

Abstract

I would like to read my paper in the section: **9. Buddhist Studies.**

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Title: On a Sanskrit version of the Vessantara-jātaka from Nepal

Abstract: The Vessantara-jātaka is a previous birth-story of the Buddha which tells us the life of the Prince Vessantara, the last but one former incarnation of the Buddha before his “Awakening”. This jāataka narrates the limitless generosity of the Prince Vessantara who gives away all his properties, even his children and wife. Nevertheless the story ends with a happy-end; with help of Indra the family of Vessantara unites again. With his exceptional generosity the Prince Vessantara accomplishes the “Perfection of Giving”, namely *dānapāramī* (skt. *dāna-pāramitā*), one of the conditions which a Bodhisatta (skt. Bodhisattva) has to meet in order to become a Buddha. This jāataka is the most famous and widely spread among the Buddhist previous birth-stories and has been retold in every language of the Buddhist countries. Even some Sanskrit versions of the Vessantara-jātaka or Viśvantara-jātaka exist. In my presentation a Sanskrit version of the Viśvantara-jātaka from Nepal, whose text is neither published nor investigated yet, will be treated. Until now a Nepalese Interpretation, namely Newarī-version of the Vessantara-jātaka that is published by S. Lienhard is well-known. However the version which I will treat in my presentation is written in Sanskrit and differs obviously from the Newarī-version. This Sanskrit version from Nepal forms nearly a typical Buddhist Sutra-style and lacks the so-called *samodhāna*-part, in which a protagonist and characters in a jāataka-story are identified with the Buddha himself, his Family or his Monks. Therefore this version deviates also from the “usual” style of other Buddhist jātakas or avadānas. In my presentation this Sanskrit version of the Vessantara-jātaka from Nepal will be outlined and then its characteristics will be discussed in detail.