



Four Gandhari Samyuktagama Sutras: Senior Kharosthi Fragment 5 (Gandharan Buddhist Texts)

Andrew Stuart Glass

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Four Gandhari Samyuktagama Sutras continues the study of Gandharan Buddhist texts and is the first investigation of a scroll from the Senior Collection of Kharosthi manuscripts. The Senior Collection, which is named after its owner, Robert Senior (Glastonbury, U.K.), consists of twenty-four birch bark scrolls or scroll fragments with at least forty-one Buddhist texts written in the Gandhari language and Kharosthi script. Senior scroll number 5, one of the best preserved of all Kharosthi manuscripts, contains four short sutras that give a first-hand account of meditation practice in Gandhara in the middle of the second century A.D.

The first sutra, which has no direct parallel in other Buddhist literatures, presents a description of four visualization exercises, three of which are unique to the Gandharan tradition. The second sutra is a teaching of non-self, which is also found in Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan. The third and fourth sutras, also available in Pali and Chinese, emphasize the role of meditation in progressing toward enlightenment.

This volume details the textual background of the Samyuktagama, a major collection of Buddhist scriptures arranged by topic, and places Gandhari Samyuktagama Sutras in this context. Andrew Glass compares the sutras with the parallel versions in Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan and presents a transcription and reconstruction of the text, together with an English translation. He also covers the paleography, orthography, phonology, and morphology of the text and offers a detailed analytic commentary on each sutra. Mark Allon discusses the significance of the Senior Collection to the ongoing textual studies. Appendices provide editions and translations of the parallel texts in Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan. There is also a complete word index to the Gandhari text, as well as Chinese-Gandhari and Tibetan-Gandhari indexes.

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