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THE ARTHASIDDHI AVADĀNA-TALE IN OIRAT-MONGOLIAN

Provisionally Translated from the Oirat by
John R. Krueger

In Journal of the American Oriental Society 86.178 (1966) I reported the existence of Laufer's copy of the tüb oroni tusa bütüqsen xa:n kübüön story, "Prince Attained-Merit (Arthasiddhi) of Middle-Earth," in a manuscript copy at the Field Museum in Chicago. It is the same as item 156 in W. Heissig's catalogue of German Mongolica (the Verzeichnis, 1961), cf. too there item 504-a.

The text is not very well written, and contains some puzzles not as yet completely solved. Pending such time as when it will be possible to secure photocopies of other texts or versions, it seemed meritorious to present here for our readers the writer's provisional rendering of this avadāna, as a sample of the Oirat literature--so little of which exists in translation in any language.

The MS is six folios, 4 written on, of about 21 lines each.

tüb oroni tusa bütüqsen xa:n kübüön

[1-A]

Prince Arthasiddhi (tusa bütüqsen) of Middle-Earth,
Revealing (=fulfilling) the prophecy of Dipaṁkara Buddha,
Taking stock of his accumulation of precious sublime merit,
Knowing the time had come to save lower sentients,
Reported to his father Pure-Food (Śuddhodāna) that he would become a monk.

His father's statement was
"Do not abandon the person of your father the king;
Do not cast away your royal saṁsara;
Defend ye carefully your whole people;
I shall give you unstintingly whatever you wish,"
he beseeched.

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When he sought the Three Alms impossible to be given,* his father, King Sŏdtuni (Pure-Food) found no means [to prevent him] and emitted no sound.

When the elevated prince, the Faith of Sentients,
said he would become a monk,
When he reported this repeatedly to his father Pure-
Food,
"Because my single boy is like my beloved heart, [1-B]
Apply all means not to let him become a monk" he
ordered in secret.

Assembling and gathering the many subject peoples,
With 108 Queens headed by Yasodhara (aldar bariqci),
Passing day and night with melody and music
He sat and guarded his firm portal impossible for an
extremely large person to open.

At that time, Qormusta of the Heavenly Brahmans (Esrua) and four Maharaja gods came, and blessed (=enchanted) the people slumbering there so that they would not awake, and came at once before Arthasiddhi, bowed and implored, "Please do perform the hardship of quickly becoming a Buddha, by the force of a benediction since time immemorial," they reported.

The elevated holy Bodhisattva, powerful among men, when he desired to proceed via the yellowish horses of the vehicle, riding postillion with Chan[d]aka the charioteer, they elevated him from the vehicle. The Four Majarajas conducted him and led him via the lumined spheres. [2-A]

Esrua (=Brahma) and Qormusta
Awoke Yasodhara (Aldar bariqci) from slumber early
of a morning,
Hastened out to the Jewelled Dais and
Perceived that the esteemed elevated Saint and
Bodhisattva was apparently
absent.

Quickly she went to the throne, perplexed.

The elevated prince, faith of sentients, had gone to
become a monk, she learned,
Her breath was unable to come in or outwards,
Her breathing was choked, nor came out any sound;
She embraced the golden throne and dais and fell in
a faint there.

---

*No rebirth, no illness, no death.

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Each and all awoke from slumber.

"Where is the Prince?" they said as they encountered
one another,
Not a single person was seen in the direction the
prince had gone,
. . . . . .
Everyone's thoughts were bewildered and no one made a
sound.

As Yasodhara sat, her lacquer-black eyes unblinking, at that time the charioteer Chan[d]aka came and brought back the chariot's yellowish horses. [2-B]

"This elevated robust and perfected handsome fine youth of mine, in which direction did he proceed? When you met with him and conveyed him, whither (?) did you go, Chandaka? Are you behaving properly with him my beloved? Don't create obstacles!" she said.

"This your foremost elevated robust and perfected
handsome fine youth,
After becoming a monk before a very purified stupa,
Gave me your yellow (steeds) and dispatched (me);
So as to become a surely perfected Buddha did he
depart.
What are we to do?

One who has dwelt surrounded by incomparably many
subjects,
Dined on foods such as heavenly ambrosia,
Grown up wearing nice, thin, delicate soft clothing,
How can one such as he dwell alone in the uninhabited
land, my oval-eyed one?

[3-A] When he is bored, with whom will he make friends?
When he is thirsty, who will fetch pure transparent
ambrosia?
When he is sleepy, who will ready a soft blanket
covering?
This bored youth of mine, after seeing some suffering,
will he not return?" he said.

The visiting Grand Lama said:

"When one is bored, intellect and wisdom both will be
comrades;
When one is thirsty, dine of the food of dhyana-
meditation;
When one is sleepy, repose in the sphere of illumined
beams;
It will be very helpful to soon becoming a Buddha. My
beautiful goddess, do not trouble your mind," he said.

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"Well, Chandaka, his performing the benediction of old, so as to become a monk for the sake of lower other beings, is very suitable, I am minded. Although it is so, (yet) my heart is grieved and pained, and I cannot endure it" she said. Thus performed she her eulogy raising her voice on high.

[3-B] "My one with the fair and lovely body, perfect with the 32 signs,
Who protects like a son all the sentients of the three worlds,
My one of illumined transparent thought,
My Brahman-voiced one who saves by one command all six kinds of sorrow-afflicted sentients,

My one with the fair and lovely body like a mango(?)-tree,
My one with the unblemished face like the autumnal moon,
My one of splendor grandly greater than the sun's rays,
My sole good lord perfect with the exemplary shape of sun and moon" she said, raising her voice on high and emitting her cry.

"This elevated robust and perfected handsome fine youth (=lass) of mine, who made me awaken,
You have placed on my heart your soles of golden color and fragrant,
Caressing my sinciput by your golden mudra-gesture which is perfected with equality,
I am becoming a monk endowed with perfectly completed bodhi" he said.

[4-A]

"If you go, what shall I do? When I sit surrounded with deities, I am filled with grief.

With perfectly complete bodhi,
I have thought to make obstacles to your becoming a monk;
The mind has become greatly disgusted with this stupid and ignorant birth-cycle;
Meanwhile, why do you flee from us?

Abandoning your own father Pure-Food,
Casting off your regal samsara,
Your queen, palace enriched with gold and jewels, . . . children,
Oh! who else will be aside from him the person who is going thus?

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So it has become in my suffering; my mind is tormented," she reported the suffering of her life.

Thinking to divert her mind, they presented jeweled ornaments and she donned them, and glided a comb through her banner-black pliable entufted hair.

[4-B]

"May it be that this elevated robust and perfected handsome fine youth of mine, will quickly become a Buddha, and will come to this land!" she said, as she sat evoking such a benediction.

END

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