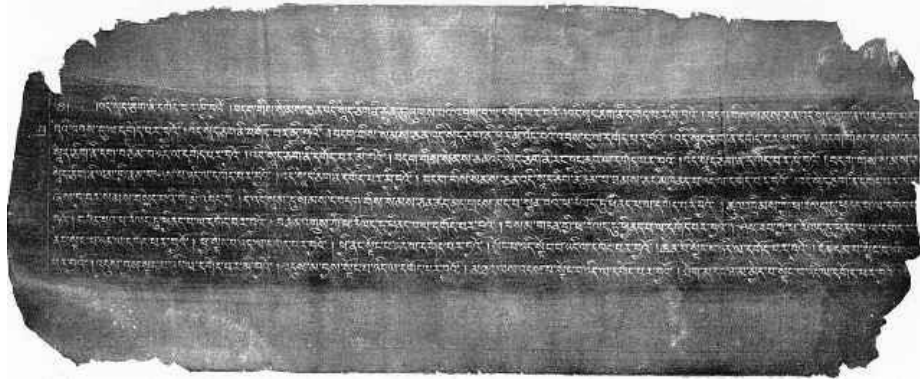


A MYSTERIOUS MANUSCRIPT

Johan van Manen

Johan van Manen was born in Holland in 1877. He joined the Theosophical Society in that country in 1895. In 1897 he acted as a translator for H. S. Olcott. During the period of 1904 and 1906 he was the Honorary Secretary of the first Convention of the Federation of European Sections of the TS. He came to Adyar in February 1909 with C. W. Leadbeater. From 1909 to 1916 he was the Assistant Director of the Adyar Library and helped to furnish it with rare manuscripts. Later on he was the General Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society in Bengal and the editor of its Journal. He passed away in 1943. The article reproduced here was originally published in The Theosophist, January 1911. (Source: The Theosophical Year Book, 1937)



A Mysterious Manuscript (Source: *The Theosophist*, January 1911)

The Manuscripts in the Adyar Library

The collection of manuscripts in the Adyar Library is really unique in its Sanskrit department. It contains already over twelve thousand works – of which several indeed are duplicates of the same treatise, but of which, on the other hand, a considerable number are unique, not known to exist in any other library, and, lastly of which a great number (if not unique) are of great rarity. Besides these Sanskrit Manuscripts there are also several others, the presence of which in our collections is perhaps less known to the public. We have, for instance, a magnificent copy of the Pāli Tripitaka and a small number of other Pāli works, and further some Telugu, Tamil, Chinese, Javanese and Tibetan Manuscripts. Besides these, again, we possess a considerable number of Japanese and Chinese prints (mostly Buddhistic) both in xylography and typography, amongst which are the Tokyo edition of the Chinese Tripitaka, and also, the late King of Siam's printed edition of the Pāli Tripitaka in Siamese characters.

Our library being a young one with very limited financial means at its disposal, some of the works in languages other than Sanskrit have not yet been adequately determined and catalogued, though it may be added that at least the Chinese Tripitaka has now been duly arranged by Mr. Spurgeon Medhurst and ourselves, and that we have also determined the character of the few bundles of Tibetan Manuscripts in our possession. The latter contain nothing of a startling nature. There is, we may say of course, a copy of the Vajracchedika or Rdo-rje-gchod-pa; then there are some minor treatises relating to Padmasambhava and similar matters, important neither in contents nor extent, nor in perfection of the writer's art. We may perhaps add that we ourselves possess a small collection of Tibetan blockprints, comprising some 2,700 leaves, and containing amongst other matter an Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāparamitā, two different editions of Milaraspa (each containing the two works), and two different Padma Thangyigs (both differing from the texts made known by Grünwedel and Schlagintweit).

A Solitary Leaf of a Tibetan Manuscript

Besides the Manuscripts mentioned above there is one other Tibetan production in our collection, a solitary leaf of what is evidently a big book. It is a splendid specimen of Tibetan calligraphy, though the leaf itself has not come to us in an altogether undamaged condition. On both outer ends it shows clear traces of being singed or burned, and on the right hand side perhaps an inch has broken off, the material having become brittle when undergoing its fire-ordeal. The text is only slightly interfered with, at the most the width of one or two letters having been lost in this way; and these lost letters, owing to the nature of the text written on the leaf, can be easily restored, as this text consists chiefly of a series of formulae which occur over and over again with only a slight verbal change in a single expression or group of expressions. The material of the leaf is some tough and leathery paper, colored dark blue and polished on that part of it on which the text has been written. The letters, beautifully and clearly executed, about a quarter of an inch high (pa, ba and the like), do not show any difference from the modern form and are written or painted in the well-known shiny, yellowish-golden color which lends such beauty to Tibetan writings of that class. The leaf contains eight lines on each side; it measures exactly ten inches high and in its present condition nearly 24½ inches long, but its length may have originally been 1 to 1½ inches more. Our reproduction on a scale of a little under one-third gives a clear idea of the state and appearance of the leaf on its recto side.

How the Manuscript Came to Us

The history of the arrival of the Manuscript in the Adyar Library is already romantic in itself. Dr. [Otto] Schrader, the Director, had, soon after his first arrival in India, taken care of a young Brahmana orphan to whom he intended to give a good education with a view of qualifying him for secretarial work of some kind. After having been placed in the Central Hindu College, the lad preferred, however, to lead the parivrājaka life, went north and was subsequently only occasionally heard of. He seems to have wandered through Nepal amongst other places, and in November, 1908, Dr. Schrader received the late tidings from him. This news was contained in a letter (bearing the postmark of Askote, Almora, November 17th, 1908), giving some particulars about his present condition and asking for a determination of the nature and contents of the Manuscript leaf, sent by the same mail per book-post under separate cover. He stated that a friend he had met possessed a collection of such leaves, of which this was one, but did not know what it was, and would be glad to be enlightened on the point. With characteristic forgetfulness he neglected to add his present address, so that no answer could be sent; and after several months Dr. Schrader, unhappily, destroyed the letter, the precise contents of which he is now no longer able to recall. How this manuscript came into the possession of the youthful brahmachārin's friend remains thus an unsolved problem. Let its solution be as it may;

the fact remains that we are in the possession of this tantalizing knowledge that somewhere up north someone possesses the remainder of this Manuscript, not knowing its unique value, which am going to demonstrate further on, perhaps not taking due care of it, whilst we are impotent to rescue it from oblivion and possible decay or disappearance.

The Unique Character of the Manuscript

When Dr. Schrader, on a mere chance occasion, during the autumn of 1909, submitted the Manuscript to me I at once recognised it as something special and remarkable. On first sight I found its orthography quite peculiar showing the ancient da-drag and the subjoined vowel, ya between the initial m and the vowels e and i in full use. Most readers will exclaim: “What are these da-drag and subjoined ya?” They represent ancient forms of Tibetan orthography, which, according to modern authorities, ceased to be employed before about the year 800 of our era. It will be seen immediately how important that single leaf at once became by this discovery. For either we have before us a modern copy artificially reproducing the obsolete orthography – and an example of such a procedure is as yet absolutely unknown – or we have a genuine old Manuscript dating from within a century or two of the introduction of writing into Tibet, which took place in about 640 A.D. It would bring us into contact with the work of the earliest translators from Sanskrit into Tibetan, and would in another way be of importance as indicating the survival at the present day of bulky specimens of the old writing, examples of which – in a very limited number – have until now only been found buried under the devastating but preservative sands of Turkestan.

What hopes for further discovery this possibility evokes it is needless to say. Let us mention only the importance such discoveries would have for the intricate history and genetic development of the Buddhist writings. Textual criticism could not hope for a better find. Little wonder, then, that I remained perplexed as to the truth of the matter, and could not easily pass over the fact that the appearance of our leaf is fresh, that it does not clearly indicate any hoary past, and does not lend force to the theory that this leaf is more than a thousand years old. And yet the cold Tibetan climate is a good preserver, better than that of tropical India with its moisture, its heat and its devouring insects.

To What Work the Leaf Belongs

In attempting to solve the above puzzle the first step to take is evidently to determine to what work this isolated leaf belongs. Unhappily there is no marginal short title on the leaf, such as is found in almost all xylographs; there is no chapter closing or beginning, no colophon or other indication which might give it a clue. The only thing is to judge the contents as such. There is however one indication of a secondary nature, and that is the page number. The leaf is marked on its recto side ga x x go-bshi or in other words Vol. III, page 94. Taking the volume number as applying to a single work – seeing that this is a Manuscript, and not a printed work, in which separate treatises are often included in a number of volumes, and accordingly marked with a volume number which has no reference to their individual length – the whole work must be of considerable bulk.

Now a perusal of the contents showed the enumeration of the various well-known series of the four (five) fruits or paths (srotāpatti, etc., including rang-byang-chhub or pratyekabuddha as the fifth), the six parāmitās, the eighteen shūnyatās, and the mention of several other series, which are, however, not singly enumerated like the former, but only mentioned collectively, as for example the four noble truths, the noble eightfold path, the four meditations, the eight escapes or emancipations, and the five powers. It is clear that the most probable hypothesis is that, with regard to length (at the least three volumes) and contents, we have here to do with one of the larger Prajñāparāmitās. And if this be so,

the choice must lie between the Shatasahasrikā (the 100,000 shloka Prajnāparāmitā), the Panchavimshatishasrikā (in 25,000 shlokas) and the Actadashasrikā (in 18,000 shlokas). The two smaller recensions, the Dashasahasrikā (in 10,000 shlokas) and the Actasahasrika (in 8,000 shlokas) are scarcely probable as the original work, as both are continually printed in Tibet in a single volume, and it is not likely that our Manuscript, containing as much matter on a page as the printed editions, would expand to (at least) three volumes in writing.

Going a step further, considering all elements at my disposal, I have come finally to this conclusion that the most likely hypothesis is to assign our fragment as belonging to the 25,000 shloka recension, called by abbreviation nyi-khri in Tibetan, and consisting in reality – as that word indicates – of perhaps roughly 20,000 shlokas. I need not detail how I have finally come to this conclusion, which, it must be remembered, is after all only a hypothesis. Suffice it to add still that a rapid glance through this 25,000 shloka recension of the Chinese Tripitaka, one through the Sanskrit 8,000 shloka edition published in the Bibliotheca Indica by Rajendralāla Mitra, one through the Tibetan 100,000 shloka edition as far as published in the Bibliotheca Indica by Pratāpachandra Ghosha, have only given me several dizzy headaches, but have not led me to an identification of our passage.

Clairvoyance to the Rescue

So there the matter stood, without prospect of further development, when I bethought myself that it might be interesting to attempt an appeal to the powers of trained clairvoyance for some suggestions, or perhaps a solution to the problem. So on the evening of November 17, 1909, at 9.30 P.M., after the day's work was over, I went to Mr. Leadbeater with the Manuscript, outlined the case to him, and asked him if he would be kind enough to go into the question either by sheer clairvoyance or by psychometry. It should be understood that I told him only the barest facts of the case: that here was a Manuscript which according to its orthographic peculiarities must be supposed to have been written before 800 A.D., that it was Tibetan, and that further than that there was nothing known about it, neither as to its ultimate provenance nor as to of what work it formed part. Unnecessary to add that Mr. Leadbeater knows no Tibetan or other Oriental languages; and though himself a Buddhist and keenly interested in its living aspects, has made no scientific studies concerning its development, nor is specially acquainted with the literature about it by any but the more popular writers amongst the western Buddhist scholars.

Readers of the Magazine are familiar with the results of clairvoyant enquiry as applied to historic researches through the series of 'Lives of Alcyone'. Those as yet unfamiliar with this subject can do no better than read Mr. Leadbeater's own little manual on *Clairvoyance*, describing the whole theory concerning the exercise of this power; and they may also advantageously compare Mr. Mead's remarks on this subject in the introduction to his work on *Did Jesus live 100 B.C.?* It is here, of course, not the place to insert a *petitio principii* concerning the reality of clairvoyance, some knowledge of which subject is taken for granted in our readers. Psychic researchers may note down the case here related as an interesting document for study, and those interested in this problem will find a good illustration of a chance example of clairvoyance, quite casually demonstrated without any previous preparation or warning. In the regular and systematic exercise of the power in lengthy series of investigations, such as those connected with *Thought-forms*, *Ancient Peru*, *Occult Chemistry*, and others, the existence of some preliminary preparation might be argued, but here we have a mere chance chip thrown off from the block, and the spontaneity of its production has a special demonstrational value.

The Date of the Leaf

Mr. Leadbeater, at once, most kindly, acquiesced in my wishes. It has been my privilege – as it has been that of many others in close connection with him – to have often witnessed such little spontaneous ‘asides’ to his more regular work. Those of us who have had this experience might construct an interesting evidential chain of argument and circumstance in favor of the reality of his possession of this abnormal power in a scientific sense.

He first took the leaf in his hands, sat quietly for a few moments, half closed his eyes, and began to speak. The Manuscript was very old, he said; it had been written in Tibet, or at least somewhere among the mountains of the Himālayan chain, or those north of them. He could not at first say exactly where. Glancing over contemporary Europe to find some landmarks for the fixing of the date – a process said to be quite feasible – it was found that it was about the time of Pepin le Bref and Charlemagne. Some interesting details of personal description of the latter were given, some glimpses of scenes in his life were depicted, and some living touches of the life of the times were described in a most casual manner, and in the merest passing. A glance over contemporary England confirmed the approximate date gained, and whilst Mr. Leadbeater was wandering round amongst these pictures of ancient life, I looked up and verified such details as lent themselves to it from the cyclopedia. It has always struck me as an amusing fact that, whereas in olden times the wizard – at least traditionally – had his proper setting in picturesque and dramatic surroundings, he now-a-days uses a prosaic typewriter, and does not despise the use of dictionary and cyclopedia to check as far as possible his own results. In occult methods, too, civilization brings progress!

A direct question brought the answer that, running rapidly over the history of the Manuscript in reverse order, from the present day to its genesis, our leaf proved to be the original production and not a later copy of it. At the moment no further precision of the date fixed was attempted, as this would entail considerable difficulty; for in such a matter concrete minute points of comparison are needed, fixed points as it were, and these depend largely on the actual knowledge present in the consciousness of the seer. Within historical times, this would not be very difficult for countries whose languages the seer understands; but for nations speaking languages or using chronologies unknown to him, the process would be laborious. Some practical makeshifts are in many cases resorted to, as for instance, when in events coinciding with Roman times the contemporary name of the acting consul was looked up and then his date read up in some cyclopedia. Huge periods are commonly computed from astronomical observations.

The Author of the Leaf

Having fixed his attention on the writer of the Manuscript, Mr. Leadbeater gave a description of him and ascertained some facts connected with him. His name was unluckily not determined, though somehow in a vague way the name Sambhava was mentioned in connection with him. He was an oldish man of commanding appearance, seemingly of some Mongolian race – perhaps Tibeto-Chinese. There was an impression that he had been born somewhere on or near the Chinese frontier. He was observed writing in a sort of monastery, a great bare walled place, part of a much larger establishment. This place was, in a sort, identified in an interesting way. During the summer of 1909 Mr. Leadbeater and myself had read the proofs of Ekai Kawaguchi’s work *Three Years in Tibet* which was published by *The Theosophist Office*. Whilst clairvoyantly looking at the Tibetan writer, long since dead and gone, and at his dwelling-place, Mr. Leadbeater said that this was the same place which Kawaguchi had visited and described in his book. He stated: ‘Look up Kawaguchi; you will find there the description of the same place. It is situated to the east of the river. Nyalba (or Nyalva) is the name of a village near by.’ Upon being asked how he knew this, he answered that a habitual exercise of clairvoyance brings with it the automatic arising of pictures of the original when various

subjects are spoken or read of. So, in reading a book of travel, the practised clairvoyant continually sees before him the real scenes and incidents described. In this way he recognised the old monastery as that which he had seen in connection with Kawaguchi's book. The detail is interesting. But I have not been able to identify the place from any description in the book.

The Writing of the Book

The vision showed the beautiful Manuscript and there was 'lots of it'. The Manuscript in the final state, of which our solitary leaf is a specimen, was not the immediate result of the translation. The translation itself was done from a palm-leaf Manuscript, written in some form of Sanskrit. The ancient translator worked at it as his great life-task, taking many years over it. His labor was a sort of secret charge. The first draft was written on some dirty-looking white-grey paper. From this the Manuscript was copied with scrupulous care and in painfully neat calligraphy on the blue paper of which we have the sample. The writing was done, it seems, with some kind of bamboo or wooden brush or pen. My notes do not record the detail, but I believe it was given at the time. The copying as well as the translation were equally sacred tasks to the Tibetan monk.

According to Csoma de Körös-Feer the Tibetan translation of the 25,000 shloka recension of the Prajnāpāramitā is unknown.

Glossolaly

Except in the *Christian Creed*, where he has given *pontou pilêtou* as the original form of the *pontiou pilatou* in the Gospels, Mr. Leadbeater has to my knowledge never yet published direct readings from ancient Manuscripts, clairaudiently obtained. The more interesting is it that on this occasion he reproduced several larger and smaller snatches of sound heard from the Tibetan writer in reading his Manuscripts. It must be borne in mind that clairvoyance does not in itself enable its possessor to read ancient Manuscripts if he does not know their script, but the clairvoyant, or rather clairaudient can hear and reproduce the sounds uttered by the people of the time who read these writings aloud. The sounds heard seem to belong to three different categories. They are those of the Sanskritic original, those of the Tibetan translation, and one sentence which seems Chinese.

I will spell as well as I can phonetically with the ordinary continental values of the letters.

(a) Chinese

The monk began his readings with what seemed a set formula running somewhat as follows, though the exact order of the sounds is not guaranteed.

fo do bo zo

Remarks:

This looks more Chinese than Tibetan, and may represent an invocation in the monk's mother tongue, as he was possibly a Chinaman by birth. It must be remembered that the titles of the Chinese Pāramitās abound in monosyllables having an o sound. The Chinese names for the three Chinese versions of the 25,000 shloka recension are named: Fāng-kwāng-pān- jo-po-lo-mi-ching, Mo-hö- pān-jo-po-lo-mi-ching, and Kwāng-tsān-pān-jo-po-lo-mi-ching . Pān-jo-po-lo-mi-to is the Chinese transcription for Prajnāpāramitā.

(b) Tibetan

The following sentences and isolated works or expressions were dictated as Tibetan. They were of course pronounced through an untrained English larynx by one not conversant with Tibetan, nor, for the matter of that, with Sanskrit or Chinese.

1. *fo khiën khab dzju lobchen thupha*

2. *tcha khiën sangtszu lo bat tsze gyal bor ang khor bat zug hrang po chellung phota.*

Remarks:

An adherent to the doctrine of sub-conscious memory will probably see in *angkor bat* a reminiscence of the famous ruins in Cambodia.

3. *Shrī chen.*

4. *naljor.*

5. *genpakdenchub.*

6. *norlab dipak denpo.*

Remarks:

Number one may be intended to represent a name; I have a lingering remembrance that it was given as such, but I have not recorded the fact in my notes.

Number two was a sentence from the book.

Number three and five were isolated words.

Number four was a word known to Mr. Leadbeater and recognized by him, as it is used in Theosophical literature, it is of course the Tibetan equivalent for Yoga, Yogin, Yogāchārya or Yogāchāra.

Number six may be a name again.

(c) *Sanskritic* (Classical Sanskrit, Buddhistic Sanskrit, Pāli?)

Taken from the original Manuscript from which the Tibetan translation was made.

1. *Itipisso bhagavan arahan*

Remarks:

This is evidently the well-known Pāli formula: *Iti pi so bhagavā arahan sammāsambuddho vijjā-carana-sampanno sugato lokavidū*, etc. It would be strange to find Pāli in the original instead of some form of Sanskrit if our book is really one of the *Prajñāpāramitās*. But a similar formula was at one time known to Tibetan Buddhists in the form: “*Itapi so Bhagavā(n) Samjaksambudho vidschdschatscharanasampano Sugato Lokavidjānuttaro*” (as transcribed by Schiefner), given the language of Magadha.

The words were given as the beginning of a sentence.

May it be that Mr. Leadbeater heard the Pāli form in Ceylon during the course of his lengthy residence there, and clothed the nearly similar sounds in a form reminiscent of them in some sub-conscious?

Mr. Leadbeater himself thinks this hypothesis probable. It was his opinion that in each of these cases, out of a torrent of unknown words which he heard, his mind pounced upon such as were already partly familiar to it, and even that he might easily have been deceived by apparent and superficial resemblances to words sub-consciously present in his mind.

2. *Saririr pilikulenda.*

3. *Buddha rajanān wahanseye nama swawera.*

Remarks:

Buddharajanānwahansé is an honorific title frequently applied in Ceylon to the Buddha. The words heard may only have *resembled* these.

We publish the above details in the hope that some reader or readers thoroughly conversant with spoken Tibetan and Chinese or with Buddhistic Sanskrit may shed some light on the problems they raise. As an almost unique example of what they are in the way of recovered sounds from the past heard by clairaudience in time, they cannot fail to have also a special interest for the student of such matters.

The Pre-History of the Document

What we have written up till now has a special interest mainly for the psychic researcher, the philologist and the student of Buddhist history and literature, and generally also for the Theosophist. What now follows is of special and almost exclusive interest to the latter. For the stray scholar, who may have happened to meet and read these pages, hypothesis and description cease and romance begins. But even if he should regard what follows as a mere story, it is an interesting one which will amuse him if no more. Needless to say that we ourselves regard the following to be as much a subject for serious consideration as what has gone before, and that we consider that our own faculties and expectations are by no means the measure of the possible or the true. Besides, we are able to bring forward a few corroborative arguments with regard to some points of the story.

After having come thus far in the description of the author, his place and time and book, I asked Mr. Leadbeater to go a step further and follow up the Sanskrit Manuscript from which the Tibetan translation was made. By tracing it back to some other Manuscript from which, in its turn, it might prove to have been copied, and so on, we would at last come to the original author and also probably to the title of the book.

Already, when describing the Tibetan translator, he had said that the man looked somehow familiar though he did not finally identify him (not as to name, but as to ego). Also the Sanskrit Manuscript had a 'curious feel' about it, he said. And in acceding to my request he very soon said: "I believe that Master K.H. may have something to do with the book." He then described how in ascending along the line of time, the Master's influence became perceptible in the Manuscript, growing stronger and stronger as he moved into the earlier past, until at last he found Master K.H. himself as its author nearly two thousand years ago. First the Manuscript took him to India. It was interesting to watch the description of how the surrounding climate was softening, and at last was transformed into one of tropical heat, and how the country in which he was moving changed from icy Tibet to glaring India.

After a few centuries he found himself transported – much to his surprise – to the identical monastery and library where Alcyone (in the thirtieth life) was abbot and librarian. In that library the Manuscript was one of the great treasures, and either that self-same Manuscript, or a copy made from it, was the Sanskrit book seen in the hands of the Tibetan translator. As this life of Alcyone will soon appear in *The Theosophist*, we need not give any particulars here, but satisfy ourselves with the statement that its time was about 650 A.D. and the place Kanyakubja.

Nāgārjuna

It is well-known in Theosophical circles that it has been stated that he who is now Master K.H. was known in a former life as Pythagoras, and some centuries later in India as Nāgārjuna – a great saint and scholar in the early Buddhist world, renowned as a mighty sorcerer and great philosopher, a voluminous author, a Methuselah who lived for three centuries as a Buddhist patriarch, the focus of countless legends, stories, traditions and even fairy-tales. To him at last the investigation leads when searching for the ultimate (or rather penultimate, as we shall see) origin of our mysterious leaf. The following are the bare facts as Mr. Leadbeater told them that evening.

We are now somewhere near the time that the Christian gospels were written, about 200 A.D., or rather a little less; between 150 and 180 A.D., would be more exact. Nāgārjuna is now an old man. He wrote the original Manuscript, but this was itself not an original production, but a translation from an Atlantean Manuscript. There is already a queer and romantic story current about it. This Manuscript was a holy relic when one of the later Atlantean migrations left Poseidonis. They took it with them to India. After a long time of peaceful dwelling in the new land, the Āryan hordes begin to invade the country from the North. The older Atlantean tribe began to be harassed and to be sorely pressed. They fought like lions but without avail. They formed the kshatriya or rājan caste, and were red-colored. At last they saw their doom was sealed, and they decided to bury their sacred treasure. They did, and it remained buried in a dry sandy place for thousands of years, quite undisturbed. This Atlantean Manuscript was enclosed in an air-tight case, hermetically sealed and made out of some sort of metal. Its preservation remained perfect.

Nāgārjuna got hold of information about it and located it by some magical means, after which he dug it up. The Manuscript was written in colored hieroglyphs on what seem metal plates. It was about two feet long and twelve inches broad. There were twenty-seven lines of script, written on one side of the plates only, which numbered one hundred and fifty-three. In translation the text expanded considerably. It was translated on palm-leaves about sixteen inches long and four high, on which twelve lines were written on both sides. About three of such palm leaves went to one metal sheet. The translation seems to consist of three parts – three bundles anyhow. The work is known as *Sambodhi*; this is the original title and Nāgārjuna is the translator. This translation is somehow dual in its nature. There seems first to be a mere translation, corresponding exactly to the original, and then secondly, under the same title, something which seems a commentary. There ought therefore to be two books or parts, with the same name but quite different contents.

After this translation was made, and the work commenced its wandering career throughout the centuries, it began to expand. This process of expansion went on and on till the book reached Tibet. And even before it reached India from Atlantis, it had already begun increasing its initial size.

A curious phrase in or connected with the initial Manuscript is: “The great King of Glory who liveth for 124,000 years.”

This then is the story of the Manuscript in so far as it related to Nāgārjuna, and so far as briefly outlined in a short and cursory investigation lasting in all scarcely more than one hour, certainly less than two hours.

Some Corroborative Observations on the Previous Paragraph

The first interesting corroboration for our story is that, in effect, there exists a legend that Nāgārjuna did find a case with manuscripts from which he drew the materials for writing the Pāramitās, all of which tradition ascribes to him. In the popular versions this case was recovered from the nether-world or the sea, by the aid of a King of the Nāgas. It will be remembered that occult enquiry has suggested the equivalence of the name Nāga – really meaning serpent, a mystical being playing a great part in early Buddhist legend – with the name of an Atlantean tribe or race. They were so called, it is stated, because of their tribal totem, borne before them in war, was a snake. Nepālese Manuscripts of the Prajnāpāramitā record in their colophons that they had been drawn from the nether-world by Nāgārjuna. The Chinese biography of Nāgārjuna relates the story as follows:

“Nāgarāja (King of the Dragons) took pity on him [Nāgārjuna] and took him with him to his palace at the bottom of the sea, and showed him there seven precious receptacles, containing the Vaipulya books and other Sūtras of a deep and mystical meaning; Nāgārjuna read them for ninety consecutive days, *and then returned to the earth with a case (Kiste).*”

Waddell adds that Nāgārjuna alleged the Buddha Himself had composed the treatise.

A second corroboration is perhaps to be found in the fact that the 25,000 shloka recension is commonly given as printed in three volumes, which fact may have something to do with the ‘three original parts’ described.

The third is with regard to the name Sambodhi. In the 25,000 shloka recension of the work, the fourth of its eight chapters is called Sarvakārābhisambodha or ‘cognisance of all forms, whereby the Bodhisattva acquires a right understanding of the various phases of the mind under different circumstances’, and the sixth chapter is called Ekākshna-visambodha, or ‘knowledge of all times present, past and future’.

The fourth corroboration is with regard to the statement that there were two different books, a translation and a commentary. Rājendralāla Mitra writes in his work already quoted, p. xiv, the following:

“The second abridgment of the large work [the 100,000 shloka recension of the Prajnāpāramitā] is usually reckoned at 25,000 shlokas ... but ... roughly calculated it is limited to 20,045 shlokas... Though professedly a digest, the arrangement of the work is not founded on the plan of the Shatasahasrika, and the treatment of the subject is generally different. In fact the work is an independent one on the subject of Nihilism bearing on the attributes of Buddha.”

For a quite recent discovery of the existence of a separate work included in the Prajnāpāramitās see M. Haraprasāda Shāstrī in the J. & P. A. S. B. Vol. VI, No. 8, August, 1910, p. 425. This short note is quite important for our present problem and was published a year after Mr. Leadbeater’s researches. It also gives some clue to the process of expansion of the earlier versions, and states that the prose portions of the work alone are original, the verses are ‘different works’.

All the above considerations deserve further careful study, and it is highly desirable that all those competent to shed more light on these problems should not hesitate to co-operate towards this end.

Back to Atlantis

The investigation did not altogether end with the facts ascertained concerning Nāgārjuna's part in the production of our manuscript. A further endeavor was made to trace back the Atlantean plates to their origin. The inquiry was a quite summary one and disclosed only a few general data, but one of them was of special interest. It was found that ultimately the primary Manuscript was one which Master M., when, more than ten thousand years ago, a Ruler in Poseidonis, had had copied. Mr. Leadbeater stated: "Master M. has had a hand in it also. I am not surprised. For wherever you find Master K.H. there you may be sure you will somehow meet Master M. also." It was not definitely stated at what time this took place. Anyhow the copy was, some 11,500 years ago, in the possession of a secret society then existing in the capital of Poseidonis, and having wide ramifications all through the land. It was then a period of the grossest general corruption, but at the same time this hidden league of white magicians and good, pure people was active in the very heart of the degraded civilisation.

Now in the fifteenth of the series of lives of Orion – which series will be published in course of time in the pages of *The Theosophist* – its hero lived in a female body in Poseidonis, from 9603-9564 B.C. She, together with another woman (Sirius) belonging to same mountain tribe as herself, was made captive in a military expedition of the Toltec army against her people, and both were carried off to the city and apportioned as slaves to a rich and highly placed official. They suffered torture and abuse to such an extent that they attempted to run away and they were ultimately successful in reaching a place of safety. Whilst hurrying through the streets of the town on their way to freedom they actually passed the house in which the meeting-place of this secret society was situated. When arriving at the point in his story, telling of the existence of this secret brotherhood, Mr. Leadbeater suddenly exclaimed in tones half of despair, half of anger: "And by Jove, they did not know, they did not know!" On being asked: "Who did not know what?" he explained the above situation, and said that if the two fugitives had only turned in there, they would have been safe and their tribulations ended. In seeing the house in which the Manuscript was guarded, and being back in the times and places of Orion's life in that period, the other pictures connected with all concerned had also been evoked, and for the first time he realised what might have been in that life, instead of what actually was. Certainly this was the first time that I witnessed emotions manifested because of adventures of more than ten thousand years ago.

A Tangled Skein

A tangled skein, indeed, has the strange story of our mysterious Manuscript proved itself according to its occult history obtained by clairvoyance, according to its immediate history in arriving in the Adyar Library, and according to the evidence of its special orthographic character. The intermingled threads have now been unravelled, but another tissue has at the same time been woven in connection with it. We find two Masters, Alcyone, Sirius, Orion, more or less directly connected with it – further investigation would perhaps reveal more kārmic links. Involuntarily we therefore ask ourselves a question which seems to suggest itself: May the coming of this leaf to us carry some purpose as yet unknown? We do not know; perhaps the future will show.

Conclusion

Before ending we must once more emphasise the fact that this little investigation was undertaken quite on the spur of the moment, without any preparation whatever. The various details outlined above were not in the least all known to myself, and even of the little of what I knew about the Prajñāpāramitās and Nāgārjuna I did not tell a word to Mr. Leadbeater in outlining the case when submitting it to him. This casual investigation, besides, was only one of many similar ones which I

have seen Mr. Leadbeater undertake in a like way. Let us admit, to say the least of it, that the story, taken as a mere concoction, is a clever improvisation for one not consulting a single book at the time, and without any special knowledge of Oriental languages and the more technical literature about them. Let us admit again that the instantaneous use of the imagination in the manufacture of such a consistent story, or such use of the dramatic powers of the sub-conscious self, would be – if anyone wishes to ascribe the tale to their action – of a nature remarkable enough to merit some attention and to demand some explanation.

We hope that the above narrative, quite apart from its interest to Theosophists, may serve a useful end in offering a remarkable ‘case’ for those interested in the whole problem of clairvoyance, or of the Theosophical doctrine of the ākāshic records. It is a typical little case, perhaps not rich enough in details and data to furnish sufficient materials for scientific study and analysis to reach final conclusions, yet certainly sufficient as a starting point for such study. There must be several people with the abilities of a Flournoy or an Lutoslawski, to mention widely divergent temperaments, who, in combination with Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese scholars, might contribute a most instructive discussion of this report. It seems to me that their labors would not be uselessly employed on it. There are great difficulties still to be explained, as for instance, the utterly Buddhistic nature of our leaf in connection with its alleged pre-Buddhistic origin, but all the more welcome would be all additional information which would enable us to understand all this – in whatever direction that explanation might eventually prove to lie.

REFERENCES:

1. The initial letter a does not occur on the leaf, so we cannot compare its form with the variety designated by L. D. Barnett in the J. R. A. S. [Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society], 1903, p. 111, as characteristic of Tibetan paleography.
2. ‘one who wanders’. [PO]
3. Though the accompanying letter was destroyed, happily the cover in which the Manuscript was sent was kept, which enables us to fix the date given.
4. For some literature on the subject see Jäschke ‘Tibetan Grammar’ (1883) § 34, and Dictionaries (1871 or 1881) s. v. da.; Csoma de Kőrös ‘Grammar of the Tibetan Language’ (1834), p. 11; Schmidt ‘Grammatik der Tibetischen Sprache’ (1839), p. 20, 21; Sarat Chandra Dās ‘Tibetan-English Dictionary’ (1902) s. v. da-drag; L. D. Barnett, J.R.A.S., 1903, p. 109 and p. 821; W. W. Rockhill, J.R.A.S., 1903, p. 572; L. A. Waddell, J.R.A.S., 1909, p. 923 (especially p. 942) and compare also p. 69; S. W. Bushell, J.R.A.S., 1880, p. 435 (especially plates after p. 534; the subjoined ya seems to be there, but the rubbing is very imperfect); M. A. Stein ‘Preliminary Report, etc., in Chinese Turkestan’ (1901) last plate and p. 57. From Laufer’s ‘Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft der Tibeter Zamatog’ in the Sitzungsberichte der philos.-philol. u. d. hist. Classe der k. b. Ak. d. Wissensch. zu München 1898), p. 519, we must conclude, ex omissione, that the Tibetan Grammar Zamatog, written in about 1500 A.D., no longer knows the da-drag, whereas Thonmi-sambhota’s grammar (about 625 A.D.) treats of it, according to A.H. Francke in the J.&P.A.S.B., 1910, p. 410. Whilst correcting the proofs of this article the October numbers of the J.R.A.S., for 1910, have come to hand, in which see L. A. Waddell, p. 1247 and especially p. 1250 and 1251. In this article the da-drag is proven to have been employed as late as about 840 A.D.

5. I will not enter into any technical discussion about the peculiarities of the Manuscript, if any such exist. That may be referred to more learned heads. Let me however note one point, the occurrence of the curious term rang-byang-chhub in the series srotāpatti, etc., after arhat, which term Chandra Dās in his dictionary (1166 b.) gives as the equivalent of rang-sangs-rgyas or pratyekabuddha. I may also add that the use of the da-drag does not tally with Barnett's analysis of it in the Eudere fragments, J.R.A.S., 1903, pp. 110, 111.
6. The above according to Csoma de Körös-Leon Feer in the 'Annales du Musée Guimet', Vol. II, p. 199. It should be remarked that whilst these authors give the 25,000 shloka recension as contained in three volumes, both the catalogue of the R.A.S.B. ('A nominal list of Tibetan Manuscripts and xylographs', etc., by P. Ghosha, p. 4, 5) and of the St. Petersburg Academy (I. J. Schmidt and O. Böhtlingk 'Verzeichniss der Tibetischen Handschriften und Holzdrucke', etc. [1846], Nos. 187-190) indicate only editions in four volumes.
7. It is curious that during all the twelve years that this publication has been in progress no one concerned has noticed that on the outer titles from the beginning till end stong phrag brgyad pa has been printed and on the inner and chapter titles stong phrag brgya pa. Jäschke has a clerical error in his London (1881) dictionary and gives stong phrag as 'ten thousand'; his Gnadau (1871) dictionary is correct on this point.
8. Bunyiu Nanjio 'Catalogue, etc., of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka', Oxford, 1883, col.4.
9. kh=Greek chi; ië as in French bière.
10. dzju as in English jujube.
11. Something between thirpa (ir an in English thirst), thupha or thirpo (short o).
12. Bat or pat.
13. Hrang very guttural in its initials and the a sound very short.
14. Phota or phoda.
15. Something between chen, short chan or chin.
16. "That is the Noble One, the Saintly One, the perfectly Enlightened One, filled with Wisdom and Virtue, the Welcome One, whose look penetrates the worlds", etc. See Bhikkhu Nānatiloka 'Die Reden des Buddha', Erster Band, Einer-Buch, Leipzig, [1910?], p. 57. The formula does not seem to occur in the written canon of Ceylon, but to be in current use among the Buddhist population.
17. A Schiefner 'Wassiljew's Vorrede, etc, zu Tārānātha's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien', St. Petersburg, 1869, p. 29.
18. See about Nāgārjuna: Albert Grünwedel 'Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet und der Mongolei', Leipzig, 1900, p. 29; L. A. Waddell 'The Buddhism of Tibet', London, 1895, p. 10; W. Wassiljew 'Der Buddhismus', St. Petersburg, 1860, p. 232, also translated into English in 'The Indian Antiquary', Vol. IV, Bombay, 1875, p. 141. A list of literature on Nāgārjuna in Grünwedel's work, note 31, p. 203.
19. J. & P. A. S. B., Vol. VI, 1910, p. 309 and 426.

20. Wassiljew 'Der Buddhismus' and 'Indian Antiquary'. See note to previous paragraph. The English translation is defective.

21. 'The Buddhism of Tibet', p. 11.

22. Rājendralāla Mitra 'Ashtasahasrika' (Biblioteca Indica), Calcuta, 1888, p. xiv, xv.