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The inscription denotes a votive object, whereas clay cones bear building inscriptions, but what purpose the object served I do not know. The style of writing is that of the Third Dynasty of Ur, and seems to me probably subsequent to Gudea. As the name of Ur-NIN.MAR does not occur on tablets of the time of the Third Dynasty, this governor may have ruled Lagash at the end of the Gutian period.

Transliteration

(1) (d)Ba-u (2) nin-a-ni (3) nam-ti (4) Ur-(d)NIN.MAR.KI
(5) iššak (6) Lagas KI-ka-še (7) gim-gir-nun (8) dam-amar-su
(9) dumu al-ge (10) u nam-ti-nil-su (11) a-mu-na-ru.

NOTES

1. Jensen reads the name of this deity Baba, and is supported by Thureau-Dangin, Homophones sumériens, p. 40.
7. Presumably a female proper name.
8. This appears to describe the lady's relation to the governor for whose life the object is dedicated, but I do not understand the phrase.
9. dumu seems to stand for dumu sal as in Gadd and Lefrain, Ur Excavations. Texts, i, No. 12, or No. 17. al alone is a peculiar personal name; one expects al-la, but the scribe is given to contracted forms.

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Two Hymns of the Catuḥ-stava of Nāgārjuna

By GIUSEPPE TUCCI

The two hymns here edited are respectively the first and the last of the four stavas attributed to Nāgārjuna, and generally known and quoted under the comprehensive name Catuḥ-stava or Catu-stava; the other two stotras, missing in our manuscript, are the Lokāṭita-stava and the Cittā-vajra-stava. As to their authorship, there is but little doubt; the style itself is the same as that of the kārikās of the Mūla-mādhyamika-kārikās. Moreover, Candrakirti in his Prasannapadā quotes from the Catuḥ-stava, attributing one of them, viz. the Lokāṭita-stava to the Master, ācārya-pādāḥ (p. 413).

We are naturally inclined to attach little importance to the hymnology of the Hindus, because, even if some of the stotras are very beautiful from the literary point of view, we think that they do not add very much to our knowledge of Hindu thought. But I venture to disagree. Many of the stotras are not mere prayers or hymns in praise of God. In a certain way they cannot be dissociated from the dhyānas, which very often are embodied in them, that is to say, their aim is to produce an inner ecstasy by which the vision of God is made possible. They are therefore essential moments of the complex process of sādhana, just as the pājā, the nāma-japa, the kirtana, etc.; they are, in other words, instruments by which the intelligence grasps the religious truth therein expounded, while in a second moment the spirit focuses and visualizes, as it were, that same truth in a direct experience. It is therefore evident that the immense stotra-literature has a great bearing upon the study of Indian mysticism, and must be thoroughly investigated by the students of religious psychology or by those who want to understand the true and fundamental characters of Hindu religious experience.
In the Catuh-stava we are confronted, no doubt, with one of the best specimens of this kind of literature. As a matter of fact, the four stotras contain in a great synthesis the entire Mahāyāna dogmaties conducive to the supreme realization of the śūnyatā, considered as paramārtha, viz. as the Absolute. At the same time they show, paradoxical as this might appear at first sight, that Buddhism even in its Mahāyāna derivatives remained fundamentally what it was at its very beginning; I mean a kind of mysticism which does not admit the existence of any god as an absolute entity. Of course its Olympus is full of gods and divine beings, crowned by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, but all these gods have only a relative reality, they exist in so far as prapañca exists, viz. in so far as the play of vikalpa and samkalpa, the synthetic and analytic imaginations, takes place in our mind. Even the dhyāni-Buddhas of later Mahāyāna-mysticism are subjective projections of the purified mind of the Bodhisattvas or of the Yogins. Their vision can be enjoyed in the highest stages of dhyanā and samādhi; but, when all impressions of the great cosmic ignorance representing the negative but necessary side of the Eternal are destroyed, even Buddhas and Tathāgatas disappear, since any activity of mind is lost in the paramārtha. This paramārtha is the Absolute beyond words, which may be called void only in so far as no predicate can be applied to it.

In the sphere of relative existence there is place for all sorts of gods, but in the plane of truth even the Tathāgata vanishes (v. Haribhadra’s Abhisamayālankārāloka, p. 542, of my edition).

This process is indicated by the Catuh-stava; the four parts into which it is divided cannot be dissociated. There must be four stava because the truth can be realized in a fourfold gradation of different intensity corresponding to the fourfold body of the Buddha. Each stava is therefore to be related to a particular aspect of the truth, of which one of the four bodies of the Buddha is to be considered as the symbol. It seems to me that the Catuh-stava codifies, as it were, the buddhology of Nāgārjuna, showing at the same time that the great doctor knew the system of the four bodies of Buddha, though he gives each one of them a name different from the usual one. But, reading the hymns, we shall easily recognize behind the difference of denomination the analogy of doctrine, and it will not be difficult to identify nirupama with nirmanā, lokālita with sambhoga, citta-vajra with dharmā-kāya, paramārtha with svābhāvika-kāya. This implies analogy between Nāgārjuna and Maitreyā, and it shows that the four-kāya-theory is much older and more diffused than is generally supposed.

My text is based on a Nepalese paper manuscript, not very old, which I bought in Nepal; the text is accompanied by a Tikā, which is a mere bāla-bodhinī, giving the grammatical construction of the sentences, nothing more.

The Tibetan translation is contained in bsTan agyur, mDo (Narthang edition), i, 74, b, 4 ff.
The Hymn to the Incomparable One

1. O incomparable One, homage unto Thee, who knowest (the truth that phenomena) have no essence of their own! Thou art eager of the benefit of this world, misled by different theories.

2. Nothing is seen by Thyself with the eye of the enlightened One. Sublime, O Lord, is Thy view which perceives the truth.\(^1\)

3. From the standpoint of metaphysical truth there is neither knower nor thing to be known. Oh! Thou knowest the reality very difficult to be known.

4. Thou dost neither create nor destroy anything; having perceived the sameness of everything, thou reachedst the most sublime condition.

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\(^1\) The MS. reads vādine, but the Tīkā vedita, which is supported by the Tibetan text.
\(^2\) MSS. na ca nasatvāyā.
5. Thou dost not take nirvāṇa as the suppression of saṃsāra; since thou, O Lord, dost not perceive any saṃsāra, thou obtainedst quiescence.\textsuperscript{1}

6. Thou knowest that the defilement of passion and the purification of virtue have the same taste; since no discrimination is possible in the reality thou art completely pure.

7. Thou, O Master, didst not utter a single syllable, and (yet) the entire people fit to be converted was gratified with the shower of the law.

8. Thou art not adherent to the skandhas, to the dhātus, or to the āyatana. Thou art mind only (as infinite and pure) as the ether, nor dost Thou reside in any contingent thing (dharma).

9. The notion of being does not occur to Thee at all, and yet Thou art exceedingly compassionate towards all beings tortured by sorrow and pain.

\textsuperscript{1} Nirvāṇa is not the result of suppression of saṃsāra; suppression of something implies previous existence of something; but saṃsāra is not existence—inasmuch it is pratītya-samutpāda, relative; nirvāṇa also is relative, if it is considered as the result of suppression of kleśas, viz. of saṃsāra. As a matter of fact, neither merit nor demerit exist, because any judgment of values as well as any notion is vikalpa or samkalpa. But truth is beyond the two; nirvāṇa and saṃsāra are therefore equivalent, since they are imagined as reciprocally connected, but in the realization of paramārtha they must disappear just as all contraries must necessarily vanish.
10. Thy mind, O Lord, is not attached to those multifarious opinions as regards pleasure and pain, existence of an ego, non-existence of an ego, affirmation of some eternal being, negation of some eternal being.

11. Thy belief is that things do not go (changing into some other condition), nor do they come (into existence by the agency of some force); nor dost Thou admit that there is a whole as the conglomeration of many parts. Therefore Thou knowest the absolute truth.

12. Thou art followed everywhere, but Thou art born nowhere; oh great ascetic, Thou art beyond our thought, as regards attributes of birth and corporeity.

13. Thou, the irreproachable One, didst understand that this world is neither unity nor multiplicity; it is like an echo, it is subject neither to changing [into other forms] nor to destruction.

14. Thou, my Lord, didst know that the cycle of existence is neither eternal nor impermanent, that in it there is no unpredictable nor predicate, (since it is) similar to a dream or to a magic play.

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1 MS. pāta.
2 Quoted by Candrakirti, commenting on Mūla-mādhyamika-kārikās, p. 215, where in a we read ekatvānyatva; in c Candrakirti’s reading is defective.
15. All defilements which have their root and their fruit in the faculty of projecting new karmic series have been completely overcome by Thee, immaculate One. By (realizing) the nature of the defilements thou obtainest immortality.

16. O Thou, firm in thy resolve, Thou didst see the world of material appearances as devoid of any predicate and like the immaterial. Still in the material sphere Thou appearest with a body shining with the (thirty-two) marks of the great man.

17. But even if Thy appearance has been seen, it cannot be said that Thou hast been seen. When the object has been seen, Thou art well seen, but reality is not the object of vision.¹

18. Thy body has not the nine holes (as mortal beings have), it has no flesh, no bones, no blood; still Thou manifestedst a body (which is a mere reflex) just as the rainbow in the sky.

19. Neither disease nor impurity are in Thy body; it is not subject to hunger or thirst and still in order to comply with the world, Thou hast shown a worldly behaviour.

20. O impeccable One, no fault whatsoever (caused) by the obstruction of the actions can be found in Thee; still on account of thy pity for this world Thou hast shown (an apparent) diving into karman.

¹ The various ways of worshipping the Buddhas are the first moment in the long anupurei or krama, which leads to the supreme realization. The same theory is accepted by the Śaiva system of Kashmir, and generally by all Indian systems following Vedānta philosophy. The idea of God and the meditation on God as a personal being are mere upāya for the siddhi, which makes the śādhaka fit for higher stages of mystic realizations.
21. Since the reality cannot be differentiated, there are no different vehicles (of liberation); only in order to convert living beings (according to their different tendencies and maturity) Thou preachest the three vehicles.\(^1\)

22. Thy body is eternal, imperishable, auspicious. It is the very law, it is the Victorious one. Still on account of the people to be converted (to the path of salvation) Thou showest Thy passing away into nirvāṇa.

23. In the infinite universe Thou art now and then beheld by those who have faith in Thee, and are anxious [to become Buddhas and to imitate Thy] descending upon earth, Thy birth, Thy illumination, Thy preaching, Thy entering into nirvāṇa.

24. No feeling, O Lord, no ideation, no motion are in Thee. Thou art accomplishing in this world the duty of a Buddha, without participating in it.

25. I have spread over the perfect One, who is beyond our thoughts and any limitation, the flowers of his very attributes. Through the merit which I have begot may all living beings in this world participate in the extremely deep law of the sublime ascetic.\(^2\)

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1 Viz. ekayāna theory, as opposed to the three-yāna theory; the truth being one, the vehicle to its realization must be one. But the truth appears to beings in a different way according to their different preparation and maturity.

2 The usual puṇyatīrthāyāma is contained in this verse.
The Hymn to the Supreme Reality

1. How can I praise Thee, O Lord, (since Thou art) unborn, residing in no place, surpassing any worldly comparison, abiding in the sphere which is beyond the path of words?

2. Anyhow, having recourse to worldly convention, I shall praise my Master with devotion, as Thou art, [only] accessible in the sense of reality.

3. Since Thou hast the nature of the unborn, for Thee there is no birth, no coming, no going. Homage unto Thee, O Lord, who art devoid of any essence!

4. Thou art neither existence nor non-existence, neither impermanent nor perennial, neither eternal nor non-eternal. Homage unto Thee who art beyond any duality!

5. No colour is perceived in Thee, neither red nor green nor scarlet, neither yellow nor black nor white. Homage unto Thee, who art without colour!

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1 The paramārtha is beyond words; how can it be praised? It is the Absolute and therefore, by definition, no further determination is possible. When we want to say something about it we cannot help limiting it within our ideas. But it is always through words and ideas that truths become present to our spirit and are afterwards realized. The following verses insist therefore on the negative description of the paramārtha, of which the best determination is complete negation of all predicables; omnis determinatio est negatio.

2 Sātvata, when used with nitya, indicates that being which, having had an origin, is never destroyed; nitya is the being without beginning or end, sadasatparināmasūnya.
6. Thou art neither big nor small, neither long nor globular. Thou hast reached the stage of the limitless. Homage unto Thee, the unlimited One.

7. Thou art neither far away nor near, neither in the sky nor in the earth, neither in the cycle of existences nor in Nirvāṇa. Homage unto Thee, who dost reside in no place!

8. Thou dost not stay in any dharma, but art gone into the condition of the Absolute and hast obtained the sublime deepness. Homage unto Thee, the deep One.

9. Praised in this way, let Him be praised; but has He been praised? When all dharmas are void who is praised or by whom can he be praised?

10. Who can praise Thee, as Thou art devoid of birth and decay, and since neither end nor middling, neither perception nor perceived exist for Thee?

11. I have praised the Well-gone (Sugata) who is neither gone nor come, and who is devoid of any going. Through the merit so acquired may this world go along the path of the Well-gone.

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