

THE TITTIRA-JĀTAKA AND THE EXTENDED MAHĀVAṂSA

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In contrast to the Mahāvamsa (Mhv), which is familiar to scholars as an important source on the history of Buddhism and of Ceylon, the extended version (EMhv) has remained relatively little known. The critical and, as far as my knowledge goes, only edition of this text, which is also called sometimes Cambodian Mahāvamsa because all extant manuscripts are written either in Cambodian script or copied from such manuscripts, has been prepared by the late G.P. Malalasekera as volume III of the Aluvihāra Series printed in Colombo 1937. In his long introduction, which does not only give a full concordance between the two Mahāvamsas, but which also contains an important discussion on the language, the sources, and the probable date and place of origin of this text, Mallalasekera suggests with commendable caution “In fact, there is no proof that the author of EM., . . . , was a monk, or that he was a native of Ceylon, though it is more than probable that he was both”, and “I would, therefore, provisionally assign EM. to the 9th or 10th century. If, however, as it is not impossible, the work was written outside Ceylon, say in Siam, these calculations become worthless” (both on p. LII).

Obviously, there are three possible ways to approach the solution of the problem of origin and date of EMhv: First, there is the colophon, which, apart from giving the name of the author as Moggallāna does not contain much useful information. Secondly, an investigation into the language of the text may well lead to more concrete results. As, however, our knowledge of post-canonical Pāli, and much more so of post-*aṭṭhakathā* and South East Asian Pāli is hardly developed at all, the necessary tools are lacking to ascertain the exact linguistic position of the EMhv. Lastly, there are the sources of this text. The colophon states that the author used the Mahāvamsa, the Buddhavamsa, the Thūpavamsa and the Līnattha, which, according to Malalasekera (p. XL) refers to the Mahāvamsaṭṭikā. Further, as Malalasekera points out, the author used in addition to the texts mentioned by himself also the Mahāvagga of the Vinayapitaka and its commentary, the Mahābodhisvamsa, and perhaps also the Buddhavamsa and Jātaka commentaries. As all these texts are well known and widely spread in all countries, where Theravāda Buddhism flourishes, they do not seem to be very helpful when trying to solve any of the three aspects of the problem: the author, his time and his country.

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In spite of this, it is possible to draw certain conclusions from the versified version of the Tittira-Jātaka (no. 319) found in the EMhv V 595-625. Although Malalasekera mentions this parallel to the Jātaka, he does not elaborate on, or draw conclusions from this fact. Now it is well known, and it has been pointed out by V. Fausbøll about a century ago in his introduction to the edition of the Jātaka (Ja) vol. IV (1887) and vol. VI (1896), that there are quite considerable discrepancies between the Sinhalese and the Burmese manuscripts of the Jātaka, so much so that Fausbøll was ready to consider them as two separate redactions. Therefore it may be useful to have a closer look at the Tittira-Jātaka comparing Fausbøll's edition Ja III 64.1-66.15 with the relevant verses of EMhv. As the latter text is not readily available everywhere, it may be useful to print it here in full:

- 595 „Paṭicca kammaṃ natthi” ti,, kiliṭṭhaṃ cetanaṃ vinā,”
thero bodhesi rājānaṃ vatvā *Tittirajātakam* :
- 596 Atīte Brahmadattamhi kārente rājataṃ kira
samiddhe nagare ramme pure Bāraṇasivhaye
- 597 dijakulamhi ekasmiṃ bodhisatto nibbattiya
vayappatto sabbasippaṃ uggaṇhitvāna vissuto
- 598 Takkasilāya nikkhamma pabbajji isipabbajaṃ.
Himavantappadesamhi pañcābhinnāsu pāragū
- 599 patvā aṭṭha samāpattiyo kiḷanto jhānakīḷitaṃ
ramaṇīye vanasaṇḍe vasanto ekako bhave.
- 600 Paccantaḡamaññataraṃ gacchamāno tadantare
loṇambilasevanatthaṃ narā disvā pasīdiya
- 601 pavane aññatarasmim kāretvā paṇṇasālakaṃ
paccayeh’ upaṭṭhahitvā sakkaccaṃ taṃ vasāpayuṃ.
- 602 Tasmim gāme tadā eko sakuṇiko vigaṇhiya
ekaṃ dīpakatittiraṃ sikkhāpetvāna pañjare
- 603 pakkhipitvā sinehena niccan ca paṭijaggati.
So taṃ araññaṃ netvā tittire āgatāgate
- 604 tassa saddena gaṇhitvā netvāna vikkiṇāti te.
„Mamaṃ nissāya tittirā nassanti bahu ñātakā
- 605 kiṃ mayaṃ taṃ pāpan” ti nirāsaddo ahosi so.
Nissaddabhāvaṃ ñatvā so paharivāna tittiraṃ
- 606 velupesikā sīsamhi abhiṇhaṃ luddako tato
dukkhāturāya saddaṃ karoti tittiro lahum.
- 607 Evaṃ sakuṇiko lobhaṃ nissāya tittire bahū
gaṇhitvā dīgham addhānaṃ kappesi jīvit’ attano.

- 608 Dukkhāturo so tittiro iti evaṃ vicintayi :
 „Aho ime marantū’ ti cetaṇā me na vijjati
- 609 paṭicca kammaṃ paṇ’ idaṃ abhinhaṃ mama phussati,
 akaronte mayi saddaṃ ete pi nāgamuṃ” iti.
- 610 „Karonte yeva gacchanti, ayañ ca āgatāgate
 ñātaka me gahetvāna pāpeti jīvitakkhayaṃ.
- 611 Ettha kin nu idaṃ pāpaṃ mayhaṃ atth’ eva natthi?” ti.
 Tato paṭṭhāya, „ko nu kho kaṅkhaṃ chindeyya maṃ,” iti
 paṇḍitaṃ so tathārūpaṃ voloketvāna vicari.
- 612 Ath’ ekadivasam so te gahetvā tittire bahū
 pūretvā pacchiyam, „pāniṃ pivissāmī” ti cintayi.
- 613 Bodhisattassa assamaṃ gantvā taṃ pañjaraṃ tato
 thapetvā santike tassa pivitvā pāniy’ icchitaṃ
- 614 vālukātale nipanno niddaṃ okkami tāvade.
 Niddokkantaṃ bhāvaṃ so ñatvāna tittiro tato,
- 615 „kaṅkham idaṃ tāpasam eva pucchissāmī,” ti cintayi,
 „Jānanto me sacāyaṃ so ajj’ ev’ imaṃ kathessati.”
- 616 Nisinno pañjare gāthaṃ pucchanto paṭham āha so :
 „susukam vata jīvāmi, labhāmi c’eva bhūñjitum
- 617 paripante ca tiṭṭhāmi kā su, bhante, gatī mama ?”
 Tassa pañhaṃ vissaṃjento dutiyaṃ gātham āha so :
- 618 „Mano te nappaṇamati, pakkhi, pāpassa kammunā,
 apāpaṃ tassa bhadrassa, na pāpaṃ upalippati.”
- 619 Sutvāna vacanaṃ tassa tatiyaṃ gātham āha so :
 „Ñātako no nisinno’, ti bahu agacchate jano,
- 620 paṭicca kammaṃ phusati tasmim me saṅkate mano.”
 Sutvā so bodhisatto taṃ catutthagātham āha so :
- 621 „Na paṭicca kammaṃ phusati, mano te nappadussati
 apposukkassa bhadrassa na pāpaṃ upalippati.”
- 622 Evaṃ so tittiraṃ tattha saññāpesi anekadhā,
 nissāya bodhisattaṃ kho nikkukkuccho aho si so.
- 623 Sakuṇiko pabuddho so bodhisattaṃ ’bhivandiya
 pañjaraṃ tattha-m-ādāya sakagharaṃ apakkami.
- 624 Dhammadesan’ imaṃ satthā āharitvāna jātaṃ
 samodhānesi sabbaṃ taṃ, „ tittiro Rāhulo ahu.
- 625 Kaṅkhaṃ vinodayanto so ahaṃ eva buddho ahu.”
 Taṃ dhammadesanaṃ sutvā rājā attamaṃ tato.

While the first verse (EMhv 595) is identical with Mhv V 264, the versified Jātaka closely follows the text in the Jātaka-Aṭṭhavaṇṇanā. Here, we can concentrate on those passages, where the wording in the Jātaka itself is different in the Sinhalese and in the Burmese manuscripts. EMhv (598 foll.) agrees with *pañca abhiññāyo ca atṭha* (B^d *atha*, Bⁱ *atta*) *samāpattiyo* (Ja III 64, 13) of the Burmese manuscripts, whereas the numerals are not found in the Sinhalese tradition. The situation is the same in other passages, too:

EMhv (601) *vāsāpayuṃ* (so read) : B^{id} *vāsāpesuṃ* : *vāsesuṃ* (Ja III 64,17)

(602) *dīpakattiraṃ* B=^{id} : *dīpatittiraṃ* (Ja III 64,18)

(604) *gaṇhitvā . . . vikkīṇāti* : B^{id} *gaheltvā vikiṇitvā* : different wording in the Sinhalese manuscripts (Ja III 64, 20)

(611) *ko nu kho kankhaṃ chindeyya 'maṃ* (sic, 'maṃ=*imaṃ*), where Fausbøll (Ja III 65,3) follows the obviously wrong Sinhalese reading *kammaṃ* for *kankham* found in B^{id}.

(612) *bahū* : B^{id} *bahu* : *bahuke* (Ja III 65,3)

(617) *vissajjento* = Bⁱ : *vissajjanto* (Ja III 65,16)

(621) *na paṭiccakammaṃ phusati* = B^{id} : *paticcakammaṃ na phusati* (Ja III 66,6*)

When trying to countercheck this evidence, there are indeed a few instances, where EMhv is closer to the Sinhalese than to, the Burmese tradition :

(614) *niddokkantassa bhāvaṃ* : *niddaṃ okkantabhāvaṃ*, but B^{id} *niddaṃ okkamanabhāvaṃ* (Ja III 65,6)

The reading *okkanta*, however, has been adopted also in the Burmese Chatṭhasaṃgāyana edition published on the occasion of the 2500th anniversary of the Nirvāṇa, although it is not clear, whether the edition by Fausbøll or a genuine Burmese edition has been followed.

In some respects the variants found in the *gāthās* of this Jātaka are more important. They seem to point to a certain independence of the canonical Jātaka tradition known to the author of EMhv. Two such variants (617) *kā su* and (619) *āgacchante* (so read for *agacchante* in the printed edition) follow the Sinhalese tradition (Ja II 65, 10*; 24*) against B^{id} *kā nu* and the unmetrical *āgacchanti*. Thrice, however, the *gāthās* preserved in EMhv even furnish altogether new readings: (618) *mano te na ppaṇamatit* is metrically correct against B^{id} *mano ce te* and the evidently corrupt C^k *mano mane* and C^s *mano cane* (Ja III 65, 17*); (621) *mano te* is not shared by the rest of the tradition, which has *mano ce* (Ja III 66,6*) firmly rooted in the text tradition as proved by the quotation in the Saddanīti *mano ce na ppadussati*, Sadd 101, 15*. As *ce* instead of *te* is postulated by the context, this reading certainly is a mistake in the archetype of the EMhv.

The most interesting variant, however, is (618) *apāpaṃ tassa* against *avyāvaṭassa* (Ja III 65, 18*) with the Burmese variants Bⁱ *ajhāvataṣṣa* and B^d *abyāvataṣṣa*. The text as printed in EMhv evidently needs correction in the light of the Jātaka: *apāpaṃatssa* seems to go back to a misunderstood *apāpatassa*, which again may be a genuine variant of *a-v(y)āvata*. Although -t- instead of -ṭ- seems to bring EMhv nearer to the Burmese Jātaka tradition, it should be kept in mind that *avyāpṛta* might well develop a doublet showing -t-, cf. *kṛta > kaṭa/kata*. Therefore -pata for -vaṭa- may, but need not necessarily be, a South East Asian reading confusing dentals and cerebrals. The development of *v - p* into *p-p* (cf. V. Trenckner, Notes on the Milindapañha 1879 = JPTS 1908. 113; Critical Pāli Dictionary s.v. *avyāvaṭa*, and Helmer Smith, Saddanīti V. 1966. Index p. 1516 "p") in EMhv against *v - v* again underlines a position of EMhv aloof to some extent at least from both Jātaka traditions.

In those passages of EMhv corresponding to the prose of the Jātaka, on the other hand, there are only two instances, where there might have been a wording in the text used by the author of EMhv different from the Burmese and the Sinhalese traditions: (601) *pavane* against *araññe* (Ja III 64,16) and (616) *nisinno* against *nipanno* (Ja III 65,7). For neither change in wording is vindicated by the metre.

To sum up: On the whole it is quite evident that the text of the Tittira-Jātaka as versified in EMhv is based on a version very near or even more or less identical with the Burmese tradition found in the manuscripts used by Fausbøll. This rules out at once that the EMhv has been written in Ceylon. It does not, however, necessarily point to any South East Asian country as its place of origin. For the differences from the Burmese and the Sinhalese Jātaka traditions may be interpreted in two ways. Either these passages represent simply an older stage of the development of the Burmese manuscript tradition of the Jātaka, or they may reflect, however faintly, a third, South Indian text of the Jātaka. If the date of EMhv inferred by Malalasekera is only approximately correct, the latter might even be the more probable conclusion. This again would be one of the rather few and therefore all the more precious survivals of the South Indian Pāli tradition, which with some probability may be traced also in Aggavaṃsa's Saddanīti, as I have tried to show elsewhere (Notes on the Pāli tradition in Burma, to be published by the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen)¹.

1. The printed edition of EMhv has to be corrected: (600) *gacchamāno* read -*naṃ*; (602) *sakuṇika* read *sā-* always; (610) *yeva gacchanti* read *yevāgacchanti*; (615) *kankhaṃ idamaṃ* read *kankhaṃ imaṃ*. — (605) *nirāsaddo* instead of *nissaddo* (Ja III 64, 22) is not clear to me.