PALI LEXICAL STUDIES

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I. kudrūsa(ka)

1. Under the heading pubbaṇṇa “primary food” or āmakadhaṇīna “raw corn” — primary and raw, that is, eaten in the natural state, as opposed to aparāṇa “secondary food” or vegetables like tila “sesame seed”, mugga “mung bean”, māśa “urd bean”, and kulattha “horse gram” — eaten in the cooked state —, the following seven sorts of grain are listed in stereotyped order by several Pali writers: sāli “winter rice”, vihi “monsoon rice”, yava “barley”, godhūma “wheat”, kāṅgū “foxtail millet”, varaka “broomcorn millet”, and lastly kudrūsaka, the identity of which has not been established so far.

Since the dictionaries are completely silent on the meaning of kudrūsaka, most scholars refrain from translating the word at all. An exception is made only by Mr. and Mrs. Rhys Davids, who consider kudrūsaka “a kind of rye”, unfortunately without elaborating, and by Neumann, who interprets it as “Mehltau” and equates this to Secale cornutum,\(^1\)

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1. AN. iv, pp. 108.11 and 112.9; Mil. p. 267.28.
2. Thus Car. (Jamnagar ed.) vi, pp. 23 and 108; its usual identification as three-lobed kidney bean [Phaseolus trilobus Arr.] is obviously wrong.
3. Vin. iv, p. 264.29-30; Nidd. ii, p. 175, no. 314; Sv. i, p. 78.9-10. At Sv. i, p. 163.25-26, this list recurs in a slightly different form, with vihi omitted and an incongruous mugga inserted after godhūma. At Mil. p. 267.27-28, the sequence has been changed to sāli vihi yava kāṅgū kudrūso varako godhūmo and is followed by muggo māśo tilam kulatthaṃ, which does not, however, mean that the author reckoned these too among the grains; it simply shows that he treated both categories, which are repeatedly mentioned together and are collectively called harīta “greens” (Vin. iv, p. 267.1-2), as a unit. At Mil. p. 106.31-32 and Nidd. i, p. 248.2-4, members of either group have been combined into new septenaries comprising sāli, vihi, yava, tanḍula (husked rice), tila, mugga, māśa and sāli, vihi, mugga, māśa, yava, godhūma, tila respectively; this disposes of Horner’s relevant comments in Vin. i, p. 83, n. 4.
4. DN. iii, p. 70, n. 1.
5. DN. p. 470 and n. 803.
the sclerotium of Claviceps purpurea, apparently confusing mildew and ergot.

2. On the other hand, there can be little doubt but that P. kudrśa(ka) corresponds – as Franke⁶ has seen long ago – to Skr. koradūśa(ka), even though the linguistic situation is not quite clear. Most probably both P. kudrśa(ka) and Skr. koradūśa(ka) (spelt also koraduśa and koraduśka) go back to a common vernacular form; cf. Pkr. kodūsaga or kodūsaga. If, however, P. kudrśa(ka) should derive from Skr. koradūśa(ka), then the development must have been somewhat as follows: koradūśa(ka) > *kordūśa(ka) > *kordūśa(ka) > *kodrūśa(ka) > kudrūśa(ka), with metathesis liquidae as in gardabha > gadrabha.⁷

Now Skr. koradūśa(ka) is a well-attested synonym of kodrava,⁸ which signifies a certain species of millet called Paspalum scrobiculatum L. in technical language and koda, kodra, or ditch millet in English.⁹ As P. kudrśa(ka) is associated in the above lists with two other species of millet, we have good reason to understand it the same way.

3. Ditch millet is reckoned by the Indians among the inferior grains (kudhānya or kṣudradhānya),¹⁰ which are not cultivated but grow wild like grass, and hence are also termed gramineous grains (ṛṇadhānya).¹¹ Though suitable for consumption by all sentient beings,¹² it is a poor

⁶ DN. p. 267, n. 3; his provisional translation “Buchweizen” is untenable, though.
⁷ Geiger, Pali, § 65. The etymology is also still unresolved; ŠKDř. ii, p. 203, has: kolam samstvānam duṣayati “spoils coagulation [or condensation]”; while Kṣirasvāmin and Bhānujiḍikṣita, in their respective comments on Ak. ii, 9.16, gloss koraṁ bhaktam duṣayati “spoils food” and koraṁ rudhiram duṣayati “spoils blood”.
⁸ Cf. Ak. ii, 9.16: koradūśas tu kodravaḥ; Nāmap. 549: kodrave koradūśakah; Abhidhānac. 1177: athoddalā kodravah koradūśakah. Contrary to this last reference, uddāla(ka) is not quite the same as kodrava; for in Āstāṅg. i, 16.33 and iii, 3.1 both are mentioned side by side. According to Šk. 448, uddāla rather denotes a wild-growing variety of kodrava: uddālo vanakodravah; similarly Bhpr. i, 1.10.75: kodravaḥ koradūśakah syād uddālo vanakodravah.
⁹ The usual Tibetan equivalent is khre-rgod (“wild millet”), which is found eight times in the Tanjūr version of Vāgbhaṭa’s Āstāṅgahṛdayasamuccāya (Peking edition, mDo, vol. se [118], fol. 15a5-322b5): at i, 6.10-11 ~ 28a3-4, i, 16.33 ~ 55a3, iii, 3.1 ~ 106b4, iv, 3.32 ~ 144a2, iv, 19.23 ~ 198b3, iv, 21.45 ~ 205a8, and vi, 24.43 ~ 276a1. In one two cases, the pendant is ci-tse and tsi-tse (which must not be mixed up with tsi-tsi: anuphala): at iv, 15.119 ~ 191b3 and iv, 19.25 ~ 198b4; cf. Sum. i, p. 566 ci-(r)tse and Mvy. 5670 tsi-thse. In the remaining three occurrences, the name has been transliterated: at iii, 7.46 ~ 115a1 as ko-dra-ba, at iv, 1.144 ~ 139b3 as ko-ta-pa, and at iv, 6.62 ~ 157b4 as ko-tra-pa. At Sum. i, p. 221, khre-rgod is equated to Mongolian siliikei (sc. qonuy) and Chinese 奎 "10 11 12 Suśr. i, 46.21; Bhpr. i, 1.10.75.
¹¹ Āstāṅg. i, 6.10.
¹² Suśr. i, 20.5.