The Earliest Dated Document in Newari
The Palmleaf from Uku Bāhāh NS 235/AD 1114

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

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

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

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

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

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

**English Translation**

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

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

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

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

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

Burleigh, Peter

Jørgensen, Hans

Kölver, Bernhard and Šakya, Hem Rāj

Locke, John

Rājvāṃṣi, Śaṅkar Mān

Śakya, Hem Rāj

Slusser, Mary Shepherd.

Vajrācārya, Dhanavajra
Devanāgarī Transliteration

1. सिद्ध स्वस्ति। सम्बत आ ल हू (१३५) मार्गिष्ठ कृष्ण चंद्रदेश्याम। श्रीलिङकमायः।
श्रीतेवल्के श्रीसिवदेवसंस्कारित श्रीमनिधरजैवमहाविहारर्यसवसंधानाः।
नियमपरिभाषपत्रनिवृत्यम्। बन्धुबिविहार हावोया चीवरि मानि। २ पदमभ्रू हानभ्रूः
पुनभ्रू एतेषां चीवरि दस माणिका धा मा ।।।।।।।। पदमभ्रूः छु पनः का।

2. बछीन मृति। स्थविरया स्थविरासनत तंड दुरुण भंट। । अपरस सम भण्डत पन सम-
चारिण। कपुष्ठ भूजा प्रभृति डा हूः बंधुबिविहार हावोन तंड कमण डास परिभोग
लीचुःबुबुस लुं वहलछि लगपबु पन संघसके सीसन उपाध्यायभा न्यूसां चीवरि बियु
मालु। मरणकालस वहल-

3. छीन ढाको तृत्यंघष परिभोग। छु प लेगन कीच्छ बिपार बसत्र बिबु मिखा तिबु मदुगाे
छु सात दुगुन बक्ले। निवासिभोजन बंकविहार न्यायू मालु। दानपति भारोष गा
लन ग्यव सरलाई १७०। छु लें च्यकु ग्यव तनेकपिन ख। ल्ल गा गान चोकोस।
मोँचा म्हूःमोँचोक कुटुम्बानुसन बिसन सेप संघ दायाद।
4. सकल कार्यक्ष समस्त संघस सम। अभिप्रायायन प्रभु मालु। सुन संघ कार्य सेना
विपरीतन बंगुया दानपति भारी कुंबलिहार संघ ज्वल लुं मंस त्रय दामपयु टेजु।
बंबिलु वृ. सुन भोगय होइँ दानभद्र पुनिभद्र उभय वा मानि २ बि मालु। बंबिलु वृ
नायिकिनि हावौया जन्मछी नायिकिनि हावौया।

5. परिभोग उस परम संघ परिसभोग। अत्ताधिसादिण। श्रीभारो वकोलि भारो साहू
ढोकु एते प्रभानेति॥ वा नेपं तंड स्थविरन कुटन मेलको आशीर्ष गोल्ल न्द्वु मालु॥
Index and Glossary

बार्फिन्द्रिण्य बeyond that; after that

बालिकाहयत्रिन्त with the intention or

बेस्वेयवत्रिन्त objective <Skt. भविष्य

अयुज्यायवत्रिन्त intention

काय्यवसंबन्धार्य all the noble members

of the Order

मा न है an alphabetical

representation of 235, the

Nepāla Era 235/AD 1114;

the Nepāla Era was founded

on Thursday, October 20,

879

ा - 200 +

la - 30 +

hr - 5

बालिकायवत्रिन्त a gift or blessing < Skt.

बालिकायवत्रिन्त blessing

हरमित्रिन्त this < Skt. घरमित्र

उपमित्रिन्त both < Skt.

उपमित्रिन्त by the Upadhyāya, a

spiritual teacher of the Order

< Skt. + Newari agentive

case-marker - न

उपमित्रिन्त after her; beyond her

उपमित्रिन्त these < Skt. उपमित्र

उपमित्रिन्त of these < Skt. उपमित्र -

masculine genitive plural

form of the demonstrative

pronoun एवः - this

कृत्रिम cloth (es) < Pk. कृत्रिम < Skt.

कृत्रिम कित्रिम by all that had been

borrowed or taken

काय्यबविन्त in the work < Skt. काय्य

व - a locative case-maker

कित्रिम legal; rightful; legitimate <

कित्रिम Skt. कित्रिम

कित्रिम according to the size or

status of the family < Skt.

कित्रिम + कित्रिम + Newari न

कित्रिम together with a due share <

Skt. कित्रिम - a piece

कित्रिम dark half of the lunar month

< Skt.

कित्रिम in a manner; in a sequence <

Skt. कित्रिम + Newari suffix न

कित्रिम so it is; is

कित्रिम a set or company of deities,

e.g., as in a गण-वर्ण- पूजय <

Skt. गण group; a company; a tribe

कित्रिम an upper garment or shawl

कित्रिम to meet; to gather; to collect

कित्रिम a betel-nut, used for ritual

presents and offerings

कित्रिम five (shares)

कित्रिम in five (shares)

कित्रिम the 14th day of the lunar

fortnight < Skt.

कित्रिम a monk's livelihood; prebend

in kind < Skt. विषय a monk's

robe

कित्रिम of those who attend or stay

or impersonate;

कित्रिम a small piece; कित्रिम - little; <

Skt. कित्रिम - a piece

कित्रिम - of those who

impersonate the whole

company or set of deities

कित्रिम what / which / whatever

कित्रिम for the entire life; life-long

< Skt. कित्रिम + Newari numeral

कित्रिम one

कित्रिम to get hold of
can; is permitted; may
the entire amount; all that is
reported; a quantifier
formation from the verbal
base धार = to say
लेख by adding
विनिर्णय for adding; in order to add;
a nominal form (from the
causative - कः -) added on to
the root
लिङ्ग to keep; to leave;
पुरुषविशेष of the three monasteries, i.e.,
the Mandharajiva-vihara, the
Bandhavu Vihara and the
Vamkuli < Skt. पु = three
ब्राह्मण three < Skt. प or व्र
दंडकय to punish < Skt. दंड =
punishment + Newari verbal
suffix खे = to do
dस ten < Skt. दस
दानित्य भारी of / by the noble
donor < Skt. दानित्य+भारितता+भारितता =
is usually either genitive
case-maker or a locative /
associative case-maker, but it
is here used in an honorific
agentive sense
दानार्थ इत्यादि inheritance; property- < Skt.
an heir; a son
dुपूण twice; twofold < Skt.द्विपुण
dुपूण also what remains
dा paddy < Skt. धान्य
नायिकिन्त्र हन्तोत्स of the wife of the
tenant farmer < Skt. नायिका
नियमपरिपास्य=संहिता a document,
stipulating the rules of the
monastery < Skt. नियम

+परिवास+ पत्रिका
निवासिण a resident < Skt.निवासिण-, a
resident <निवत्त - to reside
नें ने > निः two पापी ; पापी - a
measurement unit of जा पापी
हापू to donate; to contribute; to
give as payment
हापू to donate
हापू by raising funds or grants
प an abbreviation for पन, i.e., a
gift
पण to pay back; to pay the due
share < Pkt. पण < Skt. पण
पण a plate; an upper garment or a
Crown < Skt. पट्ट
पण a gift; an offering < Pkt.पण =
Wealth < Skt. पण
merchandise; an object for
sale?
परिशोध usufruct, the right to use
and enjoy
परिवर्तन equal right of usufruct
पण to pay a due share < Pkt.पण -
to follow
प्रभुतित beginning; since; including
< Skt.
प्रभुतित verified; attested; certified <
Skt. प्रभुतित + धि evidence;
authority
बन्दुबुधिहार the Bandhubuvihaara
ब्र to give
ब्र to give; will give
ब्रसन give; a polite imperative
form (cf. - सने; -है)
भट्ट share; treasury < Skt.भट्ट, a
division
भट्ट an attendant; a messenger <
Skt. भंजः or cooking pot; vessel < Pkt भंजः
भारो भंजः भंजः Bhāro Sāhu the Elder.
lit. The Elder Noble Merchant, a personal name.

पंजः a consecration jar < Skt
भोगन to enjoy < Skt भोगः to enjoy
भोगः a feast; boarding < Skt
माशा a unit of measurement equivalent to 80 cowries < Skt माशः or 4 कालिनी
महान also that which does not exist
मरणाला at the time of death; on someone's demise < Skt
मास a measurement of paddy / grain equivalent to 32 प्रस्ठ < Skt मासः
मासिक a measurement equivalent to 32 प्रस्ठ
मानिका a unit of measurement, equivalent to 32 प्रस्ठ
मार्गाच्यां, approximately the period of November - December < Skt
मात्र is necessary
मिला an eye
मुळत a concession
मेलको the second one; the next one; the junior one
मेला a child/children
संबंधिती a wife / wives दो = as for; including; also an emphatic particle
- या - of; belonging to
लाभसः an amount to be expended or spent < Skt संपत्ति - New Indo-Aryan स्थान+ र्ये+ या;
Maithili लाभ = to adhere to;
to stick to
लन a jacket; a bodice
शीर्षस्थायम of those who will be

ordained later on; ती = later on, न = to ordain न = a verbal suffix for an action intended to be done
स - a case-maker for location or possession

सुं gold
से left; to be left
लेना with what is left
स्त्र a tight jacket with sleeves; a bodice
बंकुच्छिखार the Vaṃkulī Vihāra, the Uktā Bāhāḥ
बंकुच्छिखारसंस्थ the Order of Vaṃkulī Vihāra
बंगुः of going, i.e., for going
बंकुच्छिखार a place-name; lit. the दुः of field on the eastern part
बस्त clutches < Skt.बस्त
बहुवांशिन the silver objects as a whole; the entire silver-ware;
बहुवांशिन = livelihood; prebend (?)
बहुवांशिन that which; that much
बहु paddy
विपरीतम in opposition; by opposition; < Skt.विपरीत - wrong; inverted + न is a case-maker suggesting an instrumental sense
विपरीत trade; transaction; exchange < Skt. विपरीत
प्रद paddy < Skt.प्रद = rice
संस्थ a monastic order; the Order < Skt.
संस्थांच्या the duties of the Order < Skt.
संस्थांच्या of the order < Skt. संस्था व = objective case-maker
संस्थांच्या with the Order; with the members of a monastery
सकल all < Skt.
The Noble of Vamkuli; lit. the South-Eastern Noble

A monastery in Lalitpur

of the historic city of Lalitpura. It was known as लक्स्मी-ग्राम in ancient times, probably a Sanskritisation of लक्स्मी, a sacrificial post. The city is still called लक्स्मी by the Newars and दूर्ग by the Tibetans. It came to be known as लक्स्मीपुर since about AD 1012. This place-name may have its origin in Laḍīta-maheśvara (near Kumbhēśvara) founded by the niece of Amśūvarma, Bhāgyadevi (born of Śūrasena and Bhogadevi, Amśūvarma's sister). See his inscription at Devapātan, dated Sāmvat 39


Let it be auspicious

at Tagval; in Lalitpur;

Modern Tyāgal tole, already a major settlement in ca. AD 714 (See a Licchavi inscription dated Sāmvat 148/AD 714, line 12; see also Rudradeva-Bhojadeva's NS 132(AD 1012): 74).