

A Gāndhārī Version of the Rhinoceros Sūtra

British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragment 5B



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CHAPTER 1

The Rhinoceros Sūtra

1.1. Versions

Previous to the discovery of the Gāndhārī version presented in this volume, the Rhinoceros Sūtra has been known in a Pali version representing the Theravādin tradition and in a Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit version incorporated into the Mahāvastu-avadāna (hereafter Mvu), a text of the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādin school. The Pali version is entitled Khaggaviṣāṇa-sutta (hereafter Khvs-P)—“Rhinoceros Sutta” or “Rhinoceros Horn Sutta”¹—and appears in three different places in the Khuddhaka-nikāya of the Theravāda canon. The primary text of the Khvs-P is presented in the Theravādin Tipiṭaka as the third sutta of the first section, the Uruga-vagga, of the Sutta-nipāta (hereafter Sn). This text consists of forty-one verses (Sn 35–75)² in triṣṭubh (or occasionally mixed triṣṭubh-jagatī) meter. Virtually the same text appears again as the subject of a commentary constituting the second part of the Culla-niddesa (pp. 243–324 of the Nālandā edition, Kashyap 1959a).³ The Culla-niddesa is the second half of the Niddesa, which is the only independent commentarial text included in the Theravāda canon and is thus agreed to be a very early commentary. Finally, a similar text of the Khvs-P is incorporated into the Paccekabuddhā-padāna (vv. 8–49), the second chapter of the Apadāna (hereafter Ap). The Ap, one of the texts composing the Khuddaka-nikāya, is generally agreed to represent a relatively late stratum of the Pali Tipiṭaka. Besides some minor variations in the readings (see appendix 3), the Ap recension of the Khvs-P differs from that of the Sn in having an extra verse at the beginning. This extra verse (Ap II.8) is a variant of the first verse of the Sn recension and resembles the readings of the corresponding verses in the Sanskrit and Gāndhārī versions of the text (for details, see the text notes on v. 1 in pt. III), thus illustrating the complex interrelationships of the different versions of the Rhinoceros Sūtra, which are discussed in detail in chapter 3.

¹ On the interpretation of the title of the text, see sec. 1.4. For convenience of reference and to clarify their mutual relationship, the three versions of the Rhinoceros Sūtra are referred to in this study by the abbreviation Khvs (for Khaggaviṣāṇa-sutta) plus the abbreviation of the language (P, Skt., G), even though the three versions may actually have had different, or possibly multiple, titles.

² Throughout this study, verses of the Khvs-P will be cited by their number within the sutta itself (i.e., from 1 to 41) rather than by their verse numbers within the Sutta-nipāta (Sn 35–75). Similarly, verses of the Khvs-Skt. will be cited by the numbers assigned to them for convenience of reference in the text provided in appendix 3 rather than by cumbersome page and line number references to the published editions of the Mvu, wherein the verses are not numbered.

³ Here I follow Norman in citing the Nālandā edition of the Culla-niddesa rather than the Pali Text Society edition, because the latter’s peculiar format is “not entirely satisfactory for giving references” (1992a: 145).

The Sanskrit version, called *Khadgaviṣāṇa-gāthā* (hereafter Khvs-Skt.),⁴ is incorporated in the Mvu (I 357–9 of Senart's edition), where it appears to be a more or less parenthetical insertion. Its structure is entirely different from that of the Pali version, and thus also of the Gāndhārī version, whose structure broadly resembles the Pali. Unlike the other versions, the Mvu text is provided with a brief frame story in prose, according to which five hundred pratyeka-buddhas assembled in a forest near Vārāṇasī, where each of them recited a gāthā revealing his own karma before passing into nirvāṇa (*svakasvakāni vyākaraṇāni vyākaritvā parinirvṛtā*, Mvu I 357,11). Only twelve verses are actually cited in the Mvu text, in contrast to the forty-one verses of the Pali version (forty-two in the Ap recension) and the forty of the Gāndhārī text. However, the Sanskrit version ends with the comment that the rest of the pratyeka-buddhas' verses (*gāthā*) "are to be supplied in full, with one verse for each of the five hundred pratyeka-buddhas" (*sarvā khadgaviṣāṇagāthā vistareṇa kartavyā. pañcānāṃ pratyeka-buddhaśatānām eka-ekā gāthā*, Mvu I 359,16–7).

The Sanskrit version also differs from the Pali and Gāndhārī versions in that it contains two sets of verses (6–10 and 11–2) that are pattern variations of a basic verse, with only a single word or phrase distinguishing the members of the set. This is a technique familiar from Buddhist texts of similar genres in Pali and other languages (cf., e.g., Sn 8–16), but it is not used in the other recensions of the Khvs. Apparently it was introduced here as a device whereby the basic stock of *khadgaviṣāṇa* verses, which probably resembled the forty-odd verses that we find in the other recensions of the text, could be expanded to provide, in theory, a separate verse for each of the five hundred pratyeka-buddhas of the Mvu frame story. Thus we have in this set of texts a good illustration of the expansion-and-contraction phenomenon characteristic of Buddhist texts: two versions of medium length, with forty to forty-two verses, contrasting with a much briefer version of twelve verses, which, however, explicitly refers to itself as an abridgement of a complete version with, theoretically, five hundred verses.

1.2. Contents and Theme

The poetic sūtra that is here called, for convenience, the "Rhinoceros Sūtra" espouses the virtues of solitude, as epitomized in the refrain that constitutes the fourth quarter of each of its verses but one (in the Pali and Gāndhārī versions). This refrain reads, in the three versions now known:

Pali:	<i>eko care khaggaviṣāṇakappo</i>
Gāndhārī:	<i>eko care khargaviṣāṇagapo</i>
Sanskrit:	<i>eko care khadgaviṣāṇakalpo</i>

The refrain may be translated as either "one should wander alone like the rhinoceros" or "one should wander alone like the rhinoceros horn" (or, in Norman's words [1992a: 4 ff.], "One

⁴ Besides the Sanskrit version in the Mvu, I have been informed by Professor Dieter Schlingloff that manuscript no. 26 of the Turfan collection of Central Asian Sanskrit manuscripts also contains Sanskrit versions of some of the *Khadgaviṣāṇa* verses in a group of stories about the pratyeka-buddhas. However, none of these verses are cited in the published extracts from this manuscript (SHT I.18–20) or its descriptions (Schlingloff 1987: 111–2, 1988: 96), and I have not yet been able to obtain any further information about it.

should wander solitary as a rhinoceros horn"). Despite the differences of opinion as to the correct translation of the phrase *khaggavisāṇakappo* (see sec. 1.4.2), the meaning of the symbol is agreed to by all: one should avoid social entanglements with family and friends and seek enlightenment in solitude. This teaching is expressed in a series of independent but largely similar, sometimes repetitive, verses.

Thematically, the Khvs verses fall into three main types. The first class of verses explains the dangers of attachments, which cause suffering (e.g., P 2 = G 2 ≈ Skt. 6–10) or distraction (P 7 = G 7) and which, moreover, divert one from the higher goal (P 3 = G 3 ≈ Skt. 11–2). In the two longer versions of the text, namely P and G, the verses of this class all occur in the first half of the text, although they are mixed with verses of the other types. The second class of verses prescribes the solitary spiritual life (e.g., P 5 = G 5 and P 8 = G 34). These verses are the most numerous type in the longer versions: twenty-seven out of forty-one verses in the Pali version and twenty-five of forty in the Gāndhārī. In these versions they are scattered throughout the text but predominate in the second half. In several of the verses of this class, the point is made by means of a simile favorably comparing the solitary ascetic to an animal such as a lion (P 37–8 = G 21–*22) or to a plant such as a bamboo tree, which avoids entanglements with others (P 4 = G 4).⁵

The third class of verses in the sūtra discusses the nature of friendship and friends, both good and bad. Despite the overall theme of shunning companions (*sahāya*), some of these verses (P 11, 13, 24 = G 25, 27, 24) do recommend the company of carefully chosen good friends who are learned and wise (P 24 = G 24) and superior or equal to oneself (P 13b = G 27b).⁶ On the other hand, some verses (P 23, 41 = G 13, 39, and G 38 [no equivalent in P]) specifically warn against association with worthless or insincere companions. Although Jayawickrama felt that the "occasional references to an 'ideal companion'" appear to be "an importation to the original sutta" and that they create an "apparent contradiction" which may reflect "a later accretion" (1949: 120, 121, 125), this suspicion seems to be based on an overly literal reading of the text.⁷ The overall message of the sūtra is not that one should have no companions at all but rather that one should choose one's companions very carefully for their moral and spiritual merits. But such sincere friends are, of course, "hard to find these days" (P 41b *nikkāraṇā dullabhā ajja mittā* = G 39b *ṇigarāṇo dulabha aja mitra*; cf. also G 38ab *kitaṇata taṇi maṇuśaloge sudulabho bado śa[dha maṇuśa]*, which has no parallel in P), so that, if one cannot find a truly worthy companion, it is better to have none at all. This point is in fact stated explicitly in the paired verses P 11–2 = G 25–6, which, significantly, are very widely quoted in Buddhist literature (see the text notes for details).

Among the subsidiary imagery used to emphasize the main point of the poem, Wiltshire points out the prevalence in the Khvs-P of imagery involving bonds and bondage, fetters, nets or traps, and the fishhook (1990: 19–20). From a slightly different perspective, Franke empha-

⁵ For further examples and discussion of these similes, see Jayawickrama 1949: 120 and Wiltshire 1990: 20.

⁶ The concept of the ideal spiritual friend is obviously reminiscent of the common Buddhist ideal of the *kalyāṇa-mitra*, although this term does not occur in any of the versions of the Khvs (see Jayawickrama 1949: 125–6).

⁷ For further discussion of this point, see sec. 4.3.

sizes the prominence in the Khvs-P and related Sn texts of the theme of “[d]as Zerreißen der Fesseln” (e.g., P 28a *sandālayitvā saṃyojanāni* ≈ G 20a *saṃdalaita gihibaṃdhaṇaṇi*) and stresses the connection of this image to that of powerful wild animals such as the rhinoceros and elephant (1914: 197–8). The theme of bondage and liberation is thus linked with the aforementioned similes with wild beasts, and the entire complex of images is consistent with the overarching theme of separation and solitude and of the solitary life in the forest.

The specific focus on the rhinoceros is, however, rather unusual in Buddhist literature and indeed in Indian literature and religious tradition generally, where the rhinoceros has complex and somewhat ambiguous roles (see, e.g., Briggs 1931; Bautze 1985: esp. 412–4; Karttunen 1989: 168–71; Jamison 1998). The terms *khadga* and *khadgaviṣāṇa* did nonetheless come to be widely used in later Buddhist literature to characterize spiritually advanced persons who dwelt in solitude, especially the pratyeka-buddhas (see, e.g., the citations in BHSD, s.v. *khadgaviṣāṇa*; Jones 1949: 250 n. 1). In light of the well-attested popularity from an early time of the Rhinoceros Sūtra (see sec. 1.5.1), we can suspect that this text played a role in the development of this proverbial usage of the word for rhinoceros, although similar usages in Jaina tradition (see Norman 1996: 139) should caution us against drawing overly simple conclusions on what is no doubt a complex history underlying this expression.

1.3. Connection with the Pratyeka-Buddha/Pacceka-Buddha Tradition

The association of the Rhinoceros Sūtra with the pratyeka-buddhas, or “solitary enlightened ones,”⁸ in the frame story of the Khvs-Skt., as it is incorporated into the Mvu, is by no means unique to that text. In fact, the various Buddhist traditions surrounding the Rhinoceros Sūtra are unanimous, where they say anything about the matter at all, in describing its verses as the inspired utterances (*gāthā* or *udāna*) of the pratyeka-buddhas. This is true not only of all of the relevant Pali commentaries (Culla-niddesa, Saddhammapajjotikā, Paramatthajotika II, Apādāna-aṭṭhakathā) but also of the frame story of the Ap recension, in which the verses of the Khvs-P are introduced as the words of the pacceka-buddhas, recited by the Buddha (i.e., Sakkamuni) at the request of Ānanda: *sayam eva buddhānaṃ . . . sādhuṇi vākyāni . . . suṇoṭha*, “Hear the excellent words of the ones who became enlightened by themselves” (i.e., the pacceka-buddhas; Ap II.5). The commentaries (e.g., Pj II 52) explain the origin of the text in similar terms.

In most of the commentaries, each of the verses is provided with a background story explaining the revelation which caused the pratyeka-buddha to realize the true nature of things and hence to utter the inspired verse. For example, in connection with Khvs-P 14, Pj II 95–6 explains that a king of Bārāṇasi, while taking his afternoon rest, was watching a servant woman grinding incense. On one of her arms she had two gold bracelets, which clashed together (*saṃghaṭṭanti*) as she worked, while on the other arm, she had only one, which remained silent. The king realized that, “just so, there is conflict when one dwells in company, but no conflict when one dwells alone” (*evam eva gaṇavāse ghaṭṭanā, ekavāse aghaṭṭanā*, Pj II 95,25–6). Thereupon he attained individual enlightenment (*paccekabodhiṃ sacchākāsi*, II 96,1) and

⁸ On the pratyeka-buddha tradition in general, see, among more recent publications, Kloppenborg 1974; Wiltshire 1990; and Ray 1994: esp. 213–50. For further references, see Ray 1994: 241 n. 1.

uttered the verse "Seeing bright [bracelets] of gold, well crafted by a smith, two [of them] clashing together on [one] arm, one should wander alone like the rhinoceros."⁹

Although the tradition, both in the Pali and in the Sanskrit texts, is unanimous and consistent in attributing the verses of the Rhinoceros Sūtra to the pratyeka-buddhas and explaining them in this fashion, some doubt exists on the part of modern scholars as to whether this association is historically original to the text or, rather, is a later interpretive imposition. The question arises, first of all, because neither the term *pacceka-buddha* nor any closely related term occurs in the text itself; the connection is attested textually only in the commentaries and the frame stories. This has given rise to the suspicion that it is only because of the association, by definition, of pratyeka-buddhas with solitude that they were subsequently, rather than originally, associated with the Rhinoceros Sūtra, of which solitude is the central theme and message. This suspicion has been reinforced, in the view of some scholars (Kloppenborg 1974: 11; Wiltshire 1990: 1-2; Collins 1992: 273), by the rarity of the term *pacceka-buddha* in early Pali texts generally and by its complete absence from the Sn.

Unfortunately this issue, like so many other historical problems about the origins of Buddhist literature and doctrine, simply cannot be decided on the basis of the material that we have, or are ever likely to have. But even if such questions about ultimate origins are, in effect, insoluble, it is clear that the association of the Rhinoceros Sūtra with the pratyeka-buddhas had become widespread, indeed apparently unanimous, at a relatively early period, as confirmed by its attestation in both the Pali and the Sanskrit traditions (see Norman 1983: 106 n. 70). Therefore, in connection with the newly discovered Gāndhārī version of this text, we can be fairly confident that the persons who copied, studied, and recited it also understood it to represent the gāthās of the pratyeka-buddhas, even though the Gāndhārī text of the sūtra, like the Pali, makes no explicit reference to them. This point is not merely theoretical but rather has a potentially important, though indirect, bearing on the problems concerning the titles of the sūtra, as discussed in the following section.

1.4. Titles

There are two problems regarding the titles applied to what is here referred to as the Rhinoceros Sūtra. The first involves the identification and explanation of the different names by which the text was known in different traditions, particularly with a view to guessing how the new Gāndhārī version was known. The second involves the long-standing controversy about the proper interpretation of the term *khaggavisāṇa/khaḍgaviṣāṇa* in the titles and refrain lines of the Pali and Sanskrit versions.

1.4.1. Titles of the Different Recensions

In the Pali tradition, the text is known regularly as *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta*, that is, the Rhinoceros Sutta or the Rhinoceros Horn Sutta, depending on which of the interpretations

⁹ Instant enlightenment stimulated by an external cause (Skt. *nimitta* or *pratyaya*) is typical of the pratyeka-buddha legends associated by the commentaries with the verses of the Rhinoceros Sūtra. This fact has been offered (Norman 1983) in support of the theory that the original term for such buddhas was *pratyaya-buddha*, "enlightened by an external cause," and that the term *pratyeka-buddha*, "solitarily enlightened," results from a later and historically inaccurate Sanskritization.

discussed in the following section one prefers. In the Sanskrit (Mvu) version, the postscript *sarvā khaḍgaviṣāṇagāthā vistareṇa kartavyā . . .* (cited in full in sec. 1.1) provides what is in effect the title of the text: “The Verses (*gāthā*) of [or ‘concerning’] the Rhinoceros/Rhinoceros Horn” (with the same interpretive problem as in the Pali title). The surviving fragments of the unique manuscript of the Gāndhārī version of the text unfortunately contain no title or colophon, and in all likelihood there was none on the original, complete scroll. As discussed in the text notes introducing verse 1, the first verse of the poem was written in a distinct style and position that set it off from the rest of the text, and I have speculated that this in effect served as a title line, the poem in general and the first verse in particular probably being so well known to the intended audience that it was unnecessary to provide a title as such. This being the case, we might assume that the text would have been known in Gandhāran tradition by the dialectal equivalent of the Pali or Sanskrit titles, that is, as either Khargaviṣaṇa-sutra or Khargaviṣaṇa-gaṣa.

One bit of evidence, however, may suggest that the text was known by another title in some branches of Buddhist tradition. This is the reference in the Chinese translation of the Mahāsaṅghika-vinaya (as cited in Lévi 1915: 422–3) to a group of texts that were deemed suitable for study by novices, one of which is called “le texte sacré des Pratyekabuddha.” There is some reason to suspect that this text, which to my knowledge is otherwise unidentified, might actually be the Rhinoceros Sūtra under another name. First of all, as previously discussed, the Rhinoceros Sūtra was unanimously associated with the pratyeka-buddhas. This in itself would prove nothing, but it becomes more interesting in combination with the fact that, as explained in detail in Salomon 1999: 158–9, the list of texts in which “le texte sacré des Pratyekabuddha” appears has other similarities to the corpus of scrolls represented in the British Library (BL) Kharoṣṭhī collection, so that we can guess that the list referred to a more or less standard elementary curriculum, which is reflected, in part, in the BL fragments. Thus, the text known as the Rhinoceros Sutta in Pali and the Rhinoceros Verses in Sanskrit may have been referred to instead, or perhaps also, as the Pratyeka-buddha Sūtra in other traditions, including, perhaps, in the Gandhāran. If so, the title of the Gāndhārī version might have been Pracegabudha-sutra or the like. But since this is little more than a guess, I have provisionally given Khargaviṣaṇa-sutra as the reconstructed title of the Gāndhārī version on the basis of the better-attested Pali and Sanskrit titles.

1.4.2. The Meaning of *Khagga-visāṇa/Khaḍga-viṣāṇa*

There has been a persistent difference of opinion, both within Buddhist tradition and among modern scholars, as to whether the term *khagga-visāṇa/khaḍga-viṣāṇa* in the Pali and Sanskrit titles of the poem, and in the refrain lines *eko care khaggavisāṇakappo/eko care khaḍgaviṣāṇa-kalpo*, is to be understood as “rhinoceros” or “rhinoceros horn.” By what may or may not be a curious coincidence (we will return to this point below), both of these interpretations provide a perfectly apt symbol for the solitary life: on the one hand, the Indian rhinoceros is by nature a solitary creature, and on the other, it has, unlike all other animals, a single horn.

From a philological point of view, the issue has been clearly and authoritatively stated by Norman as follows:

There has been some doubt among translators about the way to translate this pāda [the refrain of the Khvs-P], arising from the fact that the compound *khagga-visāṇa* is ambiguous in form and can be explained in two different ways. The Pāli word *khagga* (Sanskrit *khadga*) has two meanings: “rhinoceros” and “sword.” If *khagga* is taken in the meaning of “rhinoceros,” then the compound can be interpreted as a *tatpuruṣa* (dependent) compound, meaning “the horn of a rhinoceros.” If *khagga* is taken in the meaning of “sword,” then it can be taken as a *bahuvrīhi* (possessive) compound, meaning “having a sword as horn,” i.e. “a rhinoceros.” Consequently, from the form of the word we cannot be certain whether it is the rhinoceros or its horn which is single. (1996: 134)

Norman argues strenuously in favor of the translation “horn of a rhinoceros,” mainly on the grounds that the compound is unanimously and explicitly interpreted this way by the Pali commentaries (1992a: 145–6, 1996: 137); thus, for example, *khaggavisāṇakappo ti ettha khaggavisāṇaṃ nāma khaggamigasīṅgaṃ* (Pj II 65,10–1). Norman further supports his argument by citing the similar expression *khaggavisāṇaṃ va ega-jāe* from the Jaina Kalpa-sūtra, where the neuter form of *khaggavisāṇaṃ* proves that it means “rhinoceros horn” and not “rhinoceros” (1992a: 146, 1996: 139).

As far as it goes, this argument would seem to be decisive. However, when we look further afield, in the Buddhist Sanskrit tradition, the answer seems to be exactly the opposite. Here the clearest argument for the other interpretation is presented by Edgerton, who declares that *khadga-viṣāṇa-kalpa* means “like a rhinoceros” (BHSD, s.v. *khadga-viṣāṇa*). Although he notes that the Pali commentary on Sn prefers the interpretation of “rhinoceros horn,” he concludes that “actually the cpd. means *rhinoceros*, = Skt. *khadgin*, originally *having a sword(-like) horn*. The comparison is to the animal, not to its horn.” In support of this interpretation, he cites expressions like *khadga-samā*, *khadga-sadṛśāḥ*, and *eka viharati yathaiva khadgo*, from the Samādhirāja-sūtra, Śikṣāsammucaya, and Rāṣṭrapāla-paripṛcchā, respectively (BHSD: 202–3).

Norman argues against Edgerton’s position on the grounds that it is based on a later misunderstanding of the original sense of the word *khadga-viṣāṇa*, whereby “in some parts of the Buddhist Sanskrit tradition . . . the true meaning of the compound was forgotten” (1996: 140). This claim is justified on the basis of proposed derivations of Skt. *khadga* from a “non-Aryan” word for rhinoceros, so that “the original meaning of *khadga* was therefore ‘rhinoceros’ when it was first borrowed into Indo-Aryan, and it is not an abbreviation for *khadga-viṣāṇa* as has been suggested” (139–40). As a strictly philological and historical argument this is probably valid, but here again, as in connection with the issue of the association of the pratyeka-buddhas with the Rhinoceros Sūtra discussed above, the theoretically original state of things is not necessarily the one that most concerns us; what we ultimately want to know in the context of this study is how the readers and writers of the various versions of the text understood the term.

Since the passages cited by Norman and Edgerton do unambiguously support their respective interpretations, it is clear that there was a difference of opinion within Buddhist tradition on this issue. It is therefore useful to attempt to approach the problem from angles other than the strictly historical and philological, and here the contributions of Jayawickrama are especially worthy of attention. He argues that, despite the opinion of the commentators to the contrary, “the simile would be considered more apt if the life of the lone-sojourner was compared with the lonely habits of the rhinoceros than with its single horn” (1949: 119). In evaluating Jayawickrama’s

opinion, it is important to keep in mind that it is not merely an arbitrary judgment but is based on stylistic and textual comparisons which cannot be lightly brushed aside. He points out, "In other places in the Pāli Canon the idea of wandering alone is compared with the movements of animals of solitary habits rather than with parts of their anatomy" (119). He further cites passages from the Khvs-P itself in which the "lone sojourner" is compared to solitary wild animals such as an elephant that shuns the herds (*nāgo va yūthāni vivajjayitvā*, Khvs-P 19a; see also the comments on the theme of wild beasts above in sec. 1.2). "Moreover," he continues, "even in the similes employed in the poem where inanimate objects are compared it is rather some action that stands for comparison than those objects" (119) and concludes that "it is rather convincing that the point of contact in the simile of the *khaggavisāṇa* is not *khaggassa visāṇa* (rh.'s horn) nor the *cariyā* (movement) of the *visāṇa* (horn) of the *khagga*; but the *cariyā* of the *khaggavisāṇa*, the sword-horn (the rhinoceros) itself" (120). In other words, Jayawickrama proposes to interpret the simile of the refrain to mean "one should wander alone, as the rhinoceros wanders alone," as opposed to Norman, who would understand it as "one should wander alone, as the horn of the rhinoceros is alone" (i.e., single).

Addressing the parallel passages cited by Jayawickrama, Norman nonetheless comments, "I do not see that this necessarily precludes a comparison with an inanimate object, especially if we regard the point of the comparison as being not the activity of wandering but the solitariness" (1996: 138–9). However, one further point can be invoked in support of Jayawickrama's arguments. The paired verses Khvs-G 11–2, as noted above, are found in a great many other Buddhist texts and hence are, in a sense, the best known of the "rhinoceros" verses. However, in most of the texts other than the Khvs, the final pāda of this pair of verses refers, not to the rhinoceros of the familiar Khvs refrain, but to a bull elephant (e.g., Dhṛ 329d, *eko care mātaṅg' araṇṇe va nāgo*). Here, of course, the reference can only be to the solitary habits of the bull elephant, and this well-attested textual variant confirms, along with the several other examples cited by Jayawickrama, that the similes of the rhinoceros and the bull elephant were felt to be interchangeable. Norman's doubts notwithstanding, this strengthens the argument that *khagga-visāṇa* was taken by some readers at least—though not, as we have seen, by the commentators—to refer to the rhinoceros, and not to its horn.

The issue has been discussed by several other translators and analysts. For instance, in his translation of the Mvu, Jones notes, "Translators do not seem to be agreed as to whether *khagḍgaviṣāṇa* denotes the animal itself or its horn" (1949: 250 n. 1). He concludes that both interpretations are possible but chooses "let one live in loneliness like a rhinoceros" for his translation of the refrain of the *Khagḍgaviṣāṇa-gāthā* (303–4). Most translators of the Sn (e.g., Fausböll 1881: 6–11; Chalmers 1932: 11; Hare 1945: 6–11) have preferred the same alternative, though sometimes without adequate explanation, as noted by Norman (1996: 134–7), who thinks that "[i]n view of these [Pāli] commentarial expressions, it is strange that some translators have been so reluctant to accept the translation 'solitary as a rhinoceros-horn'" (1996: 137). One may suspect that their choices were influenced in part by the greater felicity, in English translation at least, of a phrase like "wander alone like the rhinoceros" than "wander alone like the rhinoceros horn," which, in Jamison's words, "conjures up an unintentionally comic picture" and "does not make sense in context" (1998: 253 nn. 18 and 16).

Among the many comments on this issue, there is one more that merits special attention. Kloppenborg concludes: "Although all commentaries take this comparison with reference to the horn of a rhinoceros, they combine this with the *paccekabuddha*'s way of life. In view of the fact that the rhino's way of life can equally be called solitary it seems that in the comparison both aspects are emphasized, the one horn as well as the solitary life, compared to the way of life of the *paccekabuddha*" (1974: 60). Concerning this conclusion, Norman remarks, "I find this argument hard to follow, unless she means that *khaggavisāṇa* is taken in both ways simultaneously in a play upon words (*śleṣa*)" (1996: 135). While it is true that Kloppenborg's statement is not entirely clear, I think that it should still be taken seriously. It may not be a question of *śleṣa* in the stricter technical sense of the term in the expression *khaggavisāṇakappo*, but it is certainly reasonable to think that both interpretations—"like the rhinoceros" and "like the rhinoceros horn"—are in fact implied simultaneously. In other words, the ambiguity may not be the result of a philological problem; rather, the expression can be seen as a doubly meaningful simile. Perhaps it was so intended by its original composer, who, if this is correct, cleverly took advantage of the natural fact that the Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is "alone" (*eko*) in two respects, as a solitary beast (Norman 1996: 136; Jamison 1998: 253) and as having an unusual single horn.

However this may be, it is clear that Buddhist tradition itself was divided, or at least inconsistent, on the issue. To judge by the evidence presented by Edgerton, the later Sanskrit Mahāyāna literature took the image to refer to the solitary habits of the Indian rhinoceros as consistently as the Pali commentarial literature understood it to refer to the rhinoceros's single horn. And even within the Pali tradition, as pointed out by Jayawickrama, there seems to be an implicit difference of opinion between the commentators and the composers of certain verses containing the rhinoceros and related imagery, which, as we have seen above, strongly imply that the latter understood the primary referent of the phrase in question to be the solitary life of the rhinoceros. Since both interpretations are well justified on linguistic and natural grounds, and since both are endorsed, explicitly or implicitly, by traditional sources, there is no conclusive way to decide which position is *the* correct one, and I prefer to solve, or perhaps avoid, the problem by declaring that they are both right and that the ambiguity is perhaps an intentional and creative one.

But in view of the focus of this particular study, the ultimate question is what the translator, scribe, and readers of the Gāndhārī manuscript thought about the issue. Unfortunately, we have no way to know or even guess this, since the text itself reveals nothing either way. Only if we were to come across a comment on this phrase or some revealing similar expression (such as those attested in Mahāyāna Sanskrit texts) among the newly found Gāndhārī literature would we be able to make an authoritative judgment; and it is unlikely, though not impossible, that we will be so lucky. Nevertheless, for practical purposes, namely for the translation of the Gāndhārī text (and for the title of this book), a decision had to be made, and I have therefore decided, somewhat arbitrarily and not entirely without doubts,¹¹ to understand the primary sense of the

¹¹ In particular, I have some misgivings about going against the authoritative and emphatic opinion of K. R. Norman, whose views and translations on nearly all other points have served as my guide throughout this study.

refrain of the verses of the Gāndhārī text, *eko care khargaviṣaṇagapo*, as “one should wander alone like the rhinoceros,” with the proviso that the other possible sense, “one should wander alone like the rhinoceros horn,” is by no means ruled out and in fact may have been understood to be equally and simultaneously valid.

1.5. The Rhinoceros Sūtra in Buddhist Literature

1.5.1. Evidence for the Rhinoceros Sūtra as an Independent Text

Even though, until the discovery of an independent manuscript of a Gāndhārī version of the Rhinoceros Sūtra, the text had been known only as part of larger textual units (the Sn in the Pali canon and the Mvu in Buddhist Sanskrit literature), there were nonetheless clear indications that even within these traditions it had functioned, at some earlier stage, as an independent text. The strongest proof of this is the structure of the Niddesa, which is the only independent commentary included in the Pali Tipiṭaka. The Niddesa is divided into two sections: the Mahā-niddesa, which is a commentary on the Aṭṭhaka-vagga; and the Culla-niddesa, consisting of commentaries on the Pārāyana-vagga and the Khaggavisāṇa-sutta. The first two texts commented on in the Niddesa are groupings (vaggas) of individual suttas, which in turn, at a later stage of development, came to constitute two of the five vaggas of the Sn. Thus the Khaggavisāṇa-sutta stands apart in the Niddesa as the only single, independent sutta. This implies, first of all, that it circulated as or was conceived of as an independent text¹¹ at the time of the final compilation of the Niddesa¹² and, second, that it is likely to have had some special authority or popularity. Its presumed popularity is further suggested by its incorporation, in the Pali tradition, into the Ap and the Sn and, in the Sanskrit literature, in the Mvu. Moreover, at least according to Jayawickrama, the position of the Rhinoceros Sūtra as the third sutta out of seventy-four in the Sn is an indication of its “outstanding merit” as one of the “three opening suttas of the Uraga Vagga[, which] have earned for themselves their present positions probably because they are characteristic as examples of early Buddhism showing the Dhamma considered as the true word of the Buddha” (1948a: 47, 48).

Both of these notions about the independent status and the popularity of the Rhinoceros Sūtra are now confirmed by the discovery of an independent manuscript of a hitherto unknown Gāndhārī version of the text. The fact that this manuscript is one of the two dozen or so texts, most of them still unidentified (Salomon 1999: 23), among the BL fragments could of course be mere coincidence, but it is more likely to be a reflection of the popularity of the sūtra, of which, we might speculate, a good many manuscripts may have circulated among the monastic libraries of ancient Gandhāra.¹³ The manuscript appears to have been a separate scroll containing only the Rhinoceros Sūtra, and unlike several of the other scrolls in the collection, it does not

¹¹ This important point has been mentioned by many authors, including, e.g., Jayawickrama (1948b: 250) and Norman (1992a: xxviii).

¹² It is impossible to attach an absolute date to the Niddesa with any precision or accuracy; according to von Hinüber (1996: 59 and n. 204), it was probably composed after the time of Aśoka but not later than the first century B.C.

¹³ This apparent popularity, however, may have been either geographically restricted or temporary or both. As far as I have been able to determine, no remnant of the Khvs has been located among the Central Asian Sanskrit fragments (other than the apparently related material mentioned above in n. 4), nor was it ever translated into Chinese or Tibetan.

have any characteristics that would link it with any of the other scrolls as part of some larger grouping of texts. Thus the physical evidence supports the conclusion that this sūtra circulated as an independent text in Gandhāra, as it also originally must have in the Pali tradition. Of course, the existence of a separate manuscript does not prove anything, in and of itself, about the position of the Rhinoceros Sūtra within the contemporary Gandhāran canon (if indeed there was anything like a canon in the strict sense at this point in the development of the Gandhāran tradition). But there is certainly nothing about the manuscript to suggest that it was in any way considered a portion of a larger textual unit, and since we have indirect but strong evidence from the Pali canon of a similar situation, it is only logical to conclude that it was, in fact, an independent sūtra.

1.5.2. The Antiquity of the Rhinoceros Sūtra

The Rhinoceros Sūtra, along with similar texts included in the Sn, has been referred to as one of the earlier or even one of the earliest texts in the Pali Tipiṭaka by various authors and on various grounds. Norman, for example, considers its antiquity to be guaranteed by its presence (albeit in a rather different version) in the Mvu and by the commentary on it in the Niddesa (1992a: 144). In terms of doctrine and content, Vetter finds that its main ideas “point to an early stage of development of Buddhism” (1990: 37). As for its language, Jayawickrama finds that it “on the whole is rather old . . . and may be said to belong to stratum of early gāthā-Pāli” (1949: 123). Moreover, its inclusion in the Sn, which is widely agreed to represent an early stratum of the Pali canon (see the following section), confirms that the Rhinoceros Sūtra is in fact a relatively old text within Buddhist literature.

Several authors, however, have been willing to go farther than this and to see in the individualistic message of several suttas in the Sn, and in the Rhinoceros Sūtra in particular, a reflection of some “primitive” or pre-monastic phase of Buddhism, in which practitioners of the path went it alone rather than joining together in monastic communities. This notion goes back at least to the remarks of Fausböll in the introduction to his translation of the Sn: “In the contents of the Suttanipāta we have, I think, an important contribution to the right understanding of Primitive Buddhism, for we see here a picture not of life in monasteries, but of the life of hermits in its first stage” (1881: xii). This idea has been echoed by many subsequent authors; for example, Jayawickrama says, “The older ballads reflect a time when Buddhism had not developed into a full-fledged monastic (coenobitic) system” (1948a: 46; see also 1949: 125).

However, such conclusions seem somewhat simplistic, even naive, in light of a more modern understanding of the history of Buddhism. Traditions of “town,” or monastic, monks are known to have existed simultaneously with those of “forest” monks, who followed a more ascetic path, for many centuries and down to the present day, and there is no reason to rule out the possibility that this dichotomy goes back to the early centuries of Buddhist history. Indeed, there is no clear evidence that there ever was, in any meaningful sense, a “pre-monastic period” of Buddhism. So, although the Rhinoceros Sūtra and similar texts in the Sn do clearly represent the ascetic tradition of forest-dwelling monks,¹⁴ this does not mean that they reflect a phase of development

¹⁴ I would not go so far as Collins, who thinks that the prescriptions of the Khvś-P can be interpreted as referring to monastic life: “I think that in fact the solitariness in question here is to be understood sociologically as the ‘single-ness’ of being unmarried, leading the celibate monastic life, rather than the physical solitude of eremitic asceticism” (1992: 273).

that predates the establishment of some sort of organized and settled monastic communities; they reflect a separate, but not necessarily earlier, tradition.

In conclusion, it is virtually beyond doubt that the Rhinoceros Sūtra is part of a relatively early stratum of the Pali canon and presumably of Buddhist literature as a whole, although the grave uncertainties about the early history and chronology of Buddhism make it impossible to attribute to it a specific date. It can no longer be meaningfully maintained that the Rhinoceros Sūtra expresses the spirit of "Primitive Buddhism," since this concept is, in modern perspective, a somewhat romantic will-o'-the-wisp that most serious scholars have given up hope of ever capturing. Nevertheless, this sūtra does reflect a relatively early stage of doctrinal and literary development, a stage that, moreover, was evidently still vital and central to Buddhism as it was understood in Gandhāra at the time of the Khvs-G manuscript, that is, in or around the first century A.D.

1.5.3. The Rhinoceros Sūtra, the Sutta-nipāta, and the Khuddaka-nikāya

As mentioned above, the Khvs-P is preserved, in its primary version, as the third sutta of the Uraga-vagga, which is the first of the five vaggas that make up the Sn. It has been established beyond reasonable doubt on linguistic, epigraphic, and textual grounds that the Sn, and in particular certain portions of it, date from a relatively early stratum of the Pali Theravāda canon. First of all, the archaic character of the language of many parts of the Sn has been clear since the time of Fausböll, as shown in the introduction to his translation (1881: xi-xii) and as further developed by, among others, Jayawickrama (see Jayawickrama 1951 and, on the Khvs-P in particular, 1949: 123-5).

The epigraphic evidence consists of the celebrated list of seven texts recommended by Aśoka in his Calcutta-Bairāṭ edict, of which three or four (according to varying opinions; see, e.g., Jayawickrama 1948b: 229-32; Norman 1992a: xxix-xxx) are likely to refer to suttas whose Pali versions are preserved in the Sn. This shows that some texts which later became part of the Sn were already extant and popular at least by the time of Aśoka, that is, around the middle of the third century B.C.

Finally, abundant internal textual evidence in the Pali canon and in other Buddhist texts affirms that certain portions of what came to be the Sn were extant from a relatively early time. Besides the fact that the earliest surviving independent commentary, the Niddesa, is a commentary on parts of the Sn and hence may have been based on an earlier core of such a collection (Jayawickrama 1951: 123), numerous references to sections of the Sn, especially the Aṭṭhaka-vagga and Pārāyana-vagga, in Pali and other Buddhist texts (see, e.g., Jayawickrama 1948b: 232-6, 241-2; von Hinüber 1996: 49 n. 165) prove that these parts, at least, of the Sn were old and important in Buddhist tradition.

The Sn as a whole, however, is attested as such only in the Pali Tipitaka, and there are no indications whatsoever that any of the other Buddhist traditions had an equivalent collection. Versions of the Aṭṭhaka-vagga do exist in Sanskrit and Chinese (Hoernle 1916; Anesaki 1906-7),¹⁵ but there is no larger collection in these languages that corresponds to the Pali Sn.

¹⁵ Note that the titles of these articles, referring to the "Sutta-nipāta" in Sanskrit and Chinese, respectively, are both misleading, since in fact the texts described in them are the equivalents of the Pali Aṭṭhaka-vagga but not of the Sn as a whole. This important distinction was apparently not as clear when these articles were written as it is now.

According to von Hinüber, this pattern reflects the “typical feature of Theravāda to include finally all texts in some collection or other, not tolerating separate texts as do other schools” (1996: 49–50).

In light of the new discoveries of substantial numbers of Gāndhārī Buddhist texts, however, the apparent uniqueness of the Pali Sn must now be reconsidered, especially as this may eventually shed some light on the contents and arrangement of the Gāndhārī canon or, rather, proto-canon. Even though the Gāndhārī manuscript of the Rhinoceros Sūtra presents that poem as an independent text rather than as part of a compilation, this issue still arises because several other fragments in the BL collection correspond to or at least are related to Pali texts that are part of the Sn or the Khuddaka-nikāya, the larger grouping in the Pali Tipiṭaka that includes the Sn (see Salomon 1999: 159–61). Particularly interesting in this connection are the several texts that contain citations of and comments on verses which correspond, for the most part, to Pali verses found in various Khuddaka-nikāya texts, particularly the Aṭṭhaka-vagga and Pārāyana-vagga of the Sn. But all that can be said at this point is that the new Gāndhārī textual corpus whose random remnants are represented in the BL Kharoṣṭhī collection significantly and in various ways overlaps the Pali Sn. There is no indication that the Gāndhārī texts were organized in a compendium comparable to the Sn, and it seems, for the moment at least, more likely that the Gāndhārī (proto-)canon, like all others except the Pali, maintained this material in the form of independent texts and/or smaller groupings such as the Aṭṭhaka- and Pārāyana-vaggas. The still enigmatic commentarial texts which mix together verses that, from the Theravāda point of view, would be from various Khuddaka-nikāya texts should eventually provide some clues to these issues, but for the moment this remains a problem.

The Khvs-G does contain some interesting internal indications of a relationship to the Sn literature and to other texts of the Khuddaka-nikāya type, particularly the Dhammapada (Dhp). I refer to the several cases where the sequence of verses in the Khvs-G implies an acquaintance on the part of its compiler(s) with the other texts in question. For example, it is pointed out below in the text notes on verse *12 that a verse in the Guhaṭṭhaka-sutta of the Aṭṭhaka-vagga of the Sn (Sn 774) contains close parallels with Khvs-G verses *12 (Sn 774a *kāmesu giddhā* ≈ Khvs-G *12a *raṣe agridha[m]*) and 13 (Sn 774b *visame nivīṭṭhā* = Khvs-G 13b *viṣame ṇivīṭṭha*). It is important to note that the corresponding verses in the Khvs-P are not contiguous: they are verses 31 and 23, respectively. This suggests that the ordering of the Khvs-G was influenced by an acquaintance with the verse from the Aṭṭhaka-vagga and that this development was independent of the construction of the Khvs-P.

In and of itself this would prove nothing, but when taken together with other, similar cases, a meaningful pattern emerges. Particularly notable is Khvs-G 28a [*o*]kṣitacakhu yaṣacari gramo, which has a different reading from the corresponding Khvs-P verse (29a *okkhittacakkhū na ca pādalo*) and which—again unlike the corresponding Khvs-P text—has parallels in two consecutive verses (971c *yatacāri gāme*; 972a *okkhittacakkhu na ca pādalo*) of the Sāriputta-sutta, also part of the Aṭṭhaka-vagga of the Sn.

Thus in the first case the juxtaposition of two verses in the Khvs-G seems to parallel a verse in the Aṭṭhaka-vagga, while in the second a different reading from that of the otherwise corresponding Pali verse reflects an association with a pair of verses from another sutta of the Aṭṭhaka-vagga. These two examples suggest that the compiler(s) or editor(s) of the Khvs-G, or perhaps rather of its prototype in some other Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) dialect, were familiar

with the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga*¹⁶ or some similar text. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of the aforementioned commentarial texts that were found with the Khvs-G manuscript and that contain numerous citations of verses that in the Pali canon are found in the Sn and, especially, at least in the sample text tabulated in Salomon 1999: 160, in the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* of the Sn. When it is further recalled that the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* is also represented as an independent text in both Sanskrit and Chinese, the cumulative weight of the evidence makes it very likely that the compilation of the Khvs-G, or its archetype in some other language, was influenced by an acquaintance with the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* in a form at least approximately like that which has been preserved in various Buddhist traditions.

Moreover, regardless of whether the particular recension of the Rhinoceros Sūtra that has now come to us in Gāndhārī was actually compiled in that language or in the (unidentified) language of its source text, we can be confident, in light of the evident influence of the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* on this and other associated Gandhāran manuscripts, that the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* was in fact known to their writers and readers, even though no Gāndhārī manuscript of the *Aṭṭhaka* as such has been found yet. On the other hand, it should be stressed once again that this does not suggest that the Gandhāran proto-canon of which these texts are, theoretically at least, a part had anything that corresponded to the Sn of the Pali Tipiṭaka. On the contrary, the concentration of citations and influences from the *Pārāyana-vagga* and, especially, the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* is indicative of something more like the earlier stage reflected in Pali by the *Niddesa*, that is, a stage in which these two smaller compilations, plus the Rhinoceros Sūtra, were grouped together and accorded a privileged position. But on the basis of the evidence that we now have, there is no reason to think that the Gāndhārī proto-canon expanded this core into a larger grouping equivalent to the Sn, and thus it seems to have conformed in this respect with the other Buddhist traditions rather than with the Theravāda canon in its final and definitive form.

There are also indications of a similar pattern of interrelationship and influence between the Khvs-G and the Dharmapada/Dhammapada literature. For instance (as explained in detail in the notes on *itaridare[na]* in v. 34b), verse 331 of the Dhṛp¹⁷ is linked with two consecutive verses, 34 and 35, of the Khvs-G in a way that is closely analogous to the first example cited above of the connections between the Khvs-G and the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga*. Other apparent connections, though somewhat less definite, between the Khvs-G and the Gāndhārī version of the Dharmapada are discussed in the notes on *achidravurti* in verse 23a and *ohariṇa* in uddāna 2d. So here too, we can be confident that whoever compiled or standardized the Khvs-G was familiar with and apparently influenced by the Dharmapada literature. This, of course, is hardly surprising, in view of the fact that we now have two manuscripts of the Gāndhārī Dharmapada itself: the Khotan scroll, which was for a full century the only known specimen of a Gāndhārī Buddhist manuscript, and another fragmentary manuscript of the same text among the BL scrolls

¹⁶ Note the similarities in theme and wording between the Khvs-G and the *Sāriputta-sutta*, which is the last sutta of the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga* in Pali, pointed out in the text notes on *yaṣacari gramo* in Khvs-G 28a.

¹⁷ Unfortunately, the equivalent of this Pali verse is not preserved in the Gāndhārī version of the Dharmapada from Khotan (KDhp). In the Pali Dhṛp, the verse in question is part of the *Nāga-vagga*, and only small remnants of the first two verses (341–2) of the corresponding chapter of the KDhp survive. Very likely, there would have been a verse corresponding to Dhṛp 331 after KDhp 341–2, but the remainder of the scroll is lost.

(Salomon 1999: 35, 49, 51). Thus in this case too, there is a good correlation between the internal textual indications of the Khvs-G and the contents of the corpus of which it is a part.

In conclusion, there is no reason to think that the Gāndhārī Rhinoceros Sūtra is anything other than what it appears to be from the physical form of the manuscript, namely a separate manuscript of what was conceived as an independent sūtra. Nonetheless, internal textual evidence, and the contents of the BL Kharoṣṭhī corpus as a whole, suggest that it was in some way associated with other texts such as the Aṭṭhaka-vagga and the Dharmapada, perhaps as part of a general grouping corresponding to the Khuddaka-nikāya of the Pali Tipiṭaka. The character and status of this apparent grouping remain unclear at this point, but there is reason to hope that detailed studies of the other relevant texts, especially the verse commentaries, will eventually clarify the issue.

The Text of the Gāndhārī Rhinoceros Sūtra

2.1. Description of the Manuscript

The manuscript of BL fragment 5B as it is now preserved in a glass frame (BL accession number Or. 14915.15 = frame 15 of the BL Kharoṣṭhī collection; see pls. 2 and 4) consists of twelve large subfragments, designated by the uppercase letters A through L, as well as many smaller displaced or loose pieces (pl. 6), designated by lowercase letters, on the recto (fifteen fragments, designated m through aa) and the verso (seventeen fragments, bb through rr). In addition, twenty-eight small, detached fragments broken off from the original scroll before or during the unrolling procedure were originally kept in a separate box¹ (see pl. 7) and are therefore referred to here as the “debris box fragments” (frags. ss through ttt; pls. 6–7).²

Letter designations (see pls. 3 and 5) were assigned to the fragments according to their location in the unreconstructed manuscript, beginning from the top of the left-hand column of fragments (A–H) and continuing on the right-hand column from the bottom up, since this column is entirely upside down (frags. I–L). The small, loose fragments on the recto (m–aa) and verso (bb–rr) were then numbered following the same sequence. The debris fragments (ss–ttt) were numbered arbitrarily, since they were lying loose in the debris box without any indication of their original position.

Frame 15 also contains fragmentary remains of what seem to be two other originally separate scrolls, designated BL Kharoṣṭhī fragments 5A and 5C (Salomon 1999: 45–6). These had evidently been rolled up together with fragment 5B to form a composite roll of fragmentary small scrolls before the manuscripts were deposited and buried inside the pot in which they were found (Salomon 1999: 69–70). After unrolling, fragment 5C appears at the bottom of the composite roll, this position corresponding to the inside of the rolled-up scroll, since the Gandhāran scrolls were rolled from the bottom up (Salomon 1999: 104). Fragment 5B, the Khvs scroll, is above 5C, while fragment 5A, of which only one small piece remains, is at the top. Since the upper (i.e., outer) parts of the rolls inevitably suffered more damage than the lower (inner) sections during the roughly two millennia during which they were buried, we can assume that in the original form of this composite roll, scroll 5A must have been complete, or at least much more complete than the small remnant that has survived, but we have no way to guess what its original size may have been. We also cannot know for sure whether the original composite roll included any components in addition to the three scrolls that have partly survived

¹ They have subsequently been conserved and mounted in two separate glass frames.

² For detailed descriptions of the individual fragments of the scroll, see sec. 2.3.

in it. But it is virtually certain that a large amount of the original material in the composite roll was lost, possibly including one or more entire scrolls, since all or most of the other BL scrolls have lost more than half of their original lengths.

The collocation of fragments 5A, 5B, and 5C, and quite likely others as well, in a composite roll seems to be more or less accidental, since these manuscripts contain different and apparently unrelated texts written by different hands. Fragment 5A seems to be part of a collection of unidentified didactic verses, generally similar in character to the Dharmapada and related literature (see appendix 4 for details), and fragment 5C contains a set of stotra-type verses glorifying the Buddha (Salomon 1999: 39, 46). Although these two texts and the Khvs-G are evidently not directly related to each other, it is perhaps more than coincidence that all three of the surviving texts from the composite roll are poetic in character, and it may be that someone intentionally grouped some small scrolls as a sort of *Sammelhandschrift* of poetic works. Nevertheless, it is more likely that these three poetic scrolls were grouped together for a purely practical reason: they are all “small-format” scrolls (Salomon 1999: 98–100; see also sec. 2.2.1 below), which could conveniently be so combined, especially when (as will be explained below) they may have already been damaged and fragmentary.¹¹

However this may be, it is lucky for us that these small-format scrolls were rolled up together, for it is only because of this that the Khvs-G scroll and apparently also the stotra in fragment 5C are relatively completely preserved. Whereas more than half of the original material of the single scrolls is usually lost, these two smaller texts were protected by being wrapped up inside other, separate scrolls. Thus it is that we have approximately two-thirds of the original text of the Khvs-G scroll, a much higher percentage than that of any other text among the BL fragments.

2.1.1. Disposition of the Fragments

The arrangement of the manuscript as conserved in the glass frame and the designatory letters assigned to its subfragments represent the scroll as it was unrolled, without any adjustments or alterations. As a result, the fragments of the manuscript are, for the most part, not in their correct, original positions. The fragments are divided vertically into two parallel columns, with a set of eight relatively well preserved fragments (A–H) on the left and four more decrepit ones (I–L) on the right. As will be explained in detail below (sec. 2.2.2), the eight left-column fragments are not in their correct, original sequence as it is deduced in the reconstructed scroll (pl. 1) but are jumbled together in what seems to be a random order; when restored to their original positions, the order of fragments A through H becomes: B C A H D G E F. Moreover, fragments A–E are upside down in relation to fragments F–H and to the separate scrolls 5A and 5C, and hence in relation to the composite roll as a whole. The four decrepit fragments in the right column are in correct sequence according to the reconstructed scroll, but the entire column is upside down in relation to the composite roll.

Moreover, the right and left columns of fragments as they appear in the unreconstructed text are reversed from their original positions. This is immediately obvious from their contents. The

¹¹ The “long-format” scrolls (Salomon 1999: 87–98) are often several meters long and thus hardly susceptible to combination in composite rolls.

Khvs-G scroll was originally laid out with one verse per line, with the individual quarters, or *pādas*, separated by a small blank space, usually about 1.5 cm wide; but the fragments on the left side of the unreconstructed text contain the first two quarters of the verses, while the third and fourth quarters, including the easily recognizable recurring refrain, are in the (upside-down) right-column fragments. Since Kharoṣṭhī script is written from right to left, these positions are obviously wrong, and there is no doubt that the two columns have been switched around from their original places. This situation is clearly related to the fact that Gandhāran scrolls were sometimes folded in half after being rolled up, which had the effect of weakening the middle of the scroll so that it eventually broke in half, leaving, in effect, two long parallel columns. In fact, a photograph taken of the Khvs-G scroll before conservation (pl. 8) seems to show that it was folded this way, with the folded edge apparently visible at the left side. Unfortunately, it is difficult to discern the precise situation from this photograph, but if in fact the scroll was folded lengthwise when it was discovered, the fragile central portion apparently disintegrated before the scroll was unrolled and conserved.

It is thus unfortunately not entirely clear whether the positions of the two columns of text were reversed in the composite roll as it was interred, or whether this reversal reflects dislocation during the unrolling and conservation procedures. The same uncertainty applies to the incorrect orientation and sequence of the component fragments of the left column of the unreconstructed scroll (the original right column). Here it is likely that at least some of the dislocations are consequences of the unrolling procedure. For instance, the fact that fragments A–E, at the upper section of the left column, are upside down in relation to the rest of that column and to the composite roll as a whole may not reflect their original position in the roll as it was interred. When the conservators began the unrolling, they had no way to tell which way the roll was to be oriented, since no writing was visible on the exposed blank verso, and since the roll was in effect a packet of separate fragments with no obvious indication as to the direction in which they had originally been rolled up. Thus the unrolling may have been commenced in the wrong direction, with the result that the first five pieces were inverted as they were unrolled, though they had been correctly oriented in the interred scroll.

Similar uncertainties arise with regard to the ordering of the separate pieces in the same column. For example, fragments B and C—the first and second fragments of the reconstructed text—were unrolled as the second and third pieces from the top, placed upside down and below fragment A, which turned out to be the third section in the reconstructed scroll and which is flipped over from its proper position, with the inscribed recto appearing on the otherwise blank verso in the glass frame. This too suggests, but does not prove, that the first few fragments of the left column of the scroll were unrolled in an improper sequence due to the very disturbed condition of these exposed outer layers, which made it impossible for the conservators to know which piece originally preceded which. Therefore it is possible that the first three fragments were actually in their correct original sequence when the Khvs-G scroll was rolled up inside the composite roll.

Even though some of the irregularities of the disposition and ordering of the left-column fragments may be attributable to the conservation process, it is still likely that not all the fragments were in their correct, original order in the scroll as it was interred. The fragments in the lower portion of the left column (F–H) are probably presented in the frame in the order and

position that they had in the composite roll as it was interred, for here the remains were much more intact, and it is thus less likely that the unrolling and conservation procedure introduced any distortions. But these fragments too, though in the correct orientation, are definitely not in the right sequence. Their original order, as established primarily on the basis of the uddāna (see sec. 2.2.3.2), must almost certainly have been H (D) G (E) F.

2.1.2. Date and Circumstances of Interment

The apparent dislocation of the separate fragments of the Khvs scroll suggests that the scroll may have already been fairly old when it was interred in, probably, the first century A.D.⁴ Unfortunately, we have no way to determine how long it takes for a birch bark scroll to become so brittle that it literally falls to pieces; this could be a matter of only a few decades or could involve a considerably longer period. Until data become available or experimental research is carried out on this question, we can say only that the Khvs-G scroll was apparently already old in the first century and thus is likely to date from the earlier part of that century or conceivably even from the first century B.C.

The Khvs-G seems to have been one of the scrolls that were most decrepit at the time of the interment of the BL Kharoṣṭhī collection and thus constitutes one of the strongest pieces of evidence that at least some of them were discarded, worn-out scrolls that were ritually interred, a theory that is also supported by internal textual evidence in some of the other scrolls (Salomon 1999: 71–6). It must be conceded, however, that several scrolls in the collection seem to have been in much better condition, if not completely intact, when they were buried along with the Khvs-G, so that it remains to be conclusively determined whether the theory of the ritual disposal of discarded and recopied scrolls is an adequate explanation for the entire collection.

2.2. Reconstruction of the Scroll

2.2.1. Size and Format

The unreconstructed manuscript (see pl. 2) is, at its maximum points, 41.5 cm high and 24 cm wide. The maximum height is that of the relatively better preserved left column of fragments, whereas the right column, which is at a level with the lower section of the left column, is only 23 cm high. The maximum height and width of the reconstructed text (pl. 1) are 44.4 cm and 27 cm, respectively. The Khvs-G scroll is thus one of the few examples of the small-format type of Gandhāran scroll (Salomon 1999: 98–100). The more common format is much longer, probably originally several meters in length, but considerably narrower, usually not more than 20 cm wide (Salomon 1999: 87–91, 96–8). Also characteristic of the small-format scroll is the fact that the Khvs-G scroll is apparently made from a single large sheet of birch bark, in contrast to the long scrolls, which are constructed by gluing separate sheets together (Salomon 1999: 92–8).

The bark of the Khvs-G is unusually thin, comprising, apparently, only two laminated layers; most of the other scrolls are thicker, with as many as six or more layers. Thus the scroll was written on a single, unusually large and fine piece of bark, which may have been chosen

⁴ On the evidence for this dating, see the series introduction above and Salomon 1999: 141–55.

Comparison of the Pali, Sanskrit, and Gāndhārī Versions of the Rhinoceros Sūtra

4.1. General Comparison

With the discovery of a Kharoṣṭhī manuscript of the Khvs, we now have evidence for three separate versions of this sūtra, in Pali, Sanskrit, and Gāndhārī. The relationships among these three versions are quite complex, and as all too often is the case among parallel versions of Buddhist canonical texts in different Indic languages (e.g., the KDhp and its parallels), they do not divide into clear and neat groupings. In the case of the Khvs, we find a curious situation wherein the overall structure and contents of the Gāndhārī text resemble the Pali version fairly closely and diverge widely from the Sanskrit, but the actual readings of the Gāndhārī text are consistently closer to the Sanskrit.

As noted in section 2.2.1, the Khvs-G apparently originally contained forty verses and thus is closely comparable in overall length to the Khvs-P, with forty-one verses (or forty-two in the Ap), in contrast with the twelve verses of the abridged Skt. version (see sec. 1.1). The overall structure of the Khvs-G, moreover, resembles that of the Khvs-P in several other respects. The structure of the uddāna, in four verses citing ten verses each from the original text, implies that the poem was understood as comprising groups of ten verses, and this pattern is paralleled in the Pali commentarial tradition, in which the Culla-niddesa and Paramatthajotikā divide the text into vaggas of ten verses each (or, more precisely, into three vaggas of ten and one of eleven; see sec. 3.4).¹

There also seems to be a significant, though limited, relationship between the sequence of verses in the P and G versions of the Khvs. This will be readily apparent from the concordance of the three versions provided in appendix 3, which shows, first of all, that the P and G versions have the same first five verses. Among the next four verses of G, verses 7–9 correspond to verses 7, 6, and 9, respectively, of P,² whereas G 6 resembles P 26 but has no direct parallel in P. Thus, but for one exception, the ordering of the first nine verses of G and P is similar. After this point, the correspondences in verse order between P and G break down, at least temporarily. For example, the G correspondent to P 8, which was absent from the opening sequence, appears later on as verse 34. The only meaningful correspondences with P in the middle of the G version are the parallel sequences G 21–*22 = P 37–8 and G 25–7 = P 11–3, wherein groups of verses

¹ For further details see Jayawickrama 1949: 122–3. This division into sets of ten verses appears to be a purely mechanical device, since the verses in each set are not significantly linked in terms of their theme or contents.

² See also the further comments on the order of verses in G and P in the notes on vv. 6–9.

that are clearly linked in either imagery or theme are kept together, as might be expected, in both recensions. The two verses in the first of these two groups have in common the image of the lion and the initial word *siho* (see notes on udd. 3a). The second set consists of three verses extolling the benefits of proper friendship, the first two of which are linked by parallel first quarters (*sayi/ṇoya labhea ṇivago sahayo*), with the third verse serving as a conclusion, so to speak, to the unit (*ardha prahiṣati sahayasampata*). Other than these two sets, the only linkage between the middle part of G and P is G 31–2 = P 18–9, which may be accidental, since these verses are not particularly close in theme or wording.

Near the end of G we again begin to see structural parallels with P. The last six verses of G (35–40) correspond to verses 40, 39, 32, —, 41, and 15 of P. If we exclude G 40 = P 15 for reasons that will be explained below, and G 38 because it has no parallel in P, we find that the last few verses of G come at or near the end of P as well, although not in the same order. The seeming anomaly that the final verse of G (40) corresponds to P 15 is explained in the text notes to it, the point being that the compiler of Khvs-P evidently took the first word of that verse, *evam*, as a reference to the preceding verse, P 14, whereas the compiler of Khvs-G interpreted it as a conclusion to the entire poem. But if we exclude this special case, the next-to-last verse of G (39) corresponds to the last verse of P (41).

These structural correspondences in the G and P versions are hardly likely to be mere coincidence but rather imply that the two recensions shared some common core not only in terms of their component verses but also in terms of their ordering. It is striking that the order of verses in G and P is closely parallel at the beginning of the poem and is somewhat more loosely parallel toward the end, but has little in common, except for two sets of inherently linked verses, in the middle. If both recensions inherited a common core, it seems reasonable to suppose that the beginning and end would be more stable in the memory of its transmitters in a hypothetical earlier, oral stage of transmission. A detailed study of the structure and ordering of comparable works—for example, of the Dharmapada texts in different languages and recensions—might help to corroborate this claim, but such an undertaking, needless to say, goes far beyond the scope of the present work.

As noted in section 1.1, the Skt. version of the Khvs is, at least superficially, entirely different in structure from the G and P versions. It has only twelve verses, five of which are pattern variants of a single verse, so that in effect it contains the equivalent of only seven verses of the other versions. The correspondents to these seven base verses in the Skt. are, in the numbering of the G recension, *11, 36, 1, 19, 20, 2, and 3, and in the P sequence, 34, 39, 1, 10, 28, 2, and 3. Two points of interest emerge from this comparison. First, the Skt. version contains among its seven base verses the ones corresponding to the first three verses of both G and P, although not in the same position. This can hardly be coincidental but rather confirms that at least an approximate core of stability among the first few verses of the poem is reflected in all three surviving versions. Second, the fourth and fifth verses of the Skt. correspond to the matching pair G 19 and 20, and the similarity of the opening quarters of these verses (*otārayitvā gṛhivyaṃjanāni* and *saṃdārayitvā gṛhivyaṃjanāni* in the Skt. version) shows that this too is not coincidental; rather, these two verses were considered a linked pair in both Skt. and G (though not in P, where their equivalents, with somewhat different readings, are vv. 10 and 28, respectively).

Thus, although the overall structures of the P and G versions of the Khvs stand together against that of the Skt., it is evident that the relationship of the three is actually more complicated: first, the structure of the Skt. has some similarity with that of the other two versions, and second, its structure is at least at one point more like that of the G version than of P. Moreover, when we examine the specific readings of the text, the grouping of the three versions is distinctly G and Skt. as opposed to P, in contrast to the alignment of G and P against Skt. in terms of the overall structure of the poem. In those cases where we have the same or similar verses in all three recensions, the Skt. readings are much more often closer to those of G than of P. The following are the most notable examples:

Skt. 2a/G 36a/P 39a: The wording of this quarter in Skt., . . . *upekṣāṃ karuṇāṃ ca bhāvya*, is much more similar to that of G, *metra uvekha karuṇa ya bhavae*, than it is to P's *mettaṃ upekhaṃ karuṇaṃ vimuttiṃ*. Here, as explained in the text notes, there is some reason to suspect a common innovation in Skt. and G.

Skt. 5a/G 20a/P 28a: Skt. *saṃdārayitvā gṛhivyaṃjanāni* corresponds to G *saṃdalaita gihibaṃdhaṇāni* rather than to P *sandālayitvā saṃyojanāni*. Here too there may be a common innovation in G and Skt., as mentioned in the text notes.

Skt. 6–10a/G 2a/P 2a: Here the Skt. verse in all five pattern variation verses begins with *saṃsevamanasya*; the G reading is mostly lost in the main text, but the uddāna citation *saṃsevaṇa* shows that G had the same word or at least another form of the same word (see text and uddāna notes for details), whereas P had *saṃsaggajātassa*.

In a few other cases, Skt. seems to parallel G, but the situation is less clear due to the lacunae in G. For example, Skt. 1a begins with *ālabdhavīryā satatānuyogī*, with the rest of the verse continuing with epithets in the plural, in contrast to P 34a, *araddhaviriyo paramatthapattiyā*, etc., with the remaining epithets in the singular. Unfortunately, this verse is lost in the G text, but the citation in the uddāna (2a) is *aradhavīrya*, which suggests that the main text had the plural form as in Skt. rather than the singular of P. However, here, contrary to the general pattern described above, the G reading *aradha-* corresponds to P *araddha-* rather than to Skt. *ālabdha-*. Since there are considerable differences between P and Skt. in the readings of the rest of this verse, the G version would have served as a useful point of comparison, so that it is particularly unfortunate that the G verse is lost.

The results are similarly indeterminate in examples such as Skt. 11a/12a *putrāṃ/jñātīṃ saḥāyān avalokayanto*, contrasting with P 3a *mitte suhajje anukampamāno*. Here the corresponding G line, 3a, is almost entirely lost. The uddāna citation *mitra* (udd. 1a) shows that the first word would have corresponded to P *mitte* rather than Skt. *putrāṃ* (v. 11) or *jñātīṃ* (v. 12), but the very meager remnant of the text proper seems to suggest that the second word in G was *sahaya*, corresponding to Skt. *saḥāyān* rather than **suhaja* or the like as in P. Moreover, we can easily conceive that in the hypothetical "complete" Skt. text, rather than the explicitly abridged version that we have (see sec. 1.1), there would very likely have been a further pattern variant on this verse with **mitrān* or the like as its first word, thus matching G rather than P. Therefore, in this case we can establish at least a hypothetical parallelism between G and Skt.

The situation is similar with regard to the relationship of *śikhir yathā bhasmani ekacārī* in Skt. 5b with *jalaṃ yaṣa bhitva balaṃ sāuto* in G 20b and *jālaṃ va bhetvā salil'ambucārī* in P 28b. Here Skt. agrees with G in having the adverb of comparison *yathā = yaṣa*, but G's *jalaṃ*

and *bhitvā* correspond, contrary to the general pattern, with P's *jālaṃ* and *bhetvā*. This is practically the only case where G clearly corresponds more closely to P than to Skt., and even this is of limited significance given the complex situation regarding the readings of this line (for details, see the text notes).³ All in all, although the amount of directly comparable material is less than we would have hoped for, it is sufficient to establish that in terms of text readings, as opposed to structure, the Skt. version of the Khvs is decidedly more closely allied to the G text than to the P. The possible implications of this fact for the textual history of the Khvs tradition as a whole are discussed in section 4.3.

4.2. Detailed Comparison of the Gāndhārī and Pali Versions

4.2.1. Common and Unique Verses

As mentioned above, the G and P texts are generally similar in the scope of their contents and overall structure, though not in the details of their readings. Of the forty verses of G and the forty-one (or forty-two) of P, at least thirty-five are more or less direct correspondents to each other. Besides these, G has only three verses, 14, 23, and 38, which do not correspond at all to verses in P, and two others, 6 and 18, which both have some resemblance to the same P verse, 26, but neither of which can be said to be its correspondent. The P text has four verses, 17, 27, 33, and 36, to which nothing corresponds in G, and one, 26, which, as noted above, resembles both G 6 and G 18. Finally, different parts of the similar verses 10 and 30 in P correspond to one verse, 19, in the G text.

The four P verses that have no correspondent in the G do not seem to share any particular feature that would explain their absence in the G, and their absence may be simply a random result of the vagaries of textual formation, transmission, and standardization. Nor is there any obvious explanation for the three G verses which are not represented in P, but they do have one characteristic in common that may provide a clue. By a stroke of luck, portions of the third quarters of all three of these verses have survived, and in each case these can definitely, in the case of G 14 and 38, or tentatively, in the case of G 23, be identified with third quarters of other verses in the P text (and, in the case of G 14, in Skt. as well).⁴ This might lead us to suspect that these verses are in some sense secondary to more "original" verses, and this suspicion is strengthened by their imitative quality (see, e.g., the text notes on v. 38). We must, however, be very cautious about making such subjective judgments, especially in view of our often imperfect understanding of those verses for which we lack P parallels to guide us. This impression of an imitative quality could well be an illusion arising from an unconscious assumption that the verses are "unoriginal" or "interpolated" simply because they do not appear in the P version of the Khvs. Actually, this apparent imitative quality, when viewed more objectively, could be merely a reflection of the repetitive character of the poem as a whole, which develops over and over in different terms the same basic themes of the benefits of solitude and the necessity of choosing one's companions carefully.⁵

³ This statement does not apply to the issue of the relationships among the third quarters of corresponding verses in the three versions, where other factors and patterns apply; see sec. 4.2.2.

⁴ The details of these identifications are presented in the following section.

⁵ See Jayawickrama 1949: 121, who refers to the "numerous repetitions of ideas and wholesale lines and stanzas," which he takes, probably incorrectly, to be an indication of the secondary character of some of the verses. These and related issues will be taken up again in sec. 4.3.

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