIAL.9209 *bāpā- “father”.
20 Some other examples are as follows:
K.189.8. khalu / O. bho
K.233.8. khalu / O. ho
K.436.12. khalu / Otani Collection. ho
K.457.9. khalu / O. bho
K.469.9. khalu / O. bho
K.483.5. khalu / O. bho etc. etc.
21 Both Skt. bhoḥ and Skt. khalu developed to ho in Middle Indic in a following way:
Skt. bhoḥ > ho (= Pkt., BHS.); cf. Skt. ho (“ho!”)
Skt. khalu > *khēlu > *kkhu > khu (= Pkt., BHS.), kho (= Pā., Aś., BHS.) > hu (= Pkt., BHS., GDhp.), ho (GDhp.)
The following example from the Lotus Sutra may illustrate that these words are easily confused.
K.97.6. mā haiva tvaṃ (= MSS.)
C3, N1. mā ho khalum
C4, Pkt. mā ho khalu tvaṃ
K′. mā ho khalum
T2. mā kho khalu tvaṃ
O. mā tvaṃ ida
Presumably, in an earlier recension, from which the Nepalese and Gilgit MSS. originated, the wording was something like mā ho (< Skt. khalu, Skt. ho or Skt. bhoḥ) hu ([m.c.] < Skt. ho, Skt. bhoḥ, Skt. khalu) t(v)āṃ.
An example of the same confusion is found also in the Pali Canon: Majjhima-Nikāya I 16, 29–30. durabhisambhavāni hi bho Gotama araṇī vanapathāni pantāni senāsanāni / Aṅguttara-Nikāya V 202, 4–5. durabhisambhavāni kha (v.l. hi kho) Upāl araṇī vanapathāni pantāni senāsanāni.
22 Kern 1884: 70.
23 Skt. ārya > Pkt. ajja, Pā. ayya; Skt. adya > Pkt = Pā. ajja.
24 The two Chinese translations read “now”, which corresponds with Skt. adya, cf. Krsh. 66, 296.
25 Skt. praṣārth (“wishes for”) is often combined with Skt. bodhi (“enlightenment”) in a similar context, while praṣṭhā is not used in such a way.
K.35.1. pratyekabodhi prārthenti
K.35.12. prārthenti . . . agrabadhīṃ
K.335.9. prārthayed bodhim
K.70.10. prārthanaḥ bhūtā bodhayya
Though in Pali, Skt. praṣārth and praṣṭhā developed separately to pattheti and paṭṭhatthi, we find a phrase like “abhisambodhiṃ patthayanto” (Jātaka I 66) in Pali literature, which shows that praṣārth is combined with bodhi also in this language. Therefore, I assume that prārthita- and prārthenti in the Central Asian MSS. are correct backformations, while prashthita— is a hyper-Sanskritism.
27 The two Chinese translations go with the readings of the Central Asian MSS.: Dharmarakṣa’s translation: Taishō, vol. 9, No. 263, 105a16. 大乘智證義経 之為 fēngjìng
"If one would keep for a moment this scripture, then thereby he shall respect the Buddha and all the Guides. The scripture is hard to encounter.") Kumārajīva’s translation: Taishō, vol. 9, No. 262, 34b15. cīṇ̄̄g nāc̣̄ti ruo’č̣̣n̄c̣̣h’iê wò’c̣̣ hâụṇ tɕhûoi yî rân ("The scripture is hard to hold. If one would keep it for a moment, then I shall be delighted, as shall the other buddhas"). Cf. Krsh. 153.

K.198.10. sarvajñajñānām / O, R₂ (No. 55, p. 133), sarvajñajñānām
K.198.10. sarvajñajñānām / O, R₂ (No. 55, p. 133), (sarvajñ)ānām

It must be pointed out that the consonant group jñ- does not make position in these verses.

K.66.8. buddhajñāna- / O, buddhayāna-
K.78.8. buddhajñāna- (= Lü etc.) / O, H₃ (283), buddhayāna-
K.189.1. ekam eva buddhajñānām / O, eka eva buddhayānam
K.189.2. buddhajñānām / O, buddhayānam
K.189.9. tathāgatajñānām / O, tathāgatajñānām, H₆ (306),***gatayānām

As to the antiquity of the change y- > j-, cf. Norman 1993: 55; do. 1997: 68f. We find an example of this development in the Patna Dhammapada (I am grateful to Prof. Hiromichi Hikita of Aichigakuin University for the information concerning this):

Patna Dhammapada 92ab. na hi tehi jñajñatehi (read: etehi jñanehi?) təm bhūmin abhisambhav

Dhammapada 323ab. na hi etehi yañehi gaccheya aṣṭaṁ disaṁ

Udāñnavargā 19.8a. na hy tena sa yañeṁ təm bhūmin abhisambhavet

As to the development ji- > ji-, cf. Pischel §276; Hemacandra II 83; BHSD, s.vv. a-jñaka, jñāna ("wise"), jñaka ("wise"); MW, s.v. 2jñaka ("Buddhists"; cf. also Bollée 1977: 75); Pkt. aja (≪ Skt. ajñā, pajā (≪ Skt. prajñā), sarvajjio (≪ Skt. sarvajñā), appajjio (≪ Skt. alpajñā), manojja (≪ Skt. manojñā), paramatthajñānaa (≪ skt. paramārtha-jñānaka); Hamm / Schubring 1951: 30, vs. 240) etc. Cf. also the form Jātisuta in a Central Asian manuscript, corresponding presumably to skt. Jñātiputra (Schlingloff 1955: 114, vs. 52; fn. 4).

niryāta– ("adept, perfected") + loc.
niryāvīta– ("given, presented") + instr.

A similar confusion is seen between BHS. aksena and Pā. akkhesu, cf. Lüders 1952: §221 note 5.
SOME FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE SADDHARMAPUNDARIKASUTRA

38 Cf. Pischel §§368, 369, 376; Geiger §78; v. Hinüber §§316, 317.
41 Cf. BHSG §§7.32f.
43 E.g.:

In the Abhisamācārikā, there are many more examples of the locative plural in -ehi (-āhi).

The present author is now preparing a critical edition with an annotated translation of the text, and has gathered and remarked such examples in notes there.

44 Cf. BHSG §7.32.
49 It is regrettable that the Kashagar manuscript as well as other Central Asian fragments are lacking here.
50 Cf. Kumārajīva’s translation: Taishō, vol. 9, No. 262, 43c~4, shēntōnglì rúshì yú àngqí jié chángzài Língjīshān jí yúzhūchù (“Such are my supernatural powers. For asaṃghīyakalpas I stay always on Mount Grdhṛakūṭa and in the other dwelling places”); Tib. Bya rgod phung po ‘di las mi ‘pho yang l’ gud na bye ba snyed kyi mal cha yod (“I do not leave this Grdhṛakūṭa. There are around ten millions of lodgings elsewhere.”).
REFERENCES


Roth, Gustav: 1970, Bhiksūṇī-Vinaya, including Bhiksūṇi-Prakīrṇaka and a summary of the Bhiksū-Prakīrṇaka of the Ārya-Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin, ed. Gustav Roth, Patna (TSWS 12)


LIST OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

须臾持此经，则为恭敬一切诸尊者，是难值遇

cijing nanchi ruozanchihe wozhe haunxie zhaofeoyi ran
勿致赞持，若诸善者，我则欢喜，诸佛亦然

shanzui! shanzui! shizun, anzhua! xiruoyyan, daode xuanmiuo, chaojuue walu.
hui pingdenyi, yoaar xukeong, shi wuyouyi!
善哉！善哉！世尊，安住！悉如所言。道德玄妙，超越无侣，慧平等一；
犹如虚空，实无有异！

shanzui! shanzui! Shijiumoani-shizun! neng yi pingdengdahui jiapusaofa, fosaohunian
Miufahuajing wei daizhong shuo
善哉！善哉！釋迦牟尼世尊！能以平等大慧普度法，佛所護念《妙法華經》為大眾說

shentonglirashi yia sesengqi jie changczai Lingjiushan ji yazhuzhachu
神通力如是。於阿僧祗劫，常在靈山及餘諸住處

IRIAB
Soka University
Tokyo