A 4th/5th-Century sūtra of the Saṁmitīya Canon? On the So-Called "Continental Pāli" Inscription from Devnimori

Vincent Tournier

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ข้อมูลพระไตรปิฎกศึกษา เล่ม ๑๘

Like the two earlier "International Pali Studies Weeks" (2014 and 2016), the third one, jointly organised by Nalini Balbir and Peter Skilling, was held from 11 to 14 June 2018 in Paris, at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, in the occasion of its 150th anniversary.

Seven scholars submitted their works for publication in this volume: Nalini Balbir, Oskar von Hinüber, Petra Kieffer-Pülz, Gregory Kourilsky, Santi Pakdeekham, Javier Schnake, and Vincent Tournier.

Front cover
Images from a manuscript kept in Wat Khao Yi San (courtesy Santi Pakdeekham)

Back cover
Images from a manuscript kept in Wat Khao Yi San (courtesy Santi Pakdeekham)

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1. Peter Skilling and Santi Pakdeekham, *Pāli Literature Transmitted in Central Siam,* Bangkok 2002

2. Peter Skilling and Santi Pakdeekham, *Pāli and Vernacular Literature Transmitted in Central and Northern Siam,* Bangkok 2004

3. Olivier de Bernon, Kun Sopheap, Leng Kok-An, *Inventaire provisoire des manuscrits du Cambodge. Première partie,* École française d'Extrême-Orient: Paris 2004

4. Santi Pakdeekham, *Jambūpati-sūtra. A synoptic romanized edition,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2009

5. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Skilling. Buddhism and Buddhist Literature of South-East Asia. Selected Papers,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2009

6. Claudio Cicuzza, *A Mirror Reflecting the Entire World. The Pāli Buddhapādamaṅgala or the "Auspicious Signs on the Buddha's Feet". Critical Edition with English Translation,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

7. Petra Kieffer-Pülz, *Sīmāvicāraṇa. A Pali letter on monastic boundaries by King Rāma IV of Siam,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

8. Santi Pakdeekham, *Piṭakamālā. 'The Garland of the Piṭaka',* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

9. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 1,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2014

10. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 2,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2014

11. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 3,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2015

12. Daniel M. Stuart, *The Stream of Deathless Nectar*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2017

13. Santi Pakdeekham, *Tāṃrā Traipiṭaka*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2017

14. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Katā me rakkhā, katā me parittā. Protecting the protective texts and manuscripts. Proceedings of the Second International Pali Studies Week. Paris 2016*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2018

15. Olivier de Bernon, Kun Sopheap, Leng Kok An, *Inventaire provisoire des manuscrits du Cambodge. Deuxième partie. Les bibliothèques institutionnelles de Phnom Penh*. École française d'Extrême-Orient and Fragile Palm Leaves, Paris and Bangkok 2018

16. Santi Pakdeekham (transliterated), *History of the Pali Scriptures: Saṅgītiyavaṃsa* by Somdet Phra Phonnarat, Bangkok and Lumbini 2020

17. Santi Pakdeekham, *Painted Catalogue of Pāli Literature*, *Uposatha Hall of Wat Thong Nopphakhun*, *Bangkok.* Bangkok and Lumbini 2021

18. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week, Paris 2018*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2023

19. Santi Pakdeekham, *History of the Emerald Buddha and Sihiṅga Buddha Ratanabimbavaṃsa by Brahmarājapaññā Gāthā. Tāṃnān Phra Kaew Morakot by King Mongkut. Sihiṅganidāna by Bodhiraṅsī*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2022

20. Santi Pakdeekham and Peter Skilling, *King Mongkut's Anthology: Pali Inscriptions from Phra Pathom Chedi*, Forthcoming

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A 4th/5th-Century *sūtra* of the Saṃmitīya Canon? On the So-Called "Continental Pāli" Inscription from Devnimori[*]

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T
he near absence of the Pāli language within the epigraphical landscape of early India and Sri Lanka has often been observed and never ceases to surprise.[1] The earliest indisputable examples of Pāli inscriptions in fact come from Southeast Asia, especially the Irawaddy delta in Burma and the Chao Phraya and Pasak basins of modern-day Thailand, where an epigraphic expression in Pāli had

[1] See, for instance von Hinüber 1985a: 186; Salomon 1998: 80–81.

emerged by the 7th century.[2] The extent to which earlier records from India may be qualified in any meaningful way as "Pāli" has been debated. The best-known, and certainly one of the most important of these early records is an inscription engraved in a Western variety of Southern Brāhmī script on a reliquary from Devnimori, an important Buddhist site located about 110 km as the crow flies northeast of Ahmedabad, in the Aravalli District of Gujarat. This reliquary casket in chlorite schist was recovered during the excavation of the great *stūpa*, in 1962–1963, by a team of archaeologists from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (Vadodara) led by R.N. Mehta and S.N. Chowdhary.[3] More specifically, it was found inside a broken earthenware pot "on the top of a square platform under the base of the drum."[4] The rim and bottom of the cylindrical casket (figs. 1–2)[5] are covered with a deeply engraved donative record in Sanskrit, while both sides and the rim of the lid are more superficially scratched (figs. 3–12), in smaller letters, with a complete *sūtra* presenting the law of dependent arising (*paḍiccasamuppāda*, Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*) in a variety of Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA).

The donative record has been competently edited and repeatedly studied and, in particular, the issue of the Common Era year equivalent to its date—the 127th year of an elusive Kathika era, st. 2—has been hotly debated.[6] By contrast, the scriptural citation was excluded from

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[2] See Griffiths and Lammerts 2015: 996–997. If Falk's dating of the Khin Bha (commonly spelt Khin Ba) Mound Gold Foils to the first half of the 5th century were accepted (Falk 1997: 77–84), then it would possibly be one of the earliest Pāli citation inscriptions. However, recent publications have expressed caution about such an early dating. See Griffiths et al. 2017: 59; Griffiths and Lammerts forthcoming.

[3] Mehta and Chowdhary 1966; Chowdhary 2010.

[4] Chowdhary 2010: 35, with fig. 8.

[5] According to Chowdhary, the cylindrical casket is *ca* 12.7 cm (5") high; its diameter is *ca* 15.2 cm (6.8") at the base and *ca* 15 cm (6.7") on the top. The lid's height is about 2.5 cm (1.05") and its diameter *ca* 15 cm. For further measurements and a detailed description see Chowdhary 2010: 126–130.

[6] See Mehta and Chowdhary 1962–1963; Mirashi 1965; 1981: 167–169; Sircar 1965: 564, n. 3; Srinivasan 1967; Chowdhary 2010: 137–138, and the references cited in Schopen 1979: 19, n. 35. The identification of the era of the Kathika kings with the Śaka era of 78 CE, proposed by Mehta and Chowdhary and followed by Sircar, is extremely unlikely. The hypothesis

the first publication of the inscribed reliquary by its discoverers Mehta and Chowdhary, on account of the fact that it is "of purely religious interest"[7] and likewise not part of the *Epigraphia Indica* edition. The monographic report of the excavations did include a reading of the citation inscription, but it was far from satisfactory. Since then, the epigraph has been studied closely only by Oskar von Hinüber.[8] The latter, however, was only able to re-read the first three out of nine lines, on the basis of low-quality black-and-white pictures, and to comment upon the rest of the inscription on the basis of the published reading by Mehta and Chowdhary. In his important and influential article, von Hinüber stated that the language of the Devnimori record, which was characterised by its first editors as "Prakrit," was "actually a variety of Pāli."[9] The implications of this assessment are discussed in the same article. The author describes as follows the language of both the Devnimori record and that of a 5ᵗʰ/6ᵗʰ-century inscription from Ratnagiri in Orissa:[10]

> [A]lthough nearer to Pāli than to any other surviving Middle Indic, it is by no means identical with it. Thus, the inscriptions should be classified linguistically as two new varieties of continental Pāli or Buddhist Middle Indic… Given the extremely scanty knowledge available on the geographic distribution of Buddhist schools, it would

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of a date in the Kalacuri-Cedi era—or of its possible predecessor, the Abhīra era—of 248 CE, though not free of problems, appears to be more consistent with the palaeographic features of the two inscriptions, and with the style of the Sanskrit composition. See also Salomon 1998: 90, n. 50; 194–195. While accepting the dating of the reliquary inscription to 375/76 CE, Johanna Williams (1982: 58–60) proposed to date the eight fine terracotta images and the architectural décor excavated from the large *stūpa* to the early 5ᵗʰ century. Overall, while the identification of the era remains uncertain, the dating of the reliquary inscription and of the main building activity at the *stūpa* to the late 4ᵗʰ/early 5ᵗʰ century seems relatively secure.

[7] Mehta and Chowdhary 1962–1963: 173.

[8] Mehta and Chowdhary 1966: 121–122; von Hinüber 1985a. Given its importance for the history of Buddhist canonical transmission, it is curious that this citation inscription was not included in Tsukamoto's corpus of Indian Buddhist inscriptions (IBH).

[9] von Hinüber 1985a: 187.

[10] von Hinüber 1985a: 197. See also von Hinüber 1985b: 66.

be unwise to attribute these little texts to any of them with confidence.
However, it should be stressed that they add considerably to the very
rare evidence for Buddhist canonical scriptures written in a Middle
Indic language other than Pāli. Therefore, a full study of the Devnimori
casket from a better photo, or better still, from the original deserves
high priority.

Following the publication of this article, no one has assessed the
Devnimori inscription in any depth. Norman has returned, in passing,
to the characterisation of its language, stressing that it "should not
be regarded as Pāli (continental or otherwise) but rather as a dialect
of Middle Indo-Aryan which shares a number of features with Pāli,
but also differs from it in a number of points."[11] Indeed, to prevent
confusion, it is perhaps preferable to avoid the characterisation of
the language of the Devnimori reliquary inscription as Pāli, not
only because of the linguistic specificities observed in the text, but
also because the wording can be shown to preserve a rather specific
recension of a Buddha's discourse, parallel yet distinct from the first
sutta of the Theriya (i.e. Theravādin) *Nidānasaṃyutta*, but also from a
Sanskrit *sūtra* stemming from a (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādin transmission.[12]
In other words, what will henceforward be referred to as the Devnimori
MIA inscription is likely related to the canon of a *nikāya* distinct
from either of the above-mentioned *nikāya*s. In a seminal study that
contributed to the identification of the so-called "Patna *Dharmapada*"
as a Saṃmitīya work (SDhp),[13] Peter Skilling also alluded to the
Devnimori inscription, and hypothesised that it might in fact reflect
an "earlier recension" of the Saṃmitīya canon.[14] Given the intimate
relationship existing between a canonical language and the identity of

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[11] Norman 1993: 283–284. See also Oberlies 2019, vol. I: 5, n. 1.

[12] See below, paragraph 3.3.

[13] For the spellings of this school's name in general and the one adopted here
in particular, see Sferra 2020: 659, n. 38; Tournier 2020: 862, n. 9. The most
detailed discussion of the issue is found in Namakiwa's Japanese monograph
on the Saṃmitīyas (2011: 36–43), to which I am unable to do full justice.

[14] Skilling 1997: 113. Although, as far as I know, he did not return to this
hypothesis, in a more recent discussion of the diversity of Buddhist MIA,
Skilling (2016a: 35) appears to distinguish between what he calls "Sāṃmitīya
Prakrit" and other Prakrits including that of the Devnimori inscription.

a *nikāya*—especially when such identities are fully crystallised, which was definitely the case by the 4ᵗʰ century CE—the two issues deserve to be addressed together.

The present contribution developed from the conjunction of two factors. First, thanks to colleagues at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, I was given access to a set of colour photographs of the Devnimori MIA inscription, which allowed me to produce a substantially improved edition. Second, recent developments in our knowledge about the history of the Saṁmitīyas and their scriptures allow, in my view, to revisit and consolidate the hypothesis that the MIA reliquary inscription represents one of the earliest ~~available~~ traces of their canon available in an Indic language specific to that tradition.

1. The Donative Record

Before considering the scriptural citation, it may be useful to briefly present the donative record in Sanskrit, for it provides useful context to the present discussion, and its interpretation may be somewhat improved. Although the two records are engraved in slightly different varieties of Brāhmī script, they belong to the same period and were most probably engraved as part of the same donative act. Indeed, the text layout (Fr. *mise en pierre*) illustrates a coordinated effort, with the cylindrical box being covered by the donative inscription, while the lid was reserved for the citation inscription. Looking at the content of the inscriptions, it is probably not by mere chance that the liminal homage to the Buddha in the donative record likely alludes to a famous miracle associated with the city of Śrāvastī, while the *sūtra* citation starts with the characteristic introductory account (*nidāna*) set in the Jetavana, in the precinct of that very city. More importantly, the functional pairing of a donative text recording the establishment of relics in a *stūpa* and a full or partial citation of a *sūtra* laying out the *pratītyasamutpāda* corresponds to a well-attested pattern.[15] As will be

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[15] The earliest known instance of such a pairing is the Kharoṣṭhī inscription of Śveḍavarma, dated to the year 20 of Kaniṣka (146/47 CE). It was engraved on a copper reliquary shaped like a miniature *stūpa*, presumably found in the Kurram District of present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan. See

seen below, in section 3, a close Sanskrit parallel to that preserved, in MIA, on the Devnimori reliquary, is also found in several 5th/6th-century inscriptions. This testifies to the fact that, before the use of the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* became pervasive, this short *sūtra* was considered to quintessentially represent the Buddha's core teaching on dependent arising, and thus was employed in the ritual consecration of objects or monuments.

The donative record consists of a liminal homage to the Buddha and six stanzas: a *maṅgalaśloka* is followed by five stanzas dwelling on the religious foundation, composed in Āryā (stt. 2–3, 5–6) and Gīti (st. 4). Three lines of text are engraved on the rim of the casket, and the text further continues on the casket's base (ll. 4–5). The following reading and translation may be proposed:[16]

> namas sarvvajnāya
> I.   (1)jñānānukampākāruṇyaprabhāvanidhaye namaḥ ◊
>   samyaksaṁbuddhasūryyāya paravāditamonude ||

Baums 2012: 241–242, no. 39. For this and other examples, see also *inter alia* Boucher 1991: 4ff.; Melzer 2006: 254–256; Drewes 2007: 127–128.

[16] My reading is based on the good documentation published in Chowdhary 2010: 132–133, fig. 58–59. See also figs. 1–2. Variant readings of the two best earlier editions, by Srinivasan 1967: 68–69 (S) and Mirashi 1981: 169 (M) are recorded in the apparatus. For the detail of the editorial conventions used throughout this article, see below p. 416. It seemed unnecessary to also include the *editio princeps* by Mehta and Chowdhary (1962–1963: 174–175; reproduced in Chowdhary 2010: 135 and IBH, Devnī Morī no. 1) and the few further variants in Sircar 1965: 519. Note also that previous editors have not noted (or at least not indicated) that a space (marked here as ◊) was rather consistently left by the engraver at the end of each hemistich, to emphasize the metrical structure. In the case of the first hemistich of stanzas 2 and 6, and of the second hemistich of stanza 3, the engraver decided instead to leave the remaining space on the line and proceed to the following line (see fig. 2). In the case of the last hemistich of stanza 6, it is engraved below the first hemistich of this stanza, and not below the first *akṣara* of line 4. This well-patterned text layout following metrical division is only disrupted in line 3, where the engraver squeezed one and a half stanza in that single line and thus lacked the space to mark the metrical divisions. For the use of space at *pāda*-ends and, more generally, for the influence of prosody on the text-layout of Indic manuscripts and inscriptions, see Scherrer-Schaub 2017.

II.   saptāviṁśatyadhike kathikanṛpāṇāṁ samāgate bdaśate
      (2)bhadrapadapaṁcamadine nṛpatau śrīrudrasene ca ◊
III. kṛtam avaniketubhūtam mahāvihārāśraye mahāstūpaṁ ◊
      satvānekānugrahaniratābhyāṁ śākyabhikṣubhyāṁ
IV.   (3)sādhvagnivarmmanāmnā sudarśanena ca vimuktaraṁdhreṇa
      kārmmāntikau ca pāśāntikapaḍḍau śākyabhikṣukāv atra
V.   daśabalaśarīranilayaś śubhaśailamayas svayaṁ varāheṇa
      (4)kuṭṭima*gataḥ* kṛto yaṁ samudgakas senaputreṇa ||
VI.   mahasenabhikṣur asya ca kārayitā viśrutaḥ samudgasya
      (5)sugataprasādakāmo vṛddhyartthan dharmasaṅghābhyaṁ || —

1b -nidhaye S; -*viṣaye* M. ✧ **1d -tamonude ||** M; -*tamonude* S. ✧
2c bhadrapada- Understand *bhādra-*. ✧ **3a kṛtam** M; *kratam* S. ✧
3a avaniketubhūtam S; *avaniketubhūtaṁ* M. ✧ **5c. kuṭṭima*gataḥ*
kṛto** em.; *kuṭṭimakat[o] kṛto* Is.; *kuṭṭimakatā krato* S; *kuṭṭima[gataḥ]
krito* M. In the last syllable of the first word, the left element of the
-o is faint and poorly realised, so S's reading can also be justified.
The reading could alternatively be emended *kuṭṭimakṛtā.* ✧ **6a.
mahasenabhikṣur** As noted by M, the second syllable has been
artificially shortened to fit the meter.

Homage to the Omniscient One!
(1) Homage to the Sun [that is] the Samyaksambuddha, dispeller of
    the darkness [that are] allodox [teachers], he the praiseworthy
    and luminous receptacle of knowledge and compassion!
(2) When the year (*abda*) one hundred and twenty-seven of the
    Kathika rulers had arrived (i.e. started), in the fifth day of the
    Bhādrapada month, when the Lord of men was Śrī-Rudrasena,
(3) A great *stūpa*, which, [situated] in the vicinity (*āśraya*)¹⁷ of the
    great monastery, is like (*bhūta*) a comet [fallen] on earth,¹⁸ was
    made (i.e. commissioned) by two *śākyabhikṣu*s who delighted
    in benefitting many beings,

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¹⁷ Note that *āśraya* could also be used here with a semi-expletive meaning. See
Renou 1959: 32.
¹⁸ This interpretation of *avaniketubhūta*, against "a banner of the Earth" as
translated by Mirashi (1981: 170; see also Skilling 2016a: 25), is supported by

(4) (Namely,) the excellent one named Agnivarman, and the flawless Sudarśana. With respect to that [building], the two superintendents were the *śākyabhikṣu*s Pāśāntika and Paḍḍa.[19]

(5) Varāha, son of Sena, made himself, out of beautiful stone, this round casket (*samudgaka*)—the resting place for the relics of the One endowed with the ten powers —that was [subsequently] placed at the [*stūpa*'s] tiled base (*kuṭṭimagata*).[20]

(6) And the illustrious *bhikṣu* Mahāsena was the one who ordered this round casket to be made, [he who,] desiring [others to

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the following passage of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (Rām 7.49:5–6), where Rāma enquires with Vibhīṣaṇa about the gigantic and frightening *rākṣasa* Kumbhakarṇa:

ko 'sau parvatasaṁkāśaḥ kirīṭī harilocanaḥ |
laṅkāyāṁ dṛśyate vīraḥ savidyud iva toyadaḥ ||
pṛthivyāḥ ketubhūto 'sau mahān eko 'tra dṛśyate |
yaṁ dṛṣṭvā vānarāḥ sarve vidravanti tatas tataḥ ||

Cf. Biardeau and Porcher 1994: 1021 (with slight modifications): "Quel est donc ce véritable mont ceint de son diadème, ce héros aux yeux bruns que l'on voit dans Laṅkā comme une nuée avec des éclairs, comme un grand météore sans pareil qui, seul, serait tombé sur terre, dont la vue fait fuir tous les singes en tous sens?"

[19] How the *dvandva* compound *pāśāntikapaḍḍau* is to be divided is uncertain. I very tentatively follow here Mirashi's understanding of how the two monks were named. Yet if *pāda* division were consistently observed, then one would have to rather understand the two names to be Pāśa and Antikapaḍḍa. Moreover, a division *pāśanti-kapaḍḍa* cannot be ruled out either.

[20] See PSED, s.v. *kuṭṭima*: "ground prepared for the site of a mansion." Compare the above-mentioned description (p. 403), by Chowdhary, of the casket's findspot. If one were to opt for the emendation *kuṭṭimakṛtā*, then the stanza could be translated "Varāha the tiler, son of Sena, made himself, out of beautiful stone, this round casket, which is the resting place for the relics of the One endowed with the ten powers." Falk (2013: 59) read the second hemistich *kuṭṭimakṛtā kṛto yaṁ samudgas senaputreṇa*, which leads to an unmetrical line. He translates the stanza as follows: "[By] Varāha himself a receptacle (*nilaya*) was made from auspicious stone for the relics of the Buddha (*daśabala*)[;] by Senaputra, the jeweller, was made this container (*śamudga*)." He thus sees a distinction between *nilaya* and *samudgaka*, interpreting the former as "the outer and inscribed reliquary" and the latter as "the inner and metal reliquary containing the bones." Besides the fact that it proceeds from misreading, this interpretation is unlikely: it is rather clear from the syntax that a single dedication is meant. The compound *daśabalaśarīranilaya* must then serve as an epithet of *samudgaka*. See also Mirashi 1981: 170.

develop] faith towards the Sugata,[21] [acted] for the prosperity of the Dharma and the Saṅgha.

This record provides a glimpse of the complex network of individuals involved in the construction of the great *stūpa*, with two monks acting as the instigators and sponsors (*kārayitṛ*) of the *stūpa*'s construction (described in stt. 3–4ab) and one doing the same for the reliquary (st. 6). Stanzas 4cd and 5 respectively recall the two overseers (*kārmāntika*)[22] of the construction and the master craftsman responsible for making the casket—a layman with a Vaiṣṇava theophoric name. Five of these individuals are monks, and four of them bear the title *śākyabhikṣu*. The two occurrences of *śākyabhikṣu* in the dual (stt. 3, 4) happen to be the earliest dated instances of this title in Indian epigraphy.[23]

Gregory Schopen, who proposed that *śākyabhikṣu* should be understood as a sort of "code name" for followers of the Mahāyāna, treated the Devnimori inscription as pertaining to that current.[24] This

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[21] A more natural way of rendering the compound *sugataprasādakāma* would be "desiring a favour from the Sugata." See also Mirashi 1981: 170. Since, in a Buddhist context, *prasāda* is generally used to refer to the feelings akin to faith directed towards the Buddha, rather than to a "favour" derived from him, I am however tempted to take the compound differently. See Rotman 2009: 65–87; Tournier 2018: 33–35. To be sure, however, both meanings could coexist here.

[22] Although *kārmāntika* may sometimes refer to more menial tasks, in this context it seems reasonable to understand the compound as a synonym for *navakarmika*. See also IEG, s.v. *karmāntika*; Silk 2008: 97 and n. 7.

[23] Interestingly, if the equation Kathika era year 127 = 376/77 CE proposed by Mirashi were correct, these occurrences would be nearly coeval with a key moment in the massive adoption of the monastic name Shi 釋 (abbreviation of Shijia 釋迦, itself a transcription of Skt. Śākya) in China. Indeed, as he was involved, at the end of his life, in the translation of the *Ekottarikāgama* (T. 125), Shi Dao'an 釋 道安 (312–385) saw in one of its *sūtra*s (no. 39.9) the canonical confirmation that members of the Saṅgha should adopt the name he had already chosen as his personal surname. See Link 1958: 28–29; Tsukamoto 1985, vol. II: 722–723; Palumbo 2015: 3, n. 4. The *sūtra* in question describes how, like the four main rivers lose their identity as they merge into the ocean, members of the four *varṇa*s, when leaving home to enter the Buddhist order, all become indiscriminately "*śramaṇa*s, sons of the Śākya" (Ch. 沙門釋迦子, Skt. *śramaṇāḥ śākyaputriyāḥ*). See T. 125, II, 658b28–c8. Cf. AN IV.202.7–14; Vin II.239.14–21. See also Silk 2020: 131–132.

[24] Cf. Schopen 1979: 13; 2000: 16.

idea, and the correlative argument according to which this label would somehow be mutually exclusive with a *nikāya* identity, has since been disproved.[25] Moreover, while there is no question that—from the 5th century onwards—many aspirants to perfect Awakening used the title *śākyabhikṣu*, each document in which the epithet is used ought to be examined first in relation to its immediate context. In this respect, nothing in the rest of the Devnimori donative record, or in the selection of the scriptural citation accompanying it, or in the archaeological remains of the site dating from that particular period suggests that the monastic community adhered to the outlook set forward by the Bodhisattva movement. More generally, it seems fruitful to understand the name *śākyabhikṣu* against the backdrop of the growing eagerness of Buddhist monks, whatever their lineage and their soteriological orientation, to stress their symbolic kinship with the Buddha.[26] That the spread of the title *śākyabhikṣu* was accompanied by a diminution—although certainly not by the disappearance[27]—of the mentions of *nikāya*s in the epigraphic record of the period could, in part, be explained by the necessity to stress a "Buddhist" identity, constructed in opposition to the non-Buddhist institutionalised cults, which rose to prominence during the late Middle Period of Indian Buddhism. Thus, the mention of the "allodox [teachers]" in the *maṅgalaśloka* of the Devnimori record, likely alluding to the conversion of the six "raciocinators" (*tārkika*) in Śrāvastī,[28] seems significant of that opposition.

In sum, the presentation of the monks active at Devnimori, who presided over the construction of the *stūpa* and the preparation and engraving of its reliquary, does not reveal anything of their

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[25] See Tournier 2018: 45 with n. 70, and references cited therein. In addition, with reference to the Devnimori inscription, see Skilling 2016a: 35, n. 13.

[26] Shiri 2020; Tournier forthcoming a.

[27] Compare Schopen 2005: 244.

[28] Indeed, the Śrāvastī episode may be considered the *locus classicus* for the conversion of allodoxes. At least in Mūlasarvāstivādin versions of the story, there is a pervading solar symbolism at play, and a clear allusion to the fact that the Buddha outshone his six opponents like the sun does the glow-worm. See, for instance, Divy 163.5–9; Fiordalis 2014: 27. For a similar use of the solar symbolism when contrasting the Buddha with allodoxes in another narrative context, see Mvu(S) I.73.20–74.3; Tournier 2017: 465–466 (st. 53), 500 and n. 46.

institutional—or, for that matter, soteriological—affiliation. The consideration of the broader historical context, however, allows to propose an informed hypothesis regarding the *nikāya* that was active at the site in late 4th/early 5th century.

2. New Evidence on the Saṁmitīyas and their Canon

Despite the extreme paucity of epigraphic evidence, in the vast area corresponding to present-day Gujarat, pertaining to Buddhist *nikāya*s,[29] we have good reasons to believe that this part of Western India represented a stronghold of groups related to the (Vatsīputrīya-) Saṁmitīyas since early times. The earliest dated evidence mentioning a monastic order related to that *nikāya* is a donative inscription engraved in year 35 of King Vāsiṭṭhīputta Siri-Puḷumāvi (*ca* 120 CE) from the site of Kanaganahalli, in Karnataka.[30] This group, the Kaurukullas, derived their name from Mount Kurukulla, which may be located in Lāṭa, in Southern Gujarat. The Kaurukullas may have spread along the "Southern Routes" (*dakṣiṇāpatha*) in part thanks to the political integration of this region into the Sātavāhana domain in the late 1st–early 2nd century CE. The association of the Kaurukullas with Southern Gujarat is consistent with later sources, such as the **Nikāyabhedavibhaṅgavyākhyāna* by Bhāviveka (*ca* 500–570 CE), which identifies these and the Avantakas (i.e. those of Avanti) as two, presumably close, regional groups of the Saṁmitīyas.[31] Bhāviveka's contemporary, *Paramārtha (499–569 CE), was himself born in

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[29] At present I know of a single, Kuṣāṇa-period, inscription found in Gujarat that names a *nikāya*. It was found in Vadnagar, in the Mehsana District of northern Gujarat, and was published in von Hinüber and Skilling 2016. The Bodhisattva image in red sandstone on which it is found was most likely produced in Mathurā. Since the inscription uses a phraseology that is also quite typical of the epigraphic corpus from that major Buddhist centre, it may have been imported while already inscribed. Therefore, the fact that the gift is placed in the possession (*pariyaha*, Skt. *parigraha*) of the Mahāsāṅghika masters, who dominated the Mathurā region in the Kuṣāṇa period, is not sufficient to prove that this *nikāya* had laid roots in Gujarat.

[30] For a detailed discussion of this identification, see Tournier 2020: 878–890.

[31] Eckel 2008: 114, 310.14–17.

Avanti, at Ujjayinī, and likely ordained as a Saṃmitīya monk,[32] before studying in Valabhī. In the 7th century, according to Xuanzang 玄奘 (600–664 CE), Valabhī (Ch. Falapi 伐臘毘) and Mālava (Ch. Molapo 摩臘婆) constituted, together with Sindh,[33] major strongholds of the Saṃmitīyas.[34] Moreover, the pilgrim estimated that there were more than ten monasteries of the same *nikāya* (with less than a thousand monks in total) in the realm of Ānandapura (Ch. Anantuobu 阿難陀補, modern Vadnagar) in Northern Gujarat, which at the time depended politically from Mālava.[35] Devnimori, situated 80 km as the crow flies east from Vadnagar, is thus part of a broader regional religious landscape which—as far as Buddhist monastic lineages are concerned—was dominated by the Saṃmitīyas in Xuanzang's times but probably much earlier. This naturally does not mean that other monastic orders were

[32] Okano 1998: 58–59; Funayama 2008: 145–146.

[33] Xuanzang's evidence of the Saṃmitīya presence in Sindh is conveniently summarized in Lamotte 1958: 599. Sindh and Lāṭa are also the two regions named by Yijing (義淨) as Saṃmitīya strongholds. See T. 2125, LIV, 205b3–8; Takakusu 1896: xxiv, 8–9. The association of *some* Saṃmitīya groups with Sindh may have led to their being known under the exonym *Saindhavas (Tib. Sendha pa) in Medieval Magadha and, later, in Tibetan historiography. See Skilling 1997: 106–108; Hanisch 2008: 208; Dimitrov 2020: 146–155. In his recent monograph, Dimitrov assumes that Saṃmitīyas *en bloc* originated from Sindh (see e.g. p. 152). But this assumption is not supported by any evidence earlier than Xuanzang's *Datang xiyuji* 大唐西域記, with a single possible exception discussed below, n. 48. The earlier evidence is moreover ignored by the author. The very fact that Bhāviveka does not mention *Saindhavas alongside the Kaurukullas and the Avantakas seems to support that he and his sources did not perceive Sindh to be *the* historical stronghold of the Saṃmitīyas. In sum, that many of the Saṃmitīyas established in Magadha during the Pāla and Sena periods may have been monks fleeing Sindh after the Umayyad conquest in the early 8th century is an important dimension of the late history of the school, but it has limited implications for the earlier period with which the present article is concerned.

[34] T. 2087, LI, 935c5–13, 936b16–21; Ji 1985: 900–902, 911–913; Li 1996: 298, 301–302.

[35] T. 2087, LI, 936c5–9; Ji 1985: 916; Li 1996: 302. Recent excavations have revealed ruins of a Buddhist monastery (or perhaps nunnery) within the precincts of the city. See Rawat 2011; 2018.

not present, especially around large urban centres.[36] However, besides
the Sthāvirīyas (P. Theriyas) who were presumably established in
Southern Gujarat,[37] none of the *nikāya*s supposed to have been active
in the region transmitted the scriptures in a Western variety of MIA
close to, yet distinct from, Pāli.[38] Thus, the Saṁmitīyas appear to be
natural candidates to account for the circulation of such a scriptural
tradition in Devnimori.

   Outside of Gujarat, it is significant that in Sarnath we also find
evidence for the circulation of such scriptures in a Buddhist MIA. In
this other Saṁmitīya stronghold, the Theriya lineages are not attested
in the early centuries of the Common Era. One important mention of
the Saṁmitīyas is known in a *ca* 4ᵗʰ-century record engraved, over
the erased name of the Sarvāstivādins, on the Aśokan pillar recovered
from the site.[39] Revisiting relevant epigraphic evidence, Richard
Salomon has recently argued that at least three epigraphic mentions
of the Saṁmitīyas have been defaced by Sarvāstivādin monks, a
fact that betrays an intense rivalry between the two groups over the
control of several monuments at the site, including the Dhamekh
stūpa.[40] That the Saṁmitīyas ended up prevailing is suggested by

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[36] The situation in Gujarat might thus be comparable to Āndhra, where the
regional Śaila groups as a whole dominated the religious landscape, with other
*nikāya*s being active around Dhānyakaṭaka (mod. Amaravati) and Vijayapurī
(mod. Nagarjunakonda). For the institutional landscape of Āndhra, see
Tournier forthcoming b.

[37] Xuanzang's travelogue alludes to a significant presence of the *Mahāyāna-
Sthāvirīyas (Ch. *dasheng shangzuo* 大乘上座) in Bharukaccha (Ch. Balujiezhanpo
跋祿羯呫婆) and Surāṣṭra (Ch. Sulatuo 蘇剌佗). See Deeg 2012: 151 and nn. 83–84.
For the historical realities behind this label, see Tournier 2014: 43–44; 2018:
81–82.

[38] In Xuanzang's account, besides the dominant Saṁmitīya, the Sarvāstivāda
is the only *nikāya* mentioned on the whole of what he identifies as "Western
India" (Ch. Xi Yindu 西印度). A single Sarvāstivādin monastery is indeed
mentioned in his description of Gūrjara (Ch. Juzheluo 瞿折羅). See T. 2087, ʟɪ,
936c22–27; Ji 1985: 920–922; Li 1996: 303. For the possible early presence of
Mahāsāṅghikas in northern Gujarat, see above, n. 29.

[39] See Lüders 1961: 115–116, § 80; Vogel 1905–1906: 172, with corrections in
Falk 2006: 214. See also Salomon 2009: 118.

[40] Salomon forthcoming.

Xuanzang's description of the Deer Park.[41] This context allows to
account for the presence of two citation inscriptions described as
composed in "Pāli,"[42] and dated on palaeographical grounds to the
2nd/3rd and the 3rd/4th century by their editor Sten Konow.[43] The earlier
inscription contains a list of the four noble(s') truths[44] and the later
a version of the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā*.[45] The first record is, to be
sure, linguistically very close to canonical Pāli, but there are also slight
differences in wording with the received text, and its language could
also be consistent overall with an early Saṃmitīya recension of the
pericope.[46] The text of the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* preserves a slightly

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[41] T. 2087, LI, 905b15–21; Ji 1985: 561–562; Li 1996: 171.

[42] See Konow 1907–1908: 292, 293. See also Salomon 1998: 80–81; von
Hinüber 2015: 6.

[43] See Konow 1907–1908: 291–293. See also IBH, Sārnāth nos. 94, 169.

[44] Based on the published estampage, one may offer a slightly different reading
than the one proposed by Konow (K):

(1)catt[ā]rimāni   bhikkhave   °ar(i)yasaccāni   (2)katamāni   cattāri
dukkha[ṁ] dikkhave °arāyasaccaṁ (3)dukkhasamudayaṁ °ariyasaccaṁ
dukkhanirodhaṁ °ariyasaccaṁ (4)dukkhanirodhagāmini ca paṭipad[ā]
°ari⟨ya⟩saccaṁ.

 2. dikkhave K. Emend *bhikkhave*. ✧ **2. °arāyasaccaṁ** K. Emend °*ariya-*. ✧
dukkhasamudayaṁ *dukkhasamudaya* K. ✧ **dukkhanirodhaṁ** *dukkhanirodho* K.
✧ **dukkhanirodhagāmini** -*gāminī* K. Understand -*gāminī*.

[45] As with the previous record, and until new documentation of this inscription
is produced, a slightly improved reading may be proposed on the basis of the
published estampage:

(1)ye dhammā hetuprabhav[ā] (2)tesaṁ hetuṁ tathāga(3)to °avaca
tesaṁ ca yo (4)nirodho °e(5)vaṁvādī mah[ā](6)ś[r]amaṇo ||
b. °avaca *avoca* K. The reading *avoca* by Konow does not seem to be justified,
when the second *akṣara* is compared to *vaṁ* in l. 5, and in light of the fact that
-*o* markers are otherwise clearly visible. ✧ **d. mah[ā]ś[r]amaṇo ||** *mahāśramaṇo*
K. The rather Sanskritic reading *mah[ā]ś[r]amaṇo* proposed by Konow and
provisionally accepted here is not entirely secure. The -*ā* is indeed not as clearly
marked as in *dhammā* and *evaṁvādī*, and what is read as a subscript -*ra* could also
be simply an accident in the stone. If read *mah[a]ś[r]amaṇo*, the reading would be
identical to a Bhaikṣukī inscription preserved in the Maldah Museum, on which see
Sircar 1950: 226. See also below, n. 48.

[46] See e.g. SN V.425.14–17: *cattārimāni bhikkhave ariyasaccāni || katamāni
cattāri || dukkham ariyasaccaṁ || dukkhasamudayam ariyasaccaṁ || dukkha-
nirodham ariyasaccaṁ || dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṁ ||*. See
also Mvu(S) III.331.17–332.1/(M) III.423.6–8; SBhv I.137.19–21. When
the epigraphic citation is compared to the other MIA versions, one notes the

Sanskritized linguistic shape, to the extent that is has been qualified as "Hybrid Pāli" in the literature.[47] Still, it remains representative of the so-called "*avaca* group" of the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* which—in India at least, and possibly beyond—was transmitted primarily within Saṁmitīya milieux.[48] The possibility that one or both MIA citation inscriptions from Sarnath stem from a Saṁmitīya canonical transmission invites us to think along similar lines when returning to the Devnimori record.

In 1985, when von Hinüber considered this inscription, evidence suggesting that the so-called "Patna *Dharmapada*" was in fact a

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additional voc. pl. in l. 2 and the additional *ca* in l. 4. The language corresponds rather closely to that of known Saṁmitīya texts. A significance difference may however be observed with the latter sources: the equivalent to Skt. *ārya* and P. *ariya* tends to be *ayira*, through the metathesis of the semi-vowels. See below, n. 123. The form *ayira* is also that found in the Bagh MIA inscription to be discussed below (pp. 426–427), which preserves a version of the list of the four noble(s') truths that is more strikingly distinct from the canonical Pāli one. In sum, it is unclear whether the text of the oldest Sarnath citation inscriptions is best understood as Pāli or as another, possibly Saṁmitīya MIA.

[47] See recently von Hinüber 2015: 5–6.

[48] The following version of the stanza is preserved, with minor variants, in the colophon of Saṅghatrāta's *Abhidharmasamuccayakārikā* and in several inscriptions from Bihar and Bengal dating between the 10ᵗʰ and the 12ᵗʰ centuries, most of which are engraved in Bhaikṣukī script:

ye dhammā hetuprabhavā tesāṁ hetuṁ tathāgato avaca |
tesāṁ ca yo nirodho evaṁvādī mahaśśamaṇo ||

See Namakiwa 1993: 151–158; Skilling 1997: 108–113; 1999: 181–183, § 2.2; Dimitrov 2020: 9–18; Sferra 2020: 660–661. For three iconographically-related inscribed steles originating from the Pāla domain—although one of them was found in Central Thailand—and transmitting the *avaca* recension of the *ye dharmā*, see Coedès 1959; Revire 2016: 223–225. These three inscriptions are not in Bhaikṣukī script, but in Northeastern varieties of scripts. On three *ca* 7ᵗʰ–8-c. examples from Mainland Southeast Asia—two of which, more specifically, from the Mekong Delta, the third from unknown provenance—likewise transmitting the *avaca* recension of the stanza, see Skilling 1999: 172 (K. 1330), 173 (K. 820); 2003–2004: 284. Not noticed in the above-mentionned studies is a copper plate discovered by Bird in 1839 in the *stūpa* dedicated to Śāriputra at Kanheri. This was found along with another copper plate bearing a donative inscription dated to year 245 of the Kalacuri-Cedi era (= 493/94 CE). See Mirashi 1955: 29–32; IBH, Kaṇheri no. 14. Based

Saṁmitīya scripture had only been presented in Japanese,[49] and no other texts of this prominent school preserved in Indic language had surfaced. This led the author, a few years later, in his landmark essay on the origin and varieties of Buddhist Sanskrit, to say of the Saṁmitīyas that "no information about the language used by them seems to be available."[50] Fortunately, we are now in a much better position to revisit the matter. The Patna *Dharmapada*'s affiliation to the Saṁmitīya canon has now been proven beyond doubt,[51] while other works using a similar MIA have been discovered, the most extensive of which is Sarvarakṣita's *Maṇicūḍajātaka.*[52] Importantly, reproductions of folios from one manuscript written in the so-called Bhaikṣukī script have surfaced in recent years, which transmit *sūtra*s from a Saṁmitīya canon. This manuscript kept in Lhasa has yet to be made

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on the eye copy of this plate (Sykes 1856: pl. 2.3), which is otherwise lost, the following reading may be tentatively proposed:

> ye dhammā hetuprabhavā tesāṁ hetu(ṁ) tathāgato [°a]vaca
> tesāṁ ca yo nirodho °evaṁvādī mahaś[r]a[v]aṇo

That this MIA version of the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* spread to ancient Kṛṣṇagiri in Maharashtra may be explained in light of the fact that Buddharuci, the sponsor of Śāriputra's *stūpa*, came from Sindh, which became a Saṁmitīya stronghold. For Vātsīputrīya groups in the Western Ghats, see also Skilling 2016b: 27–30. For yet another witness of the *avaca* recension, recently discovered in Bagh, see below pp. 426–427.

[49] Mizuno 1982: 44–48. This hypothesis was restated in English without evidence to back it in Mizuno 1984: 168. Further support to this hypothesis came in Namikawa 1993 and Skilling 1997. See also Hanisch 2006: 126–130; Namakiwa 2011: 217–239.

[50] von Hinüber 1989: 362.

[51] The definitive evidence, in my view, comes from the fact that a stanza identical in both wording and language to st. 357 of the Patna *Dharmapada* is cited in the colophon of Saṅghatrāta's *Abhidharmasamuccayakārikā*. There it appears, along with the distinctive *avaca*-recension of the *ye dhammā* stanza, as a fragment of *buddhavacana* which "seals" the work composed by a self-styled Saṁmitīya author. See Sferra 2020: 661–662 and Dimitrov 2020: 79–89. The latter further argues that the exemplar of the Saṁmitīya *Dharmapada*'s *codex unicus* was written in the so-called Bhaikṣukī script, which he proposes, not very convincingly in my opinion, to name instead Saindhavī.

[52] Hanisch 2006; 2008.

fully available. We know so far that it is incomplete and that 78 folios are preserved. From the images available to him, Dimitrov was able to ascertain that this manuscript preserves a version of the **Kevaṭṭasūtra* (KeS), the *Acelakamahāsūtra* (AcMS ≈ P. *Kassapasīhanādasutta*), and a possible parallel to the Pāli *Tevijjasutta*.[53] Furthermore, it transmits a version of the **Śāmaṇṇaphalasūtra* (ŚāPhS),[54] and likely one of the *Brahmajālasūtra*. The *sūtra* collection may be either a *Dīrghāgama* manuscript or else a *mahāsūtra* anthology.[55] At present, our knowledge of this exceptional witness of Saṃmitīya scriptural transmission is very fragmentary, and the amount of text available from the above-mentioned *sūtra*s is very limited. Still, what is available provides us with a very informative glimpse of the language and wording of the canonical prose of the Saṃmitīyas, which complements well the knowledge derived from the analysis of the anthology of gnomic verses that is the Saṃmitīya *Dharmapada*, and from the post-canonical poetical composition which is the *Maṇicūḍajātaka*. As we shall see below, the proximity in language already observed by von Hinüber[56] between the Devnimori citation inscription and the Saṃmitīya *Dharmapada* may be further characterised and supported, thereby strengthening Skilling's earlier hypothesis that this represents a Saṃmitīya *sūtra*.

3. The **Paḍiccasamuppādasūtra* of Devnimori: Edition and Commentary

Any detailed assessment of the recensional specificity and the linguistic features of the Devnimori **Paḍiccasamuppādasūtra* must rely on the

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[53] One folio side of the **Kevaṭṭasūtra* and two small "snippets" from a folio bearing the end of the *Acelakamahāsūtra* and the beginning of the presumed parallel to the *Tevijjasutta* were identified and studied in Dimitrov 2020: 161–199. For further non-canonical Saṃmitīya works preserved in Indic manuscripts in Tibet, see ibid.: 199–206; Sferra 2020: 654–655.

[54] Only one folio side has been published so far, on which basis Francesco Sferra identified the *sūtra*. For an edition and study of that fragment, see Tournier and Sferra forthcoming.

[55] Skilling 2016b: 16. Compare Dimitrov 2020: 197.

[56] von Hinüber 1989: 362–363.

establishment of a more satisfactory text. In this section, a diplomatic edition (paragraph 3.1) is followed by a slightly restored text (3.2), which forms the basis of the commentary (3.3). The apparatus of 3.1 records variant readings[57] and includes palaeographic notes; 3.2 presents a restored text divided into paragraphs (§) and accompanied by a presentation of its closest Indic parallels. In this restored text, punctuation is added, and the most obvious scribal(/engraving) errors corrected on the basis of internal parallels.

A word should be said about the orthography of the text, which has not been normalised in paragraph 3.2. Indeed, part of the orthographic heterogeneity may be explained by a simple fact, so far unnoticed: two hands were at work, one responsible for the engraving of the outer part of the lid and its rim (figs. 3–11, ll. 1–4), and one responsible for the inner part (fig. 12, ll. 5–9). The first hand engraved more square letters. The second ductus is rounder and less regular, and it had to adjust to the irregularities of the support and its convex shape in ll. 7–9. This explains differences of spelling between the first and the second hand, the most striking being *vetaṇā* (§ 3.f–g) against *vedaṇā-* (§ 3.f–g), and *uvādāṇa* (§ 3.h–i) against *upādāṇa* (§ 4.h–i). These variants are more revealing of scribes' idiosyncrasies than of the fluctuating state of the canonical language of the group who transmitted the *sūtra* under discussion. Both hands, moreover, do not clearly distinguish between the dental *da* and the retroflex *ḍa*, which is probably due to the small size of the letters.[58] While distinguishing between *na* and *ṇa*, both engravers often write the former when one would expect the latter. Throughout the text, one also notes the residual preservation of early Brāhmī's non-systematic marking of double consonants: for instance, we have *desesaṁ* for *desessaṁ* (§§ 2.b, 5.c),[59] *viññaṇa-*

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[57] Variant readings by von Hinüber 1985a (vH) are recorded for the first three lines, and those of Mehta and Chowdhary 1966: 121–122 (M&Ch) after that point. The version of that textual part given in Chowdhary 2010: 138–139 reproduces the original publication and does not improve upon it.

[58] This was already noted in von Hinüber 1985a: 189. In section 3.1, I have thus consistently transliterated *da*, however reintroducing the distinction in the restored text.

[59] This could however be explained by the degemination of the -*ss*- in the suffix of the future, which is also observed in Pāli, see PG § 80.2.

(§§ 3.b–c, 4.b–c) for *viññāṇa*,[60] and *paḍiccasamupādo* (§ 2.f) for *paḍiccasamuppādo*, the latter being the spelling adopted twice in § 5.a, d.[61] Conversely, there are instances of unexpected reduplication of consonants, e.g. in *jjāti-* (§ 3.j–k, against *jāti-* in § 4.j–k), *vvo* (§ 5.c, against *vo* in § 2.b), *avaccamha* (§ 5.b, d, against *avacamhā* later in § 5.d), *phphassa-* (§§ 3.e–f, 4.e–f) for *phassa-*, and *cchalāyatana-* (§§ 3.d–e, 4.d–e) for the expected *chalāyatana-*.[62] Until the language of the tradition represented by the Devnimori *sūtra* is better understood, these orthographic peculiarities have been maintained.

To facilitate comparisons, in paragraph 3.2 the Devnimori text is presented together with the Pāli text preserved as the first *sutta* in the *Nidānasaṁyutta*[63] of the *Saṁyuttanikāya*, as well as with the

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[60] von Hinüber remarks (1985a: 189) that Mehta and Chowdhary read "*viññana* instead of *viññana* throughout" and later adds (p. 192): "The word *viññana* is written with a short *a* beyond doubt twice, for which no obvious explanation suggests itself." The spelling is in fact consistently *viñāṇa*, with an additional stroke bending downwards marking the vocalic marker. This may be compared to the Khin Bha Mound Gold Foils, where the spelling of this word is consistently *viññaṇa*, with two superposed *ña* signs. See PYU 45, ll. 1–2, 8–9. Falk (1997: 58) misreads as *viññāṇa* the two last occurrences of the term.

[61] In the other occurrence of the compound in § 2.b, *paḍiccaccasamūpādaṁ* may be considered the result of a degemination followed by a compensatory lengthening (*-utpāda* > *-uppāda* > *-ūpāda*).

[62] Two inaccurate readings of the compound in § 4d–e by Mehta and Chowdhary led von Hinüber to the following comment (1985a: 192–193): "*cchalāyatana* is not recorded in canonical Pāli, where *saḷāyatana* is used exclusively. Later, in line 6 [*recte* 5], Mehta-Chowdary read *ṣal-*, which would be nearer to canonical Pāli. If read correctly, it would suggest that in the language of this inscription both forms stand side by side, a situation corresponding to that of post-canonical Pāli." For the post-canonical coexistence of *saḷāyatana* and *chaḷāyatana*, see CPD, s.v. *āyatana*. For the common spelling *ccha-* for *cha-* see, for instance, Oguibénine 2016: 87–88, § 28.2.

[63] No attempt has been made to reedit this portion of the *Saṁyuttanikāya*, and the text quoted below is drawn from the Pali Text Society edition (Eᶜ), with two exceptions (§§ 2, 3), where a reading shared by the Burmese (*Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana*, Bᶜ), Thai (*Syāmaraṭṭha*, Sᶜ), and Sinhalese (*Buddhajayanti*, Cᶜ) editions has been preferred. I thank Aruna Gamage for checking printed copies of the latter two for me. For §§ 3–4, differences in wording and significant variants transmitted in one the earliest known witnesses of these pericopes in Pāli, namely the Khin Bha Mound Gold Foils (PYU 45, ll. 1–15), have been indicated. For the latter text, I follow the edition in the *Corpus of Pyu Inscriptions* (PYU 45). For this

closest known Sanskrit parallel. The latter, although characterised by a phraseology that seems consistent with a (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādin recension, is not included within the Sanskrit *Nidānasaṁyukta* from the Turfanfunde.[64] But its popularity as well as its ritual use is testified by the fact that it is transmitted in (at least) seven 5th/6th-century inscriptions: one brick from Nalanda, two from Gopalpur, a copper plate from Kasia, and three slabs from Ratnagiri.[65]

I have been unable to find, in the *Taishō* canon, a Chinese translation of this particular *sūtra*. Note, however, that the Chinese version of the 3rd-century *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā Dṛṣṭāntapaṅkti* by Kumāralāta cites from a *Sūtra of the twelve factors* [*of dependent origination*] (Ch. *Shier yuan jing* 十二緣經): in the narrative, a copy of it is read by the brahman *Kauśika at a relative's house, which leads to his conversion. Like §§ 3–4 of the *sūtra* edited below, it consists of the simple enunciation of the law of dependent arising, listing both cycles of origination (*pravṛti*) and extinction (*nivṛti*).[66] The core section of the *sūtra* under discussion is especially common in the literature, being transmitted in various contexts. It is, for instance, famously embedded in the *bodhikathā*

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corpus, see Griffiths et al. 2017. On PYU 45, see also Falk 1997; Griffiths and Lammerts forthcoming.

[64] Some of these *sūtra*s do however share pericopes with the *sūtra* under discussion, and the most significant parallels have been indicated in 3.2.

[65] The Nalanda brick (NaBr), dated Gupta Year 197 (= 516/17 CE) was edited in Ghosh 1937–1938. Its Gopalpur brick I (GoBr$_I$) is edited in Smith and Hoey 1897: 103, with corrections in Johnston 1938: 549–550. Gopalpur brick IV (GoBr$_{IV}$) is damaged and unpublished, but it preserves the same text. Both bricks are kept at the Ashmolean museum, Oxford (acc. nos. EAX.405 and EAX.402b), and reproduction are available on the online catalogue (https://collections.ashmolean.org/). The Kasia copper plate (KaPl) was edited in Pargiter 1910–1911. Only two of the three Ratnagiri slabs apparently bearing the same sūtra were published in Mitra 1983, vol. II: 414–416 and pl. CCCXVII (RaSl$_I$), 418–420 and pl. CCCXVIII–CCCXIX (RaSl$_{II}$). No documentation of the third one is available. In section 3.2 below, NaBr has been used as base text for the Sanskrit parallel: Ghosh's reading has been checked on the basis of the picture of the brick published in Krishnan 2008: 78. Preferred readings are drawn from the other witnesses in a few instances, marked in the apparatus.

[66] See T. 201, IV, 258c24–a3; Huber 1908: 10–11.

introducing the Pāli *Vinaya*'s *Mahāvagga*.[67] It also occurs, among Mahāyāna scriptures, within the teaching delivered by the Buddha to Śrīmatī at Vārāṇasī in the beginning of the *Śrīmatībrāhmaṇīparipṛcchā*. The relevant portion of this *sūtra* is cited in the preamble of the Schøyen copper-scroll inscription, engraved in the late 5ᵗʰ century to serve— much like the inscription under consideration—as consecration deposit in a *stūpa*.[68] Among other partial parallels, the first part of the *sūtra* (§§ 1–3), namely a Śrāvastī *nidāna* followed by a presentation of only the first aspect of the *pratītyasamutpāda* is found, for instance, in the influential *Pratītyasamutpāda(vibhaṅga)-sūtra*, available in numerous versions. There, it is followed by a detailed commentary of each of the twelve *nidāna*s.[69] Comments will be made in passing on the form or wording preserved by one or the other of these partial parallels. However, since the purpose of this study is to establish the recensional specificity of the Devnimori *sūtra*, it will be compared primarily with its closest Indic parallels featuring in paragraph 3.2.

The following editorial conventions have been applied:

°x   independent vowel sign
x·   final consonant

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[67] Vin I.1.7–22. Closely related modules are found in Ud 1.9–16, 2.9–16, 2.30–3.1. The importance of the *bodhikathā* is also testified epigraphically, as its beginning (Vin I.2–2.9) is engraved on a stone slab from Kunzeik, in the Bago district of Myanmar (PYU 40). It is likely that the pericope corresponding to §§ 3–4, in the beginning of PYU 45, was quoted from that canonical source, although it could also theoretically come from another discourse, where the two lists of categories occur side by side. See, for instance, AN V.184.9–24; MN I.263.1–16; III.63.28–64.12. See also Falk 1997: 57–58.

[68] For the text of the *Śrīmatībrāhmaṇīparipṛcchā* citation, interestingly followed by the *maṅgalaśloka*s of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamādhyamakakārikā*, see Melzer 2006: 268–273. See also Scherrer-Schaub 2018: 126–128.

[69] This *sūtra* is preserved for instance as no. 298 of the **Saṁyuktāgama* (*Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經; T. 99), as the independent *Yuanqi jing* 緣起經 (T. 124), and in the *bKa' 'gyur* (D 211), but also in several Sanskrit inscriptions from Nalanda, Dunhuang, and Indonesia. It is included, in an abridged form, as *sūtra* no. 16 of the **Nidānasaṁyukta.* See de Jong 1974: 143–149; Mejor 1997; Chung 2017. For a detailed list of parallels to the *Saṁyuktāgama sūtra*, see also Chung 2008: 107–110.

[ ] reading would be uncertain if element occurred in isolation
. lost part of an *akṣara*
( ) editorial restoration of lost text
⟨ ⟩ editorial addition of omitted text
《 》 scribal insertion
x emended reading
{} editorial deletion of redundant graphemes
◊ space left blank for punctuation or another purpose
(1) line number in the support
1. paragraph number
^a) sentence number
I. stanza number
^OL outer lid
^RL rim of the lid
^IL inner lid
✧ separation between lemmas in the apparatus
x̲y̲ wording of one of the parallels differing from that of the Devnimori *sūtra*

3.1. Diplomatic Transliteration

^OL**(1)** °evam me sūta. °eka. samaya. bhagavā sāvatthiya. viharati jetavaṇe °a[ṇ]ādhapiṇdikassa °ārām[e] tattha hu bhagavā bh[i]-kkhū °āmantrettā bhikkhave ti bhant[e] ti

   sūta. *suta* vH. Here and throughout the inscription, when modifying *sa* the vocalic marker -*ū* consists in a rightward curve, engraved at the foot of the grapheme, while -*u* is instead a leftward curve. This, the first occurrence of the *akṣara*, is the only instance where the engraver was likely confused, for one rather expects *sutaṁ.* **sāvatthiya.** *s[ā]vatthaya* vH. ✧ **jetavaṇe** *jetavane* vH. ✧ **°a[ṇ]ādhapiṇdikassa** *°anādhapiṇḍika[ssa]* vH. **tattha** *tatra* vH. **bhikkhū** *bhakkhu* vH.

(2) te bhikkhū bhagavato praccaṁs.ṁs[ū]ṁ bhagavā °etad avoca ‖ padīccasamūpādaṁ vo bhikkhave desesaṁ ta. sādhu su[ṁ]-sūṇādha maṇasīkarodha bhāsissām. suhavvo °eva[ṁ] bhante ti te bhikkhu bhagato

praccaṁs.ṁs[ū]ṁ *praccaṁsuṁsū* vH. See below, l. 3: *praccasūṁsū*.
✧ **padīccaccasamūpādaṁ** *paḍīccasamūpāda* vH. The previous
editor doubted (p. 188) that the *-ī* was intended, but this is confirmed
by comparison to *maṇasī*-, ll. 2 and 8. ✧ **su[ṁ]sūṇādha** *susūnodha*
vH. The *anusvāra* is faint and located slightly to the left of the first
akṣara, but the reading is confirmed below, ll. 8–9. ✧ **maṇasīkarodha**
manāsikarodha vH. ✧ **bhāsissām.** *bhāsissaṁ*, noting (p. 188) "The
word *bhāsissam* ends in an akṣara, which resembles the numeral 8
without top and bottom…" The bottom of the sign is however visible
on the better photo at my disposal (fig. 3). The necessity to reconstruct
bhāsissām(i) is confirmed by comparison with the same word l. 9. ✧
bhikkhu *bhikkhū* vH. ✧ **bhagato** *bhagavato* vH. The engraver missed
the syllable *va*, as he missed a *da* a few words below, in l. 3: *etavoca*.

(3)   praccasūṁsū bhagavā °etavoca katam[o] ca bhikkhave
padiccasamupādo ‖ °avijjāpraccayā saṁkkhārā ‖ saṁkkhāra-
praccayaṁ viññāṇaṁ ‖ viññāṇapraccayaṁ nāmarūpaṁ ‖ nāma-
rūpapraccayā cchalāyatanaṁ ‖ cchalāyatanapraccayā phphasso ‖

praccasūṁsū *praccasuṁsū* vH. ✧ **°eta voca** *°e(tad a)voca* vH. ✧
padiccasamupādo *paḍiccasamūpādo* vH. ✧ **saṁkkhārapraccayaṁ**
saṁkkhārāpraccayaṁ vH. ✧ **viññāṇaṁ** *viññanaṁ* vH. ✧
viññāṇapraccayaṁ *viññanapraccaṁ* vH. ✧ **nāmarūpaṁ** *nāmarūpa*
vH. ✧ **cchalāyatanapraccayā** *cchalāyatanapraccayo* vH. ✧ **phphasso**
‖ *phphasso* vH.

ᴿᴸ**(4)**   phphassapraccayā   vetaṇā   ‖   vetaṇāpraccayā   taṇhā   ‖
taṇhāpraccayā   °uvādāṇaṁ   ‖   °uvādāṇapraccayā   bhavo   ‖
bhavapraccayā jjāti ‖ jjātipraccayā jarāmaraṇasokapari-
devadukkhadomaṇassa°upāyāsā   saṁmbhanti   °em   etassa
kevalassa dukkhakhandhassa samudayo hoti ‖

phphassapraccayā vetaṇā *phphasso puccayā vetano* M&Ch.
✧ **vetaṇāpraccayā taṇhā** *vetaṇo puccayā tanhā* M&Ch. ✧
taṇhāpraccayā °uvādāṇaṁ *tanhāpuccayā °uvādāṇa* M&Ch.
✧ **°uvādāṇapraccayā** *°uvādāṇapuccayā* M&Ch. ✧ **bhavapraccayā**
bhavapuccayā M&Ch. ✧ **jjātipraccayā** *jjātipuccayā* M&Ch. ✧
-domaṇassa°upāyāsā *-domanassarapāyāsā-* M&Ch. ✧ **saṁmbhanti**
saṁbhavanti M&Ch (silent emendation). ✧ **°em etassa** *°em etissa*
M&Ch. ✧ **dukkhakhandhassa** *dukkhakhaṁdhassa* M&Ch.

IL(5) °ajjāṇirodhā sa[ṁ]kkhāraṇirodho ‖ sa.kkhāraṇirodhā viññāṇa-
ṇirodho ‖ viññāṇanirodhā 《‖》 nāmarūpaṇirodho ‖ nāmar[ū]-
paṇirodhā cchalāyataṇanirodho ‖ cchalāyataṇanirodhā
phphas[s]anirodho ‖ [ph]phassanirodhā vedaṇānirodho ‖

> **°ajjāṇirodhā sa[ṁ]kkhāraṇirodho** *°ajjānirodhā sakkhāranirodho*
> M&Ch. ✧ **viññāṇaṇirodho** *viññānanirodho* M&Ch. ✧ **viññāṇanirodhā**
> 《‖》 *viññananirodhā* M&Ch. The -*vi*- seems written over a corrected
> -*nā*-, while the double *daṇḍa* erroneously inserted slightly below
> the line is a further sign of confusion of the engraver at this stage. ✧
> **nāmarūpaṇirodho** *nāmarupanirodho* M&Ch. ✧ **nāmar[ū]paṇirodhā**
> **cchalāyataṇanirodho** *nāmarupanirodhā ṣalāyatananirodho*
> M&Ch. ✧ **cchalāyataṇanirodhā** *ṣalāyatanānirodhā* M&Ch. ✧
> **vedaṇānirodho** *vedanānirodho* M&Ch.

70(6) vedaṇānirodhā taṇhānirodho ‖ taṇhānirodhā [°u]pādāṇanirodho ‖
°upādāṇanirodhā bhavanirodho ‖ bhavanirodhā jātinirodho ‖
jātinirodhā ja-

> **vedaṇānirodhā taṇhānirodho** *vedanānirodhā tanhānirodho* M&Ch.
> ✧ **taṇhānirodhā** *tanhānirodhā* M&Ch.

(7) rāmaraṇasokaparidevadukkhadomaṇassa°upāyā[s]ā
niruddhyanti °em etassa kevalassa dukkhakhandhassa nirodho
hoti ‖ °aya[ṁ] [v]uccati bhi-

> **-sokaparidevadukkhadomaṇassa°upāyā[s]ā** *-śokaparidevadukkha-*
> *domanassarapāyāso* M&Ch. ✧ **niruddhyanti** *nirudhyanti*
> M&Ch. ✧ **°em etassa** *°evaitassa* M&Ch. **dukkhakhandhassa**
> *duḥkhakhaṁdhassa* M&Ch. ✧ **°aya[ṁ] vuccati** *atha duvvuti* M&Ch.

(8) kkhave padiccasamuppādo ‖ °iti ho bhikkhave pana °avaccamha
[pa]diccasamuppādo vvo bhikkhave desesaṁ taṁ sādhu
suṁsūṇā-

> **ho** *dvo* M&Ch. ✧ **pana** *deta* M&Ch. ✧ **suṁsūṇā-** *°aṁsuṇā* M&Ch.

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70 From this line onwards, the text proceeds in spiral shape, so the line break
is indicated when the *akṣara* of the following line runs below the initial *ve-* of
l. 6.

(9) dha maṇasīrodha bhāsissāmi suhavvo ti °iti pana °avac[c]amha
°iman taṁ padiccā °avacamhā | | | | —

maṇasīrodha *maṇosi ro* M&Ch. ✧ **bhāsissāmi** *bhāsissām* M&Ch.
✧ **suhavvo ti** *antu ham me* M&Ch. ✧ **°iti pana** *ti ye ta* M&Ch. ✧
°avac[c]amha *avocamha* M&Ch. ✧ **iman taṁ** *iman ta* M&Ch. ✧
°avacamhā *avacamha* M&Ch.

3.2 Restored Text with Indic Parallels

1.
ᵃ⁾ ₍₁₎ evam me su*t*a(ṁ) ⟨|⟩ ᵇ⁾ eka(ṁ) samaya(ṁ) bhagavā sāvatthiya(ṁ)
viharati jetavaṇe aṇādhapiṇḍikassa ārāme ⟨|⟩ ᶜ⁾ tattha hu bhagavā
bhikkhū āmantrettā bhikkhave ti bhante ti ₍₂₎ te bhikkhū bhagavato
praccaṁs(ū)ṁsūṁ ⟨|⟩

> SN II.1.1–4: evam me sutaṁ || ekaṁ samayaṁ bhagavā sāvatthiyaṁ
> viharati jetavane anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme || tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū
> āmantesi bhikkhavo ti || bhadante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṁ ||

> NaBr 1–2 (= GoBr$_I$ a1–2, GoBr$_{IV}$ a1–2, KaPl 1–2, RaSl$_I$ a1–2, RaSl$_{II}$ a1–
> 2): ₍₁₎ °evam mayā śrutam e[ka]sm(i)n samaye bhagavāñ cchrāvastyāṁ
> viharati (sma jetavane °anātha)₍₂₎p[i]ṇḍadasyārāme ⟨|⟩ tatra bhagavāṁ
> bhikṣū*n* ā[ma]ṁtrayate s[ma] ⟨|⟩

>> **bhagavāñ** GoBr$_I$, GoBr$_{IV,}$ RaSl$_I$. ✧ **bhikṣū*n*** GoBr$_I$, KaPl; *bhikṣūṇ*
>> NaBr, RaSl$_I$.

2.
ᵃ⁾ ₍₂₎ bhagavā etad avoca || ᵇ⁾ paḍiccasamūpādaṁ vo bhikkhave desesaṁ
⟨|⟩ ᶜ⁾ ta⟨ṁ⟩ sādhu suṁsūṇādha maṇasīkarodha bhāsissām(i) suhavvo ⟨|⟩
ᵈ⁾ evaṁ bhante ti te bhikkhū bhaga⟨va⟩to ₍₃₎ praccasūṁsu ⟨|⟩ ᵉ⁾ bhagavā
eta⟨d a⟩voca ⟨|⟩ ᶠ⁾ katamo ca bhikkhave paḍiccasamu⟨p⟩pādo ||

> SN II.1.5–10: bhagavā etad avoca || paṭiccasamuppādam vo bhikkhave
> desissāmi || taṁ suṇātha sādhukaṁ manasikarotha bhāsissāmīti || evam
> bhante ti kho te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṁ || bhagavā etad avoca ||
> katamo ca bhikkhave paṭiccasamuppādo ||

>> **taṁ** Bᶜ Cᶜ Sᶜ; *tām* Eᶜ.

NaBr 2–3 (= GoBr₁ a2–4, GoBr_IV a2–4, KaPl 2–3, RaSl₁ a2–3, RaSl_II a2–4): (dhar̲m̲m̲ā̲n̲ā̲m̲) vo bhikṣava (°ācayaṁ ca deśa)₍₃₎yiṣyāmy apacayaṁ ca ⟨|⟩ tac [c̲h̲r̲n̲]uta s̲ā̲d̲h̲u̲ (ca) s̲u̲s̲t̲h̲u ca manasikuru[ta] ⟨bhā⟩ṣiṣy[e] ⟨|⟩ dha(rm̲m̲ā̲n̲ā̲m̲ āc̲a̲y̲a̲ḥ̲ k̲a̲t̲a̲m̲a̲ḥ̲) ⟨|⟩

   ⟨**bhā**⟩**ṣiṣy[e]** *[bhā]ṣiṣy[e]* Ghosh.

NS § 14.1–2: pratītyasamutpādaṁ vo bhikṣavo deśayiṣye | p̲r̲a̲t̲ī̲t̲y̲a̲s̲a̲m̲u̲t̲p̲a̲n̲n̲ā̲m̲ś̲ c̲a̲ d̲h̲a̲r̲m̲ā̲m̲ tāṁ ś̲r̲n̲u̲t̲a̲ s̲ā̲d̲h̲u̲ c̲a̲ s̲u̲s̲t̲h̲u manasikuruta bhāṣiṣye | pratītyasamutpādaḥ katamaḥ |

3.

a) ₍₃₎avijjāpraccayā saṁkkhārā || **b)** saṁkkhārapraccayaṁ viññāṇaṁ || **c)** viññāṇapraccayaṁ nāmarūpaṁ || **d)** nāmarūpapraccayā cchalāyatanaṁ || **e)** cchalāyatanapraccayā phphasso || **f)** ₍₄₎phphassapraccayā vetaṇā || **g)** vetaṇāpraccayā taṇhā || **h)** taṇhāpraccayā uvādānaṁ || **i)** uvādāṇapraccayā bhavo || **j)** bhavapraccayā jjāti || **k)** jjātipraccayā jarāmaraṇasokaparidevadukkhadomaṇassa-upāyāsā saṁmbha⟨va⟩nti ⟨|⟩ **l)** em etassa kevalassa dukkhakhandhassa samudayo hoti ||

SN II.1.10–18 (≈ PYU 45, 1–7): avijjāpaccayā b̲h̲i̲k̲k̲h̲a̲v̲e̲ saṅkhārā || s̲a̲ṅ̲k̲h̲ā̲r̲a̲p̲a̲c̲c̲a̲y̲ā̲   viññānaṁ || v̲i̲ñ̲ñ̲ā̲ṇ̲a̲p̲a̲c̲c̲a̲y̲ā̲   nāmarūpaṁ || nāmarūpapaccayā   s̲a̲l̲ā̲y̲a̲t̲a̲n̲a̲ṁ || s̲a̲l̲ā̲y̲a̲t̲a̲n̲a̲p̲a̲c̲c̲a̲y̲ā̲   phasso || phassapaccayā vedanā || vedanāpaccayā taṇhā || taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṁ || upādānapaccayā bhavo || bhavapaccayā jāti || jātipaccayā j̲a̲r̲ā̲m̲a̲r̲a̲ṇ̲a̲ṁ̲ sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsā sambhavanti || e̲v̲a̲m̲ etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti || a̲y̲a̲ṁ̲ v̲u̲c̲c̲a̲t̲i̲ b̲h̲i̲k̲k̲h̲a̲v̲e̲ p̲a̲ṭ̲i̲c̲c̲a̲s̲a̲m̲u̲p̲p̲ā̲d̲o̲ ||

   bhikkhave om. PYU 45. ✧ **viññāṇaṁ** *viññaṇa* PYU 45. This is. consistently has the spelling *viññaṇa-*. ✧ **taṇhāpaccayā** Bᶜ Cᶜ Sᶜ; *taṇhapaccayā* E ᵉ PYU 45. **-sokaparidevadukkhadomanass-upāyāsā** *sokaparidevita◇duḥ[kha]domanassūpāyāsa* PYU 45. ✧ **hoti … paṭiccasamuppādo** *hotī ti* PYU 45. ✧ **paṭiccasamuppādo** Bᶜ Cᶜ Sᶜ; *samuppādo* Eᶜ.

NaBr 4–8 (= GoBr₁ a4–b1, GoBr_IV a4–8, KaPl 3–7, RaSl₁ a3–8, RaSl_II a4–c2) : ₍₄₎y̲a̲d̲ u̲t̲ā̲s̲m̲i̲ṁ̲ s̲a̲t̲ī̲d̲a̲ṁ̲ b̲h̲a̲v̲a̲t̲y̲ a̲s̲y̲o̲t̲p̲ā̲[d]ā̲d̲ i̲d̲a̲m̲ u̲t̲p̲a̲d̲y̲a̲t̲e̲ y̲a̲d̲   u̲t̲ā̲vidyāpratyayāḥ saṁskā[r](āḥ saṁskārapratyayaṁ vijñanam vijñāna)₍₅₎pratyayaṁ nāmarūpaṁ n̲ā̲m̲a̲r̲ū̲p̲a̲p̲r̲a̲t̲y̲a̲y̲a̲[ṁ] ṣaḍāyatanaṁ s̲a̲ḍ̲ā̲y̲a̲t̲a̲n̲a̲p̲r̲a̲t̲y̲a̲y̲a̲ḥ sparśa ḥ s(parśapratyayā vedanā) ₍₆₎vedanā-p⟨r⟩atyayā tr̲ṣ̲nā t̲r̲ṣ̲n̲ā̲p̲r̲a̲t̲y̲a̲y̲a̲m̲ upādānaṁ [°u]pā[dā]napratyayo bhavaḥ

bhavapratyayā (jatiḥ jātipratyayā) ₍₇₎ {j}jarāmaraṇaśokaparidevaduḥkha-
daurmma[nasyo]pāyāsāḥ [saṁ]bhavanti ⟨|⟩ °evam asya k(evalasya mahato
duḥkha)₍₈₎skandhasya samudayo bhavati ⟨|⟩ °ayam ucyate dharmmāṇām
ācayaḥ ⟨||⟩

> **vedanāp⟨r⟩atyayā** *vedanapratyayā* Ghosh.　◆ **ṣaḍāyatana-**
> **pratyaya**ḥ **sparśa**ḥ KaPl, GoBr_IV; *ṣaḍāyatanapratyayāḥ sparśāḥ*
> NaBr.

4.

a) ₍₅₎a⟨vi⟩jjāṇirodhā saṁkkhāraṇirodho || **b)** sa(ṁ)kkhāraṇirodhā
viññāṇanirodho || **c)** viññāṇa-nirodhā {||} nāmarūpaṇirodho ||
d) nāmarūpaṇirodhā cchalāyataṇanirodho || **e)** cchalāyataṇa-
nirodhā phphassanirodho || **f)** phphassanirodhā vedaṇānirodho ||
g) ₍₆₎ vedaṇānirodhā taṇhānirodho || **h)** taṇhānirodhā upādāṇanirodho ||
i) upādāṇanirodhā bhavanirodho || **j)** bhavanirodhā jātinirodho ||
k) jātinirodhā ja₍₇₎rāmaraṇasokaparidevadukkhadomaṇassa-upāyāsā
niruddhyanti ⟨|⟩ **l)** em etassa kevalassa dukkhakhandhassa nirodho hoti ||

> SN II.1.19–2.8 (≈ PYU 45, 7–15): avijjāya tv eva asesavirāganirodhā
> saṅkhāranirodho || saṅkhāranirodhā viññāṇanirodho || viññāṇanirodhā
> nāmarūpanirodho || nāmarūpanirodhā saḷāyatananirodho || saḷāya-
> tananirodhā phassanirodho || phassanirodhā vedanānirodho ||
> vedanānirodhā taṇhānirodho || taṇhānirodhā upādānanirodho ||
> upādānanirodhā bhavanirodho || bhavanirodhā jātinirodho || jātinirodhā
> jarāmaraṇaṁ sokaparidevadukkhadomānāss-upāyāsā nirujjhanti || evam
> etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa nirodho hotīti ||

> > **jarāmaraṇaṁ sokaparidevadukkhadomanāssupāyāsā** *jarā-*
> > *maraṇasokaparidevitaduḥkhadomanassupāyāsa* PYU 45.　◆
> > **dukkhakkhandhassa** *duḥkhakkhandhassa* PYU 45.

> NaBr 8–14 (= GoBr_I b1–8, GoBr_IV a9–b3, KaPl 7–11, RaSl_I
> a8–b3, RaSl_II c2–d2): dharmmāṇām apacayaḥ (katamaḥ yad
> utāsmin) ₍₉₎ satīda[ṁ] na bhavaty asya nirodhād idam nirudhyate |
> yadutāvidyānirodhāt [saṁ]skāranirodhaḥ saṁskāra(nirodhād vijñāna-
> nirodhaḥ) ₍₁₀₎ vijñānanirodhān nāmarūpanirodhaḥ nāmarūpanirodhā[t·
> ṣa]ḍāyatananirodhaḥ ṣaḍāyatana(nirodhāt sparśa)[n](i)[rodhaḥ] ₍₁₁₎
> sparśanirodhād vedanānirodhaḥ vedanā[n]irodhāt tṛṣṇā⟨⟨[ni]rodhaḥ⟩⟩
> tṛṣṇānirodhād upādānanirodhaḥ °upādānanirodhā bha[va]₍₁₂₎nirodhaḥ
> bhavanirodhāj jātinirodhaḥ jātinirodhāj ja[rā]maraṇaśokaparideva-
> duḥkhadaurmmanasyopāyāsāḥ ₍₁₃₎ nirudhyante | °evam asya kevala⟨sya⟩

mahato duḥkha[ska](ndhasya) ni(rodho) bhavati ⟨|⟩ °ayam ̣ ̣ ̣ ucyate ⟨dharmmānām apacayaḥ |⟩

nāmarūpanirodhā[t· ṣa]ḍāyatananirodhaḥ *nāmarūpanirodhā[c cha]ḍāyatananirodhaḥ* Ghosh.

5.
a) (7) ayaṁ vuccati bhi(8)kkhave paḍiccasamuppādo || b) iti ho bhikkhave pana avaccamha ⟨|⟩ c) paḍiccasamuppād*aṁ* vvo bhikkhave desesaṁ ⟨|⟩ d) taṁ sādhu suṁsūṇā(9)dha maṇasī⟨ka⟩rodha bhāsissāmi suhavvo ti ⟨|⟩ e) iti pana avaccamha iman taṁ paḍiccā avacamhā | | | | —

SN II.2.9–10: idam avoca bhagavā || attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitam abhinandun ti ||

NaBr 14–15 (= GoBr b8–10, GoBr_IV b3–6, KaPl 11–12, RaSl_I b3–5, RaSl_II d2–4): dharmmānām vo bhiksa[va] (14) °ācayaṁ ca deśayisyāmy apacayaṁ *ca* ⟨|⟩ °iti [me] yad uktam [i]dam e⟨ta⟩[t] pratyuktaṁ ⟨|⟩ °idam avocad bhagavān ā[tta](15)manasas te ca bhiksavo bhagavato bhāsitam abhyanandan· ||

ca °iti GoBr_I, GoBr_IV, KaPl; *ceti iti* NaBr RaSl_I.

NS § 14.6 (cf. § 16.2): ayam ucyate pratītyasamutpādaḥ

3.3. Commentary

3.3.1 A Distinct Recension

The restored text presented above, when compared to the Indic parallels from the Theriya *Nidānasaṁyutta* and from a group of later Sanskrit inscriptions, evinces the intricate relationship between three distinct recensions. While illustrating, once again, the impossibility of reconstructing an original, "pre-sectarian" version[71] from the available witnesses, the Devnimori *sūtra* preserves several readings that may be considered older than the two other versions and have important

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[71] In this respect, de Jong's perceptive remarks (1974: 142) about the *Nidānasaṁyukta* tradition are, in my view, still valid.

historical value. While the Devnimori *sūtra* is closer to the received text of the *Nidānasaṁyutta* than to the Sanskrit parallel, it also agrees with the latter on a number of instances and significant differences may be observed between the two MIA versions in all five major articulations of the text.[72]

In § 1.c, a unique formulation may be found in the Devnimori version, which has the absolutive *āmantrettā* instead of a finite verb (P. *āmantresi*, Skt. *āmantrayate*). As far as I know, this is otherwise unknown in the Indic versions of the Śrāvastī *nidāna*.[73] Furthermore, *bhante* at the beginning of the second clause contrasts with *bhadante* in the Pāli parallel. The former, early, reading is supported by § 2.d, where both texts agree in reading *bhante*.[74]

In § 2, the third sentence *ta⟨ṁ⟩ sādhu suṁsūṇādha maṇasīkarodha bhāsissām(i) suhavvo* is also clearly distinct from the Pāli and Sanskrit parallels. Indeed, the Sanskrit has two alliterative adverbs (*sādhu ca suṣṭhu*) inserted between the two imperatives *śṛṇuta* and *manasikuruta*,[75] while the Pāli wording has the simpler *suṇātha sādhukaṁ manasikarotha*. In the Devnimori *sūtra*, the adverb *sādhu*

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[72] The heavily damaged Ratnagiri MIA citation inscription edited in Mitra 1983: 420–422, with pl. CCCXX–CCXXII, and then again in von Hinüber 1985a: 193–197 preserves a text corresponding to §§ 1–4 of the Devnimori text. Like the Devnimori inscription, it would deserve to be redocumented and reedited before its phraseology and language may be discussed in greater depth. The extant text as established by von Hinüber gives the impression of being linguistically and recensionally closer to the Pāli canonical version than to the Devnimori *sūtra*, although there are noticeable differences, some of which will be mentioned below.

[73] A developed Śrāvastī *nidāna* occurs, for instance, in two of the Gāndhārī **Ekottarikāgama*-type *sūtra*s edited by Mark Allon. The corresponding verb is *amatredi* (= Skt. *āmantrayati*). See Allon 2001: 225–232. For a detailed discussion of the *tatra ... āmantrayate* construction and its variants in Buddhist Sanskrit texts from Central Asia, see von Simson 1965: §§ 12.4–12; 14.1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 21; 17.2–3.

[74] See also von Hinüber 1985a: 190–191. Note that, in the formulation parallel to § 2.d, the Ratnagiri inscription (l. 7) has, according to von Hinüber (p. 193), *[sādhu] bhadaṁte ti*. On the coexistence of *bhadante* and *bhante* in Pāli discourses and its possible implication for textual history, see Anālayo 2011, vol. I: 22.

[75] von Simson 1965: § 2.12

precedes both imperative forms,[76] and *saṁsūṇādha* (whose reading is confirmed by the repetition of the phrase in § 5.d) is a genuine 2nd pl. imperative formed on the intensive stem.[77] The last word of § 2.c, *suhavvo*, is unique to the Devnimori recension. It is rather obscure, and von Hinüber hesitated between taking this term as dependent upon *bhāsissām(i)* or as part of the monks' answer.[78] That the first alternative is to be preferred seems confirmed by the second occurrence of the expression in § 5.d, between *bhāsissāmi* and a quotative *ti*. The only, admittedly tentative, explanation that comes to mind at present would be to take *suhavvo* as intended for *suhavo*, considering the already mentioned tendency for some consonants to be unnecessarily duplicated in the inscription. The adjective *suhava*, known to Apabhraṁśa and Mahārāṣṭrī,[79] could correspond to Skt. *subhaga.* In that case, this

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[76] This construction has a partial parallel (with *suṣṭhu* missing and *sādhu* preceding an imperative of √*śru*) in the canonical prose of the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins. The preamble of the *Avalokitasūtra*, as transmitted in the *Mahāvastu*, includes the following formula (Mvu[S] II.259.4–5/Mvu[M] II.327.2–3/Ms. Sa, fol. 196b4): *avalokitaṁ vo*[a] *bhikṣavo vyākaraṇan taṁ*[b] *śroṣyatha*[c] *sādhu vo*[d] *śṛṇotha*[e] *manasīkarotha*[f] *bhāṣiṣyāmi ca | * [a] *vo* Sa M, *bho* em. Sen.; [b] *taṁ* em. Sen., *va* em. M, *te* Sa; [c]*śroṣyatha* Sa M, *śṛṇotha* em. Sen.; [d]*vo* Sa M; *bho* Sen.; [e]*śṛṇotha* Sa M, *śṛṇotha* M; [f]*manasīkarotha* Sa M, *manasikarotha* Sen. This formula confirms that various recensions of the canonical trope lacked the word *suṣṭhu*. See also, among the Chinese versions of the *Pratītyasamutpādasūtra*, T. 124, II, 547b14–16: 汝當爲汝宣說緣起初差別義，汝應諦聽，極善思惟，吾今爲汝分別解說。

[77] von Hinüber (1985a: 191) hesitated between seeing in what he read *susūnodha* a mistake for *su⟨ṭṭhu⟩ sūnodha* or else as an intensive. He later (ÄMÜ § 417) favoured the second hypothesis and this is confirmed by the corrected reading *saṁsūṇādha*. Intensive formations are especially rare in Pāli, but *caṁkamati* (< √*kram*) provides a close parallel and possible model to the form under discussion. See also PG § 94; GPL § 556.

[78] von Hinüber 1985a: 192: "The answer of the monks to the request of the Buddha in line 2 probably starts with the obscure *suhavvo* or *ahavvo*, which does not occur in Pāli nor in Sanskrit, as the whole sentence has been dropped in the Samyuktāgama. It cannot be ruled out altogether that *suhavvo/ahavvo* is to be constructed with *bhāsissam* rather, as no *iti* marks the end of the Buddha's word. If it is spoken by the monks, the meaning should be 'very well indeed' (*eva* for Pāli *evaṁ*?), which, however, remains a highly conjectural assumption."

[79] PSM, s.v. *suhava*; GPL § 231.

would represent a rare epithet of the Buddha, semantically close to the common Bhagavant.

In § 3, one notes especially the syntactic heterogeneity of the *pratītyasamutpāda* list as transmitted in the Devnimori inscription: in § 3.b–c and possibly § 3.a the compound in -*praccaya* is a *bahuvrīhi* in the nominative, which agrees with the Sanskrit parallel and, for what is preserved of it, with the Ratnagiri MIA inscription (ll. 8–15); in § 3.d–k, however, the ablative -*praccayā* is consistently used, as in the Pāli version of the list. In addition, the Devnimori version lacks, like the Ratnagiri inscription (ll. 8, 14), both the voc. pl. form *bhikkhave* inserted at the beginning of the list, and the concluding sentence at the end.[80] The fact that the concluding sentence in the Pāli text is not paralleled by a similar sentence at the end of § 4 suggests that this might be a relatively late addition in the transmission process of the Theriya version. Finally, the Devnimori text of both § 3.k and § 4.k agrees with the Sanskrit version in taking *jarāmaraṇa* in composition with the ensuing *sokaparidevadukkhadomaṇassa-upāyāsā*, whereas the received canonical Pāli wording has *jarāmaraṇaṁ*.[81] Moreover, in § 4.a the Devnimori *sūtra* agrees with the Sanskrit parallel in the formulation of the first item, having the simpler *a⟨vi⟩jjāṇirodhā saṁkkhāraṇirodho* where the *Nidānasaṁyutta sutta* has the developed *avijjāya tv eva asesavirāganirodhā saṅkhāranirodho*.[82] Finally, the Devnimori *sūtra* stands alone in introducing the last sentence of both §§ 3 and 4 with *em*

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[80] See von Hinüber 1985a: 193. Note also that both these elements lack from the Khin Bha Mound gold foils (PYU 45, ll. 1, 7). This may be explained by the fact that that formula may have been extracted from the *bodhikathā* introducing the *Vinaya*'s *Mahāvagga*, or from another narrative context where these elements are also absent. See above, n. 67. Both elements are also absent the *Śrīmatībrāhmaṇīparipṛcchā*. See Melzer 2006: 269–270. The *Shier yuan jing* cited in the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā* likewise lacks the adress to monks, but concludes the twelvefold *nidāna* by a statement that "This is the truth of the arising [of suffering]" (是名集諦). See T. 201, ɪv, 258c27.

[81] Note that the Kunzeik slab has *jaramāmaraṇa-* in both instances of the formula. See PYU 40, ll. 8–12. The parallel to § 4.k preserved in PYU 45 (l. 13) also takes *jaramāmaraṇa-* as part of a larger compound. See also Falk 1997: 59.

[82] To be sure, the simpler wording of the first element of the *nirodha* chain is encountered elsewhere in Pāli *sutta*s. See for instance Ud 2.9; MN I.264.28–29; SN II.9–7, II.11.7–8.

etassa, where the Pāli parallel has *evam etassa* and the Sanskrit *evam asya*. The adverb *em*, not recognised by previous editors,[83] is virtually absent from Pāli texts.[84] However, it is known in Ārdhamāgadhī and Mahārāṣṭrī, and is attested in metrical environments in some Buddhist Sanskrit texts, generally combined with *eva*.[85] Interestingly, *em eva* is also attested in two verses of the Saṁmitīya *Dharmapada* (156c, 160c): as we shall see below, this is not the only parallel between the language of known Saṁmitīya texts and the Devnimori *sūtra*.

The final paragraph was especially poorly edited by Mehta and Chowdhary, to the extent that it was impossible to recognise in it the conclusion of a *sūtra*. To be sure, the phrasing is very different from both the Pāli and Sanskrit parallels, although it lies closer to the latter. It starts with a simple sentence, "this, monks, is called dependent arising" (*ayaṁ vuccati bhikkhave paḍiccasamuppādo*), serving as a joint conclusion to §§ 3 and 4. By contrast, the Sanskrit has a sentence at the end of each paragraph, presenting the first account as showing the "increasing of entities" (*dharmāṇām ācayaḥ*) and the second account as their "decreasing" (*apacaya*). The Pāli text has a very similar sentence to that of the Devnimori *sūtra* at the end of § 3; after § 4, it simply concludes the *sutta* by the typical affirmation "this the Bhagavant said" (*idam avoca bhagavā*), followed by a concluding formula showing the delightful impact that this discourse had on its audience. The same conclusion is also found in the Sanskrit *sūtra* but is absent from the Devnimori version. Instead, in § 5.b–e the Buddha refers in direct speech (using the 1st pl. aor. *avacamha*) to his earlier statement (§ 2.c–d) that he was about to teach the *pratītyasamutpāda* and that his monks should thus heed his discourse. Such a reference to what was announced earlier is also found in the Sanskrit parallel. Indeed, in that *sūtra* we also find the repetition in § 5 of a sentence already uttered in § 2, followed by *iti me yad uktam idam etat pratyuktam*, "that [topic, which has been] announced by me [earlier], this very [topic] has been

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[83] von Hinüber 1985a: 90.

[84] Note, however, that the conjectural emendation *em eva*, instead of the reading *evam eva* of manuscripts, has been suggested in several metrical environments as a solution to restore a metrical pattern. See CPD, s.v. *em-eva*, DP, s.v. *em*.

[85] GPL § 149; BHSD, s.v. *em*.

adressed."[86] This concluding statement seems to be paralleled by the very last sentence of the Devnimori *sūtra* (§ 5.e), the syntax of which remains however obscure to me at present.

    This short discussion should have made clear that the Devnimori *sūtra* represents a version of a *Pratītyasamutpādasūtra* in its own right. It does not correspond to a Theriya transmission close to that of the extant Pāli canon. Since it is also very different, in both language and phraseology, from the canonical traditions of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins and of the Mahāsāṅghika(-Lokottoravādin)s, the following examination of some significant phonological and morphological features of the *sūtra*'s language will attempt to test its consistency with the known fragments of the Saṃmitīya tradition.

3.3.2 A Language Close to that of Known Saṃmitīya Works

Let us consider first some of the phonological features of the Devnimori *sūtra*. In medial position, the language of the *sūtra* is marked by the general tendency, similar to Pāli and to the language of known Saṃmitīya texts, towards assimilation.[87] For instance, we note the assimilation with subsequent palatalization of dental in *dya* > *jja* (in *avijjā* §§ 3.a–b, 4.a–b) and *tya* > *cca* (e.g. in *praccaya-* § 3). In one instance, the conjunct *dhya* is restored (in *niruddhyanti*, § 4k), differently from Pāli and from SDhp and SMJ, where *dhya* > *jjha*.[88] However, such "hybrid" forms are not unknown in the language of Saṃmitīya texts: st. 397 of SDhp has for instance *aprāpya* alongside *prāpyato*.[89] Following the same general rule of assimilation, and again

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[86] A similar recapitulation is found in the *Pratītyasamutpādavibhaṅga-sūtra*, as transmitted in two bricks from Nalanda. See Chung 2017: 112, ll. 22–23; 124. See also NS § 16.18. It is likewise found in other *sūtra*s transmitted within a (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādin environment. See, for instance, NS § 15.13 (with n. 186); Dhammadinnā 2013: 133; Eltschinger 2013: 457. Finally, the phrase *iti mayā yad uktam idaṃ me tat pratyuktam* occurs repeatedly in several quotations from the *Mahānidānaparyāya* found in the section of the *Dharmaskandha* dealing with the *pratītyasamutpāda*. See DhS 34.17–18, 35.10–11, 43.8–9, 46.15–16, 60.11, 61.19–20, 67.1–2, 13, 68.10–11.

[87] ÄMÜ § 226; Hanisch 2006: 122–123.

[88] Hanisch 2006: 123.

[89] See also von Hinüber 1989: 364.

as in the above-mentioned languages, a conjunct formed by a sibilant and a mute is assimilated with subsequent aspiration: *stya > tthiya* (with additional insertion of a *svarabhakti* vowel) in *sāvatthiya(ṁ)* (§ 1.b); *ṣṇa > ṇha* in *taṇhā* (§§ 3.g–h, 4 g–h). This agrees with Pāli and SMJ (v. 160c, reading *taṇhā*), although SDhp has instead -*hna*- in this context.[90]

In a way that is strikingly similar to known Saṁmitīya texts and contrasts with Pāli, -*r*- is retained, in medial position, in combinations with *t*- (*āmantrettā*, § 1.c) and *p*- (*praccasūṁsū* §§ 1.c, 2.d; -*praccayā* § 3).[91] This western feature, already attested in the Girnar Rock Edicts of King Aśoka,[92] is also observed in SDhp and SMJ.[93] Very similar also to what we observed in both of these texts is the evolution *tra > ttha* in adverbs ending in *tra*: hence we read *tattha* (§ 1.c) against Skt./P. *tatra*.[94] As in Pāli and in SDhp and SMJ (where it coexists with *prati*-),[95] the spelling *paṭi*- is preserved,[96] the Devnimori *sūtra* being marked by the subsequent voicing of the cerebral (*paṭi- > *paḍi*-, spelt *padi*-). In both Saṁmitīya verse texts, intervocalic voicing *ṭ > ḍ* is incidentally attested.[97]

The voicing of consonants in medial position also affects the aspirated dental *tha*: hence *aṇādhapiṇḍika*- (§ 1.b). The development *tha > dha* also characterises all 2nd pl. imperative endings of the *sūtra* (§§ 2.c, 5d). In that respect, the Devnimori *sūtra* displays a more advanced degree of lenition than canonical Pāli and the language of known Saṁmitīya sources, although such a voicing is still marginally attested in SDhp (e.g. v. 99b *poṣadha*-, v. 362a *vanadha*-).[98] This

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[90] Hanisch 2006: 132.

[91] See already von Hinüber 1989: 363–364.

[92] Bloch 1950: 54.

[93] Hanisch 2006: 122, 131.

[94] ÄMÜ § 258; Hanisch 2006: 123. See also, for instance, SDhp vv. 141d, 184b, 254c.

[95] Hanisch 2006: 131. See also KeS (l. 3 and *passim*): -*pāṭihera*-.

[96] See also, with reference to the Bhaikṣukī MIA inscriptions from Northeast Bihar and Northwest Bengal, Namakiwa 1993: 156; 2011: 217–227.

[97] SDhp v. 127b: *aheḍayaṁ*; SMJ v. 199a: *jaḍilo*, corrected into *jaṭilo*.

[98] Mizuno 1982: 25; Norman 1989: 9. Dimitrov recently explained (2020: 135) *vanadha*-, alternating with *vanatha*- (st. 413), as the result of a purely graphic

greater degree of lenition is also observed in the monosyllabic *hu* (§ 1.e) and *ho* (§ 5.b), for Pāli *kho* and Sanskrit *khalu*.[99] In the Saṃmitīya version of the *Kevaṭṭasūtra, *khu* coexists with *kho* (KeS ll. 3, 4).

Like Pāli texts, the Devnimori *sūtra* is characterised by the reduction—or at least the lack of graphic differentiation—of the three sibilants to dental *s*. Such a reduction is also attested in SMJ, but not throughout.[100] In known canonical texts of the Saṃmitīyas, the three sibilants are however attested. Yet the dental *s* is preserved in some instances, as for instance in *sāvaka*- (KeS, l. 3), which aligns with *sāvatthī*- (§ 1.b) in the Devnimori *sūtra*.[101] Finally, there is some faint indication that the law of two morae was not systematically enforced in the transmission of the *sūtra* under examination. This is suggested, in particular, by the spelling *paḍīccasamūpāda*- (§ 2.b), alongside *paḍicca*- (§ 2.f, 5a, c). This tendency has also been repeatedly observed in Saṃmitīya sources.[102]

Several morphological features illustrate the Devnimori *sūtra*'s agreement with both canonical Pāli and the language of known Saṃmitīya texts. These can be mentioned briefly for their pervasiveness: gen. sg. of *a*-stems in -*ssa* (e.g. *kevalassa*, §§ 3.l, 4.l); abl. sg. in -*ā* (e.g. *nirodhā*, § 4); nom./acc. pl. of *u*-stems in -*ū* (*bhikkhū*, § 1.c–d). The nom. sg. of -*vant* stems is -*vā*, with *bhagavā*, as in Pāli but also in SDhp (e.g. v. 290d) and in KeS (ll. 1, 4). In agreement with Pāli but also with SDhp and SMJ, the acc. sg. of the demonstrative pronoun is *taṁ* (§§ 2.c, 5.d–e), while the nom. pl. of this pronoun is *te* (§§ 1.c, 2.d).[103] More significant is the consistent use of the "eastern" voc. pl. form *bhikkhave* (§§ 1.c, 2.b, 5.b), for it is consistent with the extant canonical prose of known Saṃmitīya *sūtra*s (KeS l. 3, ŚāPhS l. 5). The

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confusion between *tha* and *dha* in the exemplar of SDhp, which he argues was written in Bhaikṣukī/Saindhavī script. To me, it seems equally possible to explain these forms as a residual voicing of the aspirated dental.

[99] In several Gāndhārī texts as well the two forms *hu* and *ho* coexist. See DG, s.v. *kho*. For the common form *hu* in MIA, see GPL § 93; BHSD, s.v. *khu*.

[100] Hanisch 2006: 121.

[101] See also SMJ 30d: *sāvatthī*. Compare the begining of the possible parallel to the *Tevijjasutta* (Dimitrov 2020: 187), l. 6: *evaṁ me śu(taṁ)*.

[102] von Hinüber 1989: 363; Hanisch 2006: 121; Dimitrov 2020: 183.

[103] Hanisch 2006: 124

form *bhikkhave* is also frequent in canonical Pāli, where it coexists, however, with the "western" *bhikkhavo*.[104]

Turning to verbal morphology, the Devnimori *sūtra* preserves several forms that are found both in Pāli and in known Saṃmitīya texts: hence the 3rd sg. present *hoti* (§§ 3.l, 4.l),[105] and the 3rd sg. present passive *vuccati* (§ 5.a).[106] Likewise, the 3rd sg. aor. *avoca* (§ 2.a, e) corresponds to Pāli and is also attested in Saṃmitīya canonical prose (e.g. KeS, l. 2). The 1st pl. of the same verb is attested thrice in § 5, twice as *avaccamha* (understand: *avacamha*) and once as *avacamhā*.[107] While not attested so far in Saṃmitīya sources, it differs from canonical Pāli, where the 1st pl. *avocamhă* coexists with the 2nd pl. *avacuttha*.[108] In §§ 2.b and 5.c, the form *deses(s)aṃ*, associated with *bhāsissāmi*, is a 1st sg. future in -*aṃ*. Although futures in -*aṃ* are known in Pāli, *desessaṃ* is unknown, and the Pāli parallel to § 2.b has *desissāmi*.[109] The form preserved in the Devnimori reliquary inscription is reminiscent of *deśeṣyaṃ* in Buddhist Sanskrit.[110] Interestingly, futures in -*aṃ* are also known in the canonical prose of the Saṃmitīyas (AcMS l. 4: *parivasiśśaṃ*, cp. P. *parivasissāmi*).[111] Another verbal form specific to the Devnimori *sūtra* is the 3rd pl. aor. *praccasūṃsū(ṃ)* (§§ 1.c, 2.d). This compares to Pāli *paccasosuṃ* (Skt. *pratyaśrauṣuḥ*) and brings to mind formations such as *agamiṃsu* (known alongside *agamisuṃ*).[112] In

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[104] See Lüders 1954: 13, § 1; ÄMÜ § 332; Anālayo 2011, vol. I: 21–22 with n. 131.

[105] See e.g. SDhp vv. 239d, 246b, 288c; KeS ll. 7–8, AcMS l. 1. The form *hoti* is also marginally attested in the language of the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādins, where *bhoti* is much more common. See BHSD, s.v.

[106] This form is also found in SDhp vv. 53d, 133d, 147d, 184d, and 289d. It is also common in the language of the Mahāsaṅghika-Lokottaravādins. See BHSG § 2.51.

[107] The lengthening of the final vowel of this form may be due to an implied *ti*, since it is the last word of the citation inscription.

[108] See PG § 73, with the further note (p. 461, n. 1) that *avacumhă*, although known to Pāli is, like *avocuttha*, not attested in canonical texts.

[109] Note that the pericope is attested elsewhere in the Pāli canon with *desessāmi* (e.g. in MN I.1.8.). See PG § 79.14.

[110] BHSG, § 31.31.

[111] For futures in -*āmi* in Saṃmitīya Prakrit, see Hanisch 2006: 133.

[112] von Hinüber 1985a: 191–192.

known Saṁmitīya texts, aorists in *-ṁsu* are also found (SDhp v. 33b: *brahmeṁsu*; SMJ v. 87c: *vicitteṁsu*).[113] Finally, the already discussed form *amantrettā* (§ 1.c), distinct from Pāli absolutives in *-tvā*, is standard in SDhp and SMJ,[114] but also in the **Kevaṭṭasūtra* (KeS l. 1: *upasaṁkrāmittā*, *vandittā*), and the **Śāmaññaphalasūtra* (ŚPhS l. 2: *vandittā*; l. 3: *pradākhīṇīkattā*).[115]

Concluding Remarks

Besides establishing an improved edition of the Devnimori *sūtra*, the foregoing discussion undertook to locate it more precisely on the map of Buddhist scriptures. The consideration of the religious landscape of Northern Gujarat suggests that the community active in 4ᵗʰ/5ᵗʰ-century Devnimori operated in a context dominated by the Saṁmitīyas. Since in at least one contemporary site where this religious order was certainly established, so-called "Pāli" or "Hybrid Pāli" citation inscriptions were also found, and in light of newly available information on the canonical language of the Saṁmitīyas, I propose to reinterpret the Devnimori *sūtra* as an early witness of that school's canonical transmission.

The comparison of its phraseology with that of its two closest Indic parallels shows that the *sūtra* quoted in full on the Devnimori reliquary represents a clearly distinct canonical recension. The wording adopted in this *sūtra* differs also from that of known scriptures of the Mahāsāṅghikas and (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins. These *nikāya*s would otherwise be the most likely candidates among the lineages possibly established in Northern Gujarat at the time. The specificity of both the recension and the language of the Devnimori *sūtra* is thus consistent with the hypothesis that we may be dealing with a fragment of the Saṁmitīya canon. My brief survey of the language of the Devnimori *sūtra* further situates it in the landscape of Buddhist Middle Indo-Aryan: while close to canonical

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[113] For aorists in *-ensu(ḥ)/-eṁsu(ḥ)* in the language of the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins, see Tournier 2017: 431.

[114] Hanisch 2006: 125, 134.

[115] This absolutive ending, typical of Ardhamāgadhī (ÄMÜ § 498), is also found marginally in the Vinaya of the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins. See Karashima 2006: 163–164; Tournier 2017: 431.

Pāli, it lays closer still to MIA known from Saṁmitīya scriptures transmitted in later manuscripts. Most linguistic differences observed between the Devnimori *sūtra* and canonical Saṁmitīya works—e.g., a greater degree of lenition of consonants, and a reduction of the three sibilants into one—point to a lesser degree of Sanskritization of the language of the inscription, observable in particular at the phonological level. These differences could be accounted for by the temporal lag existing between our witnesses. Indeed, the type of Middle Indo-Aryan adopted by the Saṁmitīyas[116] was not a frozen language, and it is likely that the scriptures transmitted by this tradition were exposed to an ongoing process of Sanskritization between the 4th century and the 12th/13th century, when the extant manuscripts were copied. This may be compared to the linguistic evolution of texts of the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins. Indeed, the earliest among the witnesses from the tradition are 4th-century fragments in Northwestern Gupta Brāhmī recovered from the Bāmiyān valley. These display rather clearly a less Sanskritized linguistic shape than the 12th/13th century manuscripts copied in Magadha.[117]

In the absence of a clear *nikāya* label proving that, in the 4th/5th century, the site of Devnimori was controlled by a Saṁmitīya community, we cannot entirely rule out that the **Paḍiccasamuppādasūtra* transmitted there reflects, in fact, a little-known tradition whose scriptures are not extant in Indic languages (for instance, the Kāśyapīyas or the Mahīśāsakas). At present, and until more information is available on other canonical transmissions that might supposedly be closer still to the MIA of the Devnimori reliquary than the later Saṁmitīya works, the hypothesis that this inscription represents the earliest extant *sūtra* of that tradition available in an Indic language should be considered seriously.

[116] Dimitrov has recently proposed (2020: 155–161) that not only the script favoured by some Saṁmitīya communities, but also the language labelled "Saṁmitīya Prakrit" by Skilling was in fact called, by Saṁmitīya communities themselves, "Saindhavī." In my opinion, the argument is inconclusive, being primarily based on Dimitrov's above-mentioned problematic assumption that the Saṁmitīyas' place of origin was Sindh (see above, n. 33), and being further supported by very circumstantial evidence.

[117] See, for instance Karashima 2006: 163–164; Tournier 2017: 63, n. 249. The matter remains to be systematically studied.

This may in turn invite us to reconsider with fresh eyes other citation inscriptions referred to as Pāli or "Hybrid Pāli" compositions, but which significantly differ from received Pāli sources both linguistically and recensionnally. One last example, which was brought to my attention as I was bringing this study to a close, deserves to be briefly considered here, namely a slab inscription from cave II in Bagh.[118] This inscription was found in 1991 by ASI officers during a clearing of the rubble above cave II, about ten metres away from the second Bagh copper-plate charter of Subandhu.[119] It is engraved in a similar, but slightly later, script than the Devnimori inscription and may be thus tentatively dated to the 5ᵗʰ/6ᵗʰ century. Its seven lines of text consist in the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* (ll. 1–3) followed by an extract of a *sūtra* presenting the four noble(s') truths (ll. 3–7). The inscription was first edited by J. Prakash, but it deserves to be re-read (fig. 13):[120]

I.

(1) ye dhammā hetuprabhavā tesaṁ hetuṁ tathā (2)ga[t]o °avaca tesaṁ ca yo [ṇ]ir[o]dh[o] °evaṁvādī (3) mahassamaṇ[o ti] ‖

cattāri °im(ā)⟨ṇi⟩ bh(i)kkhave (4) °ayirasaccāṇi yāṇi mayā sa°iṁ °abhiña ca sacchika(5)ttā °abhisaṁbuddhāṇi ⟨|⟩ katam[ā]ṇi [ca]ttāri ⟨|⟩ dukkhaṁ °ayirasacca[ṁ] (6) dukkhasamu[da]y[o] dukkhaṇirodho dukkha[ṇ]irodhag[ā]miṇi paḍipadā (7)°ayirasa[c](c)[aṁ] ◊ °imāṇi h[o] bhikkhave cattāri °airasaccā[ṇi] ⟨‖⟩

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[118] The inscription was first edited in Prakash 2003: 138. I am very grateful to Peter Skilling for attracting my attention to this inscription. Not only did he generously share with me a set of high-quality images allowing me to prepare a new edition of the text; he also shared his notes and encouraged me to publish my findings.

[119] On the copper-plate inscription, see von Hinüber 2018. I owe the information regarding the findspot of the stone inscription to Peter Skilling, who himself interviewed (on 23 March 2016) D.S. Sood, one of the two ASI officers who found the inscription. The volume of *Indian Archaeology — A Review* for the year 1991–1992 only mentions the discovery of the copper plate (p. 116). According to the information provided to P. Skilling by the ASI, the slab measures h. 17 × w. 30.3 × 6.1 cm. Compare the information provided in Prakash 2003: 136.

[120] Variant readings by Prakash 2003: 138 (Pr) are recorded in the apparatus.

2. °avaca *°avacat* Pr. ✧ **[ṇ]ir[o]dh[o]** *nirodho* Pr. ✧ **3. mahassamaṇ[o ti] ||** *mhāssamaṇa* Pr. ✧ **cattāri °im(ā)⟨ṇi⟩ bh(i)kkhave** *[rābhari] cattāri ima .. kkrama* Pr. ✧ **4. yāṇi mayā sa°iṁ** *[pāṇa māsā] se °i* Pr. ✧ **°abhiña** Understand *abhi(ñ)ñā.* ✧ **4–5. ca sacchikattā** *vasacchi kutta* Pr. ✧ **5. katam[ā]ṇi** *kata maṇi* Pr. ✧ **dukkhaṁ °ayirasacca[ṁ]** *dukkha ayira savva* Pr. ✧ **6. dukkhasamu[da]y[o]** *dukkha samudaya* Pr. ✧ **dukkhaṇirodho dukkha[ṇ]irodhagāmiṇi** *dukkha nirodho dukkhanirodhogāmiṇi* Pr. Understand *-gāmiṇī.* ✧ **paḍipadā** *paḍipa[da]* Pr. ✧ **°ayirasa[c](c)[aṁ]** *ayīra saccā[ṇi]* Pr. ✧ **imāṇi h[o] bhikkhave** *imāṇi bhikkhuve* Pr. ✧ **°airasaccā[ṇi]** *vaira saccāṇi .* Pr.

Its language, described as "Pāli greatly influenced by Sanskrit" by its first editor,[121] is strikingly similar to that of the Devnimori inscription and, to a lesser extent, to later Saṁmitīya sources. In particular, it is worth noticing the voc. pl. *bhikkhave* (ll. 3, 7), the absolutive in *-ttā* (ll. 4–5 *sacchikattā*), and the retention of *-r-* with *p-* (l. 1 *hetuprabhavā*). Like in the Devnimori reliquary, the three sibilants are reduced to dental *sa* (l. 3 *mahassamaṇo*), and a greater degree of lenition than the language of known Saṁmitīya works may be observed in the spelling of the prefix *paḍi-* (l. 6 *paḍipadā*) and in the enclitic particle *ho* (l. 7). The adverb *saïṁ* (l. 4), known in Apabhraṁśa and corresponding to P. *sayaṁ,* confirms this advanced degree of lenition,[122] as does *aira-*, which must stand for *aïra-* (Skt. *ārya*). The latter coexists with *ayira-*, occuring three times, which is itself commonly encountered in Saṁmitiya sources.[123]

The recension of the *sūtra* extract quoted in ll. 3–7 also significantly differs from the received Pāli *sutta*s presenting the four noble(s') truths.[124] Most strikingly, the Pāli phrase partially corresponding to *yāṇi mayā saïṁ abhiñā ca sacchikattā abhisaṁbuddhāṇi* "to which I have fully Awoken, having directly realised them by myself through higher knowledge," namely *mayā sayaṁ abhiññā sacchikatvā paveditāni,* does not appear in the definition of the four noble(s') truths in the

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[121] Prakash 2003: 138.
[122] See PSM, s.v.
[123] See SDhp v. 69a, 218c; Sferra 2020: 662, n. 53.
[124] See above, n. 46.

received scriptures of the Theriyas.[125] It is moreover significant that the noble(s') truths' quote in the Bagh inscription is preceded by the *pratītyasamutpādagāthā* in the *avaca* recension, which is commonly adopted in sources of known Saṁmitīya background. There are thus both linguistic and recensional grounds to suspect that the scriptures of that very milieu provided the pool from which the text of the Bagh inscription was composed. As far as I know, no *nikāya* affiliation is known for the monastic communities occupying the monasteries known so far in the Bagh area, and the two copper plates of King Subandhu found *in situ* do not appear to provide clear hints in that respect. Yet Bagh, located in Avanti, *ca* 135 km as the crow flies Southeast of Ujjayinī, belongs, like Devnimori, to a broader landscape that was at the time dominated by the Saṁmitīyas. One may thus hypothesize that this inscription too preserves fragments of that tradition's canon. It is to be hoped that more evidence will emerge allowing to substantiate the hypotheses developed in the foregoing discussion and to further reconstruct the fragmented history of a major Buddhist denomination.

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[125] This phrase occurs, for instance, in the definition of the four types of actions realised by the Buddha, in the *Kukkuravatika-sutta* of the *Majjhimanikāya*, and in seven short *sutta*s of the *Aṅguttaranikāya*s. See MN I.389.21–22, 391.9–10; AN II.230.16–237.14. See also Anālayo 2011, vol. I: 333 with n. 118. Note that this phrase is also lacking from the citation inscription from Sarnath discussed above (p. 411), which therefore appears recensionnally closer to the received Pāli pericope.

References

Abbreviations: Primary Sources and Reference Works

NB: References to Pāli texts are to the editions of the Pali Text Society, using the abbreviation system set up in Helmert Smith's "Epilegomena" of *CPD*, vol. I, 5*–15*.

AcMS — Saṃmitīya *Acelakamahāsūtra.* See Dimitrov 2020: 187, ll. 1–6.

ÄMÜ — Oskar von Hinüber. 2001. *Das ältere Mittelindisch im Überblick*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

BHSD, BHSG — Edgerton, Franklin. 1953. *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. 2 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press.

CPD — V. Trencker et al. 1924–2011. *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, vols. I, fasc. 1–III, fasc. 8. Copenhagen: Royal Danish Academy of Science and Letters; Bristol: Pali Text Society.

D — *sDe dge bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur*. Barber, A.W. 1991. *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Taipei Edition*. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc.

DG — Stefan Baums and Andrew Glass. 2002–. *A Dictionary of Gāndhārī*. Online publication: https://gandhari.org/dictionary.

Divy — E.B. Cowell and R.A. Neil. 1886. *The Divyâvadâna: A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DP — Cone, Margaret. 2001–2020. *A Dictionary of Pāli*. 3 vols. Oxford; Bristol: Pali Text Society.

DhS — Siglinde Dietz. 1984. *Fragmente des Dharmaskandha: Ein Abhidharma-Text in Sanskrit aus Gilgit*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

GoBr$_I$ — Gopalpur Brick, no. I (Ashmolean museum, acc. no. EAX.405). See Smith and Hoey 1897: 103.

GoBr$_{IV}$ — Gopalpur Brick, no. IV (Ashmolean museum, acc. no. EAX.402b). Unpublished inscription.

GPL — Richard Pischel. 1981. *Grammar of the Prākrit Languages*. Translated by Subhadra Jhā. 2nd revised edition. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

IBH — Tsukamoto Keishō 塚本啓祥. 1996–2003. *Indo Bukkyō himei no kenkyū*インド仏教碑銘の研究 / *A Comprehensive Study of the Indian Buddhist Inscriptions*. 3 vols. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten平楽寺書店.

IEG — Dinesh Chandra Sircar. 1966. *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

KaPl — Kasia Copper Plate. See Pargiter 1910–1911.

KeS — Saṃmitīya **Kevaṭṭasūtra*. See Dimitrov 2020: 167.

Mvu(M) — Katarzyna Marciniak. 2019. *The Mahāvastu: A New Edition. Volume III*. Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University. For the only palm-leaf manuscript Sa, see Yuyama 2001, vol. I.

Mvu(S) — Émile Senart. 1882. *Le Mahâvastu. Texte sanscrit publié pour la première fois et accompagné d'introductions et d'un commentaire*. 3 vols. Paris: Imprimerie nationale.

NaBr — Nalanda Brick. See Ghosh 1937–1938.

NS — Jin-il Chung and Takamishi Fukita. 2020. *A New Edition of the First 25 Sūtras of the Nidānasaṃyukta*. Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin.

PG — Thomas Oberlies. 2019. *Pāli Grammar: The Language of the Canonical Texts of Theravāda Buddhism*. 2 vols. Bristol: Pali Text Society.

PYU — Arlo Griffiths, Julian Wheatley, and Marc Miyake. 2017—. *Corpus of Pyu Inscriptions*. Online publication: http://hisoma. huma-num.fr/exist/apps/pyu/works/.

PSED — Vaman Shivaram Apte. 1957. *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Revised and Enlarged edition by P.K. Gode and C.G. Karve. Poona: Prasad Prakasham.

PSM — H.T. Seth. 1963. *Pāia-sadda-mahaṇṇavo. A Comprehensive Prakrit-Hindi Dictionary with Sanskrit Equivalents, Quotations and Complete References*. Varanasi: Tara Printing works.

Rām — G.H. Bhatt et al. 1960–1975. *The Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa. Critical Edition*. 7 vols. Baroda: Oriental Institute.

ŚāPhS — Saṃmitīya **Śāmaññaphalasūtra*. See Tournier and Sferra forthcoming.

SBhv — Raniero Gnoli, with the assistance of T. Venkatacharya. 1977–1978. *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu: Being the*

17ᵗʰ and Last section of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin. 2 vols. Roma: Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.

SDhp — Saṃmitīya *Dharmapada* (= so-called "Patna *Dharmapada*"). See Cone 1989.

SMJ — *Maṇicūḍajātaka* by Sarvarakṣita. See Hanisch 2008.

T. — Takakusu Junjirō 高楠 順次郎, Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊 海旭, and Ono Gemyo 小野 玄妙. 1924–1934. *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新脩 大藏經 / *The Tripiṭaka in Chinese*. 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai 大正一切經刊行會.

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High resolution images

Fig. 1 — General view of the Devnimori casket.

Fig. 2 — Bottom of the cylindrical box, Devnimori casket.

Fig. 3 — Top of the lid of the Devnimori casket.

Fig. 4 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 5 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 6 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 7 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 8 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 9 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 10 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.

Fig. 11 — Details of the rim of the Devnimori reliquary's lid.
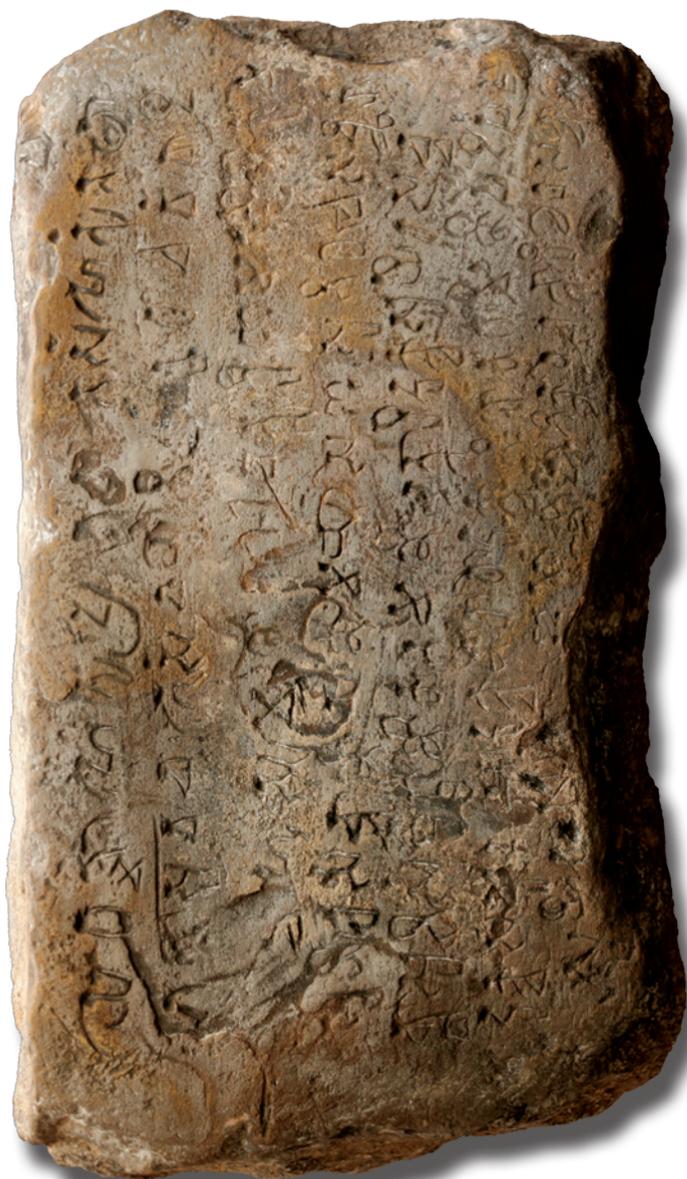
Fig. 12 — Back of the lid of the Devnimori casket.

Fig. 13 — Inscribes slab found above Bagh's cave II
(photo Peter Skilling; courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India).

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