The Earliest Dated Document in Newari
The Palmleaf from Ukū Bāhāh NS 235/AD l114

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The palmleaf land-grant, sale and mortgage documents are one of the most important primary source-materials for research into the social, cultural, economic, and political history of medieval and late medieval Nepal. Until recent years they were available in great numbers in the private collections of the older families, temples and monasteries of the Nepal Valley. Since the beginning of this century, historians have been using them off and on (Burleigh, 1970; Vajrācārya, 1984). Some have been recently edited and published by the National Archives and others, with the German help. (See Sakya, 1980, Rajvamsi, 1983 Parts 1-4, Kölver and Sakya, 1985 etc.)

The palmleaf document discussed in this paper is the earliest document in the Newari language. Measuring 4 cm x 66 cm, it is available in the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project Microfilm No. E 1403/13 in the National Archives. It comes from the collection of the Ukū Bāhāh, Patan. It was first published by Śākya, 1980 in devānāgri transliteration, though with several misreadings. Referring to the historical significance of the palmleaf land-grant documents, Vajrācārya (1984:10-14) has used this document, giving its devānāgari transliteration and Nepali translation. Our transliteration as well as translation, however, diverges from Vajrācārya's at a number of places. This will be evident by comparing the two.
Locke (1985:94) believes that the Ulūṭi Bāhāṭ was founded in the 6th-7th century A.D. Kölover and Šākya (1985:14), on the other hand, think that it is a later foundation of about 11th century A.D., founded by Šivadeva (A.D. 1098-1126) and renovated by Rudradeva (A. D. 1167-1175).

The palmleaf deals with the sharing of incomes -- both in cash and in kind -- particularly the right to enjoy and use them (i.e. paribhoga -- usufruct) among the tenant-farmers tilling the monastery's land and the members of the monastic Order. It also deals with sharing the right to enjoy and use other material possessions of the monastery. So here is an interesting evidence from medieval Nepal when the monastery and its lands were collective property used and enjoyed as individual possessions turn by turn. The palmleaf sheds much light on the sociology of medieval Buddhist monastery where the monks were duly ordained but were married householders occupying the monastery, living with their families and children.

For the linguist interested in historical analysis of the Newari language, this palmleaf document is of great value. The sources of words used in this document are understandably cultural loans from Sanskrit, Middle Indo-Aryan, and hybrid Sanskrit. The most interesting lexical items are, however, the indigenised loans such as paccu (to defray), cīvari (the means of livelihood for an ordained monk; prebend), daṇḍapayu (to punish). There are also examples of loanwords and native words coexisting side by side. For example, we have both dhā(nya), vṛ̤(hi), and vā (paddy), mānī(kā) as well as paṁ. We have daśā (ten), tṛ, traya (three) as well as ne (two) and, most interesting of all, sara-na-haiyu (one hundred and seventy). This shows that the two numeral systems have co-existed in Newari at least for a thousand years.

The document contains much valuable morphological information on nouns and noun phrases. For instance, we notice several case-markers, suggesting a full-fledged case-marking system for nominals, such as -sa (genitive/locative), -na (agentive/instrument), -sake (associative), -yā (possessive), -ta (dative/benefactive), etc. Similarly, for verbs we notice modals such as māl-u (to be necessary), principal verbs such as nha/nhu for formatives from loan lāga-rap-e (to cost); paccu (to pay; to defray). There are some important Class I verb-roots such as jvara (to get hold of, seña (to spoil, to disobey), taña (to add), hoña (to continue). The honorific
imperative verb form bi-sana (to give) is no less interesting than the concessive form te-bu (to allow; to permit). The -u form of the verb was analysed and interpreted by Jørgensen (1941) as "habitual or indicating an action to be done in future" used with Class II and III vowel-final verb roots.

The syntactic information available in the text indicates two kinds of structures, verbless string of words as well as "sentences" with final verbs. The first type of structures, interpreted by Kölver and Šákya (1985:27) as the hangover of Sanskrit nominal compounds, may have been a survival of the "isolating" phase whereas the second, the new development towards an "inflecting" or at least an agglutinating phase. Classical Newari, in the earliest phase of its documented history, however, does not seem to conform to the traditional stereotypes of a Tibeto-Burman language. Newari does not appear to be an isolating language nor a language with predominantly "monosyllabic lexical structure". It does not yet seem to have developed any classifier system for enumeration of nominals. It certainly does not seem to retain any "prefixes" -- if it had any ever. It was already a verb-final language with all the attendant syndromes. However, we do not yet know enough about the early history of Newari, and we can hardly afford to be dogmatic with so scanty connected data.

English Translation

1. Hail! Let it be auspicious! Śaṃvat 235 Mārgaśīrṣa Kṛṣṇa 14. This document lays down the rules for the monastic community of the Manidharajīva Mahāvihāra, consecrated by Śrī Śivadeva, located at Tegvala in Lalitakaramā. The tenant of the Bandhuvuvihāra gets two mānikās of paddy for his monk's robe (i.e. livelihood). Padmabhadrā, Munibhadra, Dānabhadrā, and Punnabhadrā each gets ten mānikās, paddy mānikās 10/10/10/10. All gifts-objects borrowed from Padmabhadrā will be regarded as concessions.

2. For the office of the consecrated Sthavira, an additional twofold share is allocated. For others, the objects of everyday use are common. The attendants, clothes, and the consecration jars, etc., will be divided among five partners, including the tenant of the Bandhuvuvihāra -- all of whom will respectively enjoy the rights to use them. All the gold,
silver, and garments to be used in the ordination of the monks will be given by the Upādhyāya and his disciples, together with livelihood grants, by raising donations from the Order.

3. Upon the death of the Upādhyāya, all the means of subsistence will go to the three monasteries. Therefore, the members of the community should keep an eye on what remains and replace/exchange for what is lost. With a remaining object or gift rightly sold out give some clothes. The residents of the monastery have to be fed by the community of Vaṃkuvihāra. The donor has to furnish 170 pieces of shawls, clothes, and betel-nuts. The leftover grain and betel-nuts may be kept for later use. The shawls and garments are to be shared by the monks in attendance. As for the children and wives of the monks, give the shares according to their status/number.

4. The remaining property will be inherited by the Order. With this objective in common, the Order will defray due payments. The donor is entitled to get hold of any culprit in the Vaṃkuvihāra who violated these rules and punish him by making him pay a fine of 3 māṇas of gold. The one who enjoys the paddy harvest of Vaṃbīḍul field will donate 2 māṇikās to both Dānabhadra and Punnabhadra. The remaining portions of paddy harvest from the Vaṃbīḍul field will go to the wife of the eldest tenant as usufruct for life.

5. After her, the right goes back again to the monastic Order. The witnesses to this deed of grant are Vakoli Bhāro and the Elder Sāhu. The Sthavira has to pay two pāthis of grain as a gift to the next/younger one by joint donations.
References

Burleigh, Peter

Jørgensen, Hans

Köllver, Bernhard and Šakya, Hem Rāj

Locke, John

Rājvāṃśi, Saṅkar Mān

Šakya, Hem Rāj

Slusser, Mary Shepherd.

Vajrācārya, Dhanavajra
Devanāgarī Transliteration

१. सिद्ध स्वर्णति। सम्भव भा ल हूँ (३६४) मार्गसिर कृष्ण चतुर्दश्याम। श्रीलितकमायं
श्रीतेवल्के श्रीसिवदेवसंस्कारित श्रीमानिरजैमहाबिहारार्तस्वसंस्थानां
नियमपरिभाषपत्रक्रियम्। बन्धुबिहार हावोया चीवरि मानि २ पदमभद्र दानभद्र
पुन्नभद्र ऐतें। चीवरि दस मानिका था मा १०। १०। १०। १० पदमभद्रया छु पन का-

२. बछी बुक्ति। स्थविरया स्थविराशनत तंड दुगुन भंड। • अपरस सम भण्डल पन सम-
चारिणि। कप्पू भूजा प्रभृति डा हृदा बंधुबिहार हावोन तंड कमण डास परिषोष
लीधुपुसु लं वहलछि लगरपबु पत्र संघसके सीसन उपायायण न्दुसं चीवरि बियु
मालु। मरणकालम वहल-

३. छीन ढाको तुसंघं परिषोष। छु र लेगन कृत्य बिपार बस्त्र बिवु मिखा तिबु मदुपुन
छु सात दुगुन वल्हे। निवासी भोजन बंकुविहार न्हायु मालु। दानपति भारोष गा
लन ग्वय सरनहैू। १७। १७ हे ज्यकुट्ट ग्वय तनेकपिन ख। ल्ला गा गन चोकोस।
मोचा म्हुमोटो कुटुम्बानुरुपन विसन सेप संघ दायाद।
4. सकल कार्यज्ञ समस्त संघ सम। अभिप्रायायन पच्चु मालू। सुन संघ कार्य सेड
विपरीतन बंगुया दानपति भारोष बंकुविहार संघ ज्वल लुं मंस न्यय दण्डपयु टेबु।
बंबिलु वृ। सुन भोगय होडन दानभद्र पुन्नभद्र उभय वा मानि १ वि मालू। बंबिलु वृ
नायिकिनि हारोिा पञ्मछि नायिकिनि हारोिा

5. परिभोग उस परम संघ परिसमभोग। अत्ताधिसाधिण। श्रीभारो वकोलि भारो साहु
ढोकु एल प्रमानेनि। वा नेपे तंड त्वारिण बूटुट मेलको आशीर्षो। गोल्ल न्द्यु मालू।
Index and Glossary

तपस्वि beyond that; after that
tapasvwati with the intention or objective <Skt. tapaswati intention
tapasyabhikāmān all the noble members of the Order
va san an alphabetical representation of 2 3 5, the Nepāla Era 235/AD 1114; the Nepāla Era was founded on Thursday, October 20, 879
ā - 200 +
la - 30 +
hr - 5
abhāsīya a gift or blessing < Skt.
abhāsīya blessing dhamā this < Skt.dhamā
ubhyo both < Skt.
ubhyamya by the Upādhyāya, a spiritual teacher of the Order < Skt. + Newari agentive case-marker - n
ubhyo after her; beyond her
eva these < Skt. eva
evāya of these < Skt. evāya - masculine genitive plural form of the demonstrative pronoun eva - this
rājā cloth (es) < Pk. rājā < Skt. rājād kārthikān by all that had been borrowed or taken
cārthikān in the work < Skt. cārthikān h - a locative case-maker
kārthikā legal; rightful; legitimate < Skt. kārthikā
kṛṣṇa according to the size or status of the family < Skt.
kaṭuṣṭ + brahman + Newari n
kaṭuṣṭ together with a due share < Skt. kaṭuṣṭ - a piece
kṛṣṇa dark half of the lunar month < Skt.
kaṅ in a manner; in a sequence < Skt. kaṅ + Newari suffix - n
ka so it is; is
kana a set or company of deities, e.g., as in a gana-chaṅ - pūjana < Skt. gana group; a company; a tribe
ka an upper garment or shawl
kana to meet; to gather; to collect
kanyā a betel -nut, used for ritual presents and offerings
ka five (shares)
kaṅ in five (shares)
kaṅd the 14th day of the lunar fortnight < Skt.
kaṅd a monk's livelihood; prebend in kind < Skt. kaṅd a monk's robe
kaṅdhāḥ of those who attend or stay or impersonate;
kaṅḍa a small piece; ḭa - little; < Skt. kaṅḍa - a piece]
kaṅḍaḥ - of those who impersonate the whole company or set of deities
kha what / which / whatever
kha for the entire life; life-long < Skt. kha + Newari numeral
kha = one
laṅ to get hold of
कन can; is permitted; may
बारो the entire amount; all that is reported; a quantifier
फॉरmation from the verbal base धात्ये = to say
लोगी by adding
लोगिन for adding; in order to add;
a nominal form (from the causative -क् -) added on to
the rootअन्
हेम to keep; to leave;
त्रुल्य of the three monasteries, i.e.,
the Mandharajiva-vihāra, the
Bandhavu Vihāra and the
Vamkuli < Skt. त्रु = three
ग्रां three < Skt. त्र or त्र
पन्धु to punish < Skt. दण्ड =
punishment + Newari verbal
suffix रेन = to do
दस ten < Skt. दश
मानपित भारोष of / by the noble
donor < Skt. मानपित+भारोष+ व्र.- is usually either genitive
case-maker or a locative /
associative case-maker, but it
is here used in an honorific
agentive sense
दागद inheritance; property- < Skt.
an heir; a son
दूरूण twice; twofold < Skt.दूरूण
दूरूण also what remains
धा paddy < Skt. धान
नामिनित हार्या of the wife of the
tenant farmer < Skt. नामिना
नियमपरिपास्त्रिका a document
stipulating the rules of the
monastery < Skt. नियम

+परिभाषाः+ परिभाषा
नियासिः a resident < Skt.नियासिः - a
resident नियास - to reside
नियास ने > ने - two पापी ; पा - a
measurement unit of ए पापी
नादृ to donate; to contribute; to
give as payment
नादृ to donate
नादृशिः by raising funds or grants
प an abbreviation for पन, i.e., a
gift
पन्धु to pay back; to pay the due
share < Pkt. पन्धु < Skt. पन
पप a plate; an upper garment or a
Crown < Skt. पुष्ट
पन a gift; an offering < Pkt प्रण =
Wealth < Skt. पण
merchandise; an object for
sale?
परिभाषा usufruct, the right to use
and enjoy
परिभाषा equal right of usufruct
पाप to pay a due share < Pkt.पाप -
to follow
पूजा: beginning; since; including
< Skt.
पूजा: verified; attested; certified <
Skt. पूजा + तिथि evidence;
authority
बाद्गुविहार the Bandhubuvihāra
ब्र to give
ब्रिः to give; will give
ब्रिः give; a polite imperative
form (cf. - तेन; -तस्)
पंट share; treasury < Skt.पंग, a
division
पंग an attendant; a messenger <
Skt. घोष ? or cooking pot; vessel < Pkt घोष ?
भारो घोष दोषकु घोष Bhrā Sāhu the Elder.
lit. The Elder Noble Merchant, a personal name.
ङ्ग्रास a consecration jar < Skt
भोजन to enjoy < Skt भोजन to enjoy
भोजन a feast; boarding < Skt
मासा, a unit of measurement equivalent to 80 cowries < Skt माष or 4 क्राती
मदुम also that which does not exist
सरकाल at the time of death; on someone's demise < Skt
मा a measurement of paddy / grain
equivalent to 32 प्रस्त < Skt
मानि a measurement equivalent to 32 प्रस्त
मानिक a unit of measurement,
equivalent 32 प्रस्त
मार्ग गार्थीर्ग, approximately the period of November - December < Skt
मात्र is necessary
सुखा an eye
मुति a concession
सैंको the second one; the next one;
the junior one
मोटा a child/children
संवेदनोटी a wife / wives दी = as for;
including; also an emphatic particle
- या - of; belonging to
लागरस्व an amount to be expended
or spent < Skt समपत - New Indo- Aryan लागसे + या + फु,
Maithili लाग = to adhere to ;
to stick to
लन a jacket; a bodice
लीन्द्वृष of those who will be
ordained later on; नी = later on, निम्न = to ordain य = the
a verbal suffix for an action intended to be done
स unaware suf for a case-maker for location
or possession
निम्न gold
ने left; to be left
लेन with what is left
लं a tight jacket with sleeves; a bodice
बंधिनिवास the Vaṃkuli Vihāra, the
Uktī Bāhāh
बंधिनिवास the Order of Vaṃkuli
Vihāra
संवधा of going, i.e., for going
बंधिनिवास a place-name; lit. the दुल or
field on the eastern part
स्वस clothes < Skt.स्वस
बहुलीन the silver objects as a whole; the entire silver-ware;
बहुल = livelihood; prebend (?)
बत्ते that which; that much
मा paddy
विनिर्दीन in opposition; by
opposition; < Skt.विनिर्दीन -
wrong; inverted + न is a case-
maker suggesting an instrumental sense
विपार trade; transaction; exchange
< Skt.विपार
पु paddy < Skt.पु = rice
संच a monastic order; the Order
< Skt.
संचकारी the duties of the Order
< Skt.
संचस of the order < Skt. संच
= objective case-maker
संचसके with the Order; with the
members of a monastery
संकल all < Skt.
equal < Skt.
objects of Common or
daily use
entire < Skt.
Skt. समस्त - Era
one hundred and seventy;
seven-ten; नव / द्विस + य तन
ten (Cf. Tibetan སྒྲ)
exchange < Skt. वाण;
transform; change; absorb
Hail;
by the disciple(s) monk(s) <
Skt. शिष्य = a disciple; न - an
agentive case-maker
the one who
to spoil; to do wrong;
to violate
the rest; the remaining
portion(s) < Skt. शेष = residue
by the sthavira; by the
Eldest member of the Order;
न is agent case-maker
of the sthavira, in a
monastery < Skt. the थकालि
or ठापाल्ल among the
ordained monks of the
monastery
for the office of the
sthavira < Skt. थविर + मास्न
+ dative case-maker - न for
Let it be auspicious
at Tagval; in Lalitpur;
Modern Tyāgal ṭole, already a
major settlement in ca. AD
714 (See a Licchavi
inscription dated Śaṃvat 148/AD 714, line 12; see
also Rudradeva-Bhojadeva's
NS 132(AD 1012
inscription).

The Noble of
Vamkuli; lit. the South-Eastern Noble
a monastery in
Lalitpur
of the historic city of
Lalitpura. It was known as युः-
/ द्वार in ancient times,
probably a Sanskritisiation of
्यल (शिं), a sacrificial post. The
city is still called वन by the
Newars and दृश्च by the
Tibetans. It came to be
known as ललितपुर / वन - दुर्गा since about AD 1012. This
place-name may have its
origin in Lādita-mahēśvara
(near Kumbhēśvara) founded
by the niece of Amśuvarmā,
Bhāgyadevi (born of Śūrasena
and Bhogadevi, Amśuvarmā's
sister). See his inscription at
Devapātan, dated Śaṃvat 39.
The place-name, Lādita-grāma,
is attested in an inscription in a
Buddha image from the
Cleveland Museum, USA dated
Śaka Era 513/AD 591. See
Mary Shepherd Slusser, "On
the Antiquity of Nepalese
Metalcraft." Archives of Asian
Art Vol 29 (1975-76), pp. 81-
93.

concerated by; renovated
by
śrīśrīśivaśevas (NS 177-
246/AD 1058-1126), a
famous early medieval King
of Nepalānāḍala
to carry; to wear; to continue
including the tenant farmer
of the tenant farmer
by the holder of a share; by
the collector of a share.