

## **The Earliest Dated Document in Newari The Palmleaf from Ukū Bāhāh NS 235/AD 1114**

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The palmleaf land-grant, sale and mortgage documents are one of the most important primary source-materials for research into the social, cultural, economic, and political history of medieval and late medieval Nepal. Until recent years they were available in great numbers in the private collections of the older families, temples and monasteries of the Nepal Valley. Since the beginning of this century, historians have been using them off and on (Burleigh, 1970; Vajrācārya, 1984). Some have been recently edited and published by the National Archives and others, with the German help. (See Sakya, 1980, Rajvamsi, 1983 Parts 1-4, Kölver and Sakya, 1985 etc.)

The palmleaf document discussed in this paper is the earliest document in the Newari language. Measuring 4 cm x 66 cm, it is available in the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project Microfilm No. E 1403/13 in the National Archives. It comes from the collection of the Ukū Bāhāh, Patan. It was first published by Śākya, 1980 in devānagrī transliteration, though with several misreadings. Referring to the historical significance of the palmleaf land-grant documents, Vajrācārya (1984:10-14) has used this document, giving its devanāgarī transliteration and Nepali translation. Our transliteration as well as translation, however, diverges from Vajrācārya's at a number of places. This will be evident by comparing the two.

Locke (1985:94) believes that the Ukū Bāhāḥ was founded in the 6th-7th century A.D. Kölver and Śākya (1985:14), on the other hand, think that it is a later foundation of about 11th century A.D., founded by Śivadeva (A.D. 1098-1126) and renovated by Rudradeva (A. D. 1167-1175).

The palmleaf deals with the sharing of incomes -- both in cash and in kind -- particularly the right to enjoy and use them (i.e. *paribhoga* -- usufruct) among the tenant-farmers tilling the monastery's land and the members of the monastic Order. It also deals with sharing the right to enjoy and use other material possessions of the monastery. So here is an interesting evidence from medieval Nepal when the monastery and its lands were collective property used and enjoyed as individual possessions turn by turn. The palmleaf sheds much light on the sociology of medieval Buddhist monastery where the monks were duly ordained but were married householders occupying the monastery, living with their families and children.

For the linguist interested in historical analysis of the Newari language, this palmleaf document is of great value. The sources of words used in this document are understandably cultural loans from Sanskrit, Middle Indo-Aryan, and hybrid Sanskrit. The most interesting lexical items are, however, the indigenised loans such as *paccu* (to defray), *civari* (the means of livelihood for an ordained monk; prebend), *daṇḍapayu* (to punish). There are also examples of loanwords and native words coexisting side by side. For example, we have both *dhā(nya)*, *vri(hi)*, and *vā* (paddy), *māni(kā)* as well as *pam*. We have *daśa* (ten), *tr̥*, *traya* (three) as well as *ne* (two) and, most interesting of all, *sara-na-naiyu* (one hundred and seventy). This shows that the two numeral systems have co-existed in Newari at least for a thousand years.

The document contains much valuable morphological information on nouns and noun phrases. For instance, we notice several case-markers, suggesting a full-fledged case-marking system for nominals, such as *-sa* (genitive/locative), *-na* (agentive/instrument), *-sake* (associative), *-yā* (possessive), *-ta* (dative/benefactive), etc. Similarly, for verbs we notice modals such as *māl-u* (to be necessary), principal verbs such as *nhā/nhu* or formatives from loan *lāga-rap-e* (to cost); *paccu* (to pay; to defray). There are some important Class I verb-roots such as *jvaṇa* (to get hold of, *seṇa* (to spoil, to disobey), *taṇa* (to add), *hoṇa* (to continue). The honorific

imperative verb form *bi-sana* (to give) is no less interesting than the concessive form *te-bu* (to allow; to permit). The *-u* form of the verb was analysed and interpreted by Jørgensen (1941) as "habitual or indicating an action to be done in future" used with Class II and III vowel-final verb roots.

The syntactic information available in the text indicates two kinds of structures, verbless string of words as well as "sentences" with final verbs. The first type of structures, interpreted by Kölver and Śākya (1985:27) as the hangover of Sanskrit nominal compounds, may have been a survival of the "isolating" phase whereas the second, the new development towards an "inflecting" or at least an agglutinating phase. Classical Newari, in the earliest phase of its documented history, however, does not seem to conform to the traditional stereotypes of a Tibeto-Burman language. Newari does not appear to be an isolating language nor a language with predominantly "monosyllabic lexical structure" It does not yet seem to have developed any classifier system for enumeration of nominals. It certainly does not seem to retain any "prefixes" -- if it had any ever. It was already a verb-final language with all the attendant syndromes. However, we do not yet know enough about the early history of Newari, and we can hardly afford to be dogmatic with so scanty connected data.

### English Translation

1. Hail! Let it be auspicious! Saṃvat 235 Mārgasīra Kṛṣṇa 14. This document lays down the rules for the monastic community of the Manidharajiva Mahāvihāra, consecrated by Śrī Śivadeva, located at Tegvala in Lalitakaramā. The tenant of the Bandhuvuvihāra gets two *mānikās* of paddy for his monk's robe (i.e. livelihood). Padmabhadra, Munibhadra, Dānabhadra, and Punnabhadra each gets ten *mānikās*, paddy *mānikās* 10/10/10/10. All gifts-objects borrowed from Padmabhadra will be regarded as concessions.
2. For the office of the consecrated Sthavira, an additional twofold share is allocated. For others, the objects of everyday use are common. The attendants, clothes, and the consecration jars, etc., will be divided among five partners, including the tenant of the Bandhavuvihāra -- all of whom will respectively enjoy the rights to use them. All the gold,

silver, and garments to be used in the ordination of the monks will be given by the Upādhyāya and his disciples, together with livelihood grants, by raising donations from the Order.

3. Upon the death of the Upādhyāya, all the means of subsistence will go to the three monasteries. Therefore, the members of the community should keep an eye on what remains and replace/exchange for what is lost. With a remaining object or gift rightly sold out give some clothes. The residents of the monastery have to be fed by the community of Vaṃkuvihāra. The donor has to furnish 170 pieces of shawls, clothes, and betel-nuts. The leftover grain and betel-nuts may be kept for later use. The shawls and garments are to be shared by the monks in attendance. As for the children and wives of the monks, give the shares according to their status/number.
4. The remaining property will be inherited by the Order. With this objective in common, the Order will defray due payments. The donor is entitled to get hold of any culprit in the Vaṃkuvihāra who violated these rules and punish him by making him pay a fine of 3 *māṣas* of gold. The one who enjoys the paddy harvest of Vaṃbiḍul field will donate 2 *mānikās* to both Dānabhadra and Punnabhadra. The remaining portions of paddy harvest from the Vaṃbiḍul field will go to the wife of the eldest tenant as usufruct for life.
5. After her, the right goes back again to the monastic Order. The witnesses to this deed of grant are Vakoli Bhāro and the Elder Sāhu. The Sthavira has to pay two *pāthis* of grain as a gift to the next/younger one by joint donations.

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## Devanāgarī Transliteration

१. सिद्धं स्वस्ति । सम्बत आ ल ह (२३५) मार्गसिर कृष्ण चतुर्दश्याम । श्रीललितक्रमायां  
श्रीतेगवल्के श्रीसिवदेवसंस्कारित श्रीमनिधरजैवमहाविहारार्यसर्वसंधानां  
नियमपरिभाषपत्रिकेयम् । बन्धुबुविहार हावोंया चीवरि मानि २ पदमभद्र दानभद्र  
पुन्नभद्र एतेषां चीवरि दस मानिका धा मा १०।१०।१०।१० पदमभद्रया छु पन का-
२. वछीन मुक्ति । स्थविरया स्थविरासनत तंड दुगुण भंट । • अपरस सम भण्डल पन सम-  
चारिणि । कपहू भृङ्गा प्रभृति डा हडा बंधबुविहार हावोंन तंड क्रमण डास परिभोग  
लीच्छुयुबुस लुं वहलछी लगरपबु पत्र संघसके सीसन उपाध्यायन न्हूसपं चीवरि बियु  
मालु । मरणकालस वहल-
३. छीन ढाको तृसंघष परिभोग । छु प लेगन कीत्य बिपार वस्त्र बिबु मिखा तिबु मद्गुन  
छु सात दुगुन वल्हे । निवासि भोजन वंकुविहार न्हायु मालु । दानपति भारोष गा  
लन ग्वय सरनडैयु १७० । छु ले च्यकुट्ट ग्वय तनेकपिन ख । ल्ल गा गन चोकोस ।  
मोचा म्हंचमोटो कुट्टुम्बानुरूपन बिसन सेष संघ दायाद ।

४. सकल कार्यजस समस्त संघस सम । अभिप्रायायन पच्चु मालु । सुन संघ कार्य सेड  
विपरीतन वंगुया दानपति भारोष वंकुविहार संघ ज्वड लुं मंस त्रय दण्डपयु टेबु ।  
वंबिडुल वृ सुन भोगय होडन दानभद्र पुन्नभद्र उभय वा मानि ३ बि मालु । वंबिडुल वृ  
नायिकिनि हावोया जन्मछी नायिकिनि हावोया
५. परिभोग उस परम संघ परिसमभोग । अत्राधिसाक्षिण । श्रीभारो वकोलि भारो साहु  
ढोकबु एते प्रमानेति ॥ वा नेपं तंड स्थविरन कुट्टन मेलको आशीर्श गोल्ल न्ह्यु मालु ॥

## Index and Glossary

- अपरस beyond that; after that  
 अभिप्रायान with the intention or  
 objective <Skt. अभिप्राय  
 intention  
 आर्यसर्वसंघानां all the noble members  
 of the Order  
 आ स ह् an alphabetical  
 representation of 2 3 5, the  
 Nepāla Era 235/AD 1114;  
 the Nepāla Era was founded  
 on Thursday, October 20,  
 879  
 ā - 200 +  
 la - 30 +  
 hr - 5  
 आशीर्ष a gift or blessing < Skt.  
 आशीष् blessing  
 इयम् this < Skt. इयम्  
 उभय both < Skt.  
 उपाध्यायन by the Upādhyāya, a  
 spiritual teacher of the Order  
 < Skt. + Newari agentive  
 case-marker - न  
 उस परम after her; beyond her  
 एते these < Skt. एतत्  
 एतेषां of these < Skt. एतेषाम् -  
 masculine genitive plural  
 form of the demonstrative  
 pronoun एतद् - this  
 कपह् cloth (es) < Pk. कप्पह् < Skt.  
 कर्पट  
 कावच्छिन by all that had been  
 borrowed or taken  
 कार्यजस in the work < Skt. कार्य  
 स - a locative case-maker  
 कीत्य legal; rightful; legitimate <  
 Skt. कृत्य  
 कुटुम्बानुरूपन according to the size or  
 status of the family < Skt.  
 कुटुम्ब + अनुरूप + Newari न  
 कुट्टन together with a due share <  
 Skt. कुट्ट - a piece  
 कृष्ण dark half of the lunar month  
 < Skt.  
 क्रमन in a manner; in a sequence <  
 Skt. क्रम + Newari suffix न  
 ख so it is; is  
 गन a set or company of deities,  
 e.g., as in a गण-चक्र- पूजा <  
 Skt. गण group; a company; a  
 tribe  
 गा an upper garment or shawl  
 गोल्त to meet; to gather; to collect  
 ग्वय a betel -nut, used for ritual  
 presents and offerings  
 डा five (shares)  
 डास in five (shares)  
 चतुर्दश्याम् the 14th day of the lunar  
 fortnight < Skt.  
 चीवरि a monk's livelihood; prebend  
 in kind < Skt. चिवर a monk's  
 robe  
 चोकोस of those who attend or stay  
 or impersonate;.  
 च्यकुट्ट a small piece; च्य - little; <  
 Skt. कुट्ट - a piece  
 गनचोकोस - of those who  
 impersonate the whole  
 company or set of deities  
 छु what / which / whatever  
 जन्मछी for the entire life; life-long  
 < Skt. जन्म + Newari numeral  
 छि = one  
 ज्वड to get hold of



टेबु can; is permitted; may  
 दाको the entire amount; all that is reported; a quantifier formation from the verbal base घाये = to say  
 तंढ by adding  
 तनेकपिन for adding; in order to add; a nominal form ( from the causative - क -) added on to the root तने  
 तिवु to keep; to leave;  
 तृसंघष of the three monastries, i. e., the Mandharajiva- vihāra, the Bandhavu Vihāra and the Vamkuli < Skt. तृ = three  
 त्रय three < Skt. तृ or त्र  
 दण्डपयु to punish < Skt. दण्ड = punishment + Newari verbal suffix रये = to do  
 दस ten < Skt. दश  
 दानपति भारोष of / by the noble donor < Skt. दानपति+भद्रलोक+ष.- is usually either genitive case-maker or a locative / associative case-maker, but it is here used in an honorific agentive sense  
 दायाद inheritence; property- < Skt. an heir; a son  
 दुगुण twice; twofold < Skt. द्विगुण  
 दुगुन also what remains  
 घा paddy < Skt. घान्य  
 नायिकिनि हारोया of the wife of the tenant farmer < Skt. नायिका  
 नियमपरिभाषपत्रिका a document stipulating the rules of the monastery < Skt. नियम

+ परिभाषा. + पत्रिका  
 निवासि a resident < Skt. निवासिन्. - a resident < निवस् - to reside  
 नेपं ने > नि - two पाथी ; पं - a measurement unit of 1 पाथी  
 न्हायु to donate; to contribute; to give as payment  
 न्ह्यु to donate  
 न्ह्युसपं by raising funds or grants  
 प an abbreviation for पन, i.e., a gift  
 पच्चु to pay back; to pay the due share < Pkt. पच्छ < Skt. पक्ष  
 पत्र a plate; an upper garment or a Crown < Skt. पट्ट  
 पन a gift; an offering < Pkt. प्रण = Wealth < Skt. पण्य  
 merchandise; an object for sale ?  
 परिभोग usufruct, the right to use and enjoy  
 परिसमभोग equal right of usufruct  
 पाछु to pay a due share < Pkt. पच्छु - to follow  
 प्रभृति . beginning; since; including < Skt.  
 प्रमानेति verified; attested; certified < Skt. प्रमाण + इति evidence; authority  
 बन्धुबुविहार the Bandhubuvihāra  
 बि to give  
 बियु to give; will give  
 बिसन give; a polite imperative form (cf. - सने; -सँ )  
 भंट share; treasury < Skt. भंग, a division  
 भण्डल an attendant; a messenger <

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Skt. भंग ? or cooking pot;  
vessel < Pkt भण्ड ?  
भारो साहु ढोकबु Bhāro Sāhu the Elder.  
lit. The Elder Noble  
Merchant, a personal name.  
भुंजा a consecration jar < Skt  
भोगय to enjoy < Skt भोग to enjoy  
भोजन a feast; boarding < Skt  
मस māsa, a unit of measurement  
equivalent to 80 cowries <  
Skt माष or 4 काकिली  
मदुगुन also that which does not  
exist  
मरणकालस at the time of death; on  
someone's demise < Skt  
मा a measurement of paddy / grain  
equivalent to 32 प्रस्थ < Skt  
मानि a measurement equivalent to  
32 प्रस्थ  
मानिका a unit of measurement,  
equivalent 32 प्रस्थ  
मार्ग मार्गशीर्ष, approximately the  
period of November -  
December < Skt  
मानु is necessary  
मिखा an eye  
मुक्ति a concession  
मेलको the second one; the next one;  
the junior one  
मौचा a child/children  
महचमोटो a wife / wives टो = as for;  
including; also an emphatic  
particle  
- या - of; belonging to  
लागरपनु an amount to be expended  
or spent < Skt लगयति - New  
Indo- Aryan लाग+ रपे+ बु;  
Maithili लाग = to adhere to ;  
to stick to  
लन a jacket; a bodice  
लीच्छुयुनुस of those who will be

ordained later on; ली = later  
on, च्छु = to ordain यु/-बु = a  
verbal suffix for an action  
intended to be done  
स - a case-maker for location  
or possession  
लुं gold  
ले left; to be left  
लेगन with what is left  
ल्ल a tight jacket with sleeves; a  
bodice  
बंकुविहार the Vaṅkuli Vihāra, the  
Ukū Bāhāh  
बंकुविहारसंघ the Order of Vaṅkuli  
Vihāra  
बंगुया of going, i.e. , for going  
बंकिडुल a place-name; lit. the डुल or  
field on the eastern part  
बस्त्र clothes < Skt. वस्त्र  
बहलछीन the silver objects as a  
whole; the entire silver-ware;  
बहल = livelihood; prebend (?)  
बल्हे that which; that much  
बा paddy  
विपरीतन in opposition; by  
opposition; < Skt. विपरित -  
wrong; inverted + न is a case-  
maker suggesting an  
instrumental sense  
विपार trade; transaction; exchange  
< Skt. व्यापार  
बु paddy < Skt. ब्रीहि = rice  
संघ a monastic order; the Order  
< Skt.  
संघकार्य the duties of the Order  
< Skt.  
संघस of the order < Skt. संघ  
स = objective case-maker  
संघसके with the Order; with the  
members of a monastery  
सकल all < Skt.

सम equal < Skt.  
सम चारिणि objects of Common or  
daily use  
समस्त entire < Skt.  
सम्बत < Skt. संवत् - Era  
सरनडेयु one hundred and seventy;  
from सर < Skt. शत; डैयु  
seven-ten; न्ह / न्हस + यु ten  
(Cf. Tibetan च्यु )  
सात exchange < Skt. सात्-  
transform; change; absorb  
सिद्धं Hail;  
सीसन by the disciple(s) monk(s) <  
Skt. शिष्य = a disciple; न - an  
agentive case-maker  
सुन the one who  
सेढ to spoil; to do wrong;  
to violate  
सेष the rest; the remaining  
portion(s) < Skt. शेष = residue  
स्थविरन by the sthavira; by the  
Eldest member of the Order;  
न is agent case-maker  
स्थविरया of the Sthavira, in a  
monastery < Skt. the thakāli  
or thāpāju among the  
ordained monks of the  
monastery  
स्थविरासनत for the office of the  
sthavira < Skt. स्थविर + भासन  
+ dative case-maker - त for  
स्वस्ति Let it be auspicious  
श्रीतेगवल्के at Tagval; in Lalitpur;  
Modern Tyāgal tole, already a  
major settlement in ca. AD  
714 ( See a Licchavi  
inscription dated Saṃvat.  
148/AD 714, line 12; see  
also Rudradeva-Bhojadeva's  
NS 132(AD 1012  
inscription).

श्रीभारो वकोलि The Noble of  
Vamkuli; lit. the South-  
Eastern Noble  
श्रीमनिधरजेवमहाविहार a monastery in  
Lalitpur  
श्रीललितकमाया of the historic city of  
Lalitpura. It was known as यूप-  
ग्राम /- दूङ्ग in ancient times,  
probably a Sanskritisation of  
यल [सिं], a sacrificial post. The  
city is still called य ल by the  
Newars and ये-रङ् by the  
Tibetans. It came to be  
known as ललित-पुर /- कमा - बुमा  
since about AD 1012. This  
place-name may have its  
origin in Laḍita-maheśvara  
(near Kumbheśvara) founded  
by the niece of Aṃśuvarmā,  
Bhāgyadevī (born of Śūrasena  
and Bhogadevī, Aṃśuvarmā's  
sister) See his inscription at  
Devapātan, dated Saṃvat 39  
The place-name, Laḍita-grāma,  
is attested in an inscription in a  
Buddha image from the  
Cleveland Museum, USA dated  
Śaka Era 513/AD 591. See  
Mary Shepherd Slusser, "On  
the Antiquity of Nepalese  
Metalcraft." *Archives of Asian  
Art* Vol 29 (1975-76), pp. 81-  
93.

संस्कारित concerated by; renovated  
by  
श्रीसिवदेव śrīśivadeva (NS 177-  
246/AD 1058-1126), a  
famous early medieval King  
of Nepālamaṇḍala  
हडां to carry; to wear; to continue  
हावोन including the tenant farmer  
हावोया of the tenant farmer  
होडन by the holder of a share; by  
the collector of a share.