

On an unknown commentary to the Yājñavalkya Smṛti from NGMP manuscript collection

Yasuke Ikari (Kyoto)

Among a large number of manuscripts of the Dharmaśāstra section of the precious collection of NGMP manuscripts, we find a fragment of the commentary to the Yājñavalkyasmṛti(YS) copied from a ms. in late Gupta script. NGMPP B432/19. It is dated NS122/1002A.D and is one of the oldest Smṛti manuscripts in this collection.

This fragment covers the contents correspondint to YS 1.1-195 (numbers of the Mitākṣarā version).

What is most interesting with this commentary is that it shows many parallels with the Mitākṣarā commentary by Vijñāneśvra and the Aparārka commentary by Aparāditya . I have not succeeded in identifying the author of this new commentary, but as both the date written in the colophon (NS122/ 1002A.D) and the style of the script indicate that this commentary so far unknown is older than the Mitākṣarā as well as the Aparārka.

Comparison of the contents of this old commentary with those of the influential commentaries ofr Vijñāneśvara and Aparāditya will reveal that this new NGM manuscript is not only the precursor of these two famous commentaries , but was partly regarded as a model of (at least one of the models of) the styles of later commentaries. Close examination of the parallel portions of these commentaries will shed a new light to the styles of commentating of the Mitakṣarā and the Aparārka.