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The First Leaf of an Old Uyghur 觀無量壽經 *Guanwuliangshoujing* Translation

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Abstract: The paper discusses the 觀無量壽經 *Guanwuliangshoujing* (T. 365) in Old Uyghur. It is an important text of the Pure Land Buddhism known only in its original Chinese text. Several separated fragments in Old Uyghur are known. One fragment of the Turfan Collection in Berlin (U 1499) can be joined with a leaf of the Serindia Collection of the IOM (SI 1748). The result is presented here. One of its interesting differences is the list of 15 Bodhisattvas of which only Mañjuśrī is given by name in the Chinese original.

Key words: 觀無量壽經 *Guanwuliangshoujing*, Pure Land Buddhism, first leaf, Uyghur Buddhism

The paper discusses the 觀無量壽經 *Guanwuliangshoujing* (T. 365) in Old Uyghur. It is an important text of the Pure Land Buddhism known only in its original Chinese text. The sheet U 1499 presented here was edited in 1985 by K. Kudara and P. Zieme.¹ At that time, however, it was not recognized that the join of two fragments of the glassed text was erroneous. Now, after knowing of SI 1748 from the IOM collection it became possible to make a correct join. The smaller fragment of U 1499 must be placed after a lacuna of two lines. SI 1748 has to be joined directly with the larger fragment of U 1499 on the left side,² while the smaller fragment of U 1499 forms the lower part of lines 8–11. This new situation does not change K. Kudara's fundamental assessment that this sheet represents a rather free

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¹ ZIEME and KUDARA 1985, 21–23.

² Under the same number SI 1748 there is another (or two?) small fragment with remainders of 5 lines that may belong to the manuscript, but a clear localization in T. 365 is not possible.

rendering of the Chinese text by the Uighur translator.³ Since the Berlin fragment U 1499 bears the old signature T I α, one can assume that the leaf SI 1748 was also found at the same ruin α in Kočo (Gaochang).

The first 13 lines of the recto side which comprise the title are written in red ink. The pustaka hole interrupts lines 7 to 9, which corresponds to the usual pattern of a wide *pustaka* leaf. On the left margin of the verso side only the first two letters are present, but they can probably be emended to *ba[štunki bir ptr]* “Fi[rst (juan), first leaf]”.

Since in most cases the first leaf of a Buddhist work is missing, it is appropriate to publish the joined leaf here separately. Apart from the composition in alliterating quatrains,⁴ only a few leaves have been found and published so far. One of them is a very early edition of a well-preserved sheet acquired by the Otani expedition and published by Z. Tachibana.⁵ Later, K. Kudara presented an improved edition.⁶ At the same time another sheet from the Berlin collection was edited.⁷ Recently, A. Mirkamal has identified a further fragment, probably from a different manuscript, in the Beijing National Library. It will be edited in a forthcoming paper together with a Berlin parallel, which could be assembled from two fragments.⁸

Text in transcription⁹

SI 1748 (Kr. II 8/1) + U 1499 (T I α)

(recto)

01 [na]mo but .. namo d(a)rm .. namo saŋ ..

02 [tü]käl bilgä bilig-lig t(ä)ŋri t(ä)ŋri

T.XII.365.0340c27 佛說

03 [-si] burhan y(a)rlikamiš kedin yıŋak

04 [art]ukrak mäŋi-lig uluš-ta y(a)r[ı]

05 [-kayur ü]lgülänčs[i]z uzun özlüg

觀無量壽佛

06 [yaš¹⁰]-l[ı]g y(a)rlikanču

³ ZIEME and KUDARA 1985, 23.

⁴ ZIEME and KUDARA 1985.

⁵ TACHIBANA 1912.

⁶ KUDARA 1979.

⁷ ZIEME 1982.

⁸ MIRKAMAL and ZIEME.

⁹ On the right side the Chinese equivalents are given according to the Taishō text 365.

¹⁰ It is not clear which word fits into the lacuna.

- 07 [-čī köñül] -lüg abita
 08 t(ä)ñri burh[an] -ıg .. altı-ı
 09 y(i)g(i)rmi tü[r] -lüg kolulamak
 10 -ıg sakınč-lar [ü]zä öyü sakınu
 11 tokuz türlüg tugum-ın tugmak
 12 -ıg ukıtmak atl(ı)g nom bitig bir 經
 13 tägzinč ::... ... ::
 14 ančulayu ärür mäniñ äšidmiš-im .. 0340c29 我聞如是
 15 ymä bir üdün on küçlüg ulug 一時佛住
 16 y(a)rlıkančuçı köñül-lüg .. tükäl-l
 17 bilgä bilig-lig atı kötrülmiš ..
 18 t(ä)ñri t(ä)ñrisi burhan .. kutlug
 19 ülüglüg račagr(a)h atl(ı)g ulug el 王舍城
 20 uluš-ka yakın .. grtrakut atl(ı)g 耆闍崛山中
 21 tag-ta y(a)rlıkayur ärti ol
 22 üdün bar ärür-lär .. üç tümän 0341a01 [與大比丘眾千二百
 23 iki miñ bodis(a)t(a)v-lar .. m(a)havast 五十人俱]菩薩三萬二 0341a02 千
 24 [-lar] olar ymä []¹¹

(verso)

- ba[štınkı bir ptr]
 01 -lar tep tesär .. mančuširi nom hanı 文殊師利法王子。而爲上首
 02 ögüki bodis(a)t(a)v m(a)havaste samantabad]re]
 03 [t]olpı tözün bodis(a)t(a)v aryavaloki[teš]
 04 -var iduk yertinčüg körmäk-d[ä]
 05 ärksinmäk-lig bodis(a)t(a)v [m(a)ha]
 06 -astamaprapt[e] ulu[g küč]l[lär]
 07 [-kä] tägmiš []
 08 baiš-a-ča -[ra]č otaçı
 09 -lar eligi hanı¹² bo[di]s(a)t(a)v
 10 baiš-a-ča samutga[ta] otaçı-lar-r
 11 baštıñı bodis(a)t(a)v [..] maitri ädgü-ü
 12 ögli köñül-lüg bodis(a)t(a)v

¹¹ Although it was not possible to find a correct solution for emending this line, it is clear that here the question about the names is needed.

¹² The emendation to *hanı* is unclear as only 'y can be seen.

- 13 kök kalık agılıkı bodis(a)t(a)v ..
 14 vžir agılık bodis(a)t(a)v .. lenhu-a
 15 čäčäk agılıkı bodis(a)t(a)v .. yagız yer
 16 agılıkı bodis(a)t(a)v .. sukančıg ad
 17 maᅇgal bodis(a)t(a)v .. tıdıgıg köžigig
 18 tarkarmış bodis(a)t(a)v .. uzatı yerinü
 19 -däči bodis(a)t(a)v uzatı katıglanur
 20 bodis(a)t(a)v .. muntada ulatı ulug bod[is(a)t(a)v]
 21 -lar ädräm-kä tükäl-lig alku nom
 22 -larıg tıdıgsız bilmäk ukmak
 23 -ta ärksinmäklig burhan-lar ul[u]şın
 24 [-ta] titgäli [tar]k[argalı]¹³

Translation¹⁴

[Introductory Formula]

Namo buddhāya, namo dharmāya, namaᅇ saᅇghāya!

[Title]

The sūtra scripture preached by the perfectly wise god Buddha called “The teaching of the nine kinds of births while thinking and contemplating in thoughts of the 16 meditations on the divine Buddha Amitābha, who is in the Western Extreme Blessed Land, is of immeasurable longevity and merciful [sense]”, one book (*juan*).

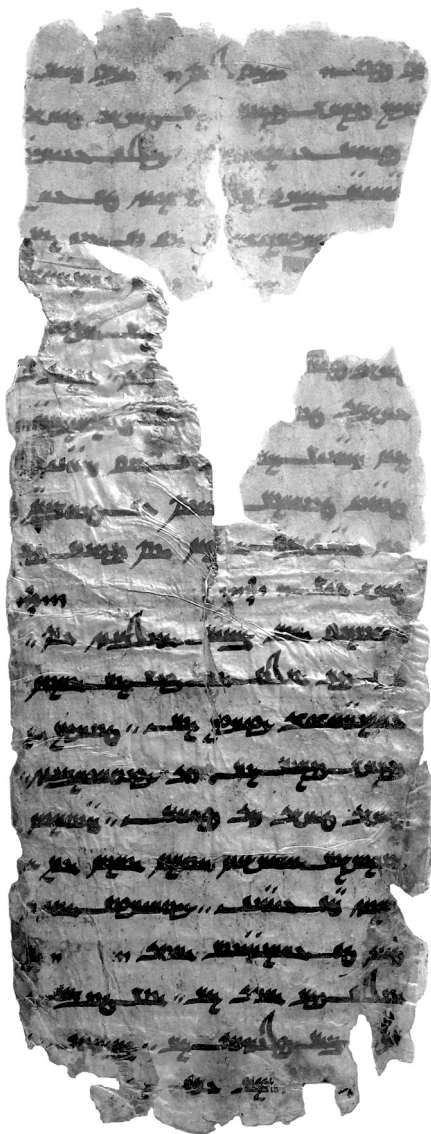
[Time and place]

Thus I have heard. Once the the great merciful, perfectly wise god Buddha possessing the ten powers, whose name is sublime, stayed on the mountain named ᅇᅇdhᅇrakūᅇa¹⁵ near the happy, blessed great empire named Rājaᅇrᅇha.

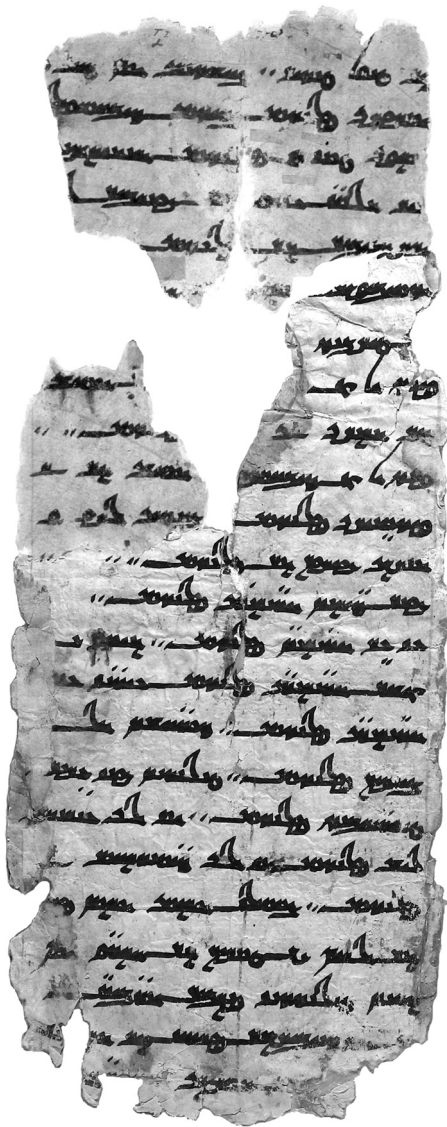
¹³ It remains unclear how this line can be emended.

¹⁴ Translation of the Chinese text: “Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying on the Vulture Peak in Rājaᅇrᅇha with a great assembly of twelve hundred and fifty monks. He was also accompanied by thirty-two thousand bodhisattvas led by Mañjuśrī, the Dharma Prince.” (INAGAKI 1994, 317)

¹⁵ The Old Uyghur text follows the Chinese when a transcription of the Sanskrit name is used. An Old Uyghur translation occurs in the text of the *Buyan ävirmäk* to the *Altun Yarık Sudur*: *kara kuş säñirlig arıg ol grtirakut tagta* “on the mountain with the vulture peak, i.e. [the pronoun *ol* has here this function] Mount ᅇᅇdhᅇrakūᅇa” (Suv. 682/22–23). This occurrence not recorded in UWN II.1 shows that its meaning is not only “Wald”.



U 1499 + SI 1748 recto



U 1499 + SI 1748 verso

[Bodhisattvas]

At this time there are 32000 Bodhisattvas Mahāsattvas. What are their names? (They are) the great bodhisattvas who are perfect in virtue and strength, in unlimited understanding and knowledge, starting with [1] Bodhisattva Mahāsattva Mañjuśrī, Beloved of the Dharma, [2] Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, the Noblest One, [3] Bodhisattva Ārya Avalokiteśvara, holy and powerful to see the world, [4] Bodhisattva [Mahā]sthāmaprāpta, the one who has achieved great power, [5] Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajyarāja, the King of doctors, [6] Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajyasamudgata, the leader of the doctors, [7] Bodhisattva Maitreya, with a mind of good will, [8] Bodhisattva Sky Firmament Treasure, [9] Bodhisattva Vajra Treasure, [10] Bodhisattva Lotus Flower Treasure, [11] Bodhisattva Earth Store, [12] Bodhisattva Glorious Happiness, [13] Bodhisattva Remover of obstacles, [14] Bodhisattva Ever wailing, [15] Bodhisattva Constantly striving (...)

Comments on the Bodhisattva names

The list of 15 Bodhisattvas¹⁶ given here is not known from other contexts. Usually Bodhisattva groups consist of 2, 3, 4, 8, 16, 25, 53 and more names.¹⁷ At the beginning of the *Larger Sukhāvāṭṭyūhasūtra*¹⁸ there is first the triad of the Bodhisattvas [here no. 2] Samantabhadra, [here no. 1] Mañjuśrī and [here no. 7] Maitreya.¹⁹ These three names are also among the Bodhisattvas listed here, but in a different order. The remaining 12 of the present list of 15 Bodhisattvas are otherwise well-known Bodhisattvas, but not known from another compilation. All these circumstances support Kudara's suggestion²⁰ that an Old Uighur Buddhist had compiled a list by himself. Possibly the Uyghur author wanted to provide a more vivid picture of the setting against the simple statement of 32000 Bodhisattvas surrounding the Buddha in the Chinese text. The position of Mañjuśrī who is the only one mentioned by name in the Chinese text as the first Bodhisattva is kept also here.

¹⁶ The Chinese introduction to the *Larger Sukhāvāṭṭyūha-sūtra* has a list of 16 Bodhisattvas, but the Uyghur version of Dunhuang (see MOTH 2 and Kudara 1995) has only 15 as here, but the names are different. Cp. KUDARA and ZIEME 1997, 78.

¹⁷ It is to be mentioned that most of the Bodhisattvas play their respective roles in the Buddhist texts, many of them are referred to in the study of KUO 1994.

¹⁸ KUDARA 1995. First edited in MOTH 2.

¹⁹ INAGAKI 1994, 228.

²⁰ ZIEME and KUDARA 1985, 23.

Mañjuśrī [1] who has the epithet 法王子 “the Dharma Prince”. In Old Uyghur this epithet is translated mostly by *nom ögüki* “Beloved of the Dharma” which is, of course, not an exact rendering of “prince”. Mañjuśrī is one of the most prominent Bodhisattvas and thus well-known in Old Uyghur.²¹

The Bodhisattvas Ārya Avalokiteśvara [3] and Mahāsthāmaprāpta [4] form the two Bodhisattvas who surround the Buddha Amitābha the chief Buddha of the Pure Land Buddhism.

The Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajyarāja [5] and the Bodhisattva Bhaiṣajya-samudgata [6] are well-known from the Healing sūtras.

Other famous Bodhisattvas are Ākāśagarbha [8], Vajragabha [9] and Padmagarbha [10]. The Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha [11] is an important figure as the guide in hells known from apocryphal texts as well as from art objects. The Bodhisattva *Sumaṅgala²² [12] is less prominent. The Bodhisattva Sarvanivāraṇa-viṣkambhin [13]²³ is not often encountered in Old Uyghur texts. The last Bodhisattva Nityodyukta “Constantly Striving” [15] 常精進 *Chang jingjin* is a Bodhisattva known e.g. from the Lotus Sūtra²⁴. The Uyghur name *uzatı katıglanur* = 常精進 *Chang jingjin* occurs in the *Kṣanti kılguluk nom* as *uzatı katıglandač*²⁵.

A special comment should be given for No. 14: *uzatı yerinüdüči bodis(a)t(a)v*, the translation of the Bodhisattva Sadāprarudita who holds a prominent position in Old Uyghur. The chapters Dharmodgata and Sadāprarudita of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra were transformed into a long poem in alliterating verses.²⁶ In the *Kṣanti kılguluk nom* the same Bodhisattva occurs²⁷. His Chinese name 薩陀波輪菩薩²⁸ *satuobolun* is a transcription of Sadāprarudita or, as J. Wilkens writes, Sadāpralāpa “ever chattering, or bewailing, name of a Bodhisattva, some say who wept while searching for truth”²⁹. The Chinese translation of the name is 常啼 *changti* “Ever wailing”.

²¹ ZIEME 2020.

²² Cp. the Bodhisattva name Maṅgala 吉祥菩薩 *jixiang* (DDB). As the name 秒吉祥菩薩 *miaojixiang* which could be reconstructed as *Sumaṅgala is another name of Mañjuśrī (DDB), it cannot be meant here. A similar case can be seen in the name of a Buddha Maṅgala who is known also as Sumaṅgala, cp. CICUZZA 2011, 185.

²³ KUO 1994, 158: 除蓋障 *Chu gai zhang*, DDB “Remover of Hindrances Bodhisattva”.

²⁴ DDB.

²⁵ BT 25, p. 432a.

²⁶ Recently re-edited in Nuri 2015.

²⁷ BT 25, p. 432b.

²⁸ BT 25, 3737, 4157. T.1909.965bb06 and 967b12-13.

²⁹ SH 468b.

Accordingly, in both texts this name was translated into Old Uyghur as *uzati yeriñüdüči*³⁰ “ever wailing”, while in other texts, the above mentioned poem as well as in a *Bahši Ögdisi*, the name was given in the transliterated Sanskrit form *sadapira-urudita*³¹ or *sada-pira-rudite*³². There are many studies about this Bodhisattva because he is regarded as protector of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā* and as a hero searching for the truth. The Chinese name appears also in abbreviated forms³³. One example is 波侖 *bolun* in the *Biography of Xuanzang*³⁴ transcribed in HT VIII 605 *palun*³⁵.

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 St. Petersburg.
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 T. Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō.
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³⁰ For the verb *yeriñü-* cp. OTWF 476, DTS 263a and several other examples. The Mongol *Altan Gerel* (KARA, 88) has *nasuda uyilayči* “unceasingly wailing”.

³¹ Nuri 2015.

³² ÖLMEZ 1998, line 59.

³³ DDB.

³⁴ FRANKENHAUSER 1995, 79 (220).

³⁵ HT VIII 605, quoted by J. Wilkens, BT 25, Anm. zu 3737.

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