

# Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts

Theories and Practices of Translation

Edited by

Dorji Wangchuk



INDIAN AND TIBETAN STUDIES 5

Hamburg • 2016

Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Universität Hamburg



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INDIAN AND TIBETAN STUDIES

Edited by Harunaga Isaacson and Dorji Wangchuk

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ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥



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## Foreword

Issues surrounding the theories and practices of translation of Buddhist texts have been an interest for modern scholars from early on, and accordingly have been the main topic of sundry academic gatherings. In February 1990, Tibet House, based in New Delhi, organized an international seminar with the title “Buddhist Translations: Problems and Perspectives,” the proceedings of which were edited and published under the same title.\* After a somewhat lengthy interval, in July 2012, the Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship (KC-TBTS), Universität Hamburg, organized a three-day international symposium on “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Theories and Practices of Translation” (July 23–25, 2012, Hamburg). This symposium has been followed by a series of international events focusing on various aspects of translation of Buddhist texts: Shortly after the Hamburg symposium, in December 2012, the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies in Mumbai organized an international conference on “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Critical Edition, Transliteration, and Translation.” A year and a half later, Prof. Dr. Klaus-Dieter Mathes and Mr. Gregory Forgues organized a one-day workshop on “Translating and Transferring Buddhist Literature: From Theory to Practice” (May 21, 2014, University of Vienna). The latter was followed by yet another related symposium, dealing with “Studies on Translation of Buddhist Sūtras: On ‘Outstanding’ Translation” (May 24, 2014), which took place within the framework of the 59th International Conference of Eastern Studies (ICES) and was organized by the Toho Gakkai and chaired by

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\* Doboomb Tulku, (ed.) *Buddhist Translations: Problems and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1995.

Prof. Dr. Akira Saito (then at the University of Tokyo). Later that year, the Tsadra Foundation, in collaboration with several other foundations and institutions, organized a conference on “Translation and Transmission” (October 2–5, 2014, Keystone, Colorado), in which numerous academics, practitioners, translators, and interpreters dealing with Tibetan Buddhist texts or oral teachings (or both) participated in various capacities. Most recently, in March 2015, the Institute for Comparative Research in Human and Social Sciences and International Education and Research Laboratory Program (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences), University of Tsukuba, Japan, organized a symposium on “Philosophy across Cultures: Transmission, Translation, and Transformation of Thought” (March 5–6, 2015, Tsukuba).

I had the privilege to attend all these events and thus to experience first-hand the rapid developments in the field. It was indeed a humbling experience, which taught me not only (a) the complexity of themes relevant to theories and practices of translation, but also (b) the existence of a persistent interest on the part of various groups—be they academics from the field of Buddhist Studies or Translation Studies, translators, interpreters, or Buddhist masters and practitioners—in exploring and deepening our understanding of the challenges involved in translating and transmitting Buddhist texts and ideas.

The present volume mostly consists of scholarly contributions by participants (arranged in alphabetical order) of the above-mentioned symposium “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Theories and Practices of Translation,” which took place in Hamburg in 2012. Each of these contributions deals, in one way or another, with issues concerning the cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist texts in general or with theories and practices of translation of Buddhist texts in the past or present in particular. I would like to take this occasion to pay homage to the late Prof. Dr. Emeritus Michael Hahn (Philipps-Universität Marburg), who over the years contributed in various ways to the translation of both Sanskrit and Tibetan texts into modern western languages. Despite his illness, he worked tirelessly to revise and finalize his contribution to the present volume, which he submitted on March 30, 2014, only about three months before his passing away on July 12. Sadly, he did not live to see this volume in print. I am thankful for having had the opportunity to be in frequent email

## Foreword

correspondence with him over various issues regarding the finalization of his contribution. Michael Hahn was widely known for being particularly kind to younger colleagues, and I can confirm this with much retrospective gratitude.

It is hoped that this volume, with its rich and diverse contributions, will be of some relevance and usefulness to those interested not only in the cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist texts but also in the cross-cultural transmission of texts and ideas—or in specific theories and practices of translation—in other disciplines and fields of specialization.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to all the institutions and individuals who contributed in various ways to the success of the above-mentioned symposium “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts.” My thanks go to all the participants (including those who unfortunately were not able to contribute to the present volume), and also to the students and staff of the Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg, for their help and support in organizing the event. Special thanks are due to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and the Khyentse Foundation without whose vision and support the Khyentse Center would not exist and academic activities such as the symposium on the cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist texts could not take place. Last but not least, I thank the Fritz Thyssen Foundation (*Die Fritz Thyssen Stiftung für Wissenschaftsförderung*) for their generous financial support of the same event.

Dorji Wangchuk

9.9.2016, Hamburg



# **Translation as Proofs and Polemics of Authentication: rNying ma versus gSar ma Translation Practices**

Orna ALMOGI (Hamburg)<sup>1</sup>

## **1. Introductory Remarks**

As is well known, the issue of translation lies at the core of the division of the various Tibetan Buddhist traditions into what is called the Old (rNying ma) and New (gSar ma) schools, which are associated with the early and later translation periods (*snga 'gyur* and *phyi 'gyur*), respectively. While there is no doubt that the main point of contention was the authenticity of Tantric scriptures that were (or were claimed to have been) translated during the early period, and often also their specific doctrinal content, the dispute extended into matters regarding translation itself. In fact, the issue of translation became in the course of time one of the proofs of authentication used by the rNying ma school. The so-called Six Supremacies (*che ba drug*) associated with it—a concept attributed to the eleventh-century scholar and translator Rong zom Chos kyi bzang po (henceforth Rong zom pa)—has been often employed by rNying ma scholars in polemical discussions in order to bolster the authenticity and identity of their school. These Six Supremacies can be summarised under the following headings:

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<sup>1</sup> This publication is a result of a wider research endeavour on rNying ma Tantric literature in general and its formation and transmission in particular, which was supported by two successive grants from the German Research Foundation (DFG) during the years 2008–2015 (FOR 963, SFB 905). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Philip Pierce (Kathmandu) for proofreading my English.

- (1) The supremacy of the benefactors  
(*spyān 'dren yon bdag gi khyad par*)
- (2) The supremacy of the location  
(*phyag bzhes gtsug lag khang gi khyad par*)
- (3) The supremacy of the Tibetan translators  
(*'gyur byed lo tsā ba'i khyad par*)
- (4) The supremacy of the Indian *paṇḍitas*  
(*paṇḍi ta'i khyad par*)
- (5) The supremacy of the offerings  
(*zhu rten me tog gi khyad par*)
- (6) The supremacy of the content  
(*brjod bya chos kyi khyad par*, i.e. primarily, and originally, referring to the quality of translation but occasionally (and clearly a later development) claiming supremacy in terms of doctrinal content)

Admittedly, in the course of time this set of concepts has increasingly taken on polemical and apologetic tones. Despite this fact, however, it can still tell us much about how Tibetans conceived some of the central aspects of their huge translation project, and likewise shed some light on their theories and practices of translation. In the present paper, I shall therefore present and discuss the phenomenon of translation via its assumed role, in polemical discussions, as a means of proving the authenticity of the rNying ma school along with the school's scriptures and doctrines, using the concept of the Six Supremacies as the point of departure.

## **2. The Origin of the Concept of the Six Supremacies**

Before going into the details of each of these “supremacies,” I would like to first briefly discuss the origin of this notion. As has been just mentioned, the Six Supremacies are believed to have been formulated by Rong zom pa, who was apparently the only rNying ma translator active during the later period of translation. Rong zom pa has been revered by his tradition as one of their greatest scholars and is celebrated as probably the first prolific Tibetan author and as a great translator. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the translation activities of this important

figure,<sup>2</sup> but it should perhaps be mentioned that Rong zom pa seems to be the only Tibetan translator (i.e. among those active during the early or later periods of dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet) who did not travel to India in order to study Sanskrit and Buddhist philosophy. Stemming from a family of renowned Tantric practitioners, he is said to have learnt Sanskrit and other Indian languages already as a child from the Indian *panditas* who dwelt in and around his home and neighbourhood. I believe that this and the fact that he is considered a rNying ma translator despite being active in the second period of translation (apparently the only case) should be borne in mind when reflecting on the concept of the Six Supremacies ascribed to him. It should be also borne in mind that although the concept seems to have originally referred to supremacies surrounding the translation activities in the early versus the later period of propagation of Buddhism in Tibet, it seems that it soon was being taken by adherents of the Old School as reflecting its supremacy over the New Schools more broadly, particularly as it grew ever more apologetic in defence of its Tantric scriptures. And indeed the notion of the Six Supremacies is often taken up by rNying ma scholars in this very context.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not have any evidence of this concept in any of the surviving writings of Rong zom pa. It is, nonetheless, believed to have been formulated in a religious history (*chos 'byung*) ascribed to him,<sup>4</sup> a work that has not surfaced up until now. The earliest source to document the Six Supremacies that could be located thus far is Rog Shes rab 'od's (1166–1244) doxography (*grub mtha'*) composed in the early 1200s, that is, around a hundred years after Rong zom pa's death.<sup>5</sup> There, Rog ascribes the six

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed study of the life and work of Rong zom pa, see Almqvist 1997. For a brief survey of sources on the life and works of Rong zom pa, see Almqvist 2002.

<sup>3</sup> As good examples of authors employing the concept of the Six Supremacies in the context of defending the authenticity of the rNying ma *tantras*, one could name both 'Jigs med gling pa and dGe rtse paṇḍita in their respective religious history–cum-catalogues of the Padma 'od gling and the sDe dge editions of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*. A further example, which will be discussed below in detail, is the Fourth Zhe chen rgyal tshab in his *chos 'byung*. For references, see below.

<sup>4</sup> Martin 1997, no. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Martin 1997, no. 40.

supremacies of the Old School (*rnying ma khyad par gyi che*) to Rong zom pa, but does not name any written source, neither a work by Rong zom pa nor any secondary source. He does not seem to provide an exact quotation of Rong zom pa’s own words either, ending his short presentation of the six points simply with the words “it is said” (*skad do*), which may well hint at an oral tradition (or at a secondary source).<sup>6</sup> Ratna gling pa Rin chen dpal bzang po (1403–1478) also refers to the Six Supremacies in his rNying ma apology-cum-religious history. He too ascribes the notion to Rong zom pa. He likewise does not name any work of Rong zom pa in which this concept is found, but instead, like Rog, uses the phrase “it is said.”<sup>7</sup> dPa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566), who refers to this notion in his *chos ’byung* composed between the years 1545–1564,<sup>8</sup> explicitly refers to Rog’s doxography as his source. However, despite his citing of Rog in this regard, he, an adherent of one of the New Schools, clearly disagrees with the validity of the notion of the Six Supremacies. Moreover, although he argues against it, he seems, as a known sympathizer of the Old school, to attempt to play down the critical tone towards the New School it was used to convey, claiming that Rog had referred to it merely in order to emphasise the greatness of the rNying ma tradition (and not in order to degrade the gSar ma ones).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Rog ban grub mtha’* (pp. 115.5–118.4). A translation of this passage is found in Cabezón 2013: 155–157. Note, however, that Cabezón translates there the word *khyad par* as “difference” (or “different”). While this is indeed the primary meaning of the word, it certainly does not convey the sense intended in this passage. The word *khyad par* is clearly to be understood here as “supremacy/supreme” or “superiority/superior,” which is its secondary meaning (as expressed in related terms such as *khyad par can*, *khyad par du ’don pa*, and the like). Rog himself uses the term *khyad par gyi che ba* (which is synonymous with *khyad par du ’phags pa*) when referring to these six supremacies collectively. Remarkably, Cabezón translates this collective term as “special greatness,” thereby rendering *khyad par* there as “special.”

<sup>7</sup> *rTsoḍ bzlog* (pp. 136.5–139.4).

<sup>8</sup> Martin 1997, no. 168.

<sup>9</sup> *Chos ’byung mkhas pa’i dga’ ston* (pp. 550.3–551.7). Although dPa’ bo gtsug lag phreng ba refers to Rog as his source, he does not cite him verbatim and in fact names only five such supremacies. To judge by his brief explanations of each of them, it appears that he conflates the supremacy of the translators and the supremacy of the quality of the translation (i.e. nos. 3 and 6, respectively, in the list provided above).

The first to name Rong zom pa's *chos 'byung* as the source seems to be mKhyen rab rgya mtsho (16/17th cent.?) in his *chos 'byung*, which was composed sometime between 1557 and 1617 or 1677.<sup>10</sup> There, however, mKhyen rab presents a scheme of fifteen supremacies of the Old School over the New Ones, while only five of them correlate with our Six Supremacies, the supremacy of the offerings being omitted.<sup>11</sup> The only hint that the source of the Six supremacies is Rong zom pa's *chos 'byung* is mKhyen rab's comment on the eleventh supremacy named by him, namely, the one regarding the location in which the translations took place (*phyag bzhes gtsug lag khang*), which correlates with the second of our Six supremacies. There he simply states that a detailed explanation to this point is found in Rong zom pa's *chos 'byung*.<sup>12</sup> Unlike the authors referred to above, mKhan rab thus clearly had access to Rong zom pa's *chos 'byung* (or at least relies on an author who had access to it).

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<sup>10</sup> Martin 1997, no. 174.

<sup>11</sup> *mKhyen rab chos 'byung* (pp. 327.4–353.3). The fifteen supremacies listed by mKhyen rab are: (1) the supremacy of the Teacher (*ston pa*), that is, the *buddha* originating the lineage (p. 329.1–5); (2) the supremacy of the abode (*gnas*) of that Teacher (pp. 329.5–330.2); (3) the supremacy of the codifier (*bsdud ba* [= *sdud pa*] *po*) of the teachings (pp. 330.2–331.1); (4) the supremacy of the time (*dus*) of imparting the teachings (p. 331.1–4); (5) the supremacy of the generation stage (*bskyed* [*rim*], pp. 331.4–332.1); (6) the supremacy of the perfection stage (*rdzogs rim*, p. 332.1–6); (7) the supremacy of the view (*lta ba*, pp. 332.6–337.3); (8) the supremacy of the positioning (i.e. on the left or right side) of the consort (*yum*) during the generation stage (pp. 337.3–338.2); (9) the supremacy of the benefactors (*sbyin bdag*, pp. 338.2–340.2), equivalent to the first of the Six Supremacies; (10) the supremacy of the *paṇḍitas* (pp. 340.2–341.4), equivalent to the fourth of the Six Supremacies; (11) the supremacy of the location, that is, the temples (*phyag bzhes gtsug lag khang*) in which the translations were made (pp. 341.4–342.5), equivalent to the second of the Six Supremacies; (12) the supremacy of the Tibetan translators (pp. 342.5–343.5), equivalent to the third of the Six Supremacies; (13) the supremacy of the content, that is, quality of translation (pp. 343.5–344.3), equivalent to the sixth of the Six Supremacies; (14) the supremacy of what is held to be the basis of Buddhahood, that is, Awareness (*rig pa*) versus mind (*sems*) (pp. 344.3–345.6); (15) the supremacy of the transmission lineage (*brgyud pa*, pp. 345.6–348.3).

<sup>12</sup> *mKhyen rab chos 'byung* (p. 342.4–5): *rgyas par ni mkhas pa chen po rong zom gyi chos 'byung las shes so* | |.

’Jigs med gling pa (1729/30–1798), in his religious history–cum-catalogue of the *rNying ma rgyud ’bum*,<sup>13</sup> does not seem to treat the Six Supremacies in their entirety, but he does refer to at least three of them, namely, the supremacy of the Tibetan translators, the supremacy of the Indian *paṇḍitas*, and the supremacy of the content—corresponding to nos. 3, 4, and 6 in the above list. He employs these concepts in his defence of the authenticity of the rNying ma *tantras*, and explicitly ascribes them to Rong zom pa, without, however, naming a specific work.<sup>14</sup> dGe rtse Paṇḍita ’Gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub (b. 1764), likewise in his religious history–cum-catalogue to the *rNying ma rgyud ’bum* composed in 1797, also made use of the concept, ascribing it to Rong zom pa, in his defence of the rNying ma *tantras*.<sup>15</sup> Unlike ’Jigs med gling pa, however, he treats the entire set of six. Interestingly, he names the sixth one the “supremacy of the doctrine” (*chos kyi par*), clearly emphasizing the content and not only the quality of translation, which obviously serves his purpose, for he cites the supremacy in the context of his defence of the rNying ma *tantras*. However, having argued for a supremacy in terms of content, he goes on to point out that there is also supremacy in the quality of the early translations over the later ones.<sup>16</sup> Other scholars who have treated the Six Supremacies are the Fourth Zhe chen rgyal tshab Pad ma rnam rgyal (1871–1926) in his *chos ’byung* composed in 1910<sup>17</sup> and bDud ’joms Rin po che ’Jigs bral ye shes rdo rje (1904–1987), likewise in his *chos ’byung* composed in 1967 (possibly already in 1962 under a different title).<sup>18</sup> It is through the translation of the latter that this concept

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<sup>13</sup> Martin 1997, no. 301.

<sup>14</sup> ’Jigs gling rgyud ’bum rtogs brjod (pp.135.3–137.1).

<sup>15</sup> Martin 1997, no. 330; *dGe rtse rgyud ’bum rtogs brjod* (vol. Śrī, pp. 311.4–314.3).

<sup>16</sup> *dGe rtse rgyud ’bum rtogs brjod* (vol. Śrī, pp. 313.6–314.3): ’gyur yang sngon gyi lo tsā ba rnam sprul pa’i sku yin pas don ji lta ba bzhin du gtan la phebs go sla zhing byings ’jal ba la rlabs che | phyis kyi lo tsā ba rnam kyi don bsgyur ma nus par rgya dpe’i go rim ltar sgra bsgyur byas pas tshig grims la go dka’ | byings ’jal ba la rlabs chung ba ltar snang bas mi ’dra ba yin no | |.

<sup>17</sup> Martin 1997, no. 425; *Zhe chen rgyal tshab chos ’byung* (pp. 95.14–101.9).

<sup>18</sup> Martin 1997, no. 471, cf. no. 457.

was first made known to the wider community of scholars.<sup>19</sup> Despite their ever-increasing apologetic nature and critical tone towards the gSar ma tradition, the Six Supremacies have also been cited by some modern Tibetan scholars (perhaps more commonly those affiliated with the rNying ma tradition) who at times devote much attention to it in their publications.<sup>20</sup>

### **3. The Six Supremacies: A Brief Outline**

In the following, I shall briefly introduce the gist of each of the Six Supremacies as presented in the above-mentioned sources:

#### **3.1. The Supremacy of the Benefactors**

The benefactors who initiated and sponsored the early dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet via the huge translation project were the three great Dharma kings—Srong btsan sgam po, Khri srong lde'u btsan, and Mu ne btsan po aka Khri ral pa can, who are considered emanations of the *bodhisattvas* Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, and Vajrapaṇi, respectively. This is in contrast to the benefactors during the later period of dissemination, whose domains of influence were small communities and minor monasteries.

#### **3.2. The Supremacy of the Location**

The locations in which a great deal of the translation activities—particularly those regarding the proofreading, standardisation, and finalisation of the translation—during the early period of dissemination took place are the glorious bSam yas temple and the two other great religious centres of the time, lHa sa and Khra

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<sup>19</sup> Dorje & Kapstein 1991: pp. 889–891.

<sup>20</sup> Thub bstan chos dar, for example, presents and discusses the Six Supremacies, which he likewise ascribes to Rong zom pa, in his catalogue of the sDe dge edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* (apparently relying on dGe rtse paṇḍita's *rNying ma rgyud 'bum* religious history–cum-catalogue). See the *rNying rgyud dkar chag* (pp. 27.16–29.7). Khro ru Tshe rnam, in his *rNying ma doxography*, devotes an entire chapter (chap. 2) to the Six Supremacies, in which he first refers to the six as, according to him, put forward by Rong zom pa, and then enlarges upon each of them separately. See the *rNying ma ba'i grub mtha'* (pp. 30–38).

'brug. This contrasts with the locations of the translation activities during the later period, which were small monasteries, scattered around in insignificant places.

### **3.3. The Supremacy of the Tibetan Translators**

During the early period of dissemination the scriptures and treatises were translated by great *lo tsā bas* such as Pa gor Vairocana, rMa Rin chen mchog, gNyags Jñānakumāra, Ka ba dPal brtsegs, and Cog ro Klu'i rgyal mtshan. These past translators excel those of the later period, most of whom are said to have stayed in Nepal only during the winter and, fearing the heat, to have moved to Mang yul during the summer, clearly indicative of their inability to endure hardships and their penchant for avoiding inconveniences. In addition, these latter are also accused of having inserted various interpolations into and made other changes to the early translations.

### **3.4. The Supremacy of the Indian *Paṇḍitas***

The old doctrines were introduced by *paṇḍitas* of the past, *bodhisattvas* abiding on the level of Knowledge Holders (*rig 'dzin*), including Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Śāntarakṣita, and Buddhaguhya. They were not like some of the *paṇḍitas* active in the later period, who, not having sufficient food, were simply beggars who had come to Tibet in search of gold.

### **3.5. The Supremacy of the Offerings**

During the first period of dissemination, the Tibetans made great offerings prior to requesting teachings—including gold dust measured in units of *bre*;<sup>21</sup> bags made of deer leather filled with turquoise; gold coins stacked in piles of seven; and heaps of gold, silver, and fine silk. This is in contrast to the offerings made during the later period, which often merely amounted to one or two gold coins a *zho* in weight<sup>22</sup> that happened to be in one's pocket.

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<sup>21</sup> According to Jäschke 1881, s.v., *bre* is a measure for both dry things and fluids, equivalent to about four pints.

<sup>22</sup> According to Jäschke 1881, s.v., *zho* is a small weight equivalent to one tenth of an ounce.

### **3.6. The Supremacy of the Content**

The supremacy of the content does not primarily refer—at least not initially—to the content of the scriptures as such, as it may sound, but rather to the content as reflected in the quality of the translation. It is argued that the early translations are more genuine due to unique methods of translation that avoided the introduction of any changes to the text. The practice of introducing changes is considered to inflict damage upon the Word of the Buddha, while a faithful translation is believed to enable one to establish and realize the true nature of phenomena. This is, so it is argued, not always the case with the new translations. Some of the translators of the later period, it is stated, were even deceitful. One of the main reasons for this is their having introduced slight changes to earlier translations, the results being then presented as new or revised translations that were more faithful to the original. Apart from tampering of this kind, they are also accused of committing the even more serious offence of altering and disparaging the Word of the Buddha and the teachings of the Buddhist masters of the past. Consequently, these translators are accused of having made up their own doctrines to replace the genuine doctrines reflected in the early translations. As stated above, in the course of time the meaning of the supremacy of the content has increasingly shifted from the quality of the translation to the actual doctrinal content of the scriptures, particularly when employed in the context of a defence of the rNying ma *tantras*.

### **4. A General Assessment of the Concept of the Six Supremacies and Its Implications**

Now, if we regard these six claims of supremacy to pertain to the entire project of translation rather than to specific translations, one may say that at least three of the six points relate to general political and socio-economical aspects of this huge translation undertaking, namely, those of the benefactors, location, and offerings. With regard to the supremacies of the benefactors and the location, the sources clearly hint at the enormous logistical challenges involved and make clear that without the political and economic support of the great kings of the Tibetan empire, and without the existence of great religious centres to serve as suitable venues, such an enormous project would have never been

successful and probably would not have been initiated in the first place. There is no doubt that such support was required in the early period of translation when a new script was needed to be created, new sets of vocabulary had to be coined, a complex, and perhaps more sophisticated, syntax had to be developed, and rules and guidelines for translation needed to be set. The necessity to develop a new grammar particularly arose from having to deal with religio-philosophical content previously unexpressed in the target language, and that, too, taken from a source language that not only belonged to a completely different language family, but was also a very rich and highly sophisticated one. The situation in the later period was naturally completely different. Enjoying a relatively established infrastructure, the translation undertaking could obviously continue even without the support of a strong central government or huge religious institutions; that is, it could be carried out with the rather modest support of local rulers in small and decentralized religious centres. The question as to how much this affected the quality of translation is of course hard to answer. The supremacy of the offerings, referring to gifts made to the Indian masters by their Tibetan hosts, does not seem to have been an economic concern, as it may seem at first, but rather a devotional and reverential one. The claim of supremacy in this regard appears to emphasize the great enthusiasm and the sincerity with which the Tibetans approached their translation undertaking during the early period, which, it is asserted, was not always the case during the later one. Here again is hard to judge on the basis of the available sources, but there is no doubt that the issue of centrality plays an important role in all of these three points and the issues they raise.

While the question as to whether and how much such political and socio-economic factors affect the quality of translation is a matter that must be looked into more carefully, the remaining three points—the supremacies of the Tibetan translators, the Indian *paṇḍitas*, and the “content”—directly touch upon the issue of quality of translation, that is, mainly but not merely as a result of the properties attributed to the respective members of the translation teams. The Tibetan translators of the early period are glorified not only in terms of the quality of their translations but also in terms of their motivation and the hardship that they were willing to undergo in order to achieve their goal. This is in contrast

to those of the later period, who are portrayed not only as persons who feared physical discomfort—obviously a sign that they lacked genuine motivation—but also as ones who made changes to the early (and genuine) translations. This latter claim has indeed been one of the major points of contention in discussions regarding the old versus new translations, and I shall come back to it below. The *paṇḍitas* of the past are similarly eulogised as great *bodhisattvas*, who were genuine Buddhist masters with pure motives. This is unlike those who were active in the later period, whose motives for coming to Tibet and spreading the Dharma there are said to have often been economically driven. Regardless of whether these claims have some truth to them, there is no doubt that those who formulated and propagated the Six Supremacies wholeheartedly believed that both the motives and the motivation of the persons involved were crucial to the outcome, as reflected in the quality of the translation. This is indeed explicitly formulated in the supremacy of the content, which ascribes to the early translations a higher quality, not only stylistically but more importantly also in terms of accuracy, while the later translations are accused of being often inferior on both counts. These grave shortcomings are of course in addition to the aforementioned demerit of plagiarism, which at least some translators of the later period were accused of.<sup>23</sup>

### **5. The Employment of the Six Supremacies in Polemical and Apologetic Discussions: The Example of Zhe chen rgyal tshab**

As mentioned earlier, the notion of the Six Supremacies has been picked up on by several rNying ma scholars down through the

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<sup>23</sup> It should be perhaps stressed that translators, be they Indian *paṇḍitas* or Tibetan *lo tsā bas*, have generally been expected to receive due credit for their work. Thus (mis)use of existing translations without (sufficiently) crediting the work done by earlier translators was not well received. This is in contrast to literal citations or borrowings without any acknowledgement of sources on the part of authors—a common phenomenon in both the Indian and Tibetan traditions—since, traditionally, scholarly readership has been expected to be sufficiently familiar with the literature to recognize allusions in the form unacknowledged citations or borrowing, and thus such practices on the part of authors have not been considered plagiarism but rather were regarded as testimony for the author’s eruditeness.

centuries, and in fact deliberations surrounding it have become ever lengthier in the course of time. One of the best examples of this is no doubt Zhe chen rgyal tshab Pad ma rnam rgyal's discussion referred to earlier. In the following, I would like to recapitulate some of the arguments he put forward in his polemical discussion of the quality and genuineness of rNying ma versus gSar ma translations.<sup>24</sup> Zhe chen rgyal tshab emphasizes the early translators' pioneering work, which laid the foundation for all later translation activities by, among other things, formulating standards of translation by way of releasing various imperial decrees (*bkas bcad*) and compiling bilingual lexicons—such as the *Svalpavyutpatti* (*Bye brag tu rtogs byed chung ngu*), *Madhyavyutpatti* (*Bye brag tu rtogs byed 'brin po*, widely known as the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*), and *Mahavyutpatti* (*Bye brag tu rtogs pa/byed chen po*)—upon which all later translators have based themselves.<sup>25</sup> He further argues that the early translations were, in the first place, made on the basis of a correct understanding of the etymology (*nges pa'i tshig*) of the Sanskrit terms, which, he states, is indispensable for producing a correct translation.<sup>26</sup> There can be various meanings to one single Sanskrit word, he explains, and therefore it is difficult to reflect the correct meaning through literal or mechanical translation (*nges tshig thad kar bsgyur ba*), which he seems to accuse at least some of the later translators of favouring. This is particularly the case, he adds, in regard to Tantric terms, which are often obscure, and in order to understand them some initiate knowledge (*mngon shes can*) acquired through special Tantric hermeneutical means known as the “six limits” (*mtha' drug*) is required. In order to strengthen his point regarding the glory of the early translators, Zhe chen rgyal tshab, like many other rNying ma authors before and after him, cites the famous verse attributed to rNgog lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes

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<sup>24</sup> *Zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung* (pp. 95.14–101.9).

<sup>25</sup> For an extensive study on the imperial decrees concerning translation and the bilingual lists compiled during the imperial period, particularly the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, see Scherrer-Schaub 2002. For an earlier study, see Simonsson 1957.

<sup>26</sup> From his following explanation it is clear that Zhe chen rgyal tshab, when using the term “etymology,” does not necessarily employ it in the sense of “history of the word” (and certainly not in the sense of “speculative etymology” as it is often the case in the Indo-Tibetan tradition), but rather in the sense of “semantics” or “meaning of the word.”

rab (1059–1109), who is said to have uttered it in praise of early Tibetan translators when, after having difficulties in translating some words in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, he looked at the old translation and a sense of amazement arose in him:<sup>27</sup>

Vairocana is equal to the sky,  
 sKa and Cog, the two, are like the pair of sun and moon,  
 Rin chen bzang po is [as bright] as the Morning Star (i.e. Venus?),  
 [While] I am [merely] like a glow-worm in their presence.

The verse is followed by a citation of some verses by Sa skya paṅḍita in which he refers to his own translation policies and practices.<sup>28</sup> Having ascribed to (at least some of) the later translators a rather mechanical or too literal translation, Zhe chen rgyal tshab commences rebuffing any criticism of the early translations, which he considers to be paraphrastic—or “dynamic”—translation (*don ’gyur*). Some think, he states, that paraphrastic translation does not directly correspond with the wording in Sanskrit (*tshig gi tshul rgya skad dang thad sor mi mthun pa*) but is merely an (inaccurate or approximate) paraphrase of the meaning. But this is not the case. It is said that after the meaning has been internalized, although the words in Sanskrit and Tibetan may be different in their literal meaning, in their actual intended meaning they are similar, and therefore one should consider both the words and their meanings as being correctly rendered. As an example, he points to the Sanskrit word “go,” which, he states, has nine meanings—including, among other things, “earth” (*sa*), “ox/cow” (*ba lang*) and “thunderbolt” (*rdo rje*). He argues that in order to avoid a mistranslation (*’gyur nyes*), one needs to know which meaning to apply to the word “go” in a specific context. Therefore, he continues, many of the literal/metaphrastic—or “formal”—translations (*tshig ’gyur*) do not convey the intended meaning (*don nor ba*), and their syntax (*tshig sdeb*, lit. “arrangement

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<sup>27</sup> *Zhe chen rgyal tshab chos ’byung* (p. 96.15–17): *bai ro tsā na nam mkha’ dag dang mnyam || skā cog nam gnyis nyi zla zung gcig la || rin chen bzang po tho rang skar chen tsam || kho bo de drung srin bu me khyer bzhin ||*. Compare the translation in Kramer 2007: 9.

<sup>28</sup> *Zhe chen rgyal tshab chos ’byung* (pp. 96.19–97.12). The verses cited by Zhe chen rgyal tshab are from Sa paṅ’s *Phyogs bcu’i sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa’ rnam la zhu ba’i spring yig* (*A Letter to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Ten Directions*). An English translation of these verses is found in Rhoton 2002: 249.19–34.

of words”), too, is often poor (*mi legs pa*). He clearly holds the old translations to be incomparably better than the new ones in terms of profundity (*don zab*), lucidity (*tshig go bde*), and effectiveness (*rlabs che ba*). The high quality of the early translations, he states, could be guaranteed only through intensive collaboration between the Tibetan *lo tsā bas* and the Indian *paṇḍitas*, who together not only translated the texts, but also proofread the translations (*zhus dag byas*) in order to remove mistakes, and then finalised (*gtan la phab*) the works by submitting them to exposition and study (*’chad nyan*).

Zhe chen rgyal tshab dismisses claims that the later translations are better than the older ones, and holds such opinions to be grounded in bias (*chags sdang kyī bsam pa*) and in attachment (*zhen lta*). He refers to admissions made by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (b. 1055/1056) of having corrected passages that could not be left uncorrected in the earlier translation of Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and other works,<sup>29</sup> which could be

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<sup>29</sup> Zhe chen rgyal tshab does not refer to a particular source, but it seems that he generally refers to statements found in some of the translation colophons of the works in question. The translation colophon of the Tibetan version of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* states that while still in Kashmir Pa tshab together with the Indian preceptor Mahāsumati corrected the earlier Tibetan translation (which was made by Jñānagarbha and Klu’i rgyal mtshan) to accord with the *Prasannapadā* (on this see note 30 below) and that later in Lhasa he once again revised the text, this time together with the Indian preceptor Kanakavarman (D, fol. 19a5–6: *slad kyis kha che’i grong khyer dpe med kyī dbus | gtsug lag khang rin chen sbas pa’i dbus su | kha che’i mkhan po ha su ma ti dang | bod kyī sgra bsgyur gyī lo tstsha ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyis mi’i bdag po ’phags pa lha’i sku ring la ’grel pa tshig gsal ba dang bstun nas bcos pa’o | | slad kyis ra sa ’phrul snang gi gtsug lag khang du | rgya gar gyī mkhan po ka na ka dang | lo tstsha ba de nyid kyis zhu chen bgyis pa’o | | |*). The employment of the phrase *zhu chen bgyis pa* in the second instance may hint at the fact that Kanakavarman and Pa tshab functioned as the chief editors, while other translators (possibly less experienced) made (at least some of) the corrections. On the employment of assistant Tibetan translators, see MacDonald 2015: 271–272. For the identification of the place in Kashmir mentioned in the colophon as the place in which the revision was carried out, and of the Kashmiri ruler mentioned there, see *ibid.* (pp. 254–256). Nāgārjuna’s *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* (P2668; D1800), which was first translated by Guṇākara and Rab zhi bshes gnyen, is also said to have been later corrected by Kanakavarman and Pa tshab (D, fol. 42b4–5: *slad kyī rgya gar gyī mkhan po ka na ka wa rma dang | bod kyī lo tsā ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyis bcos pa’o | |*), and his *Rājaparīkathāratnāvalī* (P5658; D4158), which was first translated by Jñānagarbha and Klu’i rgyal mtshan, is similarly said to have been properly corrected by Kanakavarman and Pa tshab by consulting three Sanskrit manuscripts (D, fol. 126a3–4: *slad kyī rgya gar gyī mkhan po ka na ka*

understood as suggesting that there were severe translation mistakes where the meaning did not conform to the tradition of Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva. He argues that such statements should be rather interpreted as mainly referring to the elimination of (minor orthographical and scribal) errors (*yig skyon*) that had crept into the text and not necessarily to faulty translations (*'gyur nyes*). He points out that if one compares the old with the new translations of the works in question, one realizes that, for example, all occurrences of *ngo bo nyid* were changed to *rang bzhin*, but that apart from this and similar negligible changes there are no other major differences. These claims by Zhe chen rgyal tshab needs to be corroborated by philological investigations, and indeed several studies have confirmed some of his main arguments. For example, Anne MacDonald, while discussing the practice of Tibetan translators to utilise and practically “import” an existing translation of the basic text (*mūla*) during a translation of a commentary on it in which it is embedded (that is, rather than translating it anew), refers to Pa tshab’s translation of the *Prasannapadā* and his utilisation of Jñānagarbha and Klu’i rgyal mtshan’s early translation of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. Concerning the changes Pa tshab made in the translation, she states that he “merely tweaked certain verses here and there, in some instances to bring them into accord with Candrakīrti’s interpretation of the *MMK* and in others to replace individual words with his own preferred terminology, occasionally rewriting phrases and/or revising word-order (to speak of Pa tshab’s “translation” of the *MMK*, as many modern scholars tend to do, is an exaggeration).”<sup>30</sup>

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*wa rma dang | bod kyi lo tsā ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyi rgya dpe gsum la gtugs nas legs par bcos pa'o | |).*

<sup>30</sup> MacDonald 2015: 259. MacDonald also points out the fact that it appears to have been common practice to translate a basic text so as to accord with a commentary on it and then import the translated basic text into the commentary when it is embedded in it. This procedure makes sense, but might pose difficulties when a basic text translated so as to accord with one commentary is to be embedded within another commentary that possibly offers a different interpretation. Without going into the complexity of the matter, it may merely be noted here that some of the changes introduced by Pa tshab into the early translation of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* were indeed made in order for the text to accord with the *Prasannapadā*. See *ibid.* (n. 38).

Zhe chen rgyal tshab further claims that in numerous cases in which old translations of Tantric texts were revised by allegedly merely making occasional (*re tsam*) changes, the early original translation colophons were removed and new ones were unjustifiably inserted in their place, and in other cases revision colophons were inserted (i.e. in addition to the original translation colophon), again unjustifiably. He clearly states that often this was done by later biased persons (*phyogs zhen can*) who inserted additional phrases (*tshig zur*) in order to glorify their tradition, and not necessarily by the later translators themselves, particularly not the great ones such as Rin chen bzang po and Pa tshab, who had no desire to disparage (*khyad du gsod pa'i bsam pa*) the old translations but rather acknowledged the achievements (*byas pa gzo ba'i thugs*) of their predecessors. And indeed, while discussing the issue of the authenticity of translation colophons and the validity of claims relating to revised translations, particularly in the context of Tantric works, it has already been demonstrated that there is perhaps more than a bit of truth in the rNying ma pa-s' claim of plagiarism of this kind: translation/revision colophons have been found to often be later insertions and not authentic statements made by the translators themselves, and claims for revisions have often boiled down to negligible or indeed often unnecessary changes.<sup>31</sup> But the problem of the authenticity of such colophons and the validity of claims relating to revisions is not only confined to Tantric scriptures. For example, the translation colophon of the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā*, which was also translated during the early period, merely states that the translation was corrected and finalized by Muditaśrī and Pa tshab, while there is no mention at all of the early translators.<sup>32</sup> In this connection MacDonald states: “Although Pa tshab is usually said to have translated the *YŚ*, a comparison of his version of the *kārikās* with those embedded in the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti* [...] translated during the first dissemination) reveals that Pa tshab’s version is based on and merely aims to improve the earlier version. The colophon to the Canon’s free-

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<sup>31</sup> See Almogi 2008.

<sup>32</sup> The translation colophon of the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā* (P5225; D3825) reads as follows (D, fol. 22b5–6): *rgya gar gyi mkhan po mu ti ta shrī'i zhal lnga nas dang | bod kyi lo tstsha ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyi bcos te gtan la phab pa'o |*.

standing *YŚ* confirms this, stating only that it was revised and finalized by Pa tshab and Muditaśrī.”<sup>33</sup>

It is generally accepted that translated texts differ somewhat from indigenous ones in terms of their style (*nyams*) (this issue is, however, yet to be systematically studied). Moreover, it is often claimed by rNying ma scholars that the flow (*tshig bab*) of the old translations is much more natural, and thus closer to indigenous compositions (*bod gzhung lta bu*) than those of the later period, which they consider less elegant and at times harder to comprehend. This claim, to be sure, may have made rNying ma pa-s vulnerable to another line of attack, playing into the hands of those who suspected some of the rNying ma scriptures of being inauthentic, that is, of being indigenous Tibetan compositions rather than translated Indian texts.<sup>34</sup> Zhe chen rgyal tshab, however, understands that this could be after all a mixed blessing, as it could undermine the authenticity of the rNying ma Tantric scriptures. His strategy in tackling this problem is to shift the discussion from the level of translated versus autochthonous literature to the level of scriptures versus treatises. He thus from this point in the discussion onwards does not merely talk about the phraseology (*tshig ris*) of translated texts as reflected in old and new translations, but also about whether a difference between scriptures and treatises could likewise be observed in this regard. Style alone, he argues, is not sufficient for gaining certainty as to whether a text is a scripture or a treatise, as it is often subjective and thus perceived differently by different persons (*gdul bya'i dbang gis sna tshogs 'byung ba*). With this, he enters upon his defence of the authenticity of the rNying ma *tantras*, for which the presentation of the Six

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<sup>33</sup> MacDonald 2015: 253, n. 16. Note, however, that MacDonald (*ibid.*) also points out that Chizuko Yoshimizu has argued for the existence of yet another version that differs from the canonical one and which she ascribes to Pa tshab.

<sup>34</sup> The tradition indeed displays such cases, that is, ones in which autochthonous works have been included in the canon as Indian treatises (this appears to have been more tolerated than the case of scriptures). As I have already pointed out on an earlier occasion, for example, it is believed by the tradition that several of Rong zom pa's works were included in the *bsTan 'gyur*, having been taken to be Indian works in Tibetan translation on the basis of a style and syntax redolent of translated literature. See Almogi 2008: 112–115.

Supremacies, and particularly the one concerning the quality of translation, has mainly served as a preamble.<sup>35</sup>

## **6. Concluding Remarks**

The Six Supremacies, despite their polemic nature, represent several if not all factors relevant to the undertaking of translation, including sponsorship, motive, motivation, the translators' socio-economic background, the necessity of teamwork, the team dynamic, theoretical considerations affecting translation practices, and even ethical issues such as the utilisation of work done by previous translators, which if not properly acknowledged, could easily be branded as plagiarism. Apart from the need to try to validate many of the claims made by traditional scholars in regard to the aforementioned issues, it would not be an exaggeration to say, I believe, that each of the points raised in the context of the Six Supremacies is in many ways relevant to our own work as scholars of Buddhist textual studies, which often involves the task of translation. These issues could be reflected upon or taken into consideration in one way or another, not only when examining traditional translations of Buddhist texts, which often forms the heart of our study, but also in regard to the actual act of translation in general and our own translations in particular.

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<sup>35</sup> *Zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung* (p. 101.9ff.).

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## **Gāndhārī and the Early Chinese Buddhist Translations: Reconsidering an Old Hypothesis in Light of New Finds**

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In 1998 I published an article that called the decades old “Gāndhārī hypothesis” into question. Simply stated, this hypothesis, developed first by John Brough and repeated many times subsequently by Indologists and Sinologists alike, proposed that the vast majority of Buddhist texts translated into Chinese in the first few centuries C.E. derived from Indic texts composed in Gāndhārī Prākṛit, a Middle Indo-Āryan language used in the northwest corner of the Indian subcontinent from the time of Aśoka through the first half of the first millennium. This hypothesis was founded almost entirely upon an analysis of the Chinese transcriptions of a very few texts in an effort to show that their underlying Indic forms derived from Gāndhārī originals.<sup>1</sup> Without denying the existence of some Gāndhārī source texts, my article attempted to complicate the picture in light of what we know about the process of translation in early Chinese Buddhism. I showed that much of the seeming evidence for an underlying Gāndhārī original may better reflect confusions stemming from an oral/aural interaction between members of the translation committees. At the time of its writing, our knowledge of Gāndhārī was founded on a single literary text and a significant number of inscriptions from the northwest as well as secular documents from the ancient kingdom of Shan-shan in modern Xinjiang province in China. Since my article, many more finds of Gāndhārī

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<sup>1</sup> See Boucher 1998, 471–475 on the development of the Gāndhārī hypothesis.

manuscripts have come to light in an increasingly diverse variety of genres. It is now time to rethink this hypothesis in light of this new data and to consider anew the existence of large canons of Gāndhārī Buddhist literature in the first half of the first millennium.

I would like to begin by recapitulating my original argument in brief and to discuss the kinds of evidence that were mustered to rethink this question, since it went considerably beyond the data derived solely from Chinese transcriptions of Indic names and technical terms. The problem with transcriptional data, as I have noted, is that Sinologists have often used it to aid in the reconstruction of the pronunciation of ancient Chinese. Indologists have conversely used the Chinese transcriptions to recover the underlying forms of the Indic originals. The circularity of the process is obvious, and the most recent investigations show the matter to be fraught with numerous complexities, not all of which can be controlled.

In addition, my original skepticism with regard to the strong form of the “Gāndhārī hypothesis,” namely that it accounts for almost all of the earliest Indic texts transmitted to China in the first half of the first millennium, stemmed from several questions that remained open with regard to their orthography, the role of Sanskritization in the region, and the methodological problems that plagued the use of early Chinese translations generally. For example, I suggested that there may be good reason to separate evidence for a text written in the *kharoṣṭhī* script from a presumption that it was also necessarily composed in Gāndhārī Prākṛit. There was evidence already among the Niya documents of *kharoṣṭhī* script texts composed in Sanskrit. And since my article, additional such texts have come to light, namely several *kharoṣṭhī* fragments from the Pelliot collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale and a version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* from the Schøyen collection written in a dialect Richard Salomon has termed Gāndhārī Hybrid Sanskrit.<sup>2</sup> The likelihood that many more such compositions underlay the Indic source texts of early Chinese translations could not be discounted, especially if Sanskritization might have reflected a set of literary and political forces that had

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<sup>2</sup> See Salomon 1998b on the Pelliot fragments; Allon and Salomon 2000 on the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* from the Schøyen collection; and Salomon 2001 on Gāndhārī Hybrid Sanskrit generally.

religious implications. In this regard it is worth considering that some genres of Buddhist literature such as Mahāyāna sūtras might have self-consciously sought the socio-cultural prestige of Sanskrit so as to participate within a new aesthetics of power emerging at the turn of the Common Era, documented so eruditely in the recent monograph by Sheldon Pollock.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the methodological limitations for discerning the underlying Indic source text from the early Chinese translations had not been adequately appreciated, especially with regard to the very process of transferring an indeterminate Indic text to a semi-literary Chinese rendering by translators and assistants of very questionable competence.

To reexamine these questions, I focused upon the translation oeuvre of the third-century Yuezhi translator Dharmarakṣa. Dharmarakṣa was born in ca. 233 at Dunhuang, a military and mercantile outpost at the farthest western reaches of the Chinese empire. He is the first we hear of Buddhism at this crossroads of international commerce. He is said to have studied there under an Indian teacher before beginning a translation career that would span forty years and see the rendering of over 150 texts into Chinese. In addition, we have a number of colophons to his translations that describe the process by which his team carried out these renderings. This is crucial, since this translation process may provide an alternative explanation for seeming Gāndhārī Prākṛit elements underlying the Chinese. In my 1998 article, I concentrated on a single text within his corpus from the first half of his translation career: the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, rendered in 286 C.E. Since this article I have continued my investigations of this question with a text from even earlier in his translation career, namely the *Rāṣṭrapālapariṣcchā-sūtra*, translated in 270 C.E.<sup>4</sup> I will begin by reviewing some of the internal evidence from this latter text for an underlying *kharoṣṭhī* script source text as

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<sup>3</sup> Pollock 2006, esp. 51–74.

<sup>4</sup> *Deḡuang taizi jīng* 德光太子經, T 170, 4: 412a–418c. The text is also extant in Sanskrit; it has been edited in Finot 1901, but this edition is very problematic. It was also translated again into Chinese in the late sixth century by Jñānagupta and Dharmagupta (T 310.18) and in the tenth century by Dānapāla (T 321) as well as in Tibetan in the early ninth century. See Boucher 2008, xvii–xix for more details.

well as for possible misunderstandings due to oral/aural confusions during the translation process and confusions related to Gāndhārī Prākṛit phonology. I will then translate several colophons to Dharmarakṣa's translations, from his earliest and latest known works, and discuss how the process revealed by them may qualify our data. And finally I will want to think anew about this data in light of the considerably expanded corpus of Gāndhārī texts now available to us.

### **Evidence for *Kharoṣṭhī* Script Texts**

It is highly likely that Indian manuscripts written in *brāhmī* script and others written in *kharoṣṭhī* script came into China from almost the beginning of the transmission of Buddhism eastward. Taking Dharmarakṣa's corpus as our example, we know from colophons to his translations that some Indic manuscripts are referred to as *fan*, almost certainly a transcription of *brāhmī*, and others as *hu*. While *hu* is often translated as “Central Asian” or “barbarian,” since it historically refers to peoples situated to the north and west of the Chinese heartland, I have argued elsewhere that in the context of these colophons and related records, it very probably designated *kharoṣṭhī* script texts.<sup>5</sup> In fact Chinese Buddhist intellectuals of the early medieval period seem to have understood *brāhmī* and *kharoṣṭhī* as two different languages rather than merely as distinct writing systems.<sup>6</sup> In addition, there is evidence internal to the translations themselves that suggests that Dharmarakṣa had some difficulty reading his *kharoṣṭhī* manuscripts, such that he occasionally misread *akṣaras* whose graphic forms were quite similar. I will offer a few examples below.

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<sup>5</sup> See Boucher 2000.

<sup>6</sup> See my translation of the monk-exegete Sengyou's essay, *Hu han yijing yin yi tongyi ji* 胡漢譯經音義同異記 (A Record of Similarities and Differences in Pronunciation and Meaning When Translating Scriptures from Western Languages to Chinese) in Boucher 2000, 19–22.

*ka/ṣa*

RP 16.15–16: *pratīpadati yathā ca bodhimārgē sa tu pariśodhayate  
sadāśayaṃ ca | dhāraṇīpratīlābham eṣamāṇaḥ sahati ca  
duḥkhasatāṃ guṇābhikāṅkṣī ||*

(As [the bodhisattva] undertakes the path toward enlightenment, he always purifies his intent. Seeking the acquisition of *dhāraṇī*, he desires virtue and endures hundreds of afflictions.)

Dh 413a.5–6: 假使得佛覺道意 常為清淨無疑難  
總持辯才一其心 忍一切苦不想報

(If [the bodhisattva] obtains the aspiration for enlightenment, he will always be pure, without doubts or difficulties. With *dhāraṇīs* and eloquence he unifies his mind and endures all miseries without thinking of recompense.)

There are several problems with Dharmarakṣa’s rendering here, not all of which are easily explainable. The phrase I would like to call attention to here is *dhāraṇīpratīlābham eṣamāṇaḥ*, “seeking the acquisition of *dhāraṇīs*,” rendered by Dharmarakṣa as “with *dhāraṇīs* and eloquence he unifies his mind.” First, it appears that Dharmarakṣa’s manuscript read *-pratībhānam*, “eloquence” or “inspired speech” instead of *-pratīlābham*. Both Jñānagupta’s sixth-century Chinese translation of this text as well as the Tibetan translation confirm Dharmarakṣa’s variant. More unexpected, however, is that Dharmarakṣa appears to have misconstrued *eṣamaṇaḥ*, a present middle participle, as *eka-manas*, “of one mind, concentrated.” If we posit that Dharmarakṣa was reading a *kharoṣṭhī* manuscript, then it is conceivable that he could have misread a form of the letter *ka* in this script with the letter *ṣa*. These two *akṣaras* come to resemble each other in later periods of *kharoṣṭhī* writing, both epigraphically, as in the Wardak Vase inscription, and in birch bark manuscripts recently discovered and contained in the British Library and Senior collections.<sup>7</sup> Obviously such a misreading wreaks havoc with the resulting translation.

<sup>7</sup> For the Wardak Vase inscription, see Konow 1929, 165–70 and esp. plate XXXIII (e.g., line 1, Kamagulyapu[tra] and line 3, *avaśad(r)igana*). Some of the British Library manuscripts use, albeit only intermittently, the later form of *ka* with a stroke curving from top to lower right, see Salomon 1999a, 116–17 and Salomon 2000, 63. For the Senior scroll, see Glass 2007, 95 and 100.

*ya/śa*

RP 16.15–16: *prāntaśayyāsanaḥhiratiṃ sā ca lābhasatkārānapekṣatayā*  
(takes pleasure in lodgings in secluded hinterlands  
on account of his indifference to profit and honor)

Dh 412c.9–10: 樂受教命其心不著財利  
(happy to receive decrees, his thoughts are not  
attached to wealth or benefits)

There are several problems in Dharmarakṣa’s rendering. I want to highlight his translation of *śayyāsana* (“lodgings,” literally “beds and seats”) as *jiaoming* 教命. If Dharmarakṣa misread the *akṣara ya*, which in all likelihood would have been written as a single consonant here, as *śa*, this could lead to a reading *śayyāsana* > [*śa*]*śasana* < *śāsana* (“teachings, decrees”). These are two of the most graphically similar *akṣaras* in the *kharoṣṭhī* script, especially from the turn of the Common Era, when they can become more or less indistinguishable.<sup>8</sup> So confusable are they that Dharmarakṣa transposes them on multiple occasions elsewhere in this text and in other translations.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Dharmarakṣa appears to have read the initial *prānta-* as *prāpta* (“received”), perhaps through a confusion with a Gāndhārī form *prata: prānta-* > *pra(m)ta* < *pratta* < *prāpta*.<sup>10</sup>

RP 34.11: *lābhamātrakena] iha śāsane tuṣṭim utpādayisyanti*  
(they will take satisfaction in the teaching at this time  
[only for profit])

Dh 413b.17–18: 其所在處不能得安  
(wherever they are, they will not be at ease)

<sup>8</sup> On the graphic similarity of these two *akṣaras* in *kharoṣṭhī*, see Konow 1929, cxxiii; Salomon 1998a, 55; Salomon 1999a, 116–117; and for the Senior scroll, Glass 2007, 99–100.

<sup>9</sup> See Boucher 1998, 499–500 for another example from the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Brough 1962, vv. 5 and 128 on the Gāndhārī form of *prāpta*.

There are again several problems here. If we hypothesize that Dharmarakṣa read the initial *śa* of *śāsane* as *ya*, with long vowels typically unmarked in *kharoṣṭhī* script, then he may have understood this clause as *īha yasa* (= *yasya/yasmin*) *na* .... Such a supposition also accounts for the unexpected negative marker (*bu* 不), which is not represented in the extant Sanskrit or Tibetan. It is difficult to account for the anomalies in his translation otherwise.

### Oral/Aural Confusions

If above we saw evidence for instances where Dharmarakṣa misread *kharoṣṭhī* characters with similar forms in his manuscript, it also appears that there are other cases where his recitation of the text to his translation assistants created confusions to the ear. We know from extant colophons, to be considered in some detail below, that the translation process was very much a committee affair. And Dharmarakṣa's translations reveal traces of this process, more specifically, instances where words which very likely were indistinguishable to the ear, at least for nonnative participants, were sometimes transposed by the scribal assistants who took down the draft translation. It is of course striking in most instances that context did not more fully inform any member of the translation team. This indicates just how limited the linguistic skills of his committee could be, such that no one person could check both the Indic original and resulting translation so as to verify readings. I will give one example of such a probable oral/aural confusion, again from the *Rāṣṭrapāla-pariṣecchā*.

RP 47.13–14: *gajapatigatigāmī siṃhavikrāntagāmī vṛṣabhalalitagāmī  
indrayaṣṭīpravṛddhaḥ | gaganakusumavṛṣṭiḥ puṣpachatrā  
bhavanti vṛjati-m-anuvrajanti dharmā ete 'dbhutaśya | |*  
(Sauntering with the gait of the lord of elephants,  
with the strides of a lion, and with the grace of a  
bull, he is mighty as (the *nāga*) Indrayaṣṭī. A rain of  
flowers from the sky becomes parasols of flowers;  
when he walks, they follow him. These are his  
marvelous qualities.)

Dh 417a.2–5: 經行如龍王 為如師子步 行時默低頭 諸根悉  
清淨 若人散花者 變成為花蓋 有增無減時 是  
為佛正法  
(He walks along like the king of *nāgas*, making

strides like a lion. When he walks, he lowers his head with reserve; all of his faculties are pure. Should one strew flowers upon him, they would be transformed into a flower parasol. When there is increase without decrease [?], this is the True Dharma of the Buddha.)

There are several problems in Dharmarakṣa's translation that are not immediately resolvable, stemming in all likelihood from the fact that he and his team did not understand several of the Indic similes in this verse. I want to call attention specifically here to the last *pāda* of the Sanskrit and last five-character unit of the Chinese. Dharmarakṣa appears to have rendered *'dbhutasya* as if it were *buddha*. We know that *bhūta* and *buddha* are confused elsewhere in Dharmarakṣa's corpus.<sup>11</sup> While *bhūta* is known to appear in Gāndhārī as *bhuda*, it is unlikely that its form in Dharmarakṣa's *kharoṣṭhī* manuscript would have coalesced with *buddha*. In other words, there is no reason to believe that these two words would have been confusable to the eye. It is possible that Dharmarakṣa's recitation of his Indic text could have been confusable to the ear, especially the ears of Chinese assistants who failed to distinguish aspirated and unaspirated consonants and were not better informed by the context. It is also possible, however, that his assistants, unable to decide between two possible equivalents, rendered them both in a kind of double translation, as if *'dbhutasya* could mean both "true" and "*buddha*" simultaneously. This phenomenon also happens elsewhere in Dharmarakṣa's oeuvre.<sup>12</sup> I will discuss in more detail below the translation process that would have made such mistakes possible.

### **Evidence for Misunderstandings of Gāndhārī Phonology**

The evidence just marshalled points toward the strong likelihood of an underlying *kharoṣṭhī* source text to Dharmarakṣa's translation of the *Rāṣṭrapāla-pariprcchā-sūtra*. However, despite the predominant role of this script for conveying Gāndhārī Prākṛit, this evidence by itself does not indicate a text composed in Gāndhārī. We have considerable evidence from the Niya documents discovered in

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<sup>11</sup> Boucher 1998, 480.

<sup>12</sup> See Boucher 1998, 489–493.

Xinjiang China as well as more recent finds mentioned above of fragments from the Pelliot and Schøyen collections of *kharoṣṭhī* script texts written in Sanskrit or hybrid Sanskrit.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, it is also likely that a text written in *kharoṣṭhī* would have been transmitted from a Gāndhārī-using region and would also exhibit many of the traits of this particular northwest Middle Indo-Āryan language—regardless of what language it was originally composed in. Certain of the conjunct assimilations in Gāndhārī may have resulted in semantic ambiguities that occasionally confounded the Chinese translation teams. Again, my examples are drawn from Dharmarakṣa’s translation of the *Rāṣṭrapāla-pariṣcchā-sūtra*. I’ll note examples that illustrate difficulties in interpreting nasals in conjunction with stops and semi-vowels.

RP 35.15–16:      *daridrabhūtās ca hi pravrajitvā dāridryamuktā samavāpya*  
*pūjām | taiḥ kāñcano bhāra-m-ivāpaviddhaḥ sasasya*  
*bhāraḥ punar udgrhītaḥ ||*  
([These corrupt *bodhisattvas*] went forth from the household on account of being poor, but were freed from poverty when they obtained homage. It’s like they threw away gold as a burden only to take up a load of grain.)

Dh 413c.17–18:    生於貧家作沙門    在窮厄中求供養  
譬如有人窮無物    從他債望求財產  
(Born into a poor family, they become *śramaṇas*. In the midst of hardship, they seek homage. Like someone who is poor, without property, they hope for wealth through a loan from someone else.)

Clearly Dharmarakṣa and his committee did not understand the second line of this verse. In particular he seems to have misunderstood the word *kañcano*, “gold” as *youren* 有人 “someone.” This mistake would be easier to account for if we assume that Dharmarakṣa’s Indic manuscript, which we now have reason to believe was written in the *kharoṣṭhī* script, was also influenced by the Gāndhārī tendency to assimilate nasal plus stop to either nasal or stop alone, the latter sometimes with voicing, as in *paja* < *pañca*. If

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<sup>13</sup> On Niya documents 510, 511, and 523, see most recently Hasuike 1996 and 1997; Lin 1998, 142–150 and 2003; and Iwamatsu 2001 and 2002.

this is the case, then the word *kañcano* could have appeared to Dharmarakṣa as *\*kajano* (Skt. *ko janah*), “which person” or *\*kacano* (Skt. *kaścana*), “someone.”

RP 35.11–12: *asamyatā uddhata unnatās ca agauravā mānina lobha  
utsadā | kleśābhibhūtāḥ sakhilāḥ sakimcanāḥ sudūra te  
tādrśa agrabodhaye ||*  
(“Unbridled, haughty, proud, disrespectful,  
arrogant, abounding in avarice, overcome with  
defilements, callous, and attached to property—  
very far indeed are such persons from highest  
enlightenment.”)

Dh 413c.13–14: 無智憤亂為放逸 輕慢無敬多貪求  
與塵垢會起欲想 是輩之人去道遠  
(Without knowledge, disconcerted, without  
restraint, inconsiderate, without respect, greatly  
avaricious, they meet with defilements as they  
give rise to thoughts of desire—such persons are  
far from enlightenment.)

Dharmarakṣa’s translation here, in contrast to earlier examples, matches the Sanskrit rather closely with one exception: the first word, *asamyatā* “unbridled” is rendered by Dharmarakṣa as *wu zhi* 無智, “without knowledge.” Again, assuming strong Gāndhārī influence, it is easy to imagine that *asamyatā* could have been represented in his manuscript as *asañada*, a form we find for example in the Khotan Dharmapada,<sup>14</sup> and was incorrectly deduced as deriving from *asamjñāta* (“not known, understood”). Dharmarakṣa’s committee had difficulty with the nasal plus palatal stop combinations elsewhere in their translation. In Chapter 2, v. 38 (Finot 1901, 43.13) we find the following *pāda*: *samsārapañjaragatam jagad iksya cedam* (“seeing this world stuck in the cage of *samsāra*”). Dharmarakṣa rendered this as follows: 皆見於五道 生死諸人民 (“seeing all the people in *samsāra*, amidst the five destinies ...”). If Dharmarakṣa was working with a *kharoṣṭhī* manuscript in which *paja[ra]* (= *pañjara*) was deduced as deriving from *pañca*, then he and/or his collaborators might have interpreted the compound *samsāra-pañjaragatam* incorrectly as *samsāra-pañcagati*. Such a confusion may have also in part resulted

<sup>14</sup> Brough 1962, 170–171 (vv. 325 and 331).

from a failure of the translation committee to apprehend the metaphor “the cage of *saṃsāra*” and to opt instead for a Buddhist technical term they were familiar with and that appeared to phonemically overlap with it.

### The Translation Process

Any attempt to discern the underlying Indic source text of our early Chinese translations must appreciate the complex process by which they were transmitted and rendered from memory or manuscript to the semi-literary idiom that has come down to us. The kinds of mistakes we saw above are not uniform, and it is clear that they must derive from multiple sources and agents participating in the process. Again, restricting myself to Dharmarakṣa’s corpus for our purposes here, we are fortunate to have a number of prefaces and colophons to his translations that give us considerable detail about how this was carried out. And since these records appear to date from the beginning of his translation career in 267 to near its end in 308, we can see an evolution in the roles of the participants. These colophons, preserved mainly in the early sixth-century bibliographic catalogue by the monk-exegete Sengyou 僧祐, the *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 [*Collection of Notices on Rendering the Tripiṭaka*], often give detailed information on the specific contributions of the various members of these teams.

No colophon to the *Rāṣṭrapāla-pariṣṭhā-sūtra*, the source of my examples above, is extant unfortunately, apart from a short notice by Sengyou recording its date of translation as October 31, 270.<sup>15</sup> But we do have a colophon to the translation of another text, the *Suvikrāntacintideva-putra-pariṣṭhā-sūtra*, translated just three and a half years earlier. We can reasonably assume, therefore, that the general circumstances and procedures are unlikely to have been much different for the *Rāṣṭrapāla*. I will provide a translation of this colophon here:

*Xuzhen tianzi jing* 須真天子經: On the eighth day of the eleventh month of the second year of the *Taishi*<sup>16</sup> reign

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<sup>15</sup> *CSZJJ*, T 2145, 55: 7c.

<sup>16</sup> The colophon reads *taishi* 太始 here instead of *taishi* 泰始, a reign period lasting from 265–274 C.E.

period [= December 21, 266], at the White Horse Monastery inside the Azure Gate in Chang'an, the Indian<sup>17</sup> bodhisattva Dharmarakṣa (*tanmoluocho* 曇摩羅察) orally conferred and rendered it (*kou shou chu zhi* 口授出之). At that time the ones who transferred the words (*chuanyanzhe* 傳言者) were An Wenhui and Bo Yuanxin. The ones who took it down in writing (lit. “received it by hand”) were Nie Chengyuan, Zhang Xuanbo, and Sun Xiuda. It was completed on the thirtieth day of the twelfth month during the second watch of the afternoon (*weishi* 未時 = 1–3 p.m.).<sup>18</sup>

There are several issues raised by this colophon, to the earliest translation we know of in Dharmarakṣa’s corpus, that are worth noting. Dharmarakṣa is said to have “orally conferred and rendered” the Indic text. No mention is made here as to whether he held a manuscript or recited from memory, but we do know from other colophons that he did in fact read a manuscript of those texts aloud. We can presume that he followed the same practice here; the confusions related to misreadings of *kharoṣṭhī* letters would also confirm this with regard to the *Rāstrapāla*. The verbs used to describe Dharmarakṣa’s role are ambiguous, and my rendering of them is designed to reflect that. It is certainly the case that *chu* 出 is routinely used in Chinese colophons and other bibliographic sources for an activity that corresponds roughly to “translation.” But it is also true that this activity cannot always be translation as we typically construe it, which is to say, the transference of the semantic content of a source text to a target language by a single bilingual individual or group of bilingual individuals. *Chu* literally means “to produce, to put out, to issue,” and it seems clear in colophons that the fundamental activity that it designates is the process of making the Indic text available to the translation

<sup>17</sup> Dharmarakṣa is in all biographical sources identified as a Yuezhi, a Central Asian people known to have inhabited both the Tarim Basin of modern Xinjiang province as well as the area of northwest India, Pakistan, and eastern Afghanistan, where they became the Kushans. But the ethnicon *zhu* 竺 was adopted by Dharmarakṣa because he studied at Dunhuang under an Indian teacher. It was customary during the third and fourth centuries for Chinese monks to adopt the ethnicon of their teacher if foreign.

<sup>18</sup> *CSZJJ*, T 2145, 55: 48b.22–26. See Boucher 2008, 92–94 and notes for additional details about this colophon.

committee—in other words, to recite the Indic text aloud, to draw it out of its native guise. This recitation must also have involved some amount of glossing and explaining of the text. But the colophon also informs us that two other individuals, the Parthian An Wenhui and the Kuchean Bo Yuanxin, “transferred the words.” They must have been responsible for listening to Dharmarakṣa’s recitation-cum-exegesis of the Indic text and then conveying their understanding of that recitation to the Chinese scribes, who, the colophon tells us, “received it by hand,” which is to say, took it down with a brush. This last step must have also involved a certain amount of interpretation and interpolation, related, in all probability, to some cognizance of Dharmarakṣa’s recitation of the Indic text.<sup>19</sup>

This same scenario of Dharmarakṣa reciting the Indic text aloud and then conveying it to Central Asian and Chinese assistants continues throughout his translation career. Twenty years after his translation of the *Suwikrāntacintidevaputra-pariṣcchā*, Dharmarakṣa rendered the *Viśeṣacintibrahma-pariṣcchā-sūtra* in similar fashion, albeit this time without the bilingual intermediaries:

*Chixin jing* 持心經: on the tenth day of the third month of the seventh year of the Taikang reign period [= April 20, 286], the Dunhuang bodhisattva Dharmarakṣa expounded the *brāhmī* text in Chang’an, conferring it upon [Nie] Chengyuan.<sup>20</sup>

In this case the colophon tells us explicitly that Dharmarakṣa held a manuscript, specifically referred to as *fanwen* 梵文, a *brāhmī* text. Nie Chengyuan once again served as a scribal assistant, taking down Dharmarakṣa’s recitation-exegesis, as he regularly did for texts translated in Chang’an. Again, the actual linguistic transfer here is ambiguous, and it very probably reflects the fact that even twenty years into his translation career, Dharmarakṣa was still not able to translate Indic texts independently into Chinese, relying very heavily on native assistants for their final form. This situation appears to change in subsequent colophons:

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<sup>19</sup> For evidence of both Chinese interpolations into the translation and faulty scribal apprehension of an Indic text, see Boucher 1998, esp. 489–498.

<sup>20</sup> *CSZZ*, T 2145, 55: 57c.19–21.

*Puyao jing* 普曜經: on an *upoṣadha* day in the fifth month of the second year of the Yongjia reign period [= 5 June – 4 July 308], when (counter-orbital) Jupiter was in the station *wuchen*, the bodhisattva *śramaṇa* Dharmarakṣa held the *kharoṣṭhī* text in his hands and orally delivered it into Chinese at the Celestial Water Monastery. At that time the scribes were the *śramaṇas* Kang Shu and Bo Faju.<sup>21</sup>

Here we see the colophon to Dharmarakṣa’s translation of the *Lalitavistara*, the last dated translation in his corpus. It is explicitly stated that Dharmarakṣa held a *huben* 胡本 in his hands, and I have argued elsewhere that *hu* in this context very likely designated a *kharoṣṭhī* script text.<sup>22</sup> So we have a contrast in the colophons to Dharmarakṣa’s translations between Indic texts in *brāhmī* (*fanwen*), including the *Viśeṣacintibrahma-paripṛcchā-sūtra*, the *Avāivartikacakra-sūtra*, the *Manjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivarta-sūtra*, and the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* and those in *kharoṣṭhī* script (*huben*), including, but probably not limited to, the *Lalitavistara*,<sup>23</sup> the *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra*,<sup>24</sup> the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sūtra*, and the *Tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśa-sūtra*.

What most stands out in this colophon to the *Lalitavistara*, however, is that Dharmarakṣa is said to “orally deliver it into Chinese” (*kouxuan jinyan* 口宣晉言) to two scribal assistants, one with a Sogdian ethnicon and one with a Kuchean one, though both probably were Chinese monks who had adopted these labels from their teachers. In fact, already twenty years before his translation of the *Lalitavistara*, Dharmarakṣa is reported to have

<sup>21</sup> *CSZZJ*, T 2145, 55: 48b.27–c.1.

<sup>22</sup> See Boucher 2000.

<sup>23</sup> John Brough (1977) showed that the tenth chapter of Dharmarakṣa’s translation of the *Lalitavistara*, the chapter detailing the 64 scripts mastered by the young bodhisattva Gautama, contains a syllabic list that is the alphabetical order of the *arapacana* alphabet, in contrast to both the Tang translation of Divākara and the extant Sanskrit recensions that have come down to us. And we now know the *arapacana* syllabary to be the alphabetical order of the *kharoṣṭhī* script; see Salomon 1990.

<sup>24</sup> For additional, internal, evidence that points to Dharmarakṣa’s Indic manuscript of the *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra* being in *kharoṣṭhī* script, see Boucher 1998, esp. 499–500.

“orally delivered into Chinese” the *brāhmī* manuscript of the *Mañjuśrīvikurvāṇa-parivarta-sūtra*:

*Moni jing* 魔逆經: on the second day of the twelfth month of the tenth year of the Taikang reign period [= December 30, 289], the Yuezhi bodhisattva Dharmarakṣa held the *brāhmī* manuscript (*fanshu* 梵書) in his hands and orally delivered it into Chinese. Nie Daozhen took it down in writing. It was first rendered (*chu* 出) at the White Horse Monastery west of the Loyang city wall. Then Zhe Xianyuan copied it, causing its meritorious virtues to be disseminated [so that] all can receive blessings and liberation.<sup>25</sup>

Dharmarakṣa appears to translate with more confidence in his Chinese skills here, even compared with works he does just a few years before. One also suspects that *brāhmī* manuscripts may have presented fewer difficulties than *kharoṣṭhī* texts, since Gāndhārī Prākṛit is notoriously variable in orthography and phonology. Dharmarakṣa is here assisted by Nie Daozhen, son of his long-time scribal assistant Nie Chengyuan, the latter with whom he appears to have worked only in Chang’an.

But noteworthy in this colophon is that Dharmarakṣa’s translation into Chinese is not described with the verb *chu* 出 here or in any other colophon within his corpus.<sup>26</sup> This likely confirms our sense that *chu* involves at least two steps that were not necessarily performed by the same person: the Indic text had to be read aloud, to be decoded out of its esoteric script. And it had to be explained in Chinese, since the sounds of Indic languages were no less befuddling to the scribal assistants than the manuscripts.<sup>27</sup> The

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<sup>25</sup> *CSZJJ*, T 2145, 55: 50b.6–10.

<sup>26</sup> Thus I must take issue with Zhu Qingzhi’s criticism of my translation of *chu* elsewhere (Zhu 2010, 498). It is neither the case that “to translate” is the “traditional explanation of *chu*” nor that it represents the notion of translation as we typically use it.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Shih 1968, 168: “Dans les préfaces, la différence entre ‘publier’ et ‘traduire’ apparaît clairement. Celui qui tient en mains le texte indien joue un rôle plus important que celui qui traduit l’indien en chinois.” The situation is a bit more complicated than this, but Shih is correct that the Indian or Central Asian who was able to read aloud the Indic text is almost always regarded as the true translator since it is he who is the guarantor of its authenticity. There are some exceptions to this general rule.

difference between these two steps is sometimes made clear, as in *Suṅkrāntacintidevaṅputra-pariṅcchā*, where he delivers a recitation of the Indic text to two intermediaries, and sometimes not made clear, as in the case of the *Saddharmapūṅdarīka*, where Dharmarakṣa is said to “orally deliver and bring out” (*kouxuan chu* 宣出) the *kharoṣṭhī* scripture. In the *Mañjuśrīvikurvāna-parivarta*, translated just three years after the *Saddharmapūṅdarīka*, Dharmarakṣa is described as “orally delivering the text into Chinese” to a scribal assistant who took down his recitation-cum-exegesis. The whole process of rendering the text is referred by the verb *chu*, such that it could then be copied and disseminated by others in and around Luoyang.

What we see here then is almost certainly an evolution in Dharmarakṣa’s Chinese skills over his long translation career. In 267 C.E. Dharmarakṣa relied on bilingual intermediaries presumably to assist him in making his understanding of the Indic manuscript comprehensible to the scribes who took it down in Chinese. The presence of Chinese literary allusions in the *Suṅkrāntacintidevaṅputra* also suggests that his Chinese scribes interpolated their own understandings into the finished product, since it seems extremely unlikely Dharmarakṣa himself had such command at that time.<sup>28</sup> Decades later, his translation work still proceeds by committee, but increasingly with more seeming self-confidence, as Dharmarakṣa dispenses with his bilingual intermediaries and delivers the recitation-cum-translation himself to his scribal assistants.

The complexity of this process is demonstrated by the internal evidence as well. The mistakes in reading similar looking *akṣaras* within the *kharoṣṭhī* source text can only be attributed to Dharmarakṣa, who alone would have been responsible for drawing the Indic text out of its native guise and conveying his understanding to his assistants. The evidence for oral/aural confusions, instances where a word in Middle Indo-Āryan pronunciation was confused with another similar sounding, usually technical, term cannot be due to Dharmarakṣa. These must be attributed to the members of his translation team who heard his

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<sup>28</sup> That these interpolations continued for decades points toward the likelihood that Dharmarakṣa’s skills in Chinese remained limited for some time. See the discussion on these intrusions in Boucher 1998, 497–498 and Boucher 2008, 99–100.

recitation of the Indic text and failed to differentiate phonemes that were well distinguished in writing, but not clear to the ears of non-native speakers. That a greater appreciation of the context in which these terms occurred did not aid understanding in those cases confirms our sense of the limited abilities of the translation assistants. Dharmarakṣa himself was also not able always to discern the relationship between his source text and the version taken down by his scribes. And his scribes clearly must have operated with a very partial knowledge of Buddhist literature, occasionally defaulting to the use of more common terminology in place of what the source text intended. Mistakes related to Gāndhārī phonology are more difficult to locate within the translation process, since the written form of the words could have created ambiguities that were lost on Dharmarakṣa himself occasionally. It is also possible that his assistants heard a word whose form in Prākṛit coincided with a different Sanskrit word, and they merely guessed incorrectly in some instances.

What this means is that any search for the underlying Indic language of an early Chinese translation must take into consideration the process by which these texts were rendered from their source language, which could have varied considerably within the corpus of a single translator. We have seen evidence that what the Chinese scribes recorded from what they heard isn't always what we have reason to believe was in the original Indic text. At the very least this must qualify sweeping claims uttered a generation ago that declared all early Chinese Buddhist translations to derive from Gāndhārī Prākṛit originals. That said, it is also clear that very recent finds of new Gāndhārī texts fill out the picture of the literature of Greater Gandhāra well beyond what was known even at the time of my 1998 article. So the question to reconsider in light of these more recent finds is this: is the so-called "Gāndhārī hypothesis" on more sure footing than it was a mere two decades ago?

### **New Finds of Mahāyāna Sūtras in Gāndhārī**

Without a doubt one of the most exciting developments of the last couple of decades in Buddhist studies has been the discovery and scholarly investigation of new caches of Buddhist literature in Gāndhārī Prākṛit and in the *kharoṣṭhī* script. The provenance of most of these finds is not known, but it is believed on

circumstantial evidence that most came from eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan, a region generally known now as Greater Gandhāra, as coined by Richard Salomon.<sup>29</sup> The first of these collections to come to light is the cache of birch bark manuscripts acquired by the British Library in 1994, containing almost two dozen different texts in a variety of Buddhist genres. All of them are Mainstream (i.e., *śrāvakayāna*) texts, and very likely of the Dharmaguptaka *nikāya* more specifically. The pot in which they were found has an inscription dedicated to the Dharmaguptakas, and internal evidence points to similarities between some of these texts and those from other collections thought to belong to the Dharmaguptakas, whom we know epigraphically to have existed in this region.<sup>30</sup> An additional 24 birch bark scrolls also acquired with the clay pot that contained them were purchased by Robert Senior. This collection is more homogeneous than the British Library cache, with most having parallels in the canonical *Samyuktāgama* and *Madhyamāgama*.<sup>31</sup> Much smaller fragments of Gāndhārī texts have also been found in the Schøyen collection (held in Norway), the Pelliot collection (in Paris), and the Hirayama and Hayashidera collections (in Japan).<sup>32</sup> One of the more recent collections to come to light is the birch bark scrolls found in Bajaur Pakistan in the late 1990s.<sup>33</sup> Unlike the other caches of *kharoṣṭhī* texts to appear recently, a precise find spot has been reported for this collection: it is said to have been discovered inside a small stone repository in a

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<sup>29</sup> Salomon 1999a, 3.

<sup>30</sup> This collection was first introduced to the scholarly world in Salomon 1997, and was soon followed by a monographic overview of the collection and the manifold matters related to their find, provenance, genres, and relationship to other Buddhist literature; see Salomon 1999a. Since then, individual texts have been systematically and expertly studied by Salomon and his team at the University of Washington. See to date Salomon 2000 and 2008, Allon 2001, and Lenz 2003 and 2010.

<sup>31</sup> A preliminary overview of this collection was provided in Salomon 2003. See also Glass 2007 for the first systematic study of one of these fragments, and esp. Mark Allon's introduction (pp. 3–25) in the same work for a more detailed overview of the Senior collection.

<sup>32</sup> The only *kharoṣṭhī* text within the Schøyen collection to be systematically studied to date is the fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*; see Allon and Salomon 2000. For the Pelliot fragments, see Salomon 1998b.

<sup>33</sup> See Strauch 2008 for an overview of this collection.

cell within a Buddhist monastery.<sup>34</sup> This stands in contrast to the British Library collection, for example, which is thought to have been a discarded collection of no longer used texts that had been ritually buried.<sup>35</sup> It also stands out for containing genres of texts not represented in most other collections, including the first known *vinaya* texts in *kharoṣṭhī* script and Mahāyāna texts, including a very long scroll of 640 lines, along with some non-Buddhist materials.

Until some of these more recent discoveries came to light, the lack of any Mahāyāna *sūtra* literature among these finds was perplexing.<sup>36</sup> The northwest part of the Indian subcontinent has long been suggested as a possible site for at least one of the likely origins of the Mahāyāna movement.<sup>37</sup> And recent work on the early Chinese translations, as we saw above, has shown considerable influence from Gāndhārī Prākṛit and strong evidence for a *kharoṣṭhī* script origin for at least some of the early Indic source texts. Thus we would expect a considerable Mahāyāna literature to have once existed in this region.

In fact, a smattering of Mahāyāna texts has recently come to light.<sup>38</sup> Fragments of six *sūtras* are included in several recent collections. Remnants thought to derive from Bamiyan and contained in the Schøyen, Hirayama, and Hayashidera collections include some 25 fragments of the *Bhadrakapika-sūtra*, a single small fragment of the *Sarvapūnyasamuccaya-samādhi-sūtra*, and a fragment from the ninth chapter of the large *Bodhisattva-piṭaka-sūtra*. From Bajaur Pakistan a large scroll containing what is called an *\*Akṣobhya-sūtra* is by far the largest Mahāyāna text to emerge from Greater Gandhāra.<sup>39</sup> Another “split” collection, which may have come from the northern Pakistan-Afghanistan border, contains fragments from the first and fifth chapters of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-*

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<sup>34</sup> Strauch 2008, 103–105.

<sup>35</sup> See Salomon 1999a, 69–86.

<sup>36</sup> See Salomon 1999a, 178 and Boucher 2008, 107.

<sup>37</sup> See Lamotte 1954 and more recently Seyfort Rugg 2005 for such suggestions. On Seyfort Rugg’s hypothesis see also Boucher 2008, 174, n. 39.

<sup>38</sup> See Allon and Salomon 2010 for a summary of these recent finds.

<sup>39</sup> On this text, its find, and its relationship to parallels in other languages, see Strauch 2010.

*prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*.<sup>40</sup> And a fragmentary scroll held in a private collection contains a Gāndhārī version of a text provisionally called the \**Sucitti-sūtra* after the name of the young son of Vimalakīrti featured in this text.

Certain features of these finds are unremarkable, in the sense that the dates proposed for the Gāndhārī fragments appear to roughly coincide with the dates of their earliest known Chinese translation. For example, the fragments, presumably from Bamiyan, of the *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra*, have been dated by radiocarbon testing and on paleographic grounds to fall between the early third and end of the fourth centuries.<sup>41</sup> And we know that Dharmarakṣa translated this text at least by the very beginning of the fourth century.<sup>42</sup> Dharmarakṣa also translated the *Sarvaṇyāsamuccaya-samādhi-sūtra* and the \**Sucitti-sūtra*, also by the beginning of the fourth century.<sup>43</sup> We have good reason to believe that Dharmarakṣa got his Indic source texts from a Gāndhārī-using region, probably the kingdom of Shan-shan, having seen evidence in his translations for mistakes in understanding both the *kharoṣṭhī* script and Gāndhārī phonology, and evidence from Shan-shan of prominent individuals who, in their own words, set out in the Mahāyāna.<sup>44</sup> It's unsurprising, therefore, that we find

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<sup>40</sup> On the “split” collection, so named because the contents are divided between Pakistan and a Western collection, see Falk 2011. On these two chapters of the *Aṣṭa* contained therein, see Falk and Karashima 2012 and 2013.

<sup>41</sup> On the radiocarbon testing of these and other manuscript fragments of *kharoṣṭhī* texts, see Allon, Salomon, Jacobsen, and Zoppi 2006. See also Allon and Salomon 2010, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Dharmarakṣa's translation of the *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra* is listed with two different dates: in the complete list of his translations, the date is recorded as September 1, 291 (T 2145, 55: 7b.13); in a separate colophon recording the circumstances of its translation, the date is given as August 22, 300 (T 2145, 55: 48c. 3). I should note, however, that between August 18 and October 3, 291 Dharmarakṣa was engaged in the translation of the large *Tathāgatamahākaraṇānirdeśa-sūtra*. It's difficult to believe he could also have completed the translation of the also large *Bhadrakalpika* at the same time, suggesting that the date of 300 C.E. may be more plausible.

<sup>43</sup> T 381 and T 477 respectively. No precise dates are given in the *Chu sanzang ji* for their translation.

Gāndhārī manuscript evidence for texts believed to have been derived from Greater Gandhāra and translated into Chinese nearly contemporaneously.

The \**Akṣobhya-sūtra* and *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* both probably derive from northern Pakistan near the Afghan border and both appear to date to some time within the first two centuries C.E., with a first century date even more likely for the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*.<sup>45</sup> Both of these texts were translated into Chinese by Lokakṣema in the late second century.<sup>46</sup> And the fact that Lokakṣema was a Yuezhi who in all likelihood came from the area of Greater Gandhāra supports the proposal that his source texts were also Gāndhārī or Gāndhārī influenced.<sup>47</sup> Only the *Bodhisattva-piṭaka-sūtra* lacks an early Chinese translation from among the recent finds of Mahāyāna *sūtras*. It is first known in Chinese translation from Xuanzang's seventh-century rendering from a Sanskrit manuscript he acquired at the Śvetapura Monastery some 30 miles south of Vaiśālī.<sup>48</sup> Prior to the discovery of the Gāndhārī fragment, this *sūtra* may have been incorrectly assumed to date from the middle or late period of Mahāyāna textual development.

Apart from the *Bodhisattva-piṭaka-sūtra* then, these recent finds of Mahāyāna texts in Gāndhārī correlate reasonably well with the dates of their earliest Chinese translations. Of course we had every reason to expect that Yuezhi translators of the second

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<sup>44</sup> The biography of Dharmarakṣa indicates that he travelled with his teacher to a number of kingdoms in the Western regions, which very likely included Shan-shan. On evidence for the Mahāyāna in the kingdom of Shan-shan, see Salomon 1999b and Boucher 2006, 33–34.

<sup>45</sup> On the date of the Bajaur manuscripts, see Strauch 2008, 108–111. On the date of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* within the “split” collection, see Falk 2011, 20.

<sup>46</sup> More precisely, the *Akṣobhya-tathāgata-vyūha* was translated by Lokakṣema; the Gāndhārī \**Akṣobhya-sūtra* is loosely related to this text and has much to say about Akṣobhya and his *buddha*-field Abhirati, but it is clearly not the same text as either of the extant Chinese translations or as the Tibetan translation. See Nattier 2000 on the significance of this text for understanding early “pure land” ideas in India. For Lokakṣema's *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, see the important new critical edition by Seishi Karashima (2011).

<sup>47</sup> See the argument also in Karashima 2013 that supports just such a hypothesis for his translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*.

<sup>48</sup> See Boucher (2009) 2013, 33 and n. 22 on the problems concerning the dating of this text.

and third centuries in China very likely came from this region, and those of other origins may have gotten their texts there as well. And if the situation was at all parallel to what the Chinese pilgrim Faxian encountered in the early fifth century, then we should not be surprised that monasteries full of exclusively *śrāvaka*-oriented monks could exist in close proximity to monasteries with mixed spiritual orientations.<sup>49</sup> The fact that the Bajaur collection—from this very same region—contained texts of both Mainstream (*śrāvakayāna*) and Mahāyāna orientations further confirms the likelihood that just such mixed monasteries existed centuries before.

What is, however, in some ways slightly more unexpected is not the existence of Mahāyāna texts in this region but their preservation. The Bajaur cache is reported to have been found within a stone box in the ruins of a Buddhist monastery. This points to the possibility that this was a collection in active use, with at least a certain degree of institutional support for the maintenance of Mahāyāna literature and the monks who copied and circulated it. If so, this stands in some contrast to the portrait derived from within certain strands of Mahāyāna *sūtra* literature, namely a polemic that casts their *śrāvaka* confrères as unsympathetic if not overtly hostile to this movement.<sup>50</sup>

What is harder to discern is the relationship between these portrayals of hostility and the life of monks who preserved them. It could be that these jeremiads were composed in central parts of the Indian subcontinent and then subsequently imported into Gandhāra where they were translated into Gāndhārī Prākṛit, as certainly the vast majority of Mainstream texts in Gāndhārī must have been. More philological work will be required to determine if there are telltale signs of translationese operating in these Mahāyāna *sūtras*. It is also possible that Mahāyāna monks in Greater Gandhāra encountered just the sort of opposition their texts describe and yet still managed to compose, circulate, and preserve their texts in such an unsupportive environment. There is

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<sup>49</sup> For example, Faxian reports that in the country of Luoyi 羅夷 (\*Rohi?, \*Lakki?), which is near the modern border of eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan and just south of ancient Nagarahāra, there were nearly 3000 monks who studied both the Small and Great vehicles (T 2085, 51: 859a.15–17).

<sup>50</sup> For examples of this kind of rhetoric and a discussion of its implications, see Boucher 2008, 71–78.

much about the real workings of early monastic culture that is still not well understood. Deprived of a central authority and a clear differentiation of roles within monasteries, it may be the case that monks inclined toward the Mahāyāna could maintain small sub-fraternities within larger monasteries with some degree of autonomy. The degree of difficulty in carrying this out could have varied widely even amongst monasteries in relatively close proximity. At stake in such matters is the degree to which Mahāyāna monks could actively partake in the local religious economy, a difficulty highlighted none too seldomly in their own literature.

So what is in some ways most exciting about these recent discoveries of Mahāyāna texts in *kharoṣṭhī* script and Gāndhārī Prākṛit is not that they existed. It's that they have been preserved that forces us to reexamine how the rhetoric of their texts functioned and how it might have been related to the real conditions in which these monks lived. Hopefully more discoveries will be forthcoming, and that these new finds will be met with increasingly nuanced analyses of the polemic they preserve. Regardless, we know now more than ever that monks in Greater Gandhāra copied, translated, circulated, and preserved texts in the full range of Buddhist genres. While the strongest version of the so-called "Gāndhārī hypothesis" is still not adequate, it is likely that further work on the early Chinese translations will reveal just how massive this literature once was.

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# **From Sanskrit to Chinese and Back Again: Remarks on Xuanzang's Translations of the *Yogācārabhūmi* and Closely Related Philosophical Treatises\***

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## **Introduction**

Xuanzang (玄奘, 602–664)<sup>1</sup> is an outstanding figure among translators of Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese. The sheer bulk of his pertinent oeuvre<sup>2</sup> is almost incredible. Moreover, his renderings of Indic originals have also been rarely—if ever—been surpassed in quality. This holds true if one judges his translations by his ability to understand the originals thoroughly and by his accuracy

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\*In this article, the following abbreviations are used: *SamBh* = *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ*; T = Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新修大藏經 (The Tripitaka in Chinese), edited by Junjirō Takakusu 高楠順次郎 and Kaikyō Watanabe 渡邊海旭, 85 vols., Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1932. Paragraph numbers and page numbers without any further specification refer to the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts of the *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ* as edited in Delhey 2009 and its Chinese translation as contained in T1579, respectively. —I am deeply indebted to my dear colleague Greg Seton for checking my English.

<sup>1</sup> The exact dates of his life are still open to discussion. I am following here the dates given by Deleanu (2006: 106; cf. *ibid.* 133, n. 2). The deviations only amount to a few years, anyway. This is certainly nothing about which someone who is mainly specialized in ancient Indian Buddhism with its often vexing chronological problems must be seriously concerned about!

<sup>2</sup> For information regarding the amount of translation work done by him, see e.g. Demiéville 1953: 405 (§2059); Mayer 1992: 120 and 280, nn. 617–618, cf. *ibid.*: 210; Deleanu 2006: 133, n. 3. For a full overview of the individual texts translated by Xuanzang, see Mayer 1992: 204–218.

and faithfulness to the meaning of the original texts.<sup>3</sup> The present contribution is written from the viewpoint of a specialist in Indian Buddhism. Therefore, these criteria are of central importance for this undertaking.

Not only did Xuanzang have the advantage of combining an extra-ordinarily good command of Sanskrit with the fact that he was an educated native speaker of his target language but he also had a deep insight into the intricacies of Indian Buddhist scholasticism. This was beneficial for both his main areas of scholarly expertise and translation activity, namely, *abhidharma* works of the Sarvāstivāda school of conservative Buddhism and works of the Yogācāra school of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

For Indologists interested in these two areas of Buddhism, Xuanzang's translations<sup>4</sup> are of utmost importance, since a significant number of the pertinent works are not extant in Sanskrit or Tibetan translation. Among those that still exist in the original language, some are only available in fragments. Others are preserved only in a *codex unicus*, which, more often than not, is only available in photographs, whose quality is poor and illegible in spots. For this reason, the interest in Xuanzang's translations, which determines also the way in which they are dealt with in the following pages, is pragmatic.<sup>5</sup>

In more concrete terms, Xuanzang's Chinese renderings serve the following practical purposes:

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<sup>3</sup> See e.g. the explicit judgment by the great Sinologist and expert in Buddhist studies Demiéville (1958: 415): "...Hiuan-tsang, le plus exact de tous les traducteurs chinois ..." In other places, he describes Xuanzang's ability as translator with strong terms of admiration (Demiéville 1957: 110), Demiéville 1953: 405 [§2059]). However, regarding his faithfulness to the original, one should also take into account other research, which suggests that he introduces his own dogmatic views into the translations of certain texts; see Sakuma 2008: 363.

<sup>4</sup> Expressions like "Xuanzang's translations" are used throughout this article for the sake of convenience. Strictly speaking, they are products of a large translation office headed by Xuanzang. We do not know whether the final version of each and every sentence has been checked by him. In view of the enormous amount of translations produced, this seems to be even quite unlikely.

<sup>5</sup> For an article dealing with Xuanzang from an entirely different perspective, see Rachel Lung's contribution in the present volume.

- When a Sanskrit text is preserved, Xuanzang's translations can be made use of in critical editions of the Sanskrit text. Since Xuanzang's translations typically predate the oldest Sanskrit manuscripts by several centuries and the Tibetan renderings by circa 150 years, these Chinese translations have the potential to bear indirect witness to very old textual variants. At the same time, these translations often provide considerable help in the interpretation of the original texts, since they exhibit the tendency to express the intended meaning more explicitly by minor additions to the original wording, or to give interpretative renderings of Sanskrit terms.
- When no Sanskrit text is preserved, one can gain knowledge of the contents and general message of the texts with the help of the translations. Ideally, one also may be able to draw some conclusions about the technical terms of the original or even about the exact wording.

Naturally, at this point of our consideration, some questions concerning Xuanzang's translation technique come into play. For instance, which of the Chinese words are the fixed equivalents of Sanskrit technical terms and how consistently are these used? Which grammatical devices are used by Xuanzang to translate the Sanskrit morphology and syntax into the Chinese language, whose own syntax is entirely different? Of what nature are the interpretational additions and is there a way to recognize at least some of them? Which deviations from the Sanskrit text are due to the laws governing Chinese grammar and style?

If we turn to contemporary Chinese sources for answers to these questions, it seems that we are not particularly well-informed about the details of Xuanzang's translation technique. It is true that there is a relatively large amount of valuable information about the technical organization of the translation offices of this time (which, by the way, tended to be very large).<sup>6</sup> However, regarding the general principles and especially regarding the set of

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<sup>6</sup> See Mayer 1992: 119–133 for much information on Xuanzang's translation office, including information on his collaborators, remarks on the place of his translation office in the history of these institutions and many further references in the notes. For brief remarks in English see e.g. Deleanu 2006: 107.

detailed rules employed in the translation process, there is not much written by Xuanzang himself that has been preserved, but the situation seems to be at least slightly better when it comes to statements from his collaborators and disciples.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from the fact that it does not belong to the main expertise of this present writer to scrutinize these sources in detail, it is probably fair to say that a collection of these explicit statements—though certainly important—can never produce results that would be as detailed as a thorough-going comparison of preserved, reliably edited Sanskrit texts and their translations. Moreover, it would certainly be desirable to test in practice any translation rules that he allegedly followed.<sup>8</sup>

General discussions and assessments of Xuanzang's translation technique and style of varying length are without doubt extremely numerous in the secondary literature—particularly if one takes publications written in Chinese and Japanese into consideration. However, systematic and exhaustive comparisons of Sanskrit texts with their translations in order to elucidate the translation technique seem to be far less wide-spread.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See Rachel Lung in the present volume.

<sup>8</sup> An often mentioned example of translation rules are the five principles for transcribing rather than translating a Sanskrit word (五種不翻, for which see T2131.1055a13ff.; cf. Ch'en 1960: 185). R. Lung refers to them in her contribution to the present volume as well. However, the authenticity of the ascription of these five principles to Xuanzang has been contested in secondary literature (see Mayer 1992: 281, n. 651). The present writer does not want to enter into this discussion. But even independently of this problem, it would certainly be an interesting task to check in detail whether these principles conform with the evidence of the translations themselves.

<sup>9</sup> I regret that I had no access to the monograph on Xuanzang by Kuwayama & Hakamaya (1981). It contains an extremely detailed survey and discussion of his translation activity and includes a ten paged "discussion of the characteristics and terminology of Xuanzang's translations into Chinese" according to Deleanu 2006: 133, n. 3 and 137, n. 35. Although ten pages may not be indicative of an analysis that is as systematic and detailed as this present writer deems desirable, this "discussion" was written by Noriaki Hakamaya, who is one of the leading experts in Indian Yogācāra Buddhism and has a thorough knowledge of the original Sanskrit sources as well as of the translations. Furthermore, due to the fact that it came to my notice very late, I have also not been able to make use of the monograph on Chinese rendition techniques by Chen (2004), which deals with Xuanzang (among others) and might contain much relevant material.

There are two voluminous trilingual (i.e. including Tibetan renderings) indices that treat Xuanzang's translations primarily from the perspective of words that are largely deprived of their morphological particulars and syntactic context. One of these indices is based upon an important work of the Sarvāstivāda *abhidharma* and the other upon the basic work of the Yogācāra school. Together they provide a researcher with an overview of this one aspect of Xuanzang's translation technique. In particular, a great number of his fixed equivalents for important technical terms can easily be looked up in this way. For the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, we have the index edited by Hirakawa (1973–1978) and, for the *Yogācārabhūmi*, we can now refer to the dictionary and index by Yokoyama & Hirosawa (1996 and 1997). The latter work, however, has to be used with utmost caution, because it suffers from major methodological problems.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Hirakawa's (1997) *Buddhist-Chinese Sanskrit Dictionary* must be mentioned here, because it is a comprehensive standard reference work and is based on the dictionary by Ogiwara & Tsuji (1979). Numerous words from Xuanzang's translations (including his rendering of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*) have been taken into consideration in the latter work.<sup>11</sup>

Certainly, lists of word equivalents have their merits, and one should continue to produce them. Nowadays, it is advisable to do this not (only) in the form of print publications but (also) in electronic searchable form, which should ideally be accessible via

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<sup>10</sup> See Silk 2001: 150–168 for all details. For a few relatively short sections of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, Yokoyama & Hirosawa 1996 and 1997 can be replaced by more reliable indices, in particular Choi 2001 and Choi 2002 (which will be dealt with again below) and Yaita & Takano 1995 (for which Delhey 2013: 518–520 may also be consulted). Ui's (1961) *Bodhisattvabhūmi* index requires some separate remarks (for which see below). For all further information on textual witnesses, editions, translations, and reference works of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, see Delhey 2013.

<sup>11</sup> It is not intended to give a full list of indices of Xuanzang's *abhidharma* and Yogācāra translations here. However, an on-going glossary project in Japan should be briefly mentioned in which Sanskrit technical terms, their Tibetan and Chinese (predominantly taken from Xuanzang's translations) equivalents, standard renderings in modern Japanese and English and illustrative passages are collected. See the publication Saitō et al. 2011, which is the first in a series of related volumes. For the on-line database of this project, see URL: [http://www.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~b\\_kosha/start\\_index.html](http://www.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~b_kosha/start_index.html) (date of access: November 8, 2013).

the Internet. The *Indo-Tibetan Lexical Resource* project<sup>12</sup> is, as its name indicates, mainly devoted to a study of Indic words (which form the headwords) and their Tibetan counterparts. However, Chinese words can be entered there as well—and should certainly be entered whenever the Chinese translations shed some light on the meaning of the Old and Middle Indo-Aryan terms.

That said, mere lists of words can never procure sufficient data to make a full analysis of the translation technique, since they provide very little information on the way that Xuanzang proceeds in translating on the morphological and syntactical level.<sup>13</sup> As a matter of fact, there is even the danger that the word equivalents themselves are occasionally misleading or even completely wrong, because they might not fully take into account the possibility that a sentence has been translated into Chinese in such a way that exact word-to-word correspondences cannot be established.<sup>14</sup>

Ui's older selective Index to the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (1961) chooses an interesting different approach. It combines the juxtaposition of whole or partial Sanskrit sentences with their Chinese rendering in the first part of the book with a separate bilingual word-index (which, however, can only be looked up according to Sanskrit words) in the second part of the book.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See URL: <http://www.kc-tbts.uni-hamburg.de/index.php/projects/79-indo-tibetan-lexical-resource-itlr> (date of access: November 8, 2013) for further information on this project.

<sup>13</sup> One should, however, add that this is an over-simplification of the situation. Bilingual or multilingual indices in our field of studies often include, though more or less sporadically, short phrases, Chinese grammatical particles and even Sanskrit morphemes (see e.g. Hirakawa 1997 s.v. 於 where he also gives the locative suffix *tra* as an equivalent). However, basically, they remain committed to the approach of comparing words to each other.

<sup>14</sup> In his *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary*, Hirakawa (1997: preface, 8–10) shows clear awareness of this problem and deals with it at some length (cf. also Hirakawa 1973–1978: vol. 2, preface, for briefer remarks on this topic). He also states (1997: preface, 10) that he has at times “tried to include short sentences” as a remedy. Hirakawa also addresses other methodological problems, especially the possibility that there is often a difference of recension or textual witness involved. An awareness of the last-mentioned problems must, of course, also be present, if one wants to compare the translations with the Sanskrit originals on a sentence level rather than on the word level.

<sup>15</sup> In both parts, Japanese translations are added as well.

Therefore, one can at least check the syntactical environment of the words.

It is true that all these works are useful for looking up words, though in varying degrees. However, all of them (including the last-mentioned one) are a far cry from providing either a full analysis of the translation technique on the terminological and grammatical levels or even the basic data needed for such an analysis.<sup>16</sup>

The situation is different with the trilingual index prepared by Jong-nam Choi in 2001 (213–359), which he published again with additional features regarding its searchability in 2002.<sup>17</sup> In an approach that was, to the best of my knowledge, entirely original, he systematically compared not only the words, but also their grammatical features and respective syntactical environment. Moreover, he did not hesitate to include all relevant Chinese particles as headwords.

Another interesting feature about his index is the fact that two different translations by Xuanzang of basically the same Sanskrit text are integrated into this index. This is due to the fact that Choi takes a chapter of the *Xianyang shengjiao lun* (顯揚聖教論; T1602; henceforth: *Xianyang lun*) as the main basis for his study; a work that consists, to a large degree, of often lengthy excerpts from the *Yogācārabhūmi*. The *Xianyang lun* itself is nowadays—save for a couple of citations<sup>18</sup>—only extant in Chinese translation, while the

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<sup>16</sup> This article is exclusively concerned with (a part of) Xuanzang's translations. However, for methodological inspiration and because many features of Xuanzang's translations have, of course, not been entirely original, some reference works dealing with earlier translators should be briefly mentioned here. The glossaries produced by Karashima (1998, 2001, 2010) give at least the full context in which the Chinese headwords (including also several particles with a short explanation of their function) appear. Accordingly, they also mark a considerable qualitative progress beyond other publications of this kind. Vetter's lexicographical study (2012) is in some regards similar, but contains some additional useful features.

<sup>17</sup> I have already used an earlier opportunity (Delhey 2013: 513f.) to emphasize the methodological merits of this index. However, in the present context it is useful to do this again and to add slightly more details.

<sup>18</sup> One of the quoted passages (T1602.487a3ff.) is preserved in Sanskrit, namely in the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*; see Schmithausen 1987: 315, n. 297. Unfortunately, this escaped my attention in a recent publication and should be added there (Delhey 2013: 511, n. 51).

excerpts from the *Yogācārabhūmi* occurring in the chapter studied by Choi are still existing in Sanskrit and Tibetan as well.<sup>19</sup>

Both Chinese translations belong to the early years of Xuanzang's translation activity. However, the *Xianyang lun* has already been translated in 645, only eight months after Xuanzang's return from India, while the work on the *Yogācārabhūmi* started in 646. Xuanzang's work is, as is well-known, generally regarded as the beginning of a new translation style, the so-called "New Translations" (新譯). Choi (2001: 16–18) observes that the translation style of the *Xianyang lun* shows still more traces of the previous translation period than the *Yogācārabhūmi*. In other words, to a certain extent the chronological development of Xuanzang's translation style can be observed by a comparison of the two translations. However, it would be, in my view, also desirable to trace minor changes in the translation style over the whole period of Xuanzang's activity.

It should also be noted that Choi's Index is based on a fine critical edition of the Sanskrit text and that the Chinese text of the *Xianyang lun* and the Tibetan corresponding sections have been edited with text-critical notes as well.<sup>20</sup> Choi did this work as his Ph.D. thesis. Therefore, it is only natural that the amount of text dealt with in this meticulous fashion had to be limited.

More text has to be analyzed in this or other ways<sup>21</sup> in order to gain more data. This can either be another text from the

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<sup>19</sup> It is perhaps needless to mention that in comparing the two Chinese translations one must always be aware of the possibility that the lost original of the *Xianyang lun* has introduced some changes in the wording of passages which have been taken over from the *Yogācārabhūmi*. Choi certainly shows clear awareness of this problem. It is, of course, only natural that there are cases where one can be sure that differences are due or not due to the original Sanskrit texts as well as cases which are uncertain and open to discussion.

<sup>20</sup> All these texts as well as a heavily annotated German translation are contained in Choi 2001. — Regarding the edited texts, there are some overlaps with another study published some years later by Deleanu (2006).

<sup>21</sup> One does not necessarily have to choose the same or a similar procedure as Choi. One can, for instance prefer a systematically arranged comparison of Sanskrit and Chinese grammatical features enriched by sample words and sentences. Moreover, one can also focus one's attention on texts that are available in more than one Chinese translation, as long as one compares them all with the Sanskrit text as well. (In this connection, attention should be drawn to a recent article by Harrison [2010], although it deals with somewhat different

*Yogācārabhūmi* that has parallels in the *Xianyang lun*—plenty of these passages are available<sup>22</sup>—or a part of the *Yogācārabhūmi* that has no such parallel but is at least available in a reliable edition of the Sanskrit text.

### **The Translation of the *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ* and *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ* Chapters of the *Yogācārabhūmi***

The present writer has the intention to produce a full-fledged comparative analysis of two chapters of the so-called “Basic Section” of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, namely, the fairly long *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ* (*SamBh*) and the very brief *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ* with their Chinese translation.<sup>23</sup> Such a publication will mainly focus on grammatical aspects. This can be supplemented by terminological equivalents and short phrases, which will be entered gradually into the database of the *Indo-Tibetan Lexical Resource* (for which see above). A rather brief section of the *SamBh* has a correspondence in the *Xianyang lun* which will also be taken into account.

On this present occasion, I will only make selective remarks about (1.) the translation technique in general and (2.) the two most common Chinese particles. My comments on these will be followed by (3.) a more detailed investigation into a third often used particle.

1. Leaving aside a part of the vocabulary used and some syntactic features, the language of the two Sanskrit chapters

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source material, namely, with translations by Xuanzang and others of popular Mahāyāna *sūtras*. There, the problem of underlying recensions of the translations is much more central than in the case of Xuanzang’s translations of dogmatic and philosophical treatises.) This procedure would have the advantage that one could also add a further contribution to the relatively intensely studied question regarding the place that Xuanzang’s translation technique occupies in the history of Buddhist Chinese translations. Finally, it should be at least briefly mentioned that Deleanu’s study on a part of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (2006) contains very many observations on differences between the Sanskrit original and the Chinese translations in the notes to his editions and translations, especially in the part containing the critical edition of the Chinese text.

<sup>22</sup> The whole *hetuvidyā* section (see Delhey 2013: 518–520 for basic information on this sub-chapter), for instance, is also preserved in both texts. The index by Yaita & Takano (1995), which is basically a word index, takes both translations into account.

<sup>23</sup> Critically edited, respectively in Delhey 2009 and Delhey 2006.

basically conforms to the standard of classical Sanskrit as defined by the ancient Indian grammarian Pāṇini.<sup>24</sup> This means that full use is made of the extra-ordinarily rich morphology of this language. However, like in many other classical Sanskrit texts, frequent use of the nominal style in combination with a relatively strong tendency to form long compounds restricts the use of inflected word-forms to a considerable degree. The basic word order is SOV, but sometimes deviations from this standard can be noticed.

The Chinese grammar has, as is well-known, a completely different structure. There can be no doubt that Xuanzang generally does not create “Sanskrit in disguise” or “Sanskrit Hybrid Chinese,” but rather is committed to the task of transforming the Sanskrit wording to accord with the rules of the Chinese language. The language that he uses rests historically on the basis of classical Chinese, which took shape in the centuries immediately preceding imperial times, but also exhibits many of the developments and changes that are found in other texts written in the Buddhist Chinese translation idiom.

The main task that Xuanzang has to perform on the grammatical level is to express that which is marked in Sanskrit mainly by inflection, by the strict Chinese word order (which follows generally the pattern SVO and tends to place modifiers before the modified nouns and verbs) and by function words. These include, among others, prepositions, postpositions and—as Zürcher (1977: 191) called them—“embracing patterns,” that is to say, the syntactical function of a word or phrase is marked by the combination of two such function words, one placed in the beginning and one placed in the end. His use of many particles is, however, not set in stone. Accordingly, particles are usually omitted, if Xuanzang does not deem them necessary for understanding the meaning. Another noteworthy fact is that in certain cases Xuanzang can switch between a preposition, a postposition and an embracing pattern; 於..., ...中, and 於...中, for instance, are in certain uses interchangeable.

Throughout the two chapters under consideration, Xuanzang shows a strong tendency to write rhythmic prose, that is to say, he usually creates four-syllable units in his renderings. This

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<sup>24</sup> See the remarks on the language of the *SamBh* in Delhey 2009: 97–104.

typically Chinese stylistic device always must be taken into consideration when one tries to understand why Xuanzang uses or omits a particle in a certain place, why sometimes mono-syllabic words and at other places binomes are used to express the same meaning and why Xuanzang sometimes deviates slightly from the wording of the Sanskrit text. These four-syllable units are also useful for identifying syntactical boundaries.

2. The two particles that occur the most often (i.e. more than 400 times) in the *SamBh* and *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ* are 故 and 於. The use of 故 in our texts accords very well with Zürcher's (1977: 191–192) remarks on its use in Buddhist Chinese Sanskrit. In our text, its extraordinarily frequent occurrence is predominantly due to the fact that it is Xuanzang's standard device for rendering the many ablatives of causality of the Sanskrit text. Xuanzang hardly ever abstains from marking them. For this purpose, he uses the particle alone or in an embracing pattern, preferably 由 ...故. However, he also uses ...故 and 由 ...故 for marking causes or reasons that are expressed by other means than the ablative in Sanskrit. Moreover, sometimes Xuanzang also uses these means to mark causes which are not explicitly marked as such in Sanskrit. Another construction with 故 as final member, namely 為...故 (or 為欲...故; 為... alone can also have this force) is used to render final datives or °*artham* (“for the purpose of, in order to”) in the Sanskrit text. 為...故 has already been mentioned by Zürcher (ibid.). If I understand Zürcher correctly, he means to say that the embracing patterns with 故 as final member occur only if the phrase is placed before the main clause. This does not hold true for Xuanzang's translation of the *SamBh*. In a relatively small minority of cases, it occurs after the main clause as well. To give an instance:

...或時 宣說 四聖諦智為向涅槃故。 (332b25); ... *caturṣv apy āryasatyēṣu jñānaṃ deśitaṃ nirvāṇagamanāya*. (§2.4.4.3.4); “...[and] sometimes [the Buddha] has taught knowledge of the Four Noble Truths for the sake of going to *nirvāṇa*.”

The other particle singled out above, viz. 於—which is placed before the word(s) that is/are syntactically marked by it—is used in our texts only slightly less often than 故. It is already found in pre-imperial Chinese texts and fulfills a variety of functions. A list of

these will not be provided here.<sup>25</sup> Instead, just a few brief remarks on some of its uses in the *SamBh* will be made: 於 is especially common as a rendering of locatives (in several of their functions) or the locative suffix *°tra* in Sanskrit. Sometimes the preposition is used to mark the direct object after a transitive verb; accordingly, 於 usually corresponds to an accusative in the Sanskrit text in these cases. This seems to be a peculiarity of Buddhist Chinese.<sup>26</sup> Since the direct object of a transitive verb in Chinese is placed after the latter, anyway, the use of the particle is usually superfluous. Accordingly, it only occurs in a relatively small minority of cases, probably mainly or exclusively for rhythmic reasons, that is to say, in order to arrive at a four-syllable set. However, 於 (or the embracing pattern 於...中) can also mark the equivalent to an accusative object in Sanskrit, if it is placed before the Chinese verb. The following set of equivalents may serve as an illustration:

思擇諸法 ◦ *dharmān vicinoti* (“analyzes the *dharmas*”) (333a11; §3.1.2.2.19)

思惟諸法 *dharmān vicinoti* (“analyzes the *dharmas*”) (343a26; §4.2.7.1.2)

But: 云何宴坐 於諸法中 思惟簡擇 ◦ = *kathaṃ tathāṇiṣaṇṇo dharmān vicinoti pravicinoti?* (“How does [the meditator], sitting in this way, analyze and scrutinize the *dharmas*?”) (343a20f.; §4.2.7.1.1)

In the first two cases, the word order of the Sanskrit text (object, verb) is simply reversed in Chinese, which is sufficient to arrive at the same meaning which the Sanskrit phrase has. In the last case, the Chinese rendering corresponds literally rather to English: “How does he, sitting quietly, analyze and scrutinize with reference/regard to the *dharmas*?” To mark the transferred object with 於 or 於...中 is in such a case indispensable. Why Xuanzang sometimes prefers such a rendering is an interesting question and deserves further investigation. In the present case, the addition of a second two-syllable verb might have triggered the change, since the object now cannot be combined with the verbs in a single four-

<sup>25</sup> The reader may be referred to Choi 2002: 149–152 (= Choi 2001: 231–234) for a large number of examples from the *Xianyang lun* and the *Śrāvakabhūmi* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.

<sup>26</sup> Zürcher 1977: 190. Cf. also Karashima 1998: 558–560.

syllable set anymore. To form another such set for the object, two additional syllables are needed.

**3.** The particle 諸<sup>27</sup> occurs about 235 times in the *SamBh* and *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ*.<sup>28</sup> It is placed before nouns. Typically, it immediately precedes the head of the noun phrase. Whatever the case, it is usually, though not always, placed after the adjective attributes of the head of the noun phrase. The particle is already found in classical Chinese. The most common way to label it according to its function is to call it a plural particle.<sup>29</sup> A translation equivalent of this particle in English is “all.” However, in grammars of Chinese, it is noted that such a translation is often not very exact, since it rather indicates “members of the class (referred to by the noun)” without necessarily implying a numerical totality.<sup>30</sup>

In accordance with its general description as a plural particle, there are about 100 cases where this particle is used as equivalent for a noun plural ending in the Sanskrit original. This does, however, not mean that this particle (or other particles with similar functions) is used wherever the Sanskrit text has a plural. In Xuanzang’s Chinese, the use of a particle denoting plurality is optional. Whether or not this grammatical device was used seems to have depended very much on the answer to the question of how important the translators thought it was to make the plural explicit.

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<sup>27</sup> The author of the present contribution has already written a few lines on the use of this particle in the *SamBh* in an earlier publication (Delhey 2009: 161, n. 237). However, here a more detailed treatment seems to be useful. Moreover, the earlier brief remarks have been written in German language.

<sup>28</sup> In addition to its adnominal function discussed here, 諸 can in Classical Chinese also be a contraction of 之 (in its use as an object pronoun) and a final particle marking questions. Moreover, it can be a contraction of 之於. However, the latter two uses are, as it seems, unknown to the texts under consideration. Therefore, they will henceforth be disregarded.

<sup>29</sup> Unger (1989: s.v.), for instance, labels it in his glossary of classical Chinese as an “adnominale Pluralisierungspartikel;” von der Gabelentz 1881: §760, uses the term “Pluralbezeichnung.”

<sup>30</sup> Pulleyblank 1995: 126; see also his remark concerning an example he provides (ibid.): “... severally or collectively, as a class, not all of them together as would be implied if one translated: ‘All ...’ Cf. also von der Gabelentz 1881: §1068; Unger 1985: 40f.

Additionally, the stylistic considerations mentioned above are certainly also present here and there.

There are, however, also very many cases in which 諸 does not correspond to a plural ending in the Sanskrit text—or at least, does not exclusively do so. To begin with, sometimes this particle is used when the word to which it refers has no ending in the Sanskrit original, on account of its being part of a compound. Moreover, there are cases in which Xuanzang’s rendering deviates from a literal translation of the Sanskrit text by adding a noun that has no equivalent in the original text. Generally, in these two cases 諸 seems to denote a plurality of things as well.

Furthermore, there are also cases in which 諸 is used as a rendering of the Sanskrit word *sarva* in its meaning “all” (*sarva* has in this case a plural ending, if it is not compounded with the word qualified by it).<sup>31</sup> As already mentioned above, 諸 does not make explicit that *all* members of the class are meant. As a matter of fact, usually Xuanzang renders the word *sarva* in the sense of “all” with an explicit equivalent. Most often he uses the word 一切 for it. Xuanzang’s rendering of *sarva* with 諸 has the effect that the Sanskrit text is not translated in these cases as exactly as one might expect. However, this use is restricted to less than 5% of the total occurrences of 諸 in our text. Moreover, in most of these cases, the fact that all members of class *x* are intended can be inferred from context. Sometimes, Xuanzang also combines the particle with other, more explicit words, like e.g. in 遍於諸方 (338c24; “everywhere in the directions”), which corresponds to Sanskrit *sarvadiḥsu* (§4.1.2.4.2.2.8; “in all directions”). Strictly speaking, 諸 is more or less redundant here, but fulfills Xuanzang’s goal of arriving at a set of four syllables.

If we now turn our attention to the remaining cases in which Xuanzang uses the rendering 諸, we have to recognize that it occurs in about 50 cases (i.e. more than 20% of all occurrences) where the Sanskrit text has a singular noun. What can be responsible for the abundance of singular forms as Sanskrit equivalents to the Chinese plural particle 諸? It seems that there is

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<sup>31</sup> The two uses of 諸 for the Sanskrit plural on the one hand and for Sanskrit *sarva* on the other hand, are, of course, so well-known that it is superfluous to give references for them from the text of the chapters under consideration.

not one single explanation valid for all of the occurrences. However, this is exactly the reason why the particle 諸 is an interesting candidate for a case study in Xuanzang’s translation technique.

**a.** There is, of course, the possibility that Xuanzang’s manuscript, which predates all our other textual witnesses and is not preserved, had in some places a reading different from that of our manuscript(s). In the case of three occurrences of the phrase *kleśam prajahāti* (“he gives up the defilement”) and its Tibetan and Chinese equivalents such a difference in reading seems (at least at first sight) to be especially likely:

*kleśam prajahāti; nyon mongs pa mams spong ba* (§3.1.2.2.26); 捨諸惑 (333a24)

*kleśam prajahāti; nyon mongs pa ni spong bar byed* (§3.2.4); 捨諸煩惱 (335a19)

*kleśam prajahāti; nyon mongs pa mams spong bar byed pa* (§4.1.1.2.1); 捨諸煩惱 (336c24)

The Chinese rendering might each time be based on a manuscript reading *kleśān*, that is, an accusative plural instead of an accusative singular. In favor of this assumption, one might adduce the facts that in manuscripts *kleśān* is very often written *kleśām* (and thereby more liable to be confused with the singular *kleśam* by a scribe) and that Tibetan adds a plural particle (*mams*) as well—though, notably, only in the first and third occurrence.

However, in my view, there are also reasons to doubt whether we are really dealing with differences in manuscript readings here. In the first two paragraphs cited above, the Sanskrit text uses immediately afterwards a plural form of *kleśa*, namely, *kleśebhyaḥ*. At the very least here, one can assume that, on one occasion, both the Chinese and Tibetan translators tried to make the Sanskrit text more consistent and, on the other occasion, the Chinese translators alone tried to do so. In Sanskrit, a sudden change of perspective from one individual defilement to the defilements in general can be responsible for these differences. It is also possible that in the cases given above Sanskrit *kleśam* is used in a collective sense. The translators may have correctly interpreted *kleśam* in this way and chose to render this by the particles 諸 and *mams*, respectively. On the other hand, one can, of course, also argue that the sudden change from singular to plural in the

Sanskrit text (in the first two places) led to an emendatory or redactional change in the course of the transmission within ancient India. This would entail that the relatively late Sanskrit manuscript available to us preserves a more original reading than the manuscript used several centuries earlier by Xuanzang.

In all three passages the overall meaning of the text is hardly touched by the question whether the word *kleśa* occurs in the singular or plural, and one might wonder whether it is really necessary to discuss these cases in so much detail. However, these can serve as good examples for the fact that many different possible explanations can very often come into play, when one is dealing with a difference between the original text and its translations.

For the line of argument in this contribution, it is not crucial whether we are really dealing here with textual variants in the Sanskrit transmission of the text. For, one thing is clear: It makes no sense to assume that in 50 occurrences of the particle 諸, Xuanzang's manuscript had a plural form instead of the singular form in the manuscript available to us. Very often, in Sanskrit the plural and singular forms are quite different from each other. Moreover, other words in the sentence are also often affected by this interchange of singular and plural, for instance, adjectival attributes. This makes it impossible to assume transmissional corruption in a very high amount of these cases. It is also not imaginable that, somewhere in the course of the Indian text transmission, some redactor changed a part of the plurals into singulars or the other way around. Finally, it should be noted that this problem is not confined to the *SamBh.* Earlier researchers have encountered this phenomenon sporadically in other chapters of the *Yogācārabhūmi* as well as in other translations by Xuanzang.<sup>32</sup>

**b.** Sometimes, Xuanzang appears to deliberately change the Sanskrit singular to a plural, because he wants to make the intended sense clearer. At any rate, this would help explain the following case:

謂佛宣說 補特伽羅。及與諸法。唯法是依。非數取趣。世俗

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<sup>32</sup> Stache-Rosen 1968: vol. 2, 119, n. 176, cf. *ibid.*: vol. 1, 158; Deleanu 2006: vol. 2, 412, n. 8; Choi 2002: 202 (= Choi 2001: 284) lists three such cases under item no. 5; the percentage of such uses seems to be far lower than in our chapters, though.

言辭。不應執故。(332b18f.); *bhagavatā pudgalo 'pi deśito dharmo 'pi. tatra dharma eva pratisaraṇaṃ na pudgalo janapadanirukter anabhiniveśāt* (§2.4.4.3.3.1); “The Exalted One has taught the person and the *dharma*. Among these two, only the *dharma* is what should be relied upon, not the person, because one [should] not cling to the linguistic usage of the [ordinary] people.”

Xuanzang uses 諸 in his rendering of the first occurrence of *dharma* in this passage. Here, the text gives one possible interpretation of one of the four hermeneutical principles (*pratisaraṇa*), which occur in the canonical texts of the authors of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, namely: “The *dharma* is what should be relied upon, not the person.” In the text, first this canonical formula of the hermeneutical principle is cited. Then, a first explanation is given according to which one should not focus one’s attention on the occasionally questionable behavior of a person with which one discusses the Buddhist teaching, but rather on the doctrine itself. The textual passage cited above is introduced as an alternative way to understand the canonical saying. For the authors of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, it was clear that the person whose existence is presupposed in ordinary worldly speech and thought has no basis in reality. In Buddha’s words, however, a similar usage can sometimes be found whereas in other sermons, the person is reduced to a mere accumulation of separate entities or factors (*dharma*).

It is quite obvious that this must form the background of the present explanation. Moreover, this fact makes it quite understandable why Xuanzang here uses the particle 諸. He wants to make it more explicit that, in this second interpretation of the canonical hermeneutical passage, *dharma* is taken not in its meaning “Buddhist doctrine,” but rather in its meaning “a (plurality of) physical or psychic factor(s).” As a matter of fact, it is rather astonishing that the Sanskrit text uses the singular here. Probably this is due to the fact that the Sanskrit author keeps close to the wording of the *sūtra* in his interpretation. However, one cannot completely exclude the possibility that rhythmic considerations (i.e. the predilection for four-syllable sets) served as an additional motive for Xuanzang’s rendering.

c. In many places in which 諸 occurs, the Sanskrit singular has a generic reference, that is to say, what is said about this noun is not only valid for one particular member of the class *x*

designated by the noun, but also is typical for the class  $x$  in general. For instance:

諸離欲者。猶尚生起。(331b13); ... *vītarāgasyāpi yad utpadyate.* (§2.4.4.1.3.2); “...which even arises for a person who has become free from desire.”

諸離欲者 can be understood as meaning “persons who have become free from desire.” This usage accords fairly well with what has already been said about the particle 諸 and its generic implications in the beginning of this section. In this case, only the Sanskrit singular ending is not represented in the translation; the meaning of the singular is well-preserved.

**d.**

又諸無漏名決擇分... (336a5f); “And the uncontaminated [absorptions] are called ‘leading to/belonging to the spiritual break-through’...”

*sarvaṃ cānāsravaṃ nirvedhabhāgīyam ity ucyate* ... (“And each [*sarva*, singular] uncontaminated [absorption] is called ‘leading to/belonging to the spiritual break-through’...” (§3.5.2.4)

Again, the Chinese translation preserves the meaning of the Sanskrit text fairly well. Like in the cases dealt with above where 諸 is used for Sanskrit *sarva* in the plural number (“all”), the fact that the predicate is valid for all members of the class  $x$  is, in contrast to Sanskrit, not explicitly stated. However, the context in which this sentence occurs leaves hardly any room for doubt that this must be the case here.

**e.**

諸色 (342b21) = *rūpagataṃ* (§4.2.4.1.2)

The compound *rūpagata* (singular) in Sanskrit is an idiomatic way to express “(all) that which belongs to / is subsumed under (*gata*) [the category] matter/shape (*rūpa*).” Chinese “(all) the kinds of matter/shapes” is quite an exact rendering. Xuanzang does not feel the need or does not regard it as advisable to give a more literal translation.

**f.** Slightly more difficult are cases like the following one:

從初靜慮還退出已。於諸靜慮。不復樂入。(342c16–17); *ihāyaṃ dhyāyī prathamād dhyānād vyutthītas tad dhyānaṃ na tāvat samāpattukāmo bhavati* (§4.2.5.1); “After having arisen from the first

absorption, the meditator does not want to enter into this absorption again.”

Ch. 於諸靜慮 can, if I am not mistaken, only mean “into (the) absorptions” here. This might be an instance for a rendering that is simply inexact. At any rate, I see no stylistic or grammatical reason that would have prevented Xuanzang from giving a literal rendering of the Sanskrit text. Instead of 於諸靜慮 he could have written \*於此靜慮 (“into this absorption”). Maybe Xuanzang wanted to prevent the interpretation of the Sanskrit sentence as meaning that the meditator prefers to proceed to the next, higher level of the absorptions rather than enter the first absorption again. From the context of this text passage it becomes clear that this interpretation is not meant here. The practitioner simply becomes entangled in the sphere of sensual desires again. However, exactly because the text passage as a whole can hardly be misunderstood, this type of deviation from the Sanskrit text for the purpose of clarification would be superfluous here.

The examples **b.-f.** given above must be sufficient for illustrating different ways how the particle 諸 is used for a Sanskrit singular but can still be interpreted as being completely in line with the way in which its functions were described in the beginning of this passage with reference to grammarians of classical Chinese.

**g.** Other cases seem to suggest that an account of Xuanzang’s uses of the particle cannot end here. I mean those cases in which the Sanskrit singular is clearly used not to designate a class of persons or things, but an unspecified member of the class, such as, for instance, in the following example:

謂諸苾芻 於初靜慮 具足安住。 (343a9f.); *iha bhikṣuḥ prathamam dhyānam upasampadya viharati* (§4.2.6); “There [is] a monk [who] has entered the first absorption and dwells therein.”

Similar cases can be found in 339a15 = §4.1.2.6.2; 339b13 = §4.1.2.8.1.1; 340b9 = §4.1.3.1.1. Sanskrit *iha* corresponds to an unstressed “there.” The phrase simply indicates the existence of an indefinite member of the class “monk” at an unspecified place. It is neither conceivable that Xuanzang wants to stress—contrary to the Sanskrit text—that a plurality of monks enter into the absorption, nor is it probable that he interpreted the Sanskrit singular as referring to the class of persons in general, as it was the

case in instances of the rendering 諸 dealt with above (see section **c.**). Rather, Xuanzang’s main reason for the use of the particle here seems to be that it can also function as an indefinite particle. This seems also to be suggested by the fact that Xuanzang sometimes (334a26 = §3.2.2.1; 334c8 = §3.2.2.2.20; 343a21 = §4.2.7.1.1) renders the phrase *iha bhikṣuḥ* ... with 有苾芻 ..., which is neutral as regards number; it can mean “there is a monk...” as well as “there are monks ...”.<sup>33</sup>

If Xuanzang chooses the particle 諸 rather than 有 in these cases, a generic aspect might still be present as well, especially because it seems to be used in those cases in which the unspecified monk behaves in a way that is not unusual for a member of the class “monk.” In the *SamBh*, phrases like *iha bhikṣuḥ* are used when one or the other of the various meditative practices taught in Buddhism are described.

The indefinite aspect of 諸 is probably also responsible for its occurrence in the rendering of the following phrase:

*amuko nāmāyusmān prathamam dhyānam samāpadyate yāvad bhavāgram.*  
 (§3.4.3) “...The long-lived one called so-and-so enters into the first absorption [and so on] up to the [meditation called] summit of existence.” ...如是名諸長老 等入初靜慮 乃至有頂。  
 (335b22)

In the present case, it is not entirely clear which force the character 等 has. If 等 is not used in the meaning “equal” (also in renderings of the prefix *sam*<sup>o</sup> interpreted as *sama*) and perhaps also “rank” in the chapters under consideration, it has in most cases the meaning “etc.,” except after personal pronouns, where it simply indicates the plural, or in the interrogative pronoun 何等. In a significant minority of cases that need further investigation, however, its meaning is not quite clear and it is not impossible that it—possibly together with the adnominal 諸—indicates the plural here, in contrast to the singular used in the Sanskrit text. At any rate, whether a plurality is expressed here or not, this text passage seems to corroborate the indefinite aspect of the particle 諸.

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<sup>33</sup> For the use of 有 as an indefinite pronoun see von der Gabelentz 1881: §1118; cf. the indefinite pronouns *kaścit* and *kecana* in Hirakawa 1997 s.v.

In a somewhat similar case (in which, however, the character 等 does not intervene), Stache-Rosen (1968: vol. 1, 157 and 158) uses the German indefinite pronoun “irgendeiner” (singular) as rendering of the adnominal character combination 諸有 occurring in one of Xuanzang’s translations (in T1536.427b21 and c13). As a matter of fact, the characters are explained as meaning “having such-and-such a name, belonging to such-and-such family, ...” and so on (T1536.427b21 and c13ff.).<sup>34</sup> Finally, one may point to the fact that in Xuanzang’s translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the particle 諸 is one of the equivalents used for the Sanskrit indefinite pronoun *kaścit* (nominative singular masculine; Hirakawa 1973–1978: vol. 1, s.v. *ka*).

The indefinite use of the particle 諸 is, in my view, not entirely surprising after what has been said about this Chinese particle previously in this section. Still, it is remarkable and, at least at first sight, somewhat confusing that in all cases collected above, it is used in such a sense for a Sanskrit singular.<sup>35</sup> Attention may also be drawn to the fact that in the very beginning of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Xuanzang uses the character as a rendering of the Sanskrit relative pronoun *yaḥ* (nominative singular masculine).<sup>36</sup> There it refers to the historical Buddha who is invoked by Vasubandhu as his teacher. It is not easy to understand what Xuanzang meant to imply there by the use of the character 諸. However, it is rather improbable that his intention was to preserve the singular meaning, since the commentaries on this passage—as well as an explicit reference to the fact that the particle cannot refer to one single item in another of Xuanzang’s

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<sup>34</sup> With reference to the occurrence mentioned above, Stache-Rosen remarks that 諸 cannot be taken as a plural: “Aus dieser Stelle geht hervor, dass 諸 nicht als Plural aufzufassen ist” (Stache-Rosen 1968: vol. 2, 119, n. 176). It is somewhat unclear whether she wants to say that this holds true in general or only in the present case. Probably the latter alternative is the right one. At any rate, in my view, it is safer to conclude that the main function of 諸 does not consist in expressing plurality here. It seems not to be impossible to take it as a plural indefinite pronoun.

<sup>35</sup> For the obviously different use of 諸有 among two early translators, see Karashima 2010: s.v. and Vetter 2012: s.v.

<sup>36</sup> T1558.1a6 and 1a9 = *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (edition Pradhan 1975) 1,4 and 1,9. Cf. the revised edition by Ejima (1989) 1,4 and 1,10.

renderings—point to an understanding of it as plural particle.<sup>37</sup> The only singular use that is mentioned in grammars of classical Chinese refers to one particular fixed term.<sup>38</sup>

To sum up this examination of the particle 諸: In the *SamBh* and *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ*, the presence of this particle is anything but a safe indicator of a Sanskrit plural. Besides the fact that number is often not expressed in Sanskrit because the word forms part of a compound, the main reason seems to be that the functions of many Sanskrit singulars bear a close resemblance to functions that the particle 諸 in Xuanzang’s Chinese possesses. Other reasons like interpretational or inexact renderings, attempts to polish inconsistencies of the Sanskrit original or text-critical problems play seemingly only a minor role.

### Conclusion

It is true that only very selective remarks on the translation technique of Xuanzang in the two chapters under consideration have been made here and that the only problem dealt with in detail is the way how Xuanzang uses the particle 諸 in the *SamBh* and *Asamāhitā Bhūmiḥ*. Nevertheless, some general—for the most part certainly not entirely original—conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing discussion.

Xuanzang has rightfully been described as an exceptionally able, accurate and faithful translator. However, faithfulness can take many different forms. In the case of Xuanzang, it is certainly true that he keeps very close to the original text as regards the terminology, since he uses a long list of fixed equivalents of

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<sup>37</sup> In the Chinese commentaries on Xuanzang’s translation (T1821–T1823), this occurrence of 諸 provoked some exegetical efforts and a controversial discussion. An admittedly cursory glance at these sources seem to confirm that they took 諸 in the plural sense. They arrive at different solutions who the teachers are who are referred to here in addition to Buddha Śākyamuni. More importantly, Hirakawa’s edition of Xuanzang’s translation contains at the pertinent place an interesting reference to a passage in the *\*Mahāvibhāṣā* (Hirakawa 1998: 1). There (T1545.182a2f.) one finds the following phrase: ... 諸言所表非唯一故 (“... because that what is expressed by the word 諸 is not one single [thing].”).

<sup>38</sup> Namely, to 諸侯 which can, at least sometimes, mean “a feudal lord” (von der Gabelentz 1881: §760, Pulleyblank 1995: 126).

Sanskrit words. Moreover, he generally tries to transfer the meaning of the Sanskrit sentences very accurately into his Chinese translation. He does not hesitate to make small additions or changes in order to make the sense more clear, but in the chapters considered here, he generally does not introduce major changes in the text in accordance with his own interpretation and dogmatic views. He also abstains from adding long comments on the original text.

However, he is also quite consistent in not sacrificing Chinese grammar and style on the altar of literalness. The fact that he uses the Chinese four-character rhythm in his prose means that he cannot translate the Sanskrit text as literally as he would if he were to abstain from using this Chinese stylistic device. In terms of grammar, he hardly ever uses mechanical fixed correspondences, if this would result in a Sanskrit Hybrid Chinese. Accordingly, his use of particles is in line with their Chinese functions rather than with the elements of Sanskrit morphology that partially express related concepts. This becomes, for instance, clear from his use of the particle 諸 not only for Sanskrit plurals but also for singulars. Another instance is the use of the particle 於. Since this particle covers several uses of the Sanskrit locative, it is used most often in their rendering. However, Xuanzang does not hesitate to use it for other cases (e.g. the accusative), if the many functions of the Chinese particle fit very well to their use. He also abstains from the use of particles, when the sense is perfectly clear without them and when there are no stylistic reasons for their use, either. In his use of particles, he also makes occasional use of variation, as long as the meaning remains the same.

The fact that Xuanzang transfers the Sanskrit grammar more or less fully into the entirely different Chinese grammar entails that an intense study of the latter is indispensable for making full use of these valuable materials. Moreover, we need specialized reference works helping us to understand the particular form that the combination of Buddhist Chinese, classical/literary Chinese, and perhaps certain features of spoken Chinese assumes in Xuanzang's translation idiom. The meticulous comparison of Chinese translations with extant and reliably edited Sanskrit texts can be very helpful in this enterprise.

It is true that many of the facts listed above make full-fledged reconstructions of lost Sanskrit texts from their Chinese

translations, despite the fact that they have been *en vogue* for some time, a methodologically rather questionable approach. However, we can with due justification expect from Xuanzang's translations that we receive much valuable information on the meaning, interpretation and technical terms of the lost original text and that we can, at times, even venture a more or less well-founded guess at the exact wording of a particular sentence in the original. And certainly Xuanzang is a very valuable indirect witness, if we are doing text-critical work on an extant Sanskrit manuscript. However, the degree to which we are successful in these enterprises depends largely on the question of how diligent we are in producing studies and reference works like those mentioned in the foregoing pages.

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# **Multiple Translations from Sanskrit into Tibetan**

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## **Abstract**

As is well known, there exist many multiple translations of Indian texts into Tibetan, both inside and outside the Tibetan canon. The most obvious reason for a second or even third translation is the revision or substantial improvement of an older translation, which is usually stated in the colophon. Famous examples are the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra*, Śāntideva's *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra* or Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*. Sometimes the situation is not so clear, as in the case of the canonical and paracanonical translations of Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvalī*. After a brief discussion of these cases I will deal with the double translations of Rāhulabhadra's *Prajñāpāramitāstotra* and the triple translations of Sarvajñamitra's *Sragdharāstotra* and Carpaṭi's *Avalokiteśvarastotra* as illustrations of independent translations of the same text and deliberate modifications for literary purposes.

To the best of my knowledge, no one has so far made a systematic survey or study of multiple translations of Indian texts into Tibetan, myself included. This is somewhat surprising because the one who studies works preserved in the Tibetan Buddhist canon is bound to stumble over such translations now and then. However, the reason for this omission is obvious. In most cases scholars are interested only in the content of a specific work, its various recensions and textual history, and not in some formal properties it shares with other unrelated texts. Moreover, everybody will realize soon that the task is a huge one, given the great number of cases and the diversity of their specific problems.

A very rough and provisional classification of multiple translations of Tibetan canonical works could run like this:

### 1. Revisions of Older Translations Done before the “Great Revision,” Which is Marked by the Creation of the *Mahāvvyutpatti* and the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*

A good and well-known specimen is the analysis of 84 stanzas from the old Tibetan translation of the *Saddharmapūṇḍarikasūtra* found in Turkestan in comparison with its revised and edited version in the Peking Kanjur by Nils SIMONSSON.<sup>1</sup> SIMONSSON also studied a Dunhuang fragment of the Tibetan *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra* in comparison with its canonical translations.<sup>2</sup> The main characteristics of the older Tibetan versions are their *pāda*-wise translations of verses at the expense of good Tibetan style and their greater variations in rendering dogmatic or technical terms. One illustration may be sufficient:<sup>3</sup>

*ye cāpi rājapurusaḥ kuryāt tehi na saṃstavam |*  
*caṇḍālamuṣṭikāiḥ śaundais tīrthikaś cāpi sarvaśah || SP XIII.3*

*rgyal po'i myi ni gang dang gang ||*  
*de dag dang ni 'grogs mi bya ||*  
*gdol pa dang ni khu tshur pa' ||*  
*mur 'dug mam pa thams cad dang || Tm A 2,6*

*rgyal po'i zhabs 'bring gang yin dang ||*  
*gdol pa dang ni zol pa dang ||*  
*mu stegs can ni de dag dang ||*  
*mam pa kun du 'driś mi bya || TX 129r, 6 (To 159v, 2)*

One immediately sees the divergent renderings of *tīrthika* by the older form *mur 'dug pa'* and the (newer) standard term *mu stegs can*, and of the unclear *muṣṭika* (cf. BHSD) by the ‘analytic rendering’ (thus SIMONSSON) *khu tshur pa* “fist-man” and *zol pa* “cheater.” As for the syntax, the predicate is correctly placed at the end of the stanza in the canonical version, but at the end of the second *pāda* in the manuscript from Turkestan, in accordance with the word order of the Sanskrit original.

<sup>1</sup> Nils SIMONSSON, *Indo-tibetische Studien*. Die Methoden der tibetischen Übersetzer, untersucht im Hinblick auf die Bedeutung ihrer Übersetzungen für die Sanskrit-Philologie. [Part] I. Uppsala 1957 [Part II has never appeared].

<sup>2</sup> SIMONSSON, op. cit., pp. 178–209.

<sup>3</sup> SIMONSSON, op. cit., pp. 28–31.

The motive of these revisions was to write better, clearer and more standardized Tibetan by observing the principles laid down in the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*<sup>4</sup> or, in other words, to make the texts more intelligible for Tibetan readers who knew no Sanskrit.

## **2. Revisions of Translations Done after the “Great Revision” during the First Spread of the Dharma (*snga dar*)**

These revisions were done for similar, but also slightly different reasons. Most of the translations done during the first spread of the dharma were good or even excellent. Their main problem was not so much strange syntax, but rather their sometimes terse style, especially in verses, and their vocabulary. Many words of the so-called old language (*mying skad*) or idiosyncratic renderings of dogmatic terms or proper names had become obsolete and had to be replaced by simpler, modern terms. I would like to mention proper names like *dor thabs ldan pa* “having a particular mode of walking” for *vikrama*, the name of Viṣṇu in his incarnation as dwarf, which later became *mam par gnon pa* “the one who completely defeats (his enemies)”; *tshan ldan* “he who has a band (of companions or warriors)” for Bali, Viṣṇu’s opponent, which later became *stobs ldan* “mighty.” By the way, both renderings are etymologically incorrect. Other cases are well-known place names that were first translated, but later transcribed, e.g. *khor mo ’jig* for Vārāṇasī<sup>5</sup> (later mostly *wā rā ṇa sī*<sup>6</sup>) or *mnyam dkar* for Magadha<sup>7</sup> (later *ma ga dha*). Sometimes a text was revised because of its popularity, like the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*. The motive was to render both meaning and poetical form as faithfully and clearly as possible. This can be compared to the many co-existing English translations of this work. Occasionally the borderline between

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<sup>4</sup> For the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* see Mie ISHIKAWA, *A Critical Edition of the Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa, an Old and Basic Commentary on the Mahāvīyūtpatti*, The Toyo Bunko, Tokyo 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Analyzed as *vāra* “(a person’s) turn; times” plus a derivation from the root *nas* “to be lost, perish.”

<sup>6</sup> Many spelling variants!

<sup>7</sup> For this rare and strange rendering see Michael HAHN, “*Mnyam dkar* and Dharmakīrti’s Praise of the Buddha’s Nirvāṇa. Miscellanea etymologica tibetica IX,” in *Journal of Buddhist Studies* X (2013), in the press.

revision and new translation becomes blurred. In the case of the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, the colophons speak of revisions only. In the case of Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvalī*, the (modern) colophons try to create the impression that there were two independent translations, both done at the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and both revised, by the same revisers, in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Since both translations have survived, one inside the Tibetan canon, the other outside, we can see that they are not basically different. Apart from approximately 500 minor variants, they present the same text. In my paper on the paracanonical version of the Tibetan *Ratnāvalī* I tried to show that the Zhol-par-khang block print represents the old translation of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and that the canonical text represents the revised version of the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> It seems that the revisers simply tried to make some unclear passages more intelligible by changing a few words and expressions. If my observation is correct, we do not have two independent translations, but only one that was later slightly revised.

### **3. Retranslations of Older Translations with the Sole Intention of Improving an Older Version and Producing a Correct Tibetan Text**

A good illustration is the Tibetan translation of Subhūticandra's commentary on the *Amarakoṣa* which in Tibet is generally known under the title *Kāmadhenu*. The first, rather incomplete Tibetan translation was done by Kīrticandra and Yar-lungs-pa Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As has been shown elsewhere, the translations of this team are generally of a very poor quality.<sup>9</sup> This first draft was revised and expanded by Zhwa-lu-lotsā-ba Chos-skyong-bzang-po (1441–1528 CE). The new translation is slightly better, but it still leaves much room for

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<sup>8</sup> See Michael HAHN, "On the 'Paracanonical' Tradition of the Tibetan Version of Nāgārjuna's *Ratnāvalī*", *Annual Memoirs of the Otani University Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute*, Vol. 6 (1988), pp. 93–108.

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., Michael Hahn, *Candragomins Lokānandanāṭaka. Nach dem tibetischen Tanjur herausgegeben und übersetzt. Ein Beitrag zur klassischen indischen Schauspieldichtung*. Asiatische Forschungen 39. Wiesbaden 1974, pp. 24–35; or Per KVÆRNE, *An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs. A Study of the Caryāgīti*, Oslo 1977 (Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse Skrifter. Ny Series 14), pp. 20–29 (Reprinted in a very handy format by White Orchid Press, Bangkok 1986).

improvement. In 1764 Si-tu Paṅ-chen (1700–1774 CE) prepared the third, almost complete translation, whose quality is again an improvement, but still full of minor and major blunders.<sup>10</sup> Another example is the *Nīrvikalpastotra* (also called *Prajñāpāramitāstotra*) by Rāhulabhadra, an older translation of which has been preserved in the so-called sPu-brag Kanjur.<sup>11</sup>

#### 4. Multiple Translations from Different Source Texts

A good illustration is the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*, of which we have four Tibetan translations: three done from (slightly) different Sanskrit texts, one from Chinese. These translations were partly published and analyzed in Johannes Nobel's well-known monographs on the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtra*.<sup>12</sup> Another very important case is the Dunhuang version of the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, published and studied by Akira SAITO.<sup>13</sup>

#### 5. Revisions and Recasts of Older Translations for Literary or Practical Reasons

A good illustration is the famous *Sragdharāstotra* by Sarvajñamitra.<sup>14</sup> It consists of 37 stanzas in praise of the goddess Tārā and it is named after its metre Sragdharā, consisting of four lines of 21 syllables each. It is written in the baroque Gauḍīya style, like Bāṇa's *Caṇḍīśataka*, Mayūra's *Sūryaśataka*, and Vajradatta's *Lokeśvaraśataka*. In the Tanjur we find three separate translations; see the Ōtani catalogue of the Peking Tanjur Nos. 2562–2564.

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<sup>10</sup> Its first part (about 20 per cent) is currently being edited together with its Sanskrit original by Lata DEOKAR from Pune.

<sup>11</sup> See Michael HAHN, "Zwei Texte aus dem Phudrag-Kanjur," in *Indology and Tibetology*, ed. by Helmut EIMER. Indica et Tibetica 13. Bonn 1988, pp. 53–80.

<sup>12</sup> See Johannes NOBEL, *Suvarṇabhāsottamasūtra. Das Goldglanzsūtra. Ein Sanskrittext des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus*. Leipzig 1937, pp. xviii–xxvii.

<sup>13</sup> See Akira SAITO, A Study of Akṣayamati (= Śāntideva)'s *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra* as Found in the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-huang, Project Number 02801005 (Mie University) 1993.3 [Research Report]; and A Study of the Dūn-huáng Recension of the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, Project Number 09610021 (Mie University) 2000.3 [Research Report].

<sup>14</sup> *Sragdharā-stotram, Or, A Hymn to Tara in Sragdhara Metre*, with the Sanskrit commentary of Jina Raksita, together with two Tibetan versions, ed. by Satis Chandra VIDYABHUSANA, Calcutta 1908.

While the first two translations abide by the standard practice of maintaining the same number of lines, which in this case consist of 19 syllables per line in Tibetan, the third translation represents a radically different approach. The number of syllables is reduced to seven per line, i.e., to the standard pattern of Tibetan verses, but the number of lines is increased. Their number is not fixed; it varies between six and thirteen. This gives the translator Zla-ba-zhon-nu the freedom to split the construction of the Sanskrit original into small and manageable units and to express the idea of a stanza in such a way that it can be followed much easier by a Tibetan reader. As an illustration I quote the second stanza in all its four versions, always followed by a very literal (and therefore inelegant) translation:

### The Sanskrit Original

*durlaṅghe duḥkhavahnau vinipatitanur durbhagaḥ  
kāndiśīkaḥ kiṃ kiṃ mūdhaḥ karomīty asakṛd api kṛtā-  
rambhavaiyarthyaḥkinnāḥ | śrutvā bhūyaḥ parebhyaḥ  
kṣatanayana iva vyomni candrārkalakṣmīm ālokāśā-  
nibaddhaḥ paragatigamanas tvāṃ śraye pāpa-hantrīm  
|| 2 ||*

(I), whose body has fallen into the fire of sorrow, which is so difficult to cross, unfortunate, without orientation, depressed by the frequent failure of everything I have undertaken, thinking: “What shall I, a fool, do?”, resembling a blind person who is obsessed by the hope to see the beauty of sun and moon, having repeatedly heard about it from others, (yet) depending on others when walking,<sup>15</sup> rely on you, destroyer of sins.

### The First Tibetan Translation

*skal ngan ngu ba'i bzhin ldan brgal bar dka' ba'i sdug bsngal me la lus dag  
mam ltung ba || durbhagaḥ kāndiśīkaḥ [!] durlaṅghe duḥkha-vahnau °tanur  
vinipatita°  
ci dang ci bya zhes rmongs lan cig min pa'i rtsom pa byas kyang 'bras dang*

<sup>15</sup> Jinaraḥṣita's commentary explains the compound in a very specific manner: *paragatigamanah pareṣāṃ rāgādikleśānām adhīnā yā devādiṣaḍgatayas tāsū gamanaṃ yasya so 'ham* “I who courses in the six forms of existence, gods and so on, that are attached to ‘others,’ i.e., defilements like passion and so on.”

*bral bas skyo* || kiṃ kiṃ karomi iti mūḍhaḥ asakṛd ārambha° kṛta° api vaiyarthyā°  
°khinnaḥ  
*mkha' la nyi zla'i dpal ni gzhan las mang du thos nas blta ba re bar bcas gyur*  
*pa'i* || vyomni candra-arka-lakṣmīṃ parebhyaḥ bhūyaḥ śrutvā āloka° °āśā°  
°nibaddhaḥ  
*mig nyams gzhan gyi 'gro ba lta bur bdag ni sdig 'joms khyed la gus pas brten*  
*par bgyid* || 2 || °nayanaḥ kṣata° para° °gati° iva – pāpa-hantrīm tvāṃ – śraye

Unfortunate, having a weeping face, the body fallen into the fire of sorrow, uncertain about what shall be done, disappointed by the lack of success despite the many efforts undertaken, being like a blind man who hopes to behold the beauty of sun and moon after having frequently heard about it from others, (but) depending on others when walking, I devoutly lean on you, destroyer of sins.

The compound *para-gati-gamanas* has been reduced to two words only, *gzhan gyi*<*s*> *'gro ba* “walking with [the help of] others.” *Gus pas* “devoutly” is his addition. The rendering of *kāndīśika* “insecure about the direction (to go)” by *ngu ba'i bzhin ldan* “having a weeping face (or nature)” is strange. It cannot be explained by the commentary.<sup>16</sup> I have doubts whether the genitive *lan cig min pa'i*, which makes it an attribute of the following *rtsom pa*, is correct. I suspect that the original translation had the correct adverbial form *lan cig min par*, which by way of haplography (the following word began with *r-*) became *lan cig min pa*, which was then, with no Sanskrit text at hand, “corrected” to *lan cig min pa'i*.

## The Second Tibetan Translation

*brgal*<sup>17</sup> *bar dka' ba'i sdug bsngal me nang lus lhung skal ngan phyogs gang*  
*zhig la brten snyam pa* || durlaṅghe duḥkha-vahnau °tanur vinipatita° durbhagaḥ  
kāndīśikaḥ  
*blun zhing ci ci bgyi snyam lan cig ma lags rtsom bgyi don ma mchis pas dub*  
*pa bdag* || mūḍhaḥ kiṃ kiṃ karomi iti asakṛd °ārambha° kṛta° °vaiyarthyā° °khinnaḥ  
*mig nyams gzhan gyi 'gros kyis 'gro ba snang ba re bar bcas pas nam mkha'*  
*nyi zla yi* || °nayanaḥ kṣata° para° °gati° °gamaṇaḥ āloka° °āśā° °nibaddhaḥ vyomni  
candra-arka°  
*'od \*zer gzhan dag mams las khums te sdig pa 'joms par mdzad pa khyod la*  
*brten par bgyid* || 2 || °lakṣmīṃ parebhyaḥ śrutvā pāpa-hantrīm tvāṃ śraye

<sup>16</sup> *kām kām diśam gacchāmīti kṛtvā kāndīśiko bhayadrutaḥ.*

<sup>17</sup> *rgyal D, brgal Q.*

[My] body fallen into the fire of sorrow, which is so difficult to cross, unfortunate, reflecting on which direction I should go, stupid and thinking about what is to be done, I, more than once frustrated by the uselessness of what is to be undertaken [by me], my eyesight destroyed, walking [only] with the help ('gait') of others, full of hope for its shining, having learned from others about the splendour of sun and moon, I rely on you, destroyer of sins.

*api* in line b and *bhūyaḥ* in line c are not translated. The position of *paragatigamaṇaḥ* has been shifted to the last line. In comparison with the first translation, the second looks like a refinement of its predecessor. On the one hand, it is more literal than the previous one; see the rendering of *kāndiśikāḥ*, which has *phyogs* “direction,” and the order of words. On the other hand, the wrong or unclear translations of *kāndiśikāḥ* and *paragatigamaṇaḥ* have been improved, the unnecessary addition *gus pas* “devoutly” has been taken out, and the unspecified forms *ci bya*, *lan cig min pa'i*, *rtsom pa byas kyang*, and *thos nas* “having heard” have been replaced by the appropriate elegant form *ci bgyi*, *lan cig ma lags*, *rtsom bgyi* (read *bgyis?*), and *khums nas* “having become aware,” while *sdig 'joms* has become the correct honorific form *sdig par 'joms par mdzad pa*. All this shows the hand of a careful reviser.

After these considerations, the colophon of the first translation can be read in a new light. It runs as follows:

*rje btsun 'phags ma sgröl ma'i bstod pa*<sup>18</sup> *me tog phreng ba 'dzin pa zhes bya ba slob dpon chen po thams cad mkhyen pa'i bshes gnyen zhes bya ba byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa rtse gcig tu byed pas mdzad pa rdzogs so || ||*

*rgya gar gyi mkhan po ka na ka warmā*<sup>19</sup> *dang | bod kyi lo tsā*<sup>20</sup> *ba pa tshab nyi ma grags kyis*<sup>21</sup> *bsgyur ba las | slad kyis paṇḍi ta chen po ma ṅi ka shrī dnyā na zhal snga nas dang*<sup>22</sup> *| chag*<sup>23</sup> *lo tsā*<sup>24</sup> *ba shākya'i dge slong chos rje dpal gyis cung zad bcos te dag par byas so ||*

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<sup>18</sup> *pa'i* D, *pa* Q.

<sup>19</sup> *bamma* Q, *warmā* D.

<sup>20</sup> *tša* Q, *tsā* D.

<sup>21</sup> *kyis* D, *kyi* Q.

<sup>22</sup> *dang* om. Q.

<sup>23</sup> *phyag* Q, *chag* D.

“The praise of the glorious goddess Tārā entitled *Sragdharā*[*stotra*], composed by the great teacher Sarvajñāmitra, who concentrated on the conduct of a Bodhisattva, is completed.

After it had been translated by the Indian abbot Kanakavarman and the Tibetan translator Pa-tshab Nyi-ma-grags, the great scholar Maṇikaśrījñāna and the translator from Chag, the Buddhist monk Chos-rje-dpal later corrected and purified it.”

The second translation has no colophon at all. What I suspect is that the colophon actually belongs to the second translation because it shows exactly the qualities which the revisers claim for it: the correction of real mistakes, as in the case of *kāndiśīka*, and a “purification” of the language by always using the correct level of the formal language: honorific forms when referring to the goddess, elegant or humble forms when referring to the author, and the neutral forms in all other cases. The relationship is somewhat similar to the preservation of the two Tibetan translations of the *Ratnāvalī*, although in that case the revision is not always such a clear improvement of its predecessor.

### The Third Tibetan Translation

*brgal mi nus pa'i sdug bsngal me* | |  
durlaṅghe duḥkha-vahnau  
*de la rtag tu lus lhung gnas* | |  
– °tanur vinipatita°  
*skal ba ma ldan 'gro sa gang* | |  
durbhagaḥ kāndiśīkaḥ  
*rmongs pa bdag gis ji ltar bya* | |  
mūḍhaḥ kiṃ kiṃ karomi  
*de ltar rtag tu smras nas ni* | |  
iii asakṛd api –  
*don med bdag ni stobs chung song* | |  
°vaiyarthya° – °khinnaḥ  
*mkha' la nyi zla dpal ldan grags* | |  
vyomni candra-arka-lakṣmīṃ  
*de ni gzhan gyi smra ba thos* | |  
– parebhyaḥ śrutvā  
*de thos long ba'i spyod pa ltar* | |

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<sup>24</sup> tsa Q, tsā D.

— — kṣatanayanaḥ iva  
*mthong rten 'dod kyang gzhan khrid med*<sup>25</sup> [?] ||  
 āloka° °āśā° – para° (°gati-gamaṇaḥ) –  
*sdig pa 'joms ma khyed la ni* ||  
 pāpa° °hantrīm tvāṃ  
*bdag ni skyabs mthong 'dod lags so* || 2 ||  
 – śraye

The fire of sorrow, so difficult to cross—the body has fallen into it (and) stays there. Having no good fortune, confused about the place to go, what shall I do? Having said this repeatedly, I [feel] useless and have lost [all] my strength. The fame of the glorious sun and moon in the sky—I have heard others speaking about it. Having heard it, [my] behaviour resembles that of a blind man—although longing for a basis to see it, [I am] not led by others (?). Destroyer of sins, I am longing to see you as my shelter.

As one can see immediately from the Sanskrit equivalents given below the Tibetan text, the translation is extremely free. Most of the Sanskrit terms can be found in the translation. However, some are expanded, others are shortened, and many Tibetan words have been added. The single verb form *śraye* “I rely” has been expanded to *skyabs mthong 'dod lags so* “I am longing to see [you] as my shelter,” while the compound *kṛtārambhavaiyarthyaḥinnāḥ* “depressed by the failure (or uselessness) of everything I have undertaken” has been reduced to *don med* “being useless.” The translation of *paragatigamaṇaḥ* “dependent on others when walking” by *gzhan khrid med* “being without the guidance of others” seems to be corrupt. I do not think that the translator misunderstood the compound; in my opinion, it is much more likely that the negation *med* goes back to either to \**yod* or even \**dgos*: “the guidance of others is necessary.” This would be a perfect rendering of the Sanskrit term. As for the syntax, the one sentence of the Sanskrit original has been split up into six short sentences of two lines each. Thus, it is very easy to understand for a Tibetan reader or listener.

The question which I am not able to answer is whether the third translation was done independently of the first two renderings, whether it was done from the Sanskrit or whether it is only a very free paraphrase of the earlier translations. Since the

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<sup>25</sup> Read *yod* or *dgos*?

wording is so different in almost all the stanzas, I am inclined to assume the first possibility. The colophon laconically states: *paṇḍita zla ba gzhon nus rang 'gyur mdzad pa* “This is the own translation of Paṇḍita Zla-ba-gzhon-nu.” The use of the honorific form *mdzad pa* shows that this is an editorial remark, not the translator’s own words. The only other work translated by Zla-ba-gzhon-nu which I could find in the Tibetan canon is the short *Bhavasamkrānti* by Maitreyanātha (Ötani No. 5241). His co-translator was Gru-ston Chung, about whom nothing is known.

By deviating from the standard practice of Tibetan translations as exemplified by its two predecessors, gZhon-nu-dpal has created something new, an early specimen of real Tibetan poetry that is not procrastinated the all-dominating principle of an extreme literalness. I would be glad if my colleagues could inform me about other examples of this type. I myself have encountered three similar cases which are, however, of a slightly different nature.

(1) An early example is the Tibetan translation of Āryaśura’s *Pāramitāsamāsa*. This rather free and unorthodox, yet by and large very good translation seems to have been prepared before the new rules were laid down in the *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*. This would account for its very liberal handling of the Sanskrit original, with regard to syntax and terminology. The details can be seen in Naoki SAITO’S edition and analysis of the Tibetan translation.<sup>26</sup>

(2) Another example from the 11<sup>th</sup> century is Śā-kya-’od’s rendering of the *Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā* (SRKK). The Sanskrit consists of 191 stanzas, the core of which is a poetic appeal to donate to the order of Buddhist monks. The stanzas, partly borrowed from other literary works like Mātr̥ceṭa’s *Vaṁārhaṁṇa*, Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā*, or Śāntideva’s *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, are composed in a great variety of metres. Like Zla-ba-gzhon-nu, Śā-kya-’od rendered all of them into verses of seven syllables per line, the number of lines varying between 4 and 12. Unlike Zla-ba-gzhon-nu’s translation, Śā-kya-’od’s rendering completely lacks both a clear structure and poetical beauty. Moreover, it is marred by countless silly mistakes. It is therefore not an attempt at creating

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<sup>26</sup> Naoki SAITO, *Das Kompendium der moralischen Vollkommenheiten. Vairocanarakṣitas tibetische Übertragung von Āryaśūras Pāramitāsmāsa*, Indica et Tibetica 38. Marburg 2005.

a new form, but the frozen image of a lost fight with a poorly understood Sanskrit text.<sup>27</sup>

(3) The third example is from the *śāstra* section. The section on metrics (*sdeb sbyor*) consists of two works: Ratnākaraśānti's *Chandoratnākara*, which teaches the theory, and Jñānaśrīmitra's *Vṛttamālāstuti*, which exemplifies 150 different metres from the *varṇavṛtta* section. The *Chandoratnākara* is available in three versions: the basic text, the basic text embedded in Ratnākaraśānti's auto-commentary, and a free metrical rendering of the basic text. The specific feature of the *Chandoratnākara* is that all definitions of metres are composed in that very metre. This is the definition of the Vasantatilaka metre:

*jñeyam vasantatilakam tabhajā jagau gaḥ ||*  
 - - ∪ - ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ - ∪ - -

One should know, [that the metre] Vasantatilaka [consists of the feet] *ta* (- - ∪), *bha* (- ∪ ∪) and *ja* (∪ - ∪), *ja* (∪ - ∪) and *ga* (-), and *ga* (-).

While in the first two translations the number of syllables per line is mirrored in the Tibetan version, the third translation again presents all definitions in verses of seven syllables per line. This makes the work much easier to memorize. One might argue that thereby the information about the original number of syllables is lost. However, this is rather unimportant because the really essential information, the distribution of short and long syllables, cannot be mirrored in Tibetan, since Tibetan metrics is not based on the quantity of syllables. Therefore the exact structure had always to be derived from the information about the feet or *ganas* of which a line consists. In this case, the versification was motivated by mere practical, not by literary aspects.

## 6. Unintentional Multiple Translation

The last case concerns multiple translations that do not fall into one of the above categories, translations that came into being independently of each other. One such case is the three

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed study of the Tibetan version see Heinz ZIMMERMANN, *Die Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā (dem Āryaśūra zugeschrieben). Ein Vergleich zur Darlegung der Irrtumsrisiken bei der Auswertung tibetischer Übersetzungen*, Freiburger Beiträge zur Indologie 8. Wiesbaden 1975.

independent translations of Carpaṭi's *Avalokiteśvarastotra*, also called *Lokanāthastotra*. It consists of 25 stanzas in praise of Avalokiteśvara. Its prominent feature is the use of the Mātrāsamaka metre (four time four morae per line). This is its first stanza:

*devamanusyāsūranatacaraṇa pratihatajanmajarārujāmarāṇa |*  
*lokeśa tvaṃ mām aśaranyam rakṣa kṛpālo kuru kāruṇyam || 1 ||*

The first Tibetan translation of the hymn was done by Dānaśīla from Jāgatala in Vareṇḍrī (Bengal). He wrongly ascribes the work to a Candragomin from Vareṇḍrī and gives the following title: \**Pāpavidāraṇamanoharanāmālokanāthastotra* or “The Splitter of Sins and Enticer of Mind.” The original of this title is unclear. The second translation was done by Nyi-ma-rgyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po. The *incipit* gives *Lokeśvarastotra* as the title of the work and the colophon has Tsaryadīpa as the name of the author, which would point to something like \*Caryādīpa or “The Lamp of Conduct.” In fact, this is only a corruption of Carpaṭi-pā(da), as we shall see from the third and latest translation. There the name of the author is correctly given as Carpaṭi, the title as *Avalokiteśvarastotra*. The translation was done by the famous 'Gos-lo-tṣā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal, assisted by Paṇḍita Vanaratna. The three translations show both partial agreement and great divergences. These are the three renderings of the first stanza:

- (a) *lha dang lha min mi yis zhabs la phyag byas shing ||*  
*skye rga na 'chi ma lus rab tu 'joms pa'i sku ||*  
*'jig rten dbang phyug thugs rje ldan pa khyod kyis ni ||*  
*mgon med bdag la bsrung mdzad thugs rje mdzad du gsol ||*
- (b) *lha dang lha min gyis ni zhabs btud cing ||*  
*skye rga na dang 'chi ba rab bcom pa ||*  
*'jig rten dbang byed bdag la skyabs mdzad na ||*  
*brtse dang snying rje ldan pa skyong bar mdzod ||*
- (c) *lha mi lha min gyis ni zhabs la btud ||*  
*skye rga na dang 'chi ba rab tu bcom ||*  
*thugs rje'i ngang can 'jig rten dbang po khyed ||*  
*skyabs med bdag la snying rje mdzod cig kye ||*

While the agreement can be explained by the use of standard equivalents and the clear and simple Sanskrit, the deviations in

others places makes it unlikely that they depend on each other. Here are a few examples of entirely different renderings:

<b>akṣuṇṇa-</b>	<i>sdug bsngal mang ldan</i> [!] T <sub>1</sub> , <i>skyo med</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>bde blag</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>25</b>
<b>anudīnam</b>	<i>nyin dang mtshan</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>nyin re bzhin</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>nyi ma so sor</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>15</b>
<b>avipanna-</b>	<i>sdug bsngal med la</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>phongs med</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>rgud pa ma</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>9</b>
<b>ārta-</b>	<i>sdug bsngal dang bcas</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>nyam thag</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>gdung ba'i</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>7</b>
<b>nimagna-</b>	<i>nub gyur te</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>nges lhung ba</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>bying ba</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>2</b>
<b>prīta-</b>	<i>dgongs pa</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>mnyes</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>dgyes</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>14</b>
<b>muñcasi</b>	<i>spong</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>dmigs na</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>dor zhig</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>9</b>
<b>mriyamāṇa-</b>	<i>'gums pa dang nye ba</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>'chi ba la</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>dgyes bzhin</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>15</b>
<b>sakala-</b>	<i>kun</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>mtha' yas pa'i</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>mtha' dag</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>23</b>
<b>samākula-</b>	<i>mam par gyengs pa yis</i> T <sub>1</sub> , <i>mi brtan</i> T <sub>2</sub> , <i>'khrugs pa</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>15</b>
<b>samāhati-</b>	<i>yang dag nyams</i> [< *samāhata] T <sub>1</sub> , <i>mnyam bzhag gis ni</i> [< *sam-āhita] T <sub>2</sub> , <i>tshogs kyis</i> T <sub>3</sub> <b>2</b>

A close comparison of such multiple translations reveals that there is neither a one-way road from Sanskrit to Tibetan nor from Tibetan back to the hypothetical Sanskrit original. There are pitfalls in both directions, but thorough case studies of multiple translations might help us to avoid at least some of them.

## Appendix

A Stanza from Candragomin's *Śīsyalekha* 72 and *Lokānanda* (II.16), together with its Different Translations and Commentaries<sup>28</sup>

*viśālāḥ śailānāṃ viratajanasamṣṭāsubhagā*  
*guhā gāḍhābhogā haritavanalekhāparikarāḥ |*  
*sarittīrāsannā murajamadhurair nīrjhararavair*  
*na gamyāḥ kleśāgnē vāyam iti vadantīva pathikān || 72 ||*

A Literal Translation into English:

The vast and deep-winding mountain caves, blessed by the encounters of dispassionate beings, girded by rows of green forests, close to the banks of rivers, seem to speak to the wayfarer with the sounds of the waterfalls, as sweet as tambourines: «We are not within the reach of the fire of the defilements.»

A Semi-Literary Translation into English:

The vast and vaulted mountain caves, wondrously deep and blessed by the presence of human beings rich in austerities, girded by verdant forest borders and near to the banks of rivers, appear to call out to the wayfarers in the voices of the waterfalls, sweet as tambourines: «We lie beyond all reach of the fire of the defilements!»

A Literal Prose Translation into German:

Die ausgedehnten Berghöhlen mit ihren hohen Gewölben, gesegnet durch die Zusammenkunft leidenschaftsloser Menschen, umringt von grünen Waldstreifen, den Ufern von Flüssen nahe gelegen, scheinen zu den Wanderern mit den Stimmen der Wasserfälle, lieblich wie Tambourine, zu

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<sup>28</sup> For the bibliographical details of the texts, its manuscripts, block prints and commentaries see Michael HAHN, *Invitation to Enlightenment. Letter to the Great King Kaṇṣka by Mātyeṣa. Letter to a Disciple by Candragomin*. Berkeley 1999; and id., *Candragomin's Lokānandanāṭaka. Nach dem tibetischen Tanjur herausgegeben und übersetzt. Ein Beitrag zur klassischen indischen Schauspieldichtung*, Asiatische Forschungen 39. Wiesbaden 1974.

sprechen: «Für das Feuer der Befleckungen sind wir nicht erreichbar.»

A Literary, Metrical Translation into German (Metrical Scheme: ◡ – ◡ ◡ – ◡ ◡ – ◡):

Die riesigen Höhlen der Berge,  
Gesegnet, weil Menschen dort weilen,  
Die weltlichem Treiben entsagten,  
Mit überaus hohen Gewölben,  
Umgürtet von grünen Gebüsch,  
Den Bergbächen nahe gelegen,  
Sie scheinen die Wanderer zu locken  
Mit Wasserfallstimmengewispere  
So lieblich wie Tambourinklänge:  
«Verweile, uns kann nicht erreichen  
Das Feuer der Sündenbefleckung!»

The Tibetan Translation of the *Śisyalekha* Stanza:

72. *ri sul yangs pa {r} skye bo bun long med pas rab bde ba | |*  
*nyer spyod rgya chen nags tshal sngo 'khrungs phreng bas sbrengs | |*  
*chu ngogs bsnyen pa phu chu'i rgyun sgra mnga ltar snyan pa yis | |*  
*bdag cag nyon mongs yul ma yin zhes mgon la sgrog pa bzhin | |*

Variant Readings:

- 72a *bun long*] *lhag lhug* D<sub>2</sub>; *med pas*] *med par* D<sub>2</sub>  
72b *chen nags*] *chen khor yug nags* D<sub>2</sub>; *phreng bas* D<sub>1</sub>] *phreng ba* D<sub>2</sub>, *phreng bar* G<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>Q<sub>1</sub>Q<sub>2</sub>  
72c *bsnyen*] *snyen* G<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>Q<sub>2</sub>, *snyan* D<sub>1</sub>D<sub>2</sub>; *sgra*] *'dra* D<sub>1</sub>  
72d *cag*] *can* Q<sub>2</sub>; *mgon* D<sub>2</sub>G<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>Q<sub>2</sub>, *'don* D<sub>1</sub>Q<sub>1</sub>; *sgrog*] *sgrogs* D<sub>1</sub>D<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>Q<sub>2</sub>

Vairocanarakṣita's *Śisyalekhatippaṇa*:

**skye bo** [*jana*] **lhab lhub med pa** [*virata*] ni grogs med pa'o | |  
**chu dang bral ba** ni dogs kyi gle ma'o | |  
**phug gis sgrogs pa** [= *nirjhararava?*] ni snyan par thos pa'o | |  
**'dod chags dang bral ba** [*virata*] ni srid pa las yid byung ba'o | |  
**phun sum tshogs pa** [*sampāta*] ni 'byor pa'o | |  
**khor yug** [= *guha?*] ni mthar thug pa'i longs spyod pa gang yin pa'o | |  
**phreng** [*lekhā*] ni gral lo | |  
**nyer spyod** [*ābhoga*] ni 'khor du gnas pa'o | |

Prajñākaramati's *Śisyalekharṭti*:

de dag gi don bsdu pa ni | **ri sul** zhes tshigs su bcad pa gcig go |

de la gnas kyi don bsdu ba ni | **ri sul** zhes rkang pa gcig go |  
 shing gi don bsdu ba ni | **nyer spyod** ces rkang pa gcig go |  
 chu'i don bsdu ba ni | **chu ngogs** zhes rkang pa gnyis so |  
**ri sul** [*śaila*] **yangs pa** [[399a]] [*viśāla*] ni gcong rong dang ngam grog  
 la sogs pa med pa'o |  
**nyer spyod** [*ābhoga*] **rgya che ba** [*gāḍha*] ni der 'chag pa dang 'dug (*lug*  
 Q) pa la sogs pa bag yongs (*yangs* DQ) su spyod pa'o |  
 <s>**nyan pa** [*madhura*] ni thos pa'i tshe rna bar 'phrod pa'o |  
 ji ltar snyan zhe na | (| om. D; na | om. Q) rnga [*muraja*] ltar ro |  
 phu chu bdag cag skom pas nyon mongs shing sdug bsngal ba'i yul min  
 te | 'thungs na ngoms pas bde zhing skyid pa'i yul yin zhes 'gron la  
 sgrogs pa bzhin chu sgra 'byin pa'o |

The huge ravines, very agreeable by people free of disturbances, endowed with vast amenities, girded with rows of growing green forests, near to the bathing places, seem to sound to the wayfarers with the voices of the mountain torrents, as sweet as drums: «We are not the realm of defilements.»

Only *gāḍhābhogā* “deep-winding” was translated incorrectly as *nyer spyod rgya chen* “with vast amenities,” as if *ābhoga* were identical with *bhoga*. *sampāta* is omitted in the translation. *'khrungs* in *sngo 'khrungs* cannot be explained. It seems to be a corruption of *bsangs*. *sngo bsangs* is the standard translation of *śyāma*.

The (Very Faulty) Tibetan Translation of the *Lokānandanāṭaka* Stanza:

\*yangs pa'i\* brag ri skye bos dben zhing phun sum tshogs  
 pa'i gnas bzang na || *viśālāḥ śailānām jana- virata- sampāta- subhagā*  
 phug yangs ri dags rnams kyi spyod yul nags kyi ri mos yongs  
 su bskor ||  
*guhā gāḍha- harita- ābhogā vana- lekhā- parikarāḥ* |  
 so ga'i dus na bung ba rnams ni rnga sgra snyan par rab  
 sgrogs shing ||  
*sarittivāsannā nirjhararavair muraja- madhurair*  
 lam zhugs nyon mongs me yang bdag cag rnams la 'byung  
 mi 'gyur zhes sgrogs || II.16 || *pathikān kleśa° °agner vayan na*  
*gamyāḥ iti vadantīva*

In the vast rocky mountains, bereft of people and a good places of welfare, [in] the huge caves, encircled by lines of forests, the regions of deer, the bees in the summer-time, humming in the manner of sweet drums, are resounding: «Wayfarers, the fire of defilements does not occur for us.»

## Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts

<i>*yangs pa'i*</i>	became corrupted to <i>spong ba'i</i> in all the four canonical block prints because of the similarity of <i>spa-</i> and <i>ya-</i> in the <i>dbu med</i> script and the eastern Tibetan pronunciation of <i>-ang</i> as <i>-ong</i> .
<i>virata-jana-</i>	was translated as if it were <i>*virikta-jana-</i> .
<i>sampāta-subhagā</i>	was translated as if it were <i>*sāmpat-subhāgāḥ</i> .
<i>harita-</i>	was translated as if it were <i>harina-</i> .
<i>ābhogāḥ</i>	“curved vaults” as if it were <i>gocara</i> .
<i>sarītīrāsannā</i>	“near to the banks of the river” was translated as “in the hot season.”
<i>nirjhara-</i>	“waterfall” was translated as “bees.”

# **A Cultural Approach to the Study of Xuanzang**

Rachel LUNG (Hong Kong)

## **Abstract**

How is it possible to study monk Xuanzang (600–664) and his translations without any knowledge of Sanskrit? This is probably the most legitimate question to raise among Indologists and Buddhologists for whom translating Sanskrit Buddhist texts accurately and equivalently in the target language continues to be one of their dominant concerns. In translation studies, however, the focus of a good range of research, in the past two decades, has actually evolved beyond the exclusive considerations of linguistic accuracy or translation equivalence. The aim of this article is to illustrate, using examples of the Sanskrit-Chinese translation achievements of Xuanzang, the research possibilities in a cultural approach to translation.

## **Introduction**

Xuanzang is an iconic figure in both translation studies and Buddhism in China. As a subject of academic study, Xuanzang has been examined in relation to his Indian pilgrimage and his translation principles. The quantity and quality of his translation have received wide acclaim, considering how little was made known and available in the seventh century, not just about Sanskrit, but also the art of translation at large. More importantly, Xuanzang's practice and standards of translation, from a contemporary perspective, are proving to be highly insightful and instructive even for modern translation scholars and practitioners. It is not the concern of this article to examine the quality and adequacy of Xuanzang's Chinese translation of Indian Buddhist texts, on which much has been done (Zhang 1983b; Liang 2006). Its aim, in fact, is to show how a study of Xuanzang and his translations, away from error analyses, can be conducted within

the framework of translation studies despite the researcher's lack of Sanskrit competence. It is hoped that the widening of research scope in Chinese translation of Indian Buddhist texts would enable Indology researchers to explore and expand their options in their specific areas of expertise.

Like many other Chinese translators of Indian Buddhist texts, initially Xuanzang did not consciously attempt to establish the theory informing his translation practice. He certainly had extensive experience in translation of Indian Buddhist texts and had acted as a gatekeeper for his team with regard to quality in his translation projects, before he had a chance to share insights on his translation craft, methods, principles, and standards. What can we learn from both his thoughts pertinent to techniques and his theoretical reflections about translation at large? More importantly, the case of Xuanzang can best be used to illustrate both the rift between and, ultimately, the integration of practice and theory in translation. Based on his nineteen years' of experience in translating Indian Buddhist texts, he generated guidelines, principles, and theory after pondering on the processes, products, and aims of his translation practice.

Numerous scholars in the conference wondered how it was possible for me, someone with no knowledge of Sanskrit, to do research on Xuanzang. It never occurred to me, before this, that it could be an issue. Does it not demonstrate a marked difference between practitioners and theorists in their view regarding what could be considered research, for instance, in sutra translation? To practitioners, legitimately, translation researchers need to have a relevant bilingual knowledge before they could thoroughly evaluate translation quality. Yet, this is not an unquestioned assumption for researchers who are sympathetic to the cultural approach to translation studies.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the rift between practice and theory is neither new nor unique to a particular language culture. Sporadic writings on translating can be traced to that of Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) and St. Jerome (fourth century CE). Their diverging

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<sup>1</sup> This bilingual assumption was, however, challenged by Maria Tymoczko (2006) when she examined what could be considered translation in other cultures outside Europe. This view was also supported by Hung and Wakabayashi (2005).

views concerning the way to translate the bible had been, as Jeremy Munday (2001: 7) asserts, “the battleground of conflicting ideologies in western Europe” for a millennium. Besides, translation of the bible can be politicized. Within the Western society anyway, debates over the use of free or literal translation approaches were, for over a millennium after St. Jerome, bound up primarily with bible translation. Since the Roman Catholic Church was extremely orthodox about the representation of the meaning of the bible in the strictest “correct” sense, criticisms of its translations were thus conveniently abused as a way to remove the heretics in the name of blasphemy.<sup>2</sup> Yet, it was not until nine centuries after Xuanzang’s translation pursuit that western scholars had started to more systematically reflect on the practice of bible translation and slowly churn out different ideas about its craft and principles. These considerations, over time, have laid the foundation of modern translation theories developed in the west (Nida 1964b; Tan 2001).

More modern theorists, Eugene Nida (1964a), for instance, borrowed Chomsky’s generative grammar model as the basis of his numerous books, written to be practical guidelines for bible translators. He endeavored to incorporate the tools of linguistic analyses from formal linguistics and its terminologies to introduce scientific methodology into the translation practice in the 1960s and 1970s. Like Xuanzang, this is a typical example whereby a practitioner came up with guiding principles in his translation practice. However, the integration of practice and theory can also work in a reverse direction. In short, the various theoretical developments in translation studies could also impact on the way in which a translation is assessed, valued, or critiqued. For instance, the advancement of the Manipulation school in the early 1990s by, typically, Susan Bassnett and André Levefere (1990) alerted translation researchers to the role of culture and ideology in translation. At that time, more attention was drawn to the translator as a variable in the assessment and appreciation of a translated text. This can be exemplified by Sherry Simon’s gender

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<sup>2</sup> The French humanist Etienne Dolet, for one, was burned for he had added “nothing at all” (original “rien du tout”) in a passage about what existed after death. He was accused of having largely digressed from what was said in the bible and executed for the blasphemy charge.

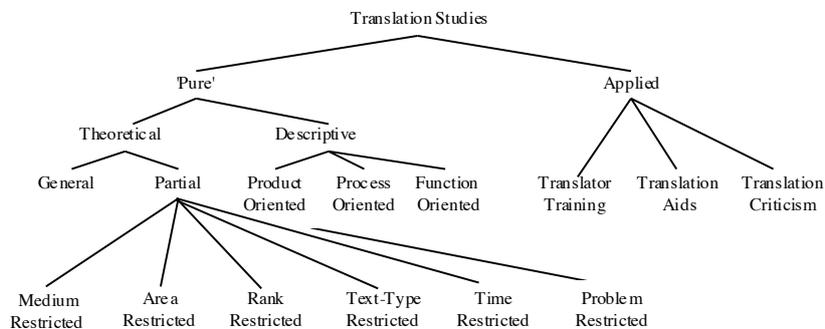
approach in the study of translated texts (1996), and Lawrence Venuti's concern about translator's invisibility in the renditions (1995). In this connection, the understanding of different theoretical models in translation studies is instructive in two regards. First, practitioners could refresh the ways in which they translate and critique their own and others' translations. Second, practitioners could be inspired to widen their scope of research, since many other perspectives could be introduced around their analyses of a translated text.

### **Position of the Translation of Buddhist Texts in Holmes's Map of Translation Studies**

It was widely believed that the discipline of translation studies was created conceptually first in 1972 in a seminal paper given by James Holmes in a Linguistics conference. This paper, entitled "The name and nature of translation studies," was published much later, in 1988. Its seminal status came from Holmes's insight in mapping out the fundamental structure of various branches of research possibilities in translation studies.

**Diagram 1**

Holmes' Conception of Translation Studies (from Munday 2001: 10)



This map, which spells out the possible directions for expansion in translation studies, is considered a groundbreaking statement for the academic study of translation. A visionary in the field, Holmes put forward a conceptual scheme that identified numerous potential avenues in the field. It is hierarchically framed, and it enables the discipline to dynamically evolve on this structural basis.

Before this structural specification, most articles on translation studies were published in channels established much earlier within its neighboring disciplines, such as language learning and comparative literature (Munday 2001). In the 1960s and 1970s when the communicative approach to language learning was the fashion, translation was then more typically used as a tool to enhance second language acquisition in many cultures. James Holmes's map elegantly depicts, with a good degree of sophistication, the coverage and fine categorization or connection in translation studies. Later developments in the discipline—in the names of the cultural turn starting in the 1980s, the ideological turn in the 1990s, onto the historical turn in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—all fall into the realm of the diagram above in different levels of directedness.

Primarily, the map divided the discipline into two major streams: the description of the phenomena of translation and the establishment of general principles to explain and predict such phenomena (theoretical studies of translation). In the descriptive study of certain translations, such as sutra translation, researchers may examine the translated text (synchronic and diachronic, or comparison of translated texts produced at different timeframes), its functions (social, religious, or political), or the process of completing a translation. In the next section, using the example of Xuanzang and his translations, I would discuss a range of ways to culturally examine his translation achievements. Incidentally, some of the approaches below happen to crisscross both the descriptive and theoretical studies of translation.

### **Topical Studies of Xuanzang within the Framework of the Map**

During his two-decade long translation career after returning to China, Xuanzang coordinated and completed the translation of 75 treatises, a total of 1335 fascicles; the amount involved has never been matched or exceeded by anyone to date. Apart from these translations of Sanskrit texts into Chinese, Xuanzang, complying with the emperor's instruction, also in 648 pioneered the Sanskrit translation of the *Laozi* and *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra* (*Dacheng*

*Qixinlun*, ch. 大乘起信論),<sup>3</sup> once in existence in Sanskrit in India, now only to be retrieved through back translation from Chinese. The part in the Map most relevant to Xuanzang's case is the "Pure" section, which is further divided into theory (general and partial) and description (translating agent, product, process, and function).

### **1. The Translator as an Individual**

Not all translators of Indian texts into Chinese have gone so far as to make a pilgrimage. Xuanzang did, and he did it as early as the seventh century when land communication was extremely difficult and the sea communication was not yet quite developed. With the government sanction imposed at the time, no Chinese national was allowed to leave China through its western frontier without an official permit. Xuanzang's determination to undertake such a daunting task, with no state support, was at odds with the political climate in early Tang China (618–907). It must have taken an unusual character and lofty mission on his part to have persisted and confronted this challenge. Numerous articles were written along this line of inquiry about Xuanzang in Chinese (Chen 2000; Ma 1980; Yang 1986). His seventeen years of pilgrimage from Central Asia to India, to seek authoritative Buddhist works and correct Buddhist teachings, was certainly a landmark achievement. Notwithstanding his knowledge of Sanskrit when he embarked on the pilgrimage, one wonders how he managed the mediation problem during his visits to various Central Asian states in which a number of other spoken languages were in use (Lung 2013). Besides, in various encounters with kings and ministers there, he had the opportunity to share his wisdom and interpretation of various Buddhist works with the more sympathetic rulers. The cultural impact he had left behind in both Central Asia and India could be a worthwhile research topic for the culture-oriented scholars in Asia (Ji 2000). In terms of the Buddhist development,

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<sup>3</sup> Known also as the Tao-te-ching, the Book of Dao and De, the *Laozi* was written by the founder of the Taoist School of Thought in ancient China. This translation request was made by the Kāmarūpa king, Bhaskara Verman (Ray, [http://ignca.nic.in/ks\\_41020.htm#\\_ftnref1](http://ignca.nic.in/ks_41020.htm#_ftnref1)). Some scholars were skeptical if Xuanzang had translated the *Laozi* at all. If it had not been translated, Xuanzang would not have made a point about his conscious decision not to translate its preface, which involves, according to the monk, 'awkward and embarrassing' Taoist practices.

Xuanzang's sustained interest in the field of Yogācāra had pioneered the development of the Faxiang school (法相宗) in East Asia. Although the school had lost much of its appeal in China soon after Xuanzang's demise, its theories regarding perception, consciousness, and *karma*, were borrowed by other schools. This contrasting turn of events in the Buddhist history, again, could be examined in Xuanzang-related research, without necessarily attending to his translation quality.

## 2. Practice as the Basis of Theoretical Growth

It is never easy to break traditions, challenging which takes a great deal of courage. Incidentally, at the time of Xuanzang, the stigmatization of the frequent use of transliteration in the Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist texts was in many ways related to Kumārajīva's (344–409) preference for semantic translation. Even so, Xuanzang, quite independently, saw the value of retaining the sound of the Sanskrit original for certain specific texts. As mentioned in Bianji's (his disciple) preface to Xuanzang's Travelogue (Xuanzang 646/2003),

The script of [India] is called 'heavenly script', and its spoken language 'heavenly speech'. In that language, the sentences, terms and expressions are knitted into intricate patterns, and the sounds and tones of words go back and forth. Sometimes a single term encompasses a number of meanings, while at other times a single meaning is represented by many different terms. The spoken words have rising and falling tones and the tones are sometimes light and sometimes heavy. (Diana Yue's translation, in Cheung 2006: 153)

That is why Xuanzang refined his translation approach by, most typically, putting forward five scenarios in which transliteration should be adopted (*wubufan* 五不翻).<sup>4</sup> Xuanzang's discreet use of a combination of translation methods and his awareness of the concerns for accuracy and reception indicated that he was thorough and resourceful as a translator. This perhaps explains

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<sup>4</sup> The "*Wubufan*" was rendered "five guideline for not-translating a term" by Yue (in Cheung 2006: 157). These guidelines are: (1) if a term carries a magic spell; (2) if a term bears multiple meanings; (3) if a term does not exist in the target culture; (4) if a term bears an established translation; and (5) if a term generates positive associations.

why his translation ideologies still matter in modern times. Some critics in the conference were dubious, without giving any substantial counter evidence, as to whether or not these five scenarios were ever put forward by Xuanzang. If there is a doubt, it should best be dealt with by way of textual and archival investigations. So, in terms of research inquiry, the aspects pertaining to the origin of the *wubufan* and how Xuanzang was related to it, or whether he was the first to put forward these conditions, under which transliteration should be used, are all legitimate avenues for further exploration.

Martha Cheung, for instance, sees the relevance and worth of these guidelines of relevance to a theoretical inquiry about translation itself. She mentions that,

These “guidelines for not-translating a term”, recorded in the “Preface” to *A Collection of Names and Their Explanations in Buddhist Translations*, represents a valuable, if incomplete, summation of Xuanzang’s views on the important topic of the way to handle terminology in translating, views which were based on his long years of translation experience and his reading of the translations of other Buddhist monk-translators. (Cheung 2006: 158)

Cheung also stresses that the other meaning of *fan* 翻 (apart from “to translate”), in Chinese, is “to turn something upside down.” In the context of Xuanzang’s rules for the use of transliteration, Cheung wonders if translation, by its very nature, “must conceal even as it reveals” (2006: 159). In the translation of Sanskrit spells and *mantras*, for example, it was believed, and quite logically so, that their verbal power would best be retained in the sounds of the source language. It is perhaps better in such cases that something in the source text remains “unturned, or not translated.” Cheung’s theoretical attempt to extrapolate the Chinese meanings, past and present, of the term *fan* 翻, commonly understood as “to translate” in English, across sutras, is indeed applicable also to other language-cultures. This again opens up a new horizon of theoretical pursuit for translation researchers.

### **3. Translation Theories as Guidelines to Translation Practice**

As a translator, Xuanzang had endeavored to share his insights into the art of translation in different channels, some more direct

than the others. His views about translation could be indirectly found in a eulogy written by Bianji, collected in Xuanzang's Travelogue. We could legitimately deduce that what it said about translation might originally have been from Xuanzang himself. This deduction is made on the basis of Bianji not only being Xuanzang's trusted assistant and disciple, but that Bianji was also a member in the translation team which Xuanzang convened. Bianji wrote,

To translate such a deeply expressive language [Sanskrit], we need translators with enlightened wisdom; and to bring out the profound meanings of the sutras, we need translators of exemplary virtue. The proposition that the length of a translation can be trimmed and that its sounds can be modified to the tonal modes of the Han [Chinese] language is unsettling; it is not a correct view at all. In sutra translation, the profound message should be made easily understandable; and as long as the translation does not violate the source, it is a good translation. Literary refinement that is overdone makes the translation garish, but a translation that is too unheven is coarse. When a translation is accurate without being excessively refined and clear without being too unheven, then it has no major fault, and only then can it be called a proper translation. (Preface, Diana Yue's translation, in Cheung 2006: 153)

As shown in the above text, it is possible that Xuanzang might have enlightened his disciples about what was expected of from a translator, what the translator could and could not do to the source text and the translation, and what it takes to achieve an optimal translation that caters to both the content and form for an adequate translation. Xuanzang did not put down much regarding his views about translation in writing. Therefore, this text written by Bianji as a preface to Xuanzang's travelogue might be taken to have originally derived from Xuanzang's teaching.

If this conjecture is justified, then these utterances in relation to his translation practice and principles might well be considered views being held by Xuanzang. Again, these insights about the agent, process, and product of translation could be analyzed even for researchers without any Sanskrit knowledge. After all, these views were uttered more than a millennium ago before any systematic study of translation emerged. Xuanzang's wisdom as a translator, reiterated as early as the seventh century, certainly is worth examining in view of its historical value.

#### **4. Ideology of the Translator**

Xuanzang's translation approach, taking the median and optimal rule, makes use of the best of literal and semantic translation strategies. He observes the merits of both foreignization and domestication in translation, to borrow terminologies used in translation studies, and fine-tuned his translation where necessary for the best communication and reception impact. He was clear about his translation ideals: the rendition has to be faithful to the source text and comprehensible to the translation readers. He was therefore quite liberal with different translation strategies, and would not be bound by a monolithic approach. It was confirmed by Jianmu Zhang (1983a and 1983b) that Xuanzang deployed various strategies, such as supplementation, ellipsis, pronoun recovery, and the like, in his translations of Buddhist texts. His translation methods are not confined and restricted, but involve the flexible use of linguistic tools to present the original meaning in the most comprehensible style. His insights pertinent to faithfulness and the need to attend to target readers' reception are still valid concerns discussed and debated in translation studies, especially in China.

His new approach to translation of Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese should have been highly instructive in the development of translation theories. Yet, the path of ideological dissemination in this case was not always straightforward. Xuanzang's translation ideology being unheard of in the west, the development of translation studies was pursued all the same, more than a millennium later, quite independently of the monk's earlier insights. Its budding development in the 1960s proceeded without the slightest reference to Xuanzang's concerns about reader reception and textual fidelity—concepts that, for half a century, dominated major debates in the discipline since its inception. Besides, Chinese scholars had an extremely limited role in the grounding work of translation studies internationally. This was partly because they had not been aware of the value of Xuanzang's remarks on translation and had therefore not capitalized on his insights into the nuances of this craft, which proved to be applicable and quite encompassing across languages and cultures. Since translation takes place in all language cultures that are in contact with others, insights about the craft of translation can be inspired in the examination of how translation was conducted and

perceived in other cultures. And it is only then that a theory of translation could possibly be applied to generalize and predict translation activities. It came as no surprise then that a recent innovation in translation studies called for researchers to look beyond the western practice and examine how translation was undertaken and viewed within the non-western cultures (Hung 2005a; Hung and Wakabayashi 2005; Trivedi 2006; Tymoczko 2006).

Xuanzang's translation was considered 'new,' as opposed to Kumārajīva's 'old' translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese conducted during the Tang period, because Xuanzang had an all-round understanding, as a reader, of the flaws and limitations in the past translations in China. As a translator, he believed that he could do better, given his distinct edge over his predecessors in terms of his Chinese-Sanskrit bilingual competence and his profound understanding of various schools of Buddhist doctrine. Besides pointing out the 'procedural' limitations of the ancient and old translations of Buddhist texts in China, he aptly summed up his principle of translation, which involves the need to be faithful to the original meaning, while at the same time making sure the text is understandable to the general public (*jìxū qiūzhēn, yóuxū yúsù* 既須求真, 又須喻俗). Moreover, Xuanzang believed that the language style of the translation has to be accessible to and easily understood by ordinary people in the target culture.<sup>5</sup> His principles of translation, with due consideration over form (*wén* 文) and content (*zhì* 質) of the target text, was undoubtedly well ahead of his time.

The first translation of a Buddhist text on record in second-century China had been in circulation for almost five centuries, when Xuanzang put forward the idea of the need to give priority to the readability of translated texts. It took half a millennium of experience with translation, undertaken by numerous non-Chinese and Chinese Buddhist monks alike, to nurture the development of more systematic principles in translation of Buddhist texts and, by extension, translation as a whole. This kind of refined thinking and

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<sup>5</sup> Kumārajīva did stress "the importance of the accessibility of sutra translation to the ordinary people with little literary training." This concern for the readers' reception came centuries earlier than that of Xuanzang's emphasis on the ease of reading. This insight of Kumārajīva, however, is not often suitably recognized and mentioned (Lingwu 2011: 206, my translation).

sophisticated reflection about translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese, attending to the source text contents, the process of translation, and the reception of the target readers, is certainly rarely heard of in his time. This, together with Xuanzang's transcendent view about the classic rift between literal and semantic translation approaches, largely enhances the theoretical discussions over translations of Buddhist texts and inspired the subsequent theoretical development of translation studies in China.

### **5. Subjectivity of the Translator**

Xuanzang, as the convener of his translation assembly, was the chief editor of the translated Buddhist texts thus produced. He was also the gatekeeper of the translation quality and standards in his team. His subjectivity as the chief translator, no doubt, would have an impact on the ultimate product. However, his subjectivity as a translator was more notable in his preface-less translation of the *Laozi* 老子, a seminal work of the Taoist religion, into Sanskrit.

When emperor Taizong (r. 626–649) instructed Xuanzang to produce a Sanskrit *Laozi* as an imperial gift to be presented to the countries in the Western Regions, the monk obliged. Xuanzang complied, but I believe he probably did so against his better judgment. Imagine the kind of pressure from the throne he must have been sustaining, for him to eventually consult some Taoist priests in the process of completing the Sanskrit rendition. His debate with the priest was documented at length in his biography (Huili 688; Li 1995). Ultimately, his refusal to translate the preface, which he considered embarrassing to Tang China, suggests very strongly his subjectivity as a translator. While reminded to insert a Sanskrit preface to the translation by the Taoist priests, Xuanzang rebuts,

As I see it, the *Laozi* is a work on disciplining the self and ruling the state; it is sufficiently clear as it stands. To add a preface consisting of Taoist health-preserving practices such as the knocking of teeth and the swallowing of saliva would expose the work to charges of vulgarity and ignorance, and bring embarrassment to our country. (Biography of Xuanzang, Yue's translation, in Cheung 2006: 160)

Xuanzang's compliance to undertake this Taoist translation was intended to be a token of his loyalty to the throne. Yet, once it was completed, Xuanzang was assertive in not rendering its preface in

order to protect the image of China. As a translator of Buddhist texts, he knew exactly when to cave in and when to be firm.

In the literature of China, there is little controversy over Xuanzang's translation of the *Laozi*. Yet, some scholars in the conference appear to be rather skeptical over the issue as to whether or not Xuanzang has actually rendered the Sanskrit translation of this Chinese classic. The basis of their uncertainty seems to be largely grounded in a French article published by Paul Pelliot in 1912 in the *T'oung Pao*. I have no knowledge of French and could not comment on the credibility of his argument. The other basis of this dubious view is that Xuanzang's biography, in which his translation of the *Laozi* is documented, is not reliable, because the biography is said to be full of exaggeration and mystical passages. This biography was also said to be an inflation of Xuanzang's eminence. Yet, I do not think that the value of this biography should be entirely discounted because of the presence of mystical elements and the glorifying remarks. Lastly, this biography's authenticity was also criticized because it was compiled by two disciples of Xuanzang at different periods, Huili for the first five chapters in 646, and Yancong for the last five chapters in 688. Yancong was also responsible for the final editing of the entire volume. However, the credibility of this source should not be ruled out entirely either. Technically the two disciples were dealing with two different parts of Xuanzang's life, Huili on the part until the end of his pilgrimage in 645, while Yancong wrote on the part from Xuanzang's return to China in 645 to the end of the master's life in 664. It would be unwise to dismiss the value of this biography compiled in seventh-century China, a time when not many countries in Asia had developed their written languages to retain their historical records. Realistically, it is acceptable to be skeptical about certain parts of the biography, but it would be improper to systemically ignore this historical text. More importantly, this dismissal of Xuanzang's biography would be damaging to the historical investigation of seventh-century events pertinent to Buddhism in China.

The other point in support of my argument that Xuanzang indeed rendered the *Laozi* into Sanskrit is related to the completion time of this biography, in which this *Laozi* translation was mentioned at length, in 688, a time of the peak of glory in Tang China. If Xuanzang's translation was a fabrication, what was the

motive for such fabrications by his disciples? Most critically, in the criminal code of law in imperial China, it was treasonous to lie to, and about, the emperor. If Yancong, his disciple, was so certain about emperor Taizong having commissioned Xuanzang to do this translation and that Xuanzang refused to translate the preface, I see very little reason for the disciple to risk his life by making this up and recording this event in writing to be circulated in Tang time. In this regard, I feel rather strongly about Xuanzang's having actually rendered the Taoist seminal work into Sanskrit, although the translation is, unfortunately, no longer extant.

Anyhow, the exchange of ideas over this issue is suggestive of the need for further research regarding Xuanzang, about whom literature written in English is still rather limited. It is possible that further communication and exchange of views would benefit research of this nature in the future.

## **6. Process of Translation and Product of Translation**

Team translation in the form of a translation assembly (Cheung 2006) or forum (Hung 2005b), sponsored by the imperial government and conducted either in a monastery or some sorts of imperial venues, was not Xuanzang's creation. This practice in translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese was started around the fourth century in Eastern Jin China in the regime of Former Qin (351–394). The earliest translation assembly was set up in Chang'an around 365–384 in the Jianyuan reign period. This institutional establishment lasted for about six centuries, ending around the time of the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), which was about the same time that translation of Indian Buddhist texts ended in China.

However, Xuanzang's team translation was on a scale quite unprecedented although this group translation practice had been conducted as early as the fourth century in China. Soon after his return to China from his pilgrimage, he was given the royal patronage to undertake extensive translation of the Buddhist texts he collected from India.

He assembled a team of some twenty eminent monks to take on the tasks of verifying interpretations and doctrinal issues, polishing the translations, standardizing terminology and checking the Sanskrit meanings. The team formed a well-organized Translation Assembly. The efforts of nineteen years saw the completion of the

translation of seventy-five sutras and treatises, a total of 1335 fascicles in all. Most of the translations are straightforward and were scrupulously checked for accuracy. (Jane Lai's translation, in Cheung 2006: 156–7)

The earliest breakdown of translation procedures was simple, in three steps: such as reading the original text aloud, communicating its ideas, and then putting it down in the target language. Later on, the steps were made more sophisticated. Daoan (312–385), for example, ensured that there were six steps in his translation assembly: reading of the text in Sanskrit, confirming the meaning of the Sanskrit text, putting it down in Sanskrit, making an oral translation into Chinese, putting it down in written Chinese, and proofreading. A recruit of Daoan on royal patronage, Kumārajīva, basically inherited this practice in his translation assembly. In Xuanzang's translation assembly, a total of eleven steps were introduced to fine-tune the translated text (Ma 1980). Unlike the panel chairpersons functioning as part of the previous translation assemblies, the difference here was that now Xuanzang, as the convener of his translation assembly, was competent in both Chinese and Sanskrit with a master knowledge in Buddhist works; he was someone who was quite capable of supervising and monitoring the whole translation process during each and every step.

### **Conclusions**

The practice of translation is an essential experience for both translation theorists and translation teachers, although, in reality, translation research is more highly valued than translation practice in academia. Such a hierarchical stereotype does nothing but hinders the growth of the discipline. In fact, translation research necessarily evolves around translations, translators, and translated texts. In Xuanzang's case, his critical reflections on his translated sutras were eventually transformed as his views about translation changed. In this connection, we could see Xuanzang both as a translation practitioner and a theorist. In this article, I attempted to introduce a cultural approach to the study of Xuanzang, which goes beyond sheer error analyses of his translations. I listed six possible research avenues in relation to Xuanzang, which could be expanded and applied to translations of Indian Buddhist texts into other languages. These avenues by their very nature are all central

concerns in academic debates in translation. It is my intention that scholars engaged in other scriptural translation studies would be suitably informed, if not inspired.

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# The *Kāraka* Section of Rāmacandra's *Prakriyākaumudī*: A Comparative Study of the Sanskrit Original and the Tibetan and Mongolian Translations<sup>1</sup>

Hong LUO (Beijing)

The *Prakriyākaumudī*, the Moon Light on Etymological Formation or the Moon Light of Etymological Formation,<sup>2</sup> which was

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<sup>1</sup> I dedicate this article to Prof. Xu Wenkan (徐文勘) on the occasion of his 70th birthday. My forthcoming edition of the collated text of the *Prakriyākaumudī* is dedicated to Prof. Duan Qīng (段晴), who introduced me into this field when I was studying at Peking University. I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to Prof. Saroja Bhate, Prof. George Cardona, Prof. Diwakar Acharya, and Dr. Pieter Cornelis Verhagen for reading an earlier draft of this presentation and offering very valuable comments and corrections. I thank Prof. Chen Ganglong (陈岗龙) and Dr. Erdni Ceceg (宝花) for checking my transliteration of the Mongolian translation of the *Prakriyākaumudī*. Special thanks to Prof. Wu Tuoya (乌托娅), Dr. Péter-Dániel Szántó, Dr. Iain Sinclair and Mr. Liu Yinghua (刘英华) for helping me get access to necessary materials. I own thanks to all my colleagues in Vienna, Hamburg, Naples, Kyoto and Beijing for their constant support and help. I thank my institute, the China Tibetology Research Center (中国藏学研究中心) for supporting my studies over years. I thank Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (中国社会科学院) for supporting my study on the *Prakriyākaumudī*. I thank Prof. Dorji Wangchuk for kindly inviting me to this conference and offering valuable comments on my draft. Last but not least, I thank Prof. Harunaga Isaacson for kindly agreeing to read this paper for me and offering comments and corrections on the previous draft. Regretfully, I missed the conference due to other duty, but the comments of other participants were kindly passed to me by Prof. Harunaga Isaacson, they are encouraging as well as intriguing, I thank all who kindly commented on this paper and my project.

<sup>2</sup> ***prakriyākaumudīm*** | *prakriyante prakṛtipratyayādivibhāgena vyutpādyante śabdā yābhis (ābhis ed.) tāḥ prakriyāḥ* | “*kṛñāḥ śa ca*” *iti karaṇe śapratyayaḥ* | “*riṇ śayaglinḥṣu*” *iti riṇ* | *tāsu kaumudī* | “*saṃjñāyām*” *iti saptaṃitātpuruṣaḥ* | *kaumudīva kaumudī sukhaṃ janayanti sarvaśabdaparakāśikā* | *atha vā prakriyā kaumudīva prakriyākaumudī* | “*upamītaṃ vyāghra—*” *iti samāsaḥ* | (TRIVEDI 1925: 4–5). “The Moonlight on/of Etymological Formation.” The etymological formations (*prakriyāḥ*) are those by

composed by Rāmacandra in the later half of the 14th century,<sup>3</sup> is—to quote K.P. Trivedi—“the first exhaustive attempt to classify the *Sūtras* of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and arrange them so as to suit a systematic and methodical treatment of the different subjects of grammar dealt with in them.”<sup>4</sup> The *Prakriyākaumudī* is an innovative as well as independent work; it had not, it seems, been influenced by such contemporary works as the *Rūpavatāra* of Dharmakīrti and the *Rūpamālā* by Vimalasarasvati.<sup>5</sup> It overshadowed works under the same rubric and dominated the field till the *Siddhāntakaumudī* of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, who preferred, heavily borrowed, and also constantly criticized the monumental work of Rāmacandra.<sup>6</sup>

Till now there is no publication specifically focusing on the comparison of the *Prakriyākaumudī* and its Tibetan and Mongolian translations. But some scholastic efforts have been put into the general examination of the *\*Pāṇinivyākaraṇasūtra* and its translations. The related publications are reviewed in

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which the words (*śabdāḥ*) are accomplished (*prakriyante*), [i.e.,] they are derived through the [grammatical] units of radical forms and affixes, etc. (*prakṛtiḥpratyayādivibhāgena*). [To explain the etymological formation of the word *prakriyā*. From the *sūtra*] ‘*kr̥ṇāḥ śa ca*’ (A 3.3.100), the affix *śa* [is added after the verb root *kr̥ṇ*] in the sense of performing (*karane*), [according to the *sūtra*] ‘*riṇ śayaglin̄kṣu*’ (A 7.4.28), *riṇ* [replaces *ṛ* of *kr̥ṇ*]. [To explain the formation of the compound *prakriyākaumudī*. It means] the moonlight on the [etymological formations], [according to the *sūtra*] ‘*saṃjñāyām*’ (A 2.1.44), this is [understood as] a locative *tatpuruṣa*. The moonlight [of etymological formation], resembling the moonlight, gives rise to pleasure, explains [the etymological formation of] all words. Alternatively, [it is the moon light of etymological formation, because] the etymological formation resembles the moonlight. The compound [is constructed according to the *sūtra*] ‘*upamitam vyāghra*—’ (A 2.1.56).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. TRIVEDI 1925: xliii–xliv. K.V. Abhyankar attributed it to the 15th century, cf. ABHYANKAR 1986: 260. Cf. also BELVALKAR 1915: 45–46, where Rāmacandra is considered “belongs to the first half of the fifteenth century.”

<sup>4</sup> Cf. TRIVEDI 1925: xxxiii. In BELVALKAR 1915: 44, the *Rūpamālā* of Vimalasarasvati is counted as the first simplest composition of this genre.

<sup>5</sup> S.K. Mukhopadhyaya was of the opinion that the author of the *Prakriyākaumudī* might have been inspired by the *Kātantra* and the *Mugdhabodha*, see MUKHOPADHYAYA 1944: 67. And S.K. Belvalkar suggested that the *Rūpamālā* is anterior to the *Prakriyākaumudī*, cf. BELVALKAR 1915: 43–44.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. BELVALKAR 1915: 45; TRIVEDI 1925: xxix–xxx, xxxiii–xxxvii; MUKHOPADHYAYA 1944: 67.

chronological order below. In 1944, S.K. Mukhopadhyaya published “Tibetan Translation of *Prakriyā-Kaumudī* and the mention of *Siddhānta-Kaumudī* therein.” This might be the first publication focusing on the Tibetan translation of the *Prakriyākaumudī*.<sup>7</sup> In this article he analyzed PS<sub>Tib</sub> and gave a proper evaluation of this work:<sup>8</sup>

The Tibetan translation with all its errors is praiseworthy. To translate the grammar of Pāṇini in a foreign language is not an easy task. It is really a great and successful attempt of a young man of 25.

In this article, Mukhopadhyaya pointed out the different quotation of the original *sūtras* and *vārttikas* between the *Prakriyākaumudī* and the *Siddhāntakaumudī*.<sup>9</sup> Also, he listed the divergent readings of the original *sūtras* attested in the manuscripts of the *Prakriyākaumudī*.<sup>10</sup> At the end of this article he suggested to compare PS<sub>Tib</sub> with “the original *sūtras* of Pāṇini, that are found in *Mahābhāṣya*, *Kāśikā*, *Prakriyā-Kaumudī* and *Siddhānta-Kaumudī*, and I have a mind to record the differences in details in a separate paper.”<sup>11</sup> A complete collated text, i.e., Sanskrit original with its Tibetan translation, however, can be much more informative and useful, since it can give us a clearer idea how the cooperative group tried to convey the subtle conceptions in Pāṇini's tradition into Tibetan.

In *The Sanskrit and World Culture* published in 1986, Shagdaryn Bira and O. Sukhabaatar contributed one article: “On the Tibetan and Mongolian Translations of Sanskrit Grammatical Works.” In this article, with special emphasis on the Tibetan and the Mongolian translation of the *\*Pāṇinivyākaraṇasūtra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī*, they briefly delineated and evaluated the

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<sup>7</sup> I thank P.C. Verhagen for informing me of this article and pointing out that N.K. Dash's “Tibetan Translation of *Pāṇini-Vyākaraṇa Sūtras*, *Mahābhāṣya*, *Kāśikā*, *Prakriyā-Kaumudī* and *Siddhānta-Kaumudī*: A Comparative Study” published in 1994 in *The Tibet Journal* is a plagiarism of S.K. Mukhopadhyaya's publication.

<sup>8</sup> MUKHOPADHYAYA 1944: 69.

<sup>9</sup> MUKHOPADHYAYA 1944: 67–68.

<sup>10</sup> MUKHOPADHYAYA 1944: 68–69.

<sup>11</sup> In N.K. Dash's paper, there is a list of divergences attested between the Sanskrit text and the Tibetan translation of the *\*Pāṇinivyākaraṇasūtra*, it seems that this was inspired by Mukhopadhyaya's remarks and prepared by himself.

transmission of the Sanskrit grammatical works in Tibet and Mongol. The authors bore high opinions on the quality of the Tibetan translation of the *\*Pāṇiniṣyākaraṇasūtra*:<sup>12</sup>

This is a witness to the great skill of the Tibetan translator who perceived the subtle shade of meaning of each *sūtra* of Pāṇini.

This evaluation, however, does not fit the situation and needs to be reconsidered.<sup>13</sup> At the end of this article a project “with a view to issuing a new edition of the Mongolian Translation of the Pāṇini grammar” is announced.<sup>14</sup> The project has not been effectively carried out and no revised translation has been published yet.

In *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet Volume I, Transmission of the Canonical Literature* published in 1994, P. C. Verhagen gave a detailed description of the Tibetan translation of the *\*Pāṇiniṣyākaraṇasūtra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī*.<sup>15</sup> He mentioned the existence of the “numerous (editorial) changes” in PK<sub>Tib</sub> and pointed out that this is probably the reason why the translators invented a new title for this work at the end of the text.<sup>16</sup> While the conclusion is no doubt right, our author seems to have misinterpreted the word *zin bris* in the invented Tibetan title. This word was translated as “synopsis,”<sup>17</sup> but it is more natural that it is used in the sense of “note(s),” and this can be a direct and

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<sup>12</sup> BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 158.

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion below.

<sup>14</sup> BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 160.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 133–137.

<sup>16</sup> There is no title at the beginning of PK<sub>Tib</sub>, cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 136–137.

<sup>17</sup> His translation of the title of PK<sub>Tib</sub>: *brda sprod pa'i bstan bcos chen po pāṇiniṣyākaraṇa gzuñ 'grel gyi go don cho ga dper brjod sogs zin bris su bkod pa legs bśad nor bu 'dren pa'i śin rta źes bya ba* is as follows: “(Treatise entitled) ‘Chariot carrying jewels (in the form of) aphorisms,’ consisting of a synopsis on the (correct) interpretation, rules, examples, etc., of the commentary on the basic text of the great grammatical treatise *Pāṇini-ṣyākaraṇa*.” It would be more accurate to translate it as follows: “(Treatise entitled) ‘Chariot carrying jewels (in the form of) aphorisms, notes of the (correct) interpretation, rules, examples, etc., of the commentary on the basic text of the great grammatical treatise *Pāṇini-ṣyākaraṇa*.”

convincing evidence to the argument that PK<sub>Tib</sub> is by itself a compiled translation of the *Prakriyākaumudī*.<sup>18</sup>

As can be seen from the above-mentioned contributions, a complete collated text of the *\*Pāṇinivṛyākaraṇasūtra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī*, their Tibetan and Mongolian translations is still a desideratum.<sup>19</sup> The main tasks of future study would be:<sup>20</sup>

- (1) to provide a complete collated text of the *\*Pāṇinivṛyākaraṇasūtra* in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Mongolian;
- (2) to provide a collated text of the Tibetan text of the *Prakriyākaumudī*;
- (3) to provide a description and analysis of the Tibetan and Mongolian translations of the *\*Pāṇinivṛyākaraṇasūtra* and those of the *Prakriyākaumudī* on the basis of the published Sanskrit editions; and
- (4) to propose new translation of the incomplete and problematic Tibetan translation in PS<sub>Tib</sub>.

The present paper focuses only on the *Kāra* chapter of the *Prakriyākaumudī*. It aims to examine the Tibetan and Mongolian translation in light of Sanskrit text and further discuss the possibility to improve those problematic Tibetan translations. In the Tibetan Tanjur there are three works belonging to Pāṇini's tradition:<sup>21</sup>

- (1) The *Pāṇinidhātusūtra*<sup>22</sup>
- (2) The *Pāṇinivṛyākaraṇasūtra*<sup>23</sup>
- (3) The *Prakriyākaumudī*<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> This had been pointed out by Shagdaryn Bira and O. Sukhabaatar: "... and wrote all the explanations that he got from these paṇḍits down in the form of a broad commentary under the title of ..." (BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 157).

<sup>19</sup> Shagdaryn Bira and O. Sukhabaatar suggested to prepare "a new edition of the Mongolian Translation of the Pāṇini grammar," cf. BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 160.

<sup>20</sup> The present author is collating the Tibetan and Mongolian translations with the Sanskrit original, this project is supported by Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and expected to be accomplished in 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 184.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 312–314.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 314–317.

Among these three works, and even among all the grammatical works translated into Tibetan and Mongolian, the *Prakriyākaumudī* is “the most voluminous” one:<sup>25</sup>

This commentary is in fact by far the most voluminous treatise in the Tibetan corpus of Sanskrit grammatical literature, its size ranging from 425 folios in the various Bstan ’gyur editions.

Taking also into consideration the fact that Pāṇini grammar is the most sophisticated one among the four systems transmitted to Tibet and Mongol, we are convinced that the comprehensive examination of the Sanskrit original, the Tibetan translation and the Mongolian translation of the *Prakriyākaumudī* is worth doing in that it can provide us a solid basis for further study of the dissemination of the Pāṇini grammar in particular, and Sanskrit grammar in general in Tibet and Mongolian.

The Tibetan translation of the *\*Pāṇinivṛyākaraṇasūtra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī* was prepared by ’Dar ba lo tsā ba Ṅag dbaṅ phun tshogs lhun grub, alias Tshe dbaṅ rab brtan rdo rje (1634–?)<sup>26</sup> in cooperation with Gokulanāthamiśra and Balabhadra,<sup>27</sup> two *paṇḍitas* from west India, during the period of 1658–1660.<sup>28</sup> The cooperative team was financially supported by the Fifth Dalai Lama and the translation was carried out in the ’Bras spuṅs Monastery (Dhānyakaṭaka).<sup>29</sup> A close examination of PS<sub>Tib</sub> shows that it is most likely an unrevised/unpolished draft. There are many imperfections which should have been avoided if even a rough revision had been carried out. There are two *sūtras* missing in PS<sub>Tib</sub>, there are wrongly included interpretations and *vārttikas* in PS<sub>Tib</sub>, there are incomplete as well as problematic translations, besides, the application of *saṃdhi* rules in the Tibetan translation is also need to be reconsidered.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 317–322.

<sup>25</sup> VERHAGEN 1994: 135–136.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 156–157.

<sup>27</sup> For the identification of Gokulanāthamiśra and Balabhadra, see GHOSH 1970: 36–38. I owe thanks to P.C. Verhagen for drawing my attention to this article.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. VERHAGEN 1994: 139.

<sup>29</sup> For the transliteration and translation of the colophon of PS<sub>Tib</sub>, see VERHAGEN 1994: 314–315; for those of PK<sub>Tib</sub>, see VERHAGEN 1994: 318–320.

In the following examples, when examining PS<sub>Tib</sub>, the *pratīkas* in PK<sub>Tib</sub> are also taken into consideration and quoted. The numbering of the *sūtras* follows the edition prepared by the present author; for instance, 2.11 refers to the eleventh *sūtra*, which deals with the second set of case-endings, of the *Kāra* section. An asterisk before the numbering means that the *sūtra* concerned is not available in the Tibetan and Mongolian translations; for instance, \*2.14 refers to the fourteenth *sūtra* which is available in the published Sanskrit editions but missing in the Tibetan and Mongolian translations. For the incomplete and problematic translations, a new translation is also proposed.

### Missing *Sūtras* in PS<sub>Tib</sub>

Two *sūtras* in PK are not attested in PS<sub>Tib</sub> and PK<sub>Tib</sub>:

\*2.14 *karmappravacanīyayukte dvitīyā* || 2.3.8 ||

\*7.97 *saptamīpañcamyau kārakamadhye* || 2.3.7 ||

### Interpretation or *Vārttikas* wrongly included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>

One *śloka* in the interpretation of 2.11 (*upānvadhyānvasaḥ* || 1.4.48 ||) is included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>, probably wrongly taken as a *sūtra*:

*ubhasarvatasoḥ kāryā dhiguparyādisu triṣu |*  
*dvitīyāmreḍitānteṣu tato 'nyatrāpi drśyate ||*  
*gñis dañ thams cad de dag gi bya ba dañ | 'dzin pa dañ | yañ yañ la*  
*sogs par gsum du dañ | zlos pa'i mtha' rnam su dañ | de las gžan du*  
*yañ dag gñis pa mthon ño ||*

In the following cases, *vārttikas* are included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>:

- (1) One *vārttika* (*prakṛtyādibhyas tṛtīyā* ||) of 3.24 (*kartṛkaraṇayos tṛtīyā* || 2.3.18 ||) is included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>: *prakṛti sogs rnam las gsum pa'o* ||
- (2) One *vārttika* (*tādarthyē caturthī vācyā* ||) of 4.43 (*parikrayaṇe sampradānam anyatarasyām* || 1.4.44 ||) is included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>: *de'i don la bži pa brjod do* ||
- (3) One *vārttika* (*yataś cādhvakālanirmāṇaṃ tatra pañcamī*) of 5.57 (*bhuvah prabhavaḥ* || 1.4.31 ||) is included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>: *gañ las lam dus nes pa'i tshad de la lia pa'an ño* ||
- (4) One *vārttika* (*tṛptyarthānāṃ karaṇe ṣaṣṭhī vā* ||) of 6.93 (*caturthī cāśisy āyusyamadrabhadraśūśalasukhārthahitaiḥ* || 2.3.73 ||) is

included in PS<sub>Tib</sub>: *tshim pa'i don mams kyi byed pa po la drug pa yañ na'o* ||

After 6.87 (*ktasya ca vartamāne* || 2.3.67 ||), PS<sub>Tib</sub> contains an extra *sūtra*: *napuṃsake bhāve | ma niñ la dños po la'o* ||

### Incomplete Translation in PS<sub>Tib</sub>

3.27 *sahayukte 'pradhāne* || 2.3.19 ||; *lhan cig sbyor ba la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>) *lhan cig sbyor ba la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The word *apradhāne* is left untranslated.<sup>30</sup> The translation may be thus improved: *lhan cig sbyor ba la gtso bo ma yin pa la'o*<sup>31</sup> ||.

4.44 *kriyārthopapadasya ca karmaṇi sthāninaḥ* || 2.3.14 ||; *bya ba'i don gyi ñe ba'i tshig la 'añ las la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *bya ba'i don gyi ñe ba'i tshig la 'añ las la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). There is no equivalent of *sthāninaḥ* in Tibetan.<sup>32</sup> The translation may be thus improved: *gnas dan ldan pa'i bya ba'i don gyi ñe ba'i tshig can gyi [byiñs kyi] 'añ las la'o*<sup>33</sup> ||.

4.46 *namaḥsvastisvāhāsvadhālamvaṣaḍyogāc ca* || 2.3.16 ||; *namas svasti svāhā alaṃ vaṣaḍ mams sbyor ba las kyañ ño* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *namas svasti svāhā alaṃ vaṣaḍ mams sbyor ba las kyañ ño* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). There is no equivalent of *svadhā* in the Tibetan translation.<sup>34</sup> The translation may be thus improved: *namas svasti svāhā svadhā alaṃ vaṣaḍ mams sbyor ba las kyañ ño* ||.

### Problematic Translation in PS<sub>Tib</sub>

1.1 *prātipadikārthalingaparimāṇavacanamātre prathamā* || 2.3.46 ||; *rtags kyi mtshan ñid min gi don tsam brjod pa la dan po'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *rtags*

<sup>30</sup> The *pratīka* in PK<sub>Tib</sub> contains *apradhāne*.

<sup>31</sup> Mvy 2523 (*pradhāna: gtso bo; gces pa*); Mvy 4549 (*pradhāna: gtso bo*). The explanation of this word in PK<sub>PRAK</sub> is: *vivakṣānibandhanam etat sāksāt kriyānvayī pradhānaṃ tadviparītam apradhānam* | (PK<sub>PRAK</sub>: 32).

<sup>32</sup> The *pratīka* in PK<sub>Tib</sub> contains *sthāninaḥ*.

<sup>33</sup> *kriyā kriyārthopapadaṃ yasya tasya sthānino 'prayujyamānasya tumunaḥ karmaṇi caturthī syāt* || *phalebhyo yāti | phalāny āhartum yātīty arthaḥ* | (PK); *kriyā kriyārthopapadaṃ yasya so 'yaṃ kriyārthopapadaḥ* | “*tumunṅvulau kriyāyāṃ kriyārthāyām*” [A 3.3.10]; *ity eṣa viśayo lakṣyate | kriyārthopapadasya ca sthānino 'prayujyamānasya dhātoḥ karmaṇi kārake caturthī vibhaktir bhavati | dvitīyāpavādo yogah | edhebhyo vrajati | puṣpebhyo vrajati* | (KĀŚ).

<sup>34</sup> The *pratīka* in PK<sub>Tib</sub> does not contain *svadhā*.

*kyi mtshan ñid miñ gi don tsam brjod pa la dañ po'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation reflects each word of the Sanskrit text: *rtags kyi mtshan ñid* for *līṅgaparimāna*,<sup>35</sup> *miñ gi don* for *prātipadikārtha*, *tsam* for *mātra*, *brjod pa* for *vacana*, *dañ po* for *prathamā*, but the original syntax is twisted. The translation may be thus improved: *miñ gi don dañ rtags dañ yoñs su bpyad pa dañ brjod pa tsam la dañ po'o*<sup>36</sup> ||.

2.3 *kartur īpsitatamaṃ karma* || 1.4.49 ||; *byed po'i 'dod pa las so* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *byed po'i 'dod pa las so* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). There is no reflection of the suffix *tamaṃ* of *īpsitatamaṃ*. The translation may be thus improved: *byed pa po'i 'dod soṣ ni las so* ||.

2.7 *gatibuddhipratyavasānārthasābdakarmākarmakāṇām aṅikartā sa nau* || 1.4.52 ||; *'gro ba dañ rtogs pa dañ zas dañ sgra'i don gyi las dañ las med pa mams kyi ñi dañ lhan cig pa ma yin pa'i ñi med pa la byed pa po la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *'gro ba dañ rtogs pa dañ zas dañ sgra'i don gyi las dañ las med pa mams kyi ñi dañ lhan cig pa ma yin pa'i ñi med pa la byed pa po la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). Note that *sgra'i don gyi las* in the Tibetan translation seems to be the result of the misunderstanding of the word order of the compound, the meaning of the second half of the translation seems to be in contradiction with the interpretation in PK. The translation may be thus improved: *'gro ba dañ rtogs pa dañ zas kyi don can dañ sgra yi las can dañ las med pa mams kyi ñi ma yin pa'i byed pa po de ni ñi la'o*<sup>37</sup> ||.

2.9 *adhiśṅsthāsām karma* || 1.4.46 ||; *adhi sṅ sthā ās\* mams kyi 'ai ño* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *adhi sṅ sthā ās\* mams kyi 'ai ño* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). Instead of an equivalent of *karma*, *'ai*, which reflects *ca*, is attested. In PK<sub>Tib</sub>, the

<sup>35</sup> This identification is not certain, since *mtshan ñid* can hardly be an equivalent of *parimāna*.

<sup>36</sup> *prātipadikārthaḥ sattā | mātraśabdasya pratyekaṃ yogaḥ | sattāmātrādiṣv artheṣu prathamā syāt || uccaiḥ | nīcaiḥ | kṛṣṇaḥ | śrīḥ | jñānam | khāri | droṇaḥ | āḍhakam | ekaḥ | dvau | bahavaḥ | kṛdarthe yuḥ | taddhitārtha aupagavaḥ | samāsārthe citraguḥ | (PK); prātipadikārthaḥ sattā | līṅgaṃ strīlīṅgapuṃlīṅganapuṃsakāni | parimānaṃ droṇaḥ, khāri, āḍhakam | vacanam ekatvadvitvabahuṭvāni | mātraśabdaḥ pratyekam abhisambadhyate | prātipadikārthamātre, līṅgamātre, parimānamātre, vacanamātre prathamā vibhaktir bhavati | (KĀS).*

<sup>37</sup> *gatyarthādīnām aṅau yaḥ kartā sa nyantānām karmasamjñāḥ syāt || (PK); arthaśabdaḥ pratyekam abhisambadhyate | gatyarthānām buddhyarthānām pratyavasānārthānaṃ ca dhātūnām tathā śabdakarmakāṇām akarmakāṇām cānyantānām yaḥ kartā sa nyantānām karmasamjño bhavati | (KĀS).*

Tibetan transliteration of this *sūtra* is *adhiśīnsthāsām tsa*. The particle *ca* at the end of this *sūtra* is doubtful, since the last *sūtra* is *ādharo 'dhikaraṇam* || 1.4.45 ||. Most likely, this is a miscopy of the original *sūtra* in PK, and the mistake may be due to an eye-skip to the *ca* at the end of the next *sūtra*: *abhiniviśaś ca* || 1.4.47 ||. The translation may be thus improved: *adhi śīn sthā ās mams kyi las so* ||.

2.18 *lakṣaṇetthambhūtākhyānabhāgavīpsāsu pratiparyanavaḥ* || 1.4.90 ||; *mtshan ñid dan 'di ltar gyur pa dan bgo skal dan zlos pa mams la prati pari anu mams las so* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *mtshan ñid dan 'di ltar gyur pa dan bgo skal dan zlos pa mams la prati pari anu mams las so* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). Note that *ākhyāna* of *itthambhūtākhyāna* is not translated and it is improper to translate *pratiparyanavaḥ*, a nominative plural, into *prati pari anu mams las so*, which would be taken as an equivalent of an ablative plural. The translation may be thus improved: *mtshan ñid dan 'di ltar gyur par bśad pa dan bgo skal dan zlos pa mams la prati pari anu mams so*<sup>38</sup> ||.

2.20 *atir atikramane ca* || 1.4.95 ||; *ati śin tu pa'i bya ba la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *ati śin tu pa'i bya ba la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The Tibetan translation of *atikramane* does not make good sense. Moreover, in PK<sub>Tib</sub>, the Tibetan transliteration of this *sūtra* is *atir atikramane* ||, also there is no equivalent of *ca* in the Tibetan and Mongolian translation. The particle seems to be missing in both PS<sub>Tib</sub> and PK<sub>Tib</sub>. However, as explained in PK<sub>PRAK</sub>, *ca* is meaningful: *ca*: 'suḥ pūjāyām' [A 1.4.94] *ity anantaranirdiṣṭasyārthasya parāmarśārthaḥ* | (PK<sub>PRAK</sub>: 26–27). The translation may be thus improved: *ati 'das pa la 'an no* ||.

3.23 *sādhakatamaṃ karaṇam* || 1.4.42 ||; *bsgrub nus pa de byed pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *bsgrub nus pa de byed pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). There is no reflection of *tamaṃ* in the *sūtra*. The translation may be thus improved: *bsgrub pa'i mchog / bsgrub pa'i shos / bsgrub nus pa che shos ni byed pa'o* ||.

3.29 *itthambhūtalakṣaṇe* || 2.3.21 ||; *'di 'drar yod pa'i mtshan ñid la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *'di 'drar yod pa'i mtshan ñid la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *'di 'drar gyur pa'i mtshan ñid la'o* ||.

4.32 *karmaṇā yam abhipraiti sa sampradānam* || 1.4.32 ||; *gan gi las mñon par rab tu 'on ba de yan dag par rab tu sbyin pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *gan gi*

<sup>38</sup> *eṣv artheṣv eta uktasamjñāḥ syuḥ* | (PK); *lakṣaṇa itthambhūtākhyāne bhāge vīpsayām ca viśāyabhūtāyām prati pary anv ity ete karmaṇavacanīyasamjñā bhavanti* | (KAŚ).

*las mñion par rab tu 'on̄ ba de yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). Note that *gañ gi las* could not be a proper translation of *karmaṇā yam*. The translation may be thus improved: *las kyis gañ la mñion par rab tu 'on̄ ba de yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa'o* ||.

4.37 *sprher īpsitaḥ* || 1.4.36 ||; *grogs 'dod pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *grogs 'dod pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *chags pa la 'dod pa'o* || *sprh gi 'dod pa'o*<sup>39</sup> ||.

4.38 *krudhadruherṣyāsūyārthānām yaṃ prati kopāḥ* || 1.4.37 ||; *krudha druha īṣyā asūyā mams gañ la so sor khro ba'i don la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *krudha druha īṣyā asū mams gañ la so sor khro ba'i don la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *krudha druha īṣyā asūyā'i don can mams la gañ la so sor khro ba'o* ||.

4.39 *krudhadruhor upasṛṣṭayoḥ karma* || 1.4.38 ||; *kruda druha dag gi ñe bar 'os pa dag la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *kruda druha dag gi ñe bar 'os pa dag la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *ñe bar sbyor ba'i kruda druha dag gi las so* ||.

4.43 *parikrayaṇe sampradānam anyatarasyām* || 1.4.44 ||; *parikrayaṇa'i\* yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa yañ na'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *parikrayaṇa'i\* yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa yañ na'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The term *parikrayaṇa* is left untranslated. The translation may be thus improved: *gla ba la yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa yañ na'o*<sup>40</sup> ||

5.49 *dhruvam apāye 'pādānam* || 1.4.24 ||; *brtan pa las bral ba de ñes par kun sbyin pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *brtan pa las bral ba de ñes par kun sbyin pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *bral ba la brtan pa ni ñes par kun sbyin pa'o* ||.

5.52 *parājer asodhaḥ* || 1.4.26 ||; *rgyal ba ma yin pa'i 'pham pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *rgyal ba ma yin pa'i 'pham pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *parā sñon du 'gro ba'i rgyal ba la / ji la mi bzod pa'o* ||.

5.54 *antardhau yenādarśanam icchati* || 1.4.28 ||; *gañ gis mi mthoñ bar byed pa'i sbed pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *gañ gis mi mthoñ bar byed pa'i sbed pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *sbed pa la gañ gis mi mthoñ bar 'dod pa'o* ||.

<sup>39</sup> Mvy 2221 (*sprhā: chags pa; sēn pa; 'dod pa*).

<sup>40</sup> *niyatakālam bhṛtyā svikaraṇaṃ parikrayas tatkaraṇaṃ sampradānaṃ vā syāt* | (PK); *parikrayaṇaṃ niyatakālam vetanādīnā svikaraṇaṃ nātyantikah kraya eva* | (KĀŚ).

5.55 *ākhyātopayoge* || 1.4.29 ||; *klog pa dan ñe bar sbyor ba la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *klog pa dan ñe bar sbyor ba la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *ñe bar sbyor ba la klog pa po'o* ||.

5.57 *bhuvah prabhavaḥ* || 1.4.31 ||; *'byuñ bar 'gyur ba las so* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *'byuñ bar 'gyur ba las so* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *'byuñ ba yi 'byuñ khuñs so* ||.

5.59 *apaṣarī varjane* || 1.4.88 ||; *apa pari dag gi bor ba la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *apa pari dag gi bor ba la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *apa pari dag ni bor ba la'o* ||.

5.61 *pañcamy apāñparibhiḥ* || 2.3.10 ||; *apa āñ pari mams kyi lña pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *apa āñ pari mams kyi lña pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *apa āñ pari mams dan [sbyor ba la] lña pa'o* ||.

5.66 *prthagvinānānābhis trītyānyatarasyām* || 2.3.32 ||; *prthak vinā nānā mams kyis\* gsum pa yañ na'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *prthak vinā nānā mams kyis\* gsum pa yañ na'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *prthak vinā nānā mams dan [sbyor ba la] gsum pa yañ na'o* ||.

6.73 *enaṣā dvitīyā* || 2.3.31 ||; *ena'i gñis pa la'an ño* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *ena'i gñis pa la'an ño* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *enaṣ dan [sbyor ba la] gñis pa'o* ||.

6.74 *dūrāntikārthaiḥ śaṣṭhy anyatarasyām* || 2.3.34 ||; *riñ ba dan ñe ba'i don mams kyis\* drug pa yañ na'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *riñ ba dan ñe ba'i don mams kyis\* drug pa yañ na'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *riñ ba dan ñe ba'i don mams dan [sbyor ba la] drug pa yañ na'o* ||.

6.75 *jñō 'vidarthasya karāṇe* || 2.3.51 ||; *jan śes pa'i don ma yin pa la byed pa po la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *jan śes pa'i don ma yin pa la byed pa po la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *śes pa'i don ma yin pa'i jñā yi byed pa la'o* ||.

6.77 *kṛñah pratiyatne* || 2.3.53 ||; *kṛñ'i 'bad pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *kṛñ'i 'bad pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *kṛñ'i so sor 'bad pa la'o* ||.

6.79 *āsīṣi nāthaḥ* || 2.3.55 ||; *nātha'i smon pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *nātha'i smon pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *nāthr'i smon pa la'o* ||.

6.81 *vyavahṛpaṇoḥ samarthayoḥ* || 2.3.57 ||; *vi-ava-hṛ paṇa dag gi rgyal ba la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *vi-ava-hṛ paṇa dag gi rgyal ba la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *don mthun pa'i vi-ava-hṛ dan paṇa dag gi'o* ||.

6.84 *kṛtvo'rthaprayoge kāle 'dhikarane* || 2.3.64 ||; *dus kyi don rab tu sbyor ba'i kṛt las lhag par byed pa la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *dus kyi don rab tu sbyor ba'i kṛt las lhag par byed pa la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *kṛtvas kyi don can gyi rab tu sbyor ba'i dus la lhag par byed pa la'o* ||.

6.89 *na lokāvyayaniṣṭhākhalarthatṛnām* || 2.3.69 ||; *'jig rten mi zad pa bden pa khal\* ṭṛn nmams kyi don la ma yin no* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *'jig rten mi zad pa bden pa khal\* ṭṛn nmams kyi don la ma yin no* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *la u uka dan mi zad pa dan niṣṭhā dan khal gyi don can dan ṭṛn nmams la ma yin no* ||.

6.92 *tulyārthair atulopamābhyām tṛtīyānyatarasyām* || 2.3.72 ||; *mñam pa'i don dan mñam bar ñe bar 'jal ba ma yin pa dag la gsum pa yan na'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *mñam pa'i don dan mñam bar ñe bar 'jal ba ma yin pa dag la gsum pa yan na'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *tulā dan upamā dag las mñam pa'i don nmams dan [sbyor ba la] gsum pa yan no* ||.

6.93 *caturthī cāśisy āyusyamadrabhadrakušālasukhārthahitaiḥ* || 2.3.73 ||; *smon pa āyusya madra bhadra kuśāla bde ba'i don nmams dan hita nmams kyi bži pa'an no* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *smon ba āyusya madra bhadra kuśāla bde ba'i don nmams dan hita nmams kyi bži pa'an no* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *smon pa la āyusya madra bhadra kuśāla bde ba'i don nmams dan hita nmams dan [sbyor ba la] bži pa'an no* ||.

7.96 *yasya ca bhāvena bhāvalakṣaṇam* || 2.3.37 ||; *dños po gañ gi dnos po'i mtshan ñid la'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *dños po gañ gi dnos po'i mtshan ñid la'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *gañ gi'an dnos pos dnos po'i mtshan ñid do* ||.

7.99 *yasmād adhikaṃ yasya ceśvaravacanam tatra saptamī* || 2.3.9 ||; *gañ las adhi gañ gi dbaṅ phyug brjod pa de la bdun pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *gañ las adhi gañ gi dbaṅ phyug brjod pa de la bdun pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *gañ las lhag pa gañ gi'an dbaṅ phyug brjod pa de la bdun pa'o* ||.

7.101 *svāmīśvarādhipatidāyādasākṣipratibhūprasūtais ca* || 2.3.39 ||; *svāmī śvarah adhipatiḥ dāyādaḥ sāksī pratibhūḥ prasūtaḥ nmams kyi\* 'an no*

|| (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *svāmī īśvaraḥ adhipatiḥ dāyādaḥ sākṣī pratibhūḥ prasūtaḥ nams kyiś\* ’anī nō* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *svāmī īśvaraḥ adhipatiḥ dāyādaḥ sākṣī pratibhūḥ prasūtaḥ nams danī* [sbyor ba la] *’anī nō* ||.

7.102 *āyuktakuśalābhyāṃ cāsevāyām* || 2.3.40 ||; *āyukta kuśala dag gis\* mchod pa la yañ na’o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *āyukta kuśala dag gis\* mchod pa la yañ na’o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *āyukta kuśala dag danī* [sbyor ba la] *mchod pa la yañ na’o* ||.

7.103 *yataś ca nīrdhāraṇam* || 2.3.41 ||; *gañ las kyañ nes par bkar ba mams kyi’o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *gañ las kyañ nes par bkar ba mams kyi’o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *gañ las kyañ nes par bkar ba’o* ||.

7.104 *pañcamī vibhakte* || 2.3.42 ||; *mam par gus pa la lia pa’o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *mam par gus pa la lia pa’o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *mam par phye ba la lia pa’o* ||.

7.105 *sādhunipūṇābhyāṃ arcāyāṃ saptamy aprateḥ* || 2.3.43 ||; *prati med pa’i mchod pa’i don la sādhu nipūṇa dag gi bdun pa’o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *prati med pa’i mchod pa’i don la sādhu nipūṇa dag gi bdun pa’o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *prati med pa’i mchod pa’i don la sādhu nipūṇa dag danī* [sbyor ba la] *bdun pa’o* ||.

7.106 *prasitotsukābhyāṃ trṭīyā ca* || 2.3.44 ||; *prasita danī utsuka dag gis\* gsum pa yañ na’o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *prasita danī utsuka dag gis\* gsum pa yañ na’o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The translation may be thus improved: *prasita danī utsuka dag danī* [sbyor ba la] *gsum pa yañ na’o* ||.

### **Incorrect Saṃdhi**

2.10 *abhiniviśaś ca* || 1.4.47 ||; *abhiniviśa’i’anī nō* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *abhiniviśa’i’anī nō* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). The *saṃdhi* requires *abhiniviśa*, but the reading should be *abhiniviś*, which is however beyond the *saṃdhi* rules of Tibetan. A system for the *saṃdhi* of Sanskrit transliteration in Tibetan text should be considered: *abhiniviś kyi ’anī nō* ||. Here the *saṃdhi* rule for *s* is tentatively applied to *ś*.

Another Similar Case:

3.25 *divaḥ karma ca* || 1.4.43 ||; *diva’i las la’anī nō* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *div kyi las la’anī nō* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>). Since *ba* is very often used to transliterate *va*, it would be acceptable to apply the *saṃdhi* rule for *ba* to *va*.

The Mongolian translation of the \**Pāṇiniyyākaraṇasūtra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī* was prepared by Sumatiśīla or Blo bzai tshul khriṃs (1694–?) in the 18th century.<sup>41</sup> As had been pointed out by Shagdaryn Bira and O. Sukhabaatar, the Mongolian translation is based upon the Tibetan translation.<sup>42</sup> The Mongolian translation, besides copying mistakes in the Tibetan translation, contains mistakes due to misunderstanding of the Tibetan translation.

2.3 *kartur īpsitatamaṃ karma* || 1.4.49 ||; *byed po'i 'dod pa las so* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *byed po'i 'dod pa las so* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>); *üiledügči-yin küsekü üile bolai*: (PS<sub>M</sub>); *üiledügči-yin taḡalal-ača bolai*: (PK<sub>M</sub>). It is noteworthy that here the Mongolian translation in PS<sub>M</sub> corresponds well with the Tibetan translation in PS<sub>Tib</sub> and PK<sub>Tib</sub>.<sup>43</sup> The Mongolian translation in PK<sub>M</sub>, however, is wrong, *ača* ('from') is a result of the misunderstanding of *las*—a substantive, here an equivalent of *karman*<sup>44</sup>—which is also one of the ablative particles in Tibetan.

2.4 *karmani dvitīyā* || 2.3.2 ||; *las la gñis pa'o* || (PS<sub>Tib</sub>); *las la gñis pa'o* || (PK<sub>Tib</sub>); *üile-dür qoyaduyar bolai*: (PS<sub>M</sub>); *üile-dür qoyar bolai*: (PK<sub>M</sub>). The Mongolian translation in PK<sub>M</sub> means: “In the case of *karman*, there are two (*qoyar*),” which is wrong. The translation in PS<sub>M</sub>, however, is right.

### A List of Terms in the *Kāra* Section

Sanskrit	Tibetan	Mongolian	Source	Mvy
<i>adhikaraṇa</i>	<i>lhag par byed pa</i>	<i>ülenji üiledeküi</i>	7.94	x
<i>apādāna</i>	<i>ñes par kun</i>	<i>mayad büküin</i>	5.49	x

<sup>41</sup> Cf. BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 159–160.

<sup>42</sup> “Turning to the Mongolian translations of Sanskrit grammatical works it should be noted that all of them were made from the Tibetan translations considered above and were included into the relevant volumes of the Mongolian Tanjur” (BIRA-SUKHABAATAR 1986: 159). In rare cases we find that the translator consulted Sanskrit. The immediate Sanskrit original available to the Mongolian translator, of course, is the Tibetan transliteration in PK<sub>Tib</sub>. For example, in 7.107, while the Tibetan translation gives *skar ma la'an*, the Mongolian translation contains *nakṣatra-dur ču*, which echoes the Sanskrit original: *nakṣatre ca*.

<sup>43</sup> The Tibetan translation is imperfect, see above.

<sup>44</sup> The Mongolian translation in PS<sub>M</sub> has *üile* for *las*.

	<i>sbyin pa</i>	<i>öḡkü</i>		
<i>upasarga</i>	<i>ñer bsgyur</i>	<i>čiqula qubiluyčī</i>	6.83	4710
<i>karaṇa</i>	<i>byed pa</i>	<i>üiledbüri</i>	3.23	x
<i>prātīpadika</i>	<i>miñ</i>	<i>ner-e</i>	1.1	x
<i>liṅga</i>	<i>rtags</i>	<i>temdeg</i>	1.1	7247
<i>sampradāna</i>	<i>yañ dag par rab tu sbyin pa</i>	<i>üneker saitur öḡkü</i>	4.32	x
<i>sambodhana</i>	<i>kun tu bod pa</i>	<i>qotala dayudaqu</i>	1.2	x

## Abbreviations and Sigla

### (a) Primary Sources in Sanskrit

- A Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* [*adhyāya*, *pāda*, *sūtra*). See CARDONA 1997.
- KĀŚ Vāmana and Jayāditya's *Kāśikāvṛtti*. See MIŚRA 1985a–f.
- KĀŚN Jinendrabuddhi's *Kāśikāvivaraṇapañcikā Nyāsa*. See MIŚRA 1985a–f.
- KĀŚP Haradatta Miśra's *Padamañjarī*. See MIŚRA 1985a–f.
- MBh Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*.
- MBh<sup>KIEL</sup> Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*. See KIELHORN 1985 [volume, page, line].
- PK Rāmacandra's *Prakriyākaumudī*.
- PK<sup>T</sup> TRIVEDI 1925 (*Vibhaktyarthāḥ*, pp. 379–464); TRIVEDI 1931.
- PK<sup>M</sup> MIŚRA 1977 (*Kāraḥaparakaraṇam*, vol. 2, pp. 1–89); MIŚRA 1980.
- PK<sup>PRAK</sup> Kṛṣṇa's *Prakāśa*, a commentary on PK. See MIŚRA 1977; MIŚRA 1980.
- PK<sup>PRAS</sup> Viṭṭhala's *Prasāda*, a commentary on PK. See TRIVEDI 1925; TRIVEDI 1931.

### (b) Primary Sources in Tibetan

- PS<sub>Tib</sub> The Tibetan translation of PS: The \**Pāṇinivṛtyākaraṇasūtra: brDa sprod pa pāṇini'i mdo*.
- PS<sub>Tib</sub><sup>D</sup> The sDe dge edition of PS<sub>Tib</sub> [D. No. 4420: To 1v1–27r7, Kāraḥa Section: 6v6–8r4]
- PS<sub>Tib</sub><sup>G</sup> The Golden Tanjur edition of PS<sub>Tib</sub> [G. No. 3923: 1v1–38r4, Kāraḥa Section: 9r3–11r1]
- PS<sub>Tib</sub><sup>N</sup> The sNar than Tanjur edition of PS<sub>Tib</sub> [N. No. 1v1–

- 32v3, Kāraka Section: 8v1–10r1]
- PS<sub>Tib</sub><sup>P</sup> The Peking edition of PS<sub>Tib</sub> [P. No. 5914: Bo 1–32r2, Kāraka Section: 8v3–10r6]
- PK<sub>Tib</sub> The Tibetan translation of PK: The *brDa sprod pa'i bstan bcos chen po pāṇiniṅyākarāna g'zūn 'grel gyi go don cho ga dper brjod sogs zin bris su bkod pa legs bsad nor bu 'dren pa'i śin rta.*
- PK<sub>Tib</sub><sup>D</sup> The sDe dge edition of PK<sub>Tib</sub> [D. No. 4420: To 27v–452r7, Kāraka Section: 97v2–110r1]
- PK<sub>Tib</sub><sup>G</sup> The Golden Tanjur edition of PK<sub>Tib</sub> [G. No. 3924: Bo 39v1–Mo 323r6, Kāraka Section: 138v5–155v6]
- PK<sub>Tib</sub><sup>N</sup> The sNar than edition of PK<sub>Tib</sub> [N. No. Bo 32v3–Mo 257v1, Kāraka Section: 116r1–130r6]
- PK<sub>Tib</sub><sup>P</sup> The Peking edition of PK<sub>Tib</sub> [P. No. 5914: Bo 32r2–Mo 266r2, Kāraka Section: 117v8–132v6]

**(c) Primary Sources in Mongolian**

- PS<sub>M</sub> The Mongolian translation of PS<sub>Tib</sub>: *Dokiy-a tokiyalduyulusan pā-ṅi-ni-yin sudur kemekü bolai* [M. No. 4975, 2v–57r, Kāraka Section: 12v9–15r31]
- PK<sub>M</sub> The Mongolian translation of PK<sub>Tib</sub>: *Dokiy-a tokiyalduyulusan pā-ṅi-ni-yin sudur-un tayilburi masi delgerenggüi kemegdekü* [M. No. 4976 57r–321r, Kāraka Section: 212r4–238r3).

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# **Matching Stellar Ideas to the Stars: Remarks on the Translation of Indian *jyotiṣa* in the Chinese Buddhist Canon**

Bill M. MAK (Kyoto)

## **Abstract**

A significant amount of Indian *jyotiṣa* (astronomy/astrology) materials is preserved in the Chinese Buddhist Canon, reflecting their circulation in South and Central Asia from the third to eleventh century CE. A comparison of these materials with the orthodox Sanskrit *jyotiṣa* texts extant reveals an important feature of the Chinese materials, namely, that it reflects a shift in interest in the South Asian subcontinent during the early centuries of the first millennium from the lunar-based *nakṣatra* astrology to the solar-based zodiacal genethliacal astrology (*horā*).

While the abundance of these materials provides us a rare glimpse of the Indian astral science in its different stages of development, a number of text-critical considerations should be made. First of all, why were these materials included in the Buddhist texts in the first place? Moreover, how genuinely do the Chinese translations reflect their Indic exemplars? As we examine these issues, we are bound to confront a number of unique features of the Chinese Buddhist translation such as the heterogeneity of the target language and style, the convoluted process of retranslation and multiple compilation, together of which resulted in the multivocality of both individual texts as well as of the Chinese corpus as a whole.

## **1. Introduction**

By the way of introduction, a few remarks should first be made with regard to the nature of the astronomical/astrological materials found in the Chinese Buddhist Canon, or the Buddhist Canon in general—why were they there in the first place? It is well known that in early Buddhism, overwhelmingly negative views

have been repeatedly expressed toward the traditional mantic lore practiced in ancient India, of which the astral science is a part of. Although the astral science, as with the mantic lore, was highly regarded in the mainstream Indian society,<sup>1</sup> the Buddhists were in general dismissive toward it.<sup>2</sup> Within the Buddhist texts, we find passages where astrologers were subjected to ridicule and the Buddhist *vinaya* explicitly forbade members of the *saṅgha* to practice as a livelihood the mantic lore, described in the Pāli Canon as “animal knowledge” (*tiracchānavijjā*).<sup>3</sup> Though some notable concessions had been made,<sup>4</sup> much of the astronomical materials found in the Buddhist Canon, especially those of explicit astrological intent, should be considered *prima facie* accretive in nature.

An examination of these materials would reveal how *jyotiṣa* materials were incorporated, rather ingeniously, into the Buddhist texts by a variety of strategies—polemic, expedient or esoteric. In

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<sup>1</sup> By the term “astral science” I refer here generally to the body of knowledge related to the stars, whereby the concepts of astronomy and astrology are not distinct from each other. As one of the six *vedāṅga*-s (branches of traditional Vedic science, AŚ1.3.3), *jyotiṣa* is studied up to the modern time and no traditional Sanskrit scholar considers himself learned without some knowledge in the subject. Though vastly disseminated in ancient India, the astral lore was traditionally a monopoly of the priestly and the ruling classes. The king’s *purohita* was often expected to be conversant in *jyotiṣa* for purposes such as rituals and military expeditions; astrologers sometimes function as not only advisors but even undercover informants (AŚ 1.13.23).

<sup>2</sup> This is not surprising, as it is in line with the Buddhists’ general anti-Brahmanic stance. Besides *jyotiṣa*, other subjects associated with traditional Brahmanic learning such as *chandas* (Cv.5.33.1) and *kalpa* (DN2) were also shunned.

<sup>3</sup> *Sāmaññaphalasutta* (DN2, SN4.14). For a synoptic translation and comparisons of different editions of the *Śrāmanyaphalasūtra* (DN2) where the passage is found, see Meisig, Konrad. *Das Śrāmanyaphala-sūtra: Synoptische Übersetzung und Glossar der chinesischen Fassungen verglichen mit dem Sanskrit und Pāli*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1987, pp. 240–65.

<sup>4</sup> A curious incident about the monks’ ignorance of *jyotiṣa*, in particular, concerning calculation of the Full Moon day and thus was made a subject of ridicule by the Brahmins was noted in the Pāli Canon. As a result, the Buddha exceptionally allowed monks to have some rudimentary astronomical knowledge for purposes such as the reckoning of *poṣadha* days (Mv.2.18; also in the *Vinaya* translated by Yijing 義淨 T(1452)24.415b, and that of Buddhahadra 佛陀跋陀羅, T(1426)22.549a).

the *Dafangdeng daji jing* 大方等大集經 (T397), Chinese translation and compilation of a Mahāyāna text titled *Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra* (MSN), all the three strategies may be noted and thus serve as a good example to show how such accretion might have taken place. In the first case, noted in the *parivarta* titled *Ratnaketu*, *jyotiṣa* materials were presented as part of the polemics against the Brahmanic lore, described in a parallel passage as “views of foolish common folk” 愚癡凡夫所見.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, the detailed description of the astronomical and astrological knowledge attributed to a certain mysterious sage named Jyotīrasa, suggests that the Buddhist author, whoever that might be, was conversant with the materials himself.<sup>6</sup> A number of other Mahāyāna texts such as the *Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna*, one of the earliest sources of *jyotiṣa* materials in the Chinese Buddhist translation, belong also to this category.<sup>7</sup> Such blatant reproduction of *jyotiṣa* materials, albeit polemic, is not found in the Pāli texts; in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, only a list of mantic practices were given.<sup>8</sup>

More often, we find *jyotiṣa* presented as a form of *upāya*, in a typically Mahāyāna fashion. Expediently, the author is thus licensed to include materials of otherwise dubious nature, so long as they served to benefit the sentient beings in the Buddhist sense. Such is the case of the long astrological tract attributed to once again the sage Jyotīrasa found in the *Sūryagarbha* of the MSN. Instead of being repudiated, the astral knowledge of Jyotīrasa this time was to relieve the plight of the Nāgas afflicted by Māra and his armies.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> T(402)13.556b.

<sup>6</sup> T(397)13.138c, 140a–c.

<sup>7</sup> Mukhopadhyaya, Sujitkumar. *The Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna*. Santiniketan: Visvabharati, 1954.

<sup>8</sup> The list included practices which fall generally under the traditional Indian mantic lore, as illustrated for example in Varāhamihira’s *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. Other practices included the reading of marks on the limbs (*aṅgaṃ nimittam*), the reading of omens and signs (*uppātam*), the interpretation of dreams (*supinam*), the prediction of lunar and solar eclipses (*candaggāho bhavissati, suriyaggāho bhavissati*) and the interpretation of various celestial events (*evaṃvipāko candaggāho bhavissati...*) (DN 2).

<sup>9</sup> T(397)13.270a–274, 282b–c. Beside Chinese and Tibetan translations (*‘Phags pa shin tu rgyas pa chen po’i sde nyi ma’i snying po zhes bya ba’i mdo*. Tōhoku 257, Derge

Finally, we find astrological materials presented unapologetically or even promoted as genuine Buddhist teachings in some of the late Mahāyāna texts and practically all esoteric Buddhist texts where the esoteric knowledge including *jyotiṣa* was customarily attributed to the Buddha or those who represent him.<sup>10</sup> In the *Candraḡarbha* of the MSN, astrological materials were presented as a lecture given by the Buddha to Brahma in a dialogue.<sup>11</sup> Thus in the Chinese compilation of the MSN, we can identify three different approaches in dealing with the *jyotiṣa* materials, which as we shall see, are ultimately of Indic origin but belonging to different periods and sources.<sup>12</sup>

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly how, when and where the various accretions took place. Given their popularity, such materials were doubtless accessible to the Indian Buddhists. It would therefore not be surprising that some of such materials had already become an integral part of the texts before they were exported out of India. The *jyotiṣa* passages found in parallel Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan texts often show a great deal of

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za 91b–245b), part of the astrological passage in the *Sūryaḡarbha* may be seen in a Hoernle MS 143a SB 2, described as “an unidentified fragment.” Hoernle, August Friedrich Rudolf. *Manuscript Remains of Buddhist Literature Found in Eastern Turkestan: Facsimiles with Transcripts, Translations, and Notes*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916, pp. 121–125.

<sup>10</sup> In Dharmakṣema’s translation of the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, Buddha explained to a Bodhisattva that the practice of the Bodhisattvas is different from that of the Śrāvakas and the Pratyekabuddhas, and that the essence of all the non-Buddhist knowledge including *jyotiṣa* (eclipses and movement of stars) maybe obtained in this Buddhist *sūtra*. T(374)12.487a. In the case of *Xūyao jīng*, “Sūtra of Lunar Mansions and Luminaries,” translated or most likely compiled by Amoghavajra, the text was attributed to the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and the sages.

<sup>11</sup> T(397)13.371a–273c.

<sup>12</sup> It thus falls on the East Asian Buddhists who often had a much keener sense of history than the Indians to sort out suchlike heterogeneous body of materials. The attempt to rationalize the heterogeneity of the Indic materials is best illustrated by the various Chinese classifications of Buddhist teachings *panjiao* 判教. In terms of Buddhist astronomy and the effort to consolidate materials from various Buddhist sources, the best example is the Japanese *bonreki* 梵曆 movement during the Edo period, exemplified by Fumon Entsū 普門円通 (1755–1834)’s *Bukkoku rekisho hen* 仏国曆象編 (Astronomy in the Country of Buddha, 1810).

variations.<sup>13</sup> Such textual irregularities may suggest that the materials were making their way into the texts while the texts were still in a rather fluid state. As we shall see, the variety of readings could only reflect the “extra works” of the scribes, compilers and possibly even the translators themselves.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. Challenges for the Translators

The fact that astrology and fortune-telling were forbidden in the *vinaya* points to the very fact that they were practiced within the *saṃgha*. A survey of the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 well gives the impression that many of the “eminent monks” who came to China were skilled astrologers well trained in *jyotiṣa* and the mantic lore, whose talents were highly sought after by the Chinese rulers.<sup>15</sup> As the astral science was highly politicized in China and was thought to pertain to matters of national security, its practice was traditionally forbidden outside the royal court.<sup>16</sup> The advent of a new and possibly more sophisticated form of astral lore held an

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<sup>13</sup> In the case of the MSN, the *jyotiṣa* passages are not found in the Gilgit recension, but only in the Central Asian fragments, and translations in Tibetan and Chinese.

<sup>14</sup> Methodologically speaking, this is an important point to bear in mind as it complicates our task to extract historical information from the received texts. On the positive side, unlike the doctrinal materials, we need not to concern too much with the conundrum of *Urtext* due to the blatantly accretive nature of the materials. Furthermore, the textual variation provides us a glimpse, however partial, of the different interpretations available at a given time and locale.

<sup>15</sup> T(2059)50.325a, *passim*. Thus, for example, An Shigao was described as skilled in astrology and divination (lit. seven luminaries 七曜 and five agents 五行) together with other exotic lore such as healing 醫方異術 and interpretation of bird and animal sounds 鳥獸之聲; Dharmakāla as conversant in interpreting the wind, clouds and lunar mansions 風雲星宿; Kang Senghui as an expert on astronomy and magical diagrams 天文圖緯. Even an eminent monk such as Kumārajīva was praised by the Chinese for his knowledge in the four Vedas and the five *Vidyā*-s, and in particular, his astrological and divinatory skills 陰陽星算. As astrology and astronomy played a vital role in Chinese politic, the knowledge was greatly prized by the rulers as the biographies of Kumārajīva and Amoghavajra would suggest. See discussion in Niu Weixing 钮卫星. 《西望梵天》. 上海: 上海交通大学出版社, 2004, pp. 18–19.

<sup>16</sup> Jiang Xiaoyuan 江曉原. 《天學真原》. 修訂版. 1991年初版. 瀋陽: 遼寧教育出版社, 2004, pp. 52–57.

immense appeal not only to the ruling class, but also to the Buddhist missionaries and the new Chinese converts who were suddenly empowered with such esoteric knowledge. Thus for reasons both within and outside Buddhism, we find an abundance of such materials within the Chinese Buddhist Canon.

As one of the most salient characteristics of the Chinese Buddhist translation (CBT), Chinese materials were remarkably accumulative and retrospective in terms of both style and content. In other words, through nearly a millennium from the second century up to the eleventh century, translators tirelessly looked for precedents and examples available to them, adopted what was acceptable or else came up with better solutions. This is certainly the case with most astronomical terminology which became largely standardized by the end of the Tang Dynasty. In some other but no less common cases, the less readily compatible ideas went through a long process of adaptation into the Chinese language and context, evolving ultimately into something quite different from their sources. In this paper, I will examine two specific cases, namely the Chinese translation of the concept of *nakṣatra* (lunar mansions) and *rāśi* (zodiacal signs). The former astral concept has counterparts in Chinese, although their contents do not align with each other exactly. The latter does not have a correspondence, creating thus considerable difficulty to the Chinese translators. The evolution of their translations within the CBT reveals to us an ongoing negotiation of meanings of which often no decisive conclusion can be made.

## 2.1 *Nakṣatra*-s: The Lunar Mansions

Some time during the first millennium or possibly much earlier, both the Chinese and the Indians had developed a system of 28 lunar asterisms, known as *xiu* 宿 (“lodges”) and *nakṣatra* (“mansions”) respectively.<sup>17</sup> Its origin most likely reflected the

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<sup>17</sup> The earliest mention of the 28 asterisms 星 in Chinese materials extant is found in the Rites of Zhou 周禮 while the first complete list of the 28 lunar lodges is found in *Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (completed in 239 BCE). The 1978 archaeological discovery of lacquer box in the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 with a full set of lodges names in seal script pushed the *terminus ante quem* to 433 BCE. For discussion of the origin of the Chinese lodges, see Zhu Kezhen 竺可桢. “Ershiba xiu zhi qi yuan yu di dian” 二十八宿之起源与地点. First

observation of the daily motion of the Moon against the fixed stars and its revolution in a sidereal month (c. 27.32 days). In the Indian case, both system of 28 and 27 *nakṣatra*-s are found, with the former appearing to be older than the latter.<sup>18</sup>

When the Indian *nakṣatra*-s were first introduced to the Chinese through the Buddhist texts coming from Central Asia and India starting from the beginning of the first millennium CE, the translators naturally and conveniently matched them to their Chinese counterparts. While some of the conspicuous asterisms of both systems coincided without much doubt (e.g., the Pleiades =

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published in 1944. In *Zhu Kezhen wenji* 竺可桢文集. 北京: 科学出版社, 1979, pp. 234–254. For the Indian mansions, see below.

<sup>18</sup> The 28-*nakṣatra* system is found mostly in the Vedic corpus proper, namely the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* (4.10.1–3) and the *Atharvaveda* (AVŚ19.7.1–5), while the 27-*nakṣatra* system is found almost exclusively in later works such as *Vedāṅgajyotiṣa* (VJ-R 25–28, VJ-Y 32–35) and *Nakṣatrakalpa* of *Atharvaveda-pariśiṣṭa*, as well as practically all later astrological works. Most scholars consider the two systems to be indistinct from each other. See for example, Subbarayappa, B.V. *The Tradition of Astronomy in India: Jyotiḥśāstra*. New Delhi: Centre for Studies in Civilization, 2008, pp. 69–90. However, an examination of the *nakṣatra*-systems found in the Chinese Buddhist corpus revealed that the more mathematically rigorous 27-*nakṣatra* system gradually took over the older 28-*nakṣatra* system associated originally exclusively with lunar astrology. For argument, see Mak, Bill M. “Indian Jyotiṣa literature through the lens of Chinese Buddhist Canon.” *Journal of Oriental Studies* 48, no.1 (2015): pp. 1–19. A summary of the stages of evolution as represented by the Chinese evidences may be shown as follows:

	Chinese translations	Astrology	Astronomy	Indian correspondences
Old	> 300 CE ŚKA MSN- <i>Ratnaketu</i>	Lunar astrology/ 28 <i>nakṣatras</i>	VE= <i>Kṛttikā</i> (2350 BCE), 5 years <i>yuga</i>	<i>Taittirīyasamhitā</i> , AVŚ, <i>Gargasamhitā</i>
Transitional	c. 600 CE MSN- <i>Candragarbha</i> MSN- <i>Sūryagarbha</i>	Lunar astrology/ Zodiac/ 7–8 <i>grahas</i>	VE= <i>Kṛttikā</i> / <i>Bharanī</i> (1300 BCE)	VJ, BS
New	c. 800 CE - * <i>Navagrahakarāṇa</i> , <i>Xiyao jing</i> , <i>Qiyao rangzaijue</i>	Horoscopy based on 9 <i>grahas</i> / 27 <i>nakṣatras</i>	VE= <i>Aśvinī</i> (300 CE), <i>siddhānta</i> , ephemerides	<i>Yavanajātaka</i> , <i>Bṛhajātaka</i> , <i>Pañcasiddhāntikā</i>

*Kṛttikā* = *Mao* 昴), in many cases they in fact did not.<sup>19</sup> This problem had been largely overlooked in early Chinese Buddhist translations, where the mansions were by and large symbolic in their astrological contexts and their function as astronomical coordinates was only secondary.<sup>20</sup>

Beside the difference of asterisms and stars the Indian mansions and Chinese lodges referred to, their presentations also varied. In the Indian case, the oldest mansion system began invariably with *Kṛttikā*,<sup>21</sup> while the Chinese lodge system began with *Jiao* 角 (α Vir = *citrā*). Furthermore, the Indian system (27 mansions) in the *kūrmavibhāga* division was conventionally grouped under nine regions corresponding to the eight directions and the center, clockwise from the east.<sup>22</sup> The Chinese system (with 28 lodges), was on the other hand, divided into four quarters (*sixiang* 四象), counterclockwise from the east.<sup>23</sup>

While the nominal correspondence between the Chinese lodges and Indian mansions in Chinese Buddhist translations remained mostly consistent. In at least one instance, namely, the

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<sup>19</sup> Yano Michio 矢野道雄. *Mikkyō senseijutsu* 密教占星術. 東京: 東京美術, 1986, p. 82; of the same author, インド数学の発想 IT 大国の源流をたどる. 東京: NHK 出版部, 2011, pp. 125–129. See also Yabuuti Kiyoshi 藪内清. *Chūgoku-no tenmon rekihō* 中国の天文曆法. 東京: 平凡社, 1969, p. 72.

<sup>20</sup> That is, according to the definition of *yogatāra* or standard star (*juxing* 距星) given in later Hindu and Chinese astronomical works. See Yano, *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> That is, representing position of vernal equinox at around 2300 BCE. Incidentally, *Mao* 昴 was also taken as the position of vernal equinox in *Huangdi neijing - Lingxu* 黄帝内經·靈樞. See Li Yong 李勇 & Zhao Yongheng 赵永恒. 〈二十八宿的形成与演变〉, 《中国科技史杂志》30: 1 (2009): pp. 110–119.

<sup>22</sup> *nakṣatratrayavargair āgneyādyair vyavasthitair navadhā | bhāratavarṣe madhyaprāgādivibhājitā deśāḥ ||* BS 14.1.

<sup>23</sup> Some exceptions should be taken note of. For example, there appears also to be an ancient tradition to divide the 28 Indian mansions into four quarters in the *yātra* texts (YJ 73.18–20). See comments in Pingree, David Edwin (ed.). *The Yavanajātaka of Sphuṣṭidhvaja*. Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 48. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978, II: p. 394. As for the Chinese lodges, there was also a less popular but astrologically significant scheme known as “Nine fields” 九野 described in *Huainanzi* 淮南子. It may be noted that both retained nonetheless their conventional order, namely clockwise and counter-clockwise respectively.

MSN, one of the important astronomical sources for later East Asian Buddhists, the presentation of mansions together with their cardinal assignments appeared to have caused some confusion to the translator. Within the chronologically conflated compilation of the MSN, in an astrological tract found in the translation of the *Ratnaketu* (T397–9) by Dharmakṣema 曇無讖, there appeared to be an attempt to represent the mansions starting from *Kṛttikā* with the lodges beginning with *Jiao*, assigned clockwise to the four quarters starting from the east.<sup>24</sup> This curious interpolation resulted in a system that is attested in neither India nor China.

Needless to say, Dharmakṣema’s attempt to reconcile the two systems had failed completely, leading only to the wrong references all together. A century later in 629 CE, the same *parivarta* was retranslated as a separate *sūtra* (T402) by Prabhāmitra 波羅頗蜜多羅. The concerned passage was given a completely new treatment:

T397–9 <i>Ratnaketu</i>	T402 [=AvŚ19.7=BS14/15]
E: 角(12), 亢(13), 氐(14), 房(15), 心(16), 尾(17), 箕(18)	<i>kṛttikā</i> 昴(1), <i>rohiṇī</i> 畢(2), <i>mṛgaśīrṣa</i> 觜(3), <i>ārdrā</i> 參(4), <i>punarvasu</i> 井(5), <i>pusya</i> 鬼(6), <i>āślēsā</i> 柳(7)
S: 井(5), 鬼(6), 柳(7), 星(8), 張(9), 翼(10), 軫(11)	<i>maghā</i> 星(8), <i>pūrvaphālgunī</i> 張(9), <i>uttaraphālgunī</i> 翼(10), <i>hasta</i> 軫(11), <i>citrā</i> 角(12), <i>svāti</i> 亢(13), <i>viśākhā</i> 氐(14)
S: 井(5), 鬼(6), 柳(7), 星(8), 張(9), 翼(10), 軫(11)	<i>maghā</i> 星(8), <i>pūrvaphālgunī</i> 張(9), <i>uttaraphālgunī</i> 翼(10), <i>hasta</i> 軫(11), <i>citrā</i> 角(12), <i>svāti</i> 亢(13), <i>viśākhā</i> 氐(14)
W: 奎(26), 婁(27), 胃(28), 昴(1), 畢(2), 觜(3)	<i>anurādhā</i> 房(15), <i>jyeṣṭhā</i> 心(16), <i>mūla</i> 尾(17), <i>pūrvāśādhā</i> 箕(18), <i>uttarāśādhā</i> 斗(19), <i>śravaṇa</i> 牛(20), <i>dhaniṣṭhā</i> 女(21)
N: 斗(19), 牛(20), 女(21), 虛(22), 危(23), 室(24), 璧	<i>śatabhiṣaj</i> 危(23), <i>pūrvabhādrapadā</i> 室(24), <i>uttarabhādrapadā</i> 璧(25), <i>revatī</i> 奎(26),

<sup>24</sup> T397.13.138b. For the textual history of the MSN and the problem of this interpolation, see my forthcoming paper: “Silk Road Transmission of Astrological Lore to China - Indian, Chinese and Central Asian elements in the *Mahāsammipātasūtra* (T397).” *Silk Road: Interwoven History*. Cambridge, MA: Association for Central Asian Civilizations & Silk Road Studies, 2013.

(25)	<i>aśvinī</i> 婁(27), <i>bharanī</i> 胃(28)
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First of all, the correct stellar reference was restored, aligning *Kṛttikā* to *Mao* 昴. To avoid ambiguity, phonetic transcription in Chinese characters was given.<sup>25</sup> Secondly, the Chinese cardinal grouping was dropped and appeared only as interlinear notes.<sup>26</sup> Lastly, only 27 mansions were given, with *Abhijit* dropped, suggesting that the 27-*nakṣatra* system had by then clearly supplanted the older 28 one.<sup>27</sup> All the changes above indicated that the new translator strove to be Indocentric, and hence "authentic" in his approach, showing his translation to be more faithful and thus better than the older one, albeit at the expense of incompatibility with the indigenous system.

After Prabhāmitra, Amoghavajra 不空 in his *Xiuyaojing* (T1299, abbr. XYJ) revised the lodge-assignment by matching *abhijit* to *niu* 牛, *śravaṇa* to 女 and *dhanīṣṭhā* to 虛.<sup>28</sup> This system became the standard for all subsequent works in both Buddhist Chinese astronomy and astrology. While Amoghavajra's XYJ represented possibly the culmination of Indian Buddhist astrology in China, it was also the starting point of a long process of sinification. As shown by Yano in his study of the text, the first fascicle edited by Amoghavajra's student Yang Jingfeng 楊景風 was in fact a retranslation of the second fascicle edited earlier by

<sup>25</sup> Zenba appeared to have overlooked the cause of the confusion and suggested the astrology presented by the two texts to belong to different systems — ... どう見ても同系のものとは考えられないが、そうかいつてそれが如何なる系統のものであるかは分明でない。Zenba Makoto 善波周。「大集経の天文記事」『日本仏教学会年報』22 (1957), p. 105.

<sup>26</sup> The cardinals ESWN were given to the group of 7, 7, 7 and 6 *nakṣatra*-s. As this leads to the a cardinal assignment not attested in Indian or Chinese tradition, this could be once again an arbitrary interpolation, possibly by later scribes, with the additional remark “原缺虚星” in the Ming edition may indicate.

<sup>27</sup> Here I cannot agree with Zenba's opinion that *śravaṇa* was mistakenly assigned to *Niu* 牛. Zenba, *ibid*, p. 116, fn. 4. The convention of assigning *Abhijit* to *Niu* was likely to be unknown to Prabhāmitra. The chronology of transition to 27 mansions correspond to the model I proposed earlier. See note 2.

<sup>28</sup> T1299.21.387b–c.

another disciple Shi Yao 史瑤.<sup>29</sup> Shi's edition was more Indocentric but less accessible to the Chinese readers. By means of a greater degree of sinification, the text was rendered more accessible.

A comparison of the extant Chinese editions and the surviving Japanese manuscripts of the XYJ reveals some subtle but revealing differences. In the Chinese editions, one finds only the descriptions of 28 mansions, while in the Japanese manuscripts, both 27 and 28 mansions are found. Although some careful philological investigation is still underway, the presence of 27 mansions in the Japanese manuscripts indicates most likely the original rendering while some instances of the 28 mansions could have been later scribal alternation.

To sum, the Chinese translation of the Indian *nakṣatra*-s underwent the following evolution. In the earliest translations prior to the sixth century, the 28-mansion system of India was arbitrarily mapped to the Chinese 28-lodge system. We saw at least one failed attempt to sinicize the Indian system by superimposing Chinese elements such as order and cardinal groupings onto the former. By the eighth century, a more literal and Indocentric approach, favoring phonetic translation was adopted. In the new translations, the 27-mansion system had supplanted the 28 one, and the optional *abhijit* was linked to *niu* since Amoghavajra. The older 28-mansion system, nonetheless, continued to exist, preserved in the older translations. The vogue of Indocentrism, however, was short-lived, as a large wave of sinification soon took place. By the end of the tenth century, as evinced by all the extant Chinese sources, the 27-mansion system was almost completely replaced by the 28 one; phonetic translations fell out of favor and were replaced by their Chinese counterparts. The process of sinification was complete.

## 2.2 *Rāśi*-s: The Zodiac Signs

The Chinese Buddhist translation was responsible for bringing some new astronomical/astrological concepts into China. Among them, the Zodiac had a long history of transmission in Asia and had posed some unique challenges to the Chinese translators.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Yano 1986, *ibid*, pp. 7–14.

<sup>30</sup> The Zodiac is believed to be a Babylonian invention of the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE and was transmitted to India via Greece. It divided the ecliptic

Within the Sanskrit literature extant, the term *rāśi* to refer to one of the twelve Zodiacal signs with full astrological significance first appeared in the *Yavanajātaka* dated some time during the early centuries of the first millennium.<sup>31</sup> Unlike the lunar-based astrology firmly established in Vedic India, the Zodiac, with the horoscopy which it entails, was a latecomer but gradually replaced the former.<sup>32</sup> The Indic version of the Zodiac appears to be inadvertently introduced to the Chinese via the CBT. The earliest record extant of the Zodiacal signs is found in the *Sūryagarbha* of MSN translated by Narendrayaśas in 584/585 CE. In this text they were translated as deities (*shen* 神) of various descriptions. In the *Candragarbha* of the same text attributed to the same author (placed after *Sūryagarbha* but actually predated the former at 566 CE), the same twelve signs were translated

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into twelve equal zone beginning with vernal equinox, fixed at Aries (= *meṣa*) by the time of Ptolemy. The Zodiac, together with other concepts such as horoscope and planetary divinities, were essential features of Greco-Babylonian astral science. The different waves of its dissemination across Eurasia were discussed in my paper, “Zodiac in South and East Asia: Transformation and interaction with indigenous astral science as seen from textual and iconographical sources,” presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference on the History of Science in East Asia. International Society for the History of East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine (ISHEASTM) at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris, France on Jul 6–10, 2015.

<sup>31</sup> Pingree, *op. cit.*, p. 3. The dating proposed by Pingree was shown to be untenable. Based on a number of textual evidences, the YJ was composed likely some time between the fourth and the seventh century. See Bill M. Mak, “The Last Chapter of Sphujidhvaja’s *Yavanajātaka* critically edited with Notes.” *SCIAMVS* 14 (2013): 59–148. Also, “The ‘Oldest Indo-Greek Text in Sanskrit’ revisited – Additional Readings from the newly discovered Manuscript of the *Yavanajātaka*.” *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 印度學佛教學研究 62, No.3 (2014): 1101–1105.

<sup>32</sup> The Indian Zodiac transmitted in the CBT is nearly identical the Indian Zodiac except some iconographical variations as we shall see, suggesting possibly another layer of Central Asian influence yet to be identified. For the role of Central Asia in the development of Chinese Buddhist Astral science, see Bill M. Mak, “The Transmission of Buddhist Astral Science from India to East Asia – The Gandhāran and Central Asian Connections.” *Historia Scientiarum* 24–2 (2015): 59–75.

phonetically instead and were described as *chen* 辰, and were thus matched to the Jupiter cycle of 12 years.<sup>33</sup>

Signs	English (12 signs)	Sanskrit (12 <i>rāśi</i> -s)	T397-14 <i>Sūryagarbha</i> (十二 神?)	T397-15 <i>Candragar- bha</i> (十二辰)	T1299 <i>Xiyao jing</i> 1 <sup>st</sup> fasc (十二 宮)	T1191 MMK (十二 宮)
♈	Aries	<i>meṣa</i>	持 <sup>34</sup> 羊 之神	彌沙	羊	羊
♉	Taurus	<i>vṛṣa</i>	持 <sup>35</sup> 牛 之神	毘利沙	牛	牛
♊	Gemini	<i>mithuna</i>	雙鳥之 神 <sup>36</sup>	彌偷那	姪 <sup>37</sup>	陰陽/ 男女
♋	Cancer	<i>karkaṭa</i>	蟹神	羯迦吒	蟹	蟹
♌	Leo	<i>simha</i>	師子 之神	繚呵	師子	師子
♍	Virgo	<i>kanyā</i>	天女 之神	迦若	女	雙女/ 童女
♎	Libra	<i>tulā</i>	秤 <sup>38</sup> 量 之神	兜邏	秤	秤
♏	Scorpio	<i>vṛścika</i>	蝎神	毘梨 支迦	蝎	蝎
♐	Sagitta- rius	<i>dhanvin</i>	射神	檀尼毘	弓	人馬/ 弓馬

<sup>33</sup> Though attested very early in China as noted in the oracle bones, some scholars had suggested that the Chinese Jupiter cycle might have a Babylonian connection. See Guo Moruo 郭沫若. 「甲骨文字研究」 in 『郭沫若全集（考古編）』 (北京: 科學出版社, 1982), pp. 237ff, 248.

<sup>34</sup> 特 in Ming and Kyū editions.

<sup>35</sup> 時 in Song; 特 in Yuan, Ming and Kyū editions.

<sup>36</sup> Lit. “God of Double Bird.”

<sup>37</sup> Lit. “sexual relation.” Alternatively, it was glossed also as “husband and wife” *fuqi* 夫妻 in the first fascicle and was translated as “man and woman” *nannü* 男女 in the second fasc. This is consistent with the Indian iconography although the holding objects are not given: *ṛmithunaṃ sagadaṃ savīṇam* (BJ1.5)

<sup>38</sup> 稱 in Kyū edition.

Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts

♈	Capri-corn	<i>makara</i>	磨竭之神	摩伽羅	磨竭	磨竭
♉	Aqua-rius	<i>kumbha</i>	水器之神	鳩槃	瓶	寶瓶
♊	Pisces	<i>mīna</i>	天魚之神	彌那	魚	雙魚/魚

While it is unclear why the same translator would translate the same set of terminology differently in the same text, suggesting the possibility of a false attribution or an interpolation of a different hand, the abrupt appearance of the Zodiac in the text without explanations on the horoscopic techniques suggests that it was only tentatively introduced to the Buddhist text at this stage prior to the sixth century CE.

Subsequently, with the influx of a large body of horoscopic Tantric Sanskrit texts in the Tang and Song periods (from Amoghavajra to Tian Xizai 天息災), these terms were retranslated but always with some variations. The translations show little effort at standardization, unlike the lunar mansions we have just seen. With the exception of *makara*, whose phonetic transcription persisted,<sup>39</sup> translation was favored in almost all cases.

A number of curious features, or in some cases, deviations, in the Chinese translation, reflected through also the subsequent iconography, may be observed (Fig. 1).<sup>40</sup> *Mithuna*, mysteriously translated as the “Double bird” by Narendrayaśas, was rendered as a male-female couple, following the Indian tradition. *Kumbha*, *tula*, *dhanvin*, on the other hand were all rendered as objects rather than their bearers as customary in the Indian tradition.<sup>41</sup> In the Sung translation of Tian Shizai, we find the improved translation

<sup>39</sup> This is probably due to the lack of a Chinese semantic equivalent. Traditionally in India, following its Greco-Babylonian exemplar, the monster is depicted as a monster with the front of a deer and the body of a aquatic creature (*mṛgārdhapūro makaro ’mbugārdho*—YJ1.23).

<sup>40</sup> For the iconography described below, see the *Butsuzōzu’i* 仏像図彙, a Japanese collection of Buddhist iconography in woodblock print first published in Genroku 3 元禄 3 年(1690) and was widely circulated during the Edo Period.

<sup>41</sup> Thus according to BS 1.5, *Aquarius*, *Libra* and *Sagittarius* were glossed as *ghaṭin*, *taulin* and *cāpin*.

of “double fish” 雙魚 for *mīna*,<sup>42</sup> as well as the more pictorial description of “man-horse” 人馬 for *dhavin* (Fig. 2) and the problematic “double maiden” 雙女 for *kanyā* (Fig. 3). In the case of “man-horse”, we find one iconographic misrepresentation of literally a man standing next to a horse suggesting a coordinative reading of the Chinese binom.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the “double maiden” is also widely attested iconographically, although its origin is yet to be clarified.<sup>44</sup> All these variants demonstrate on one hand the translators’ unfamiliarity of the subject-matter, and on the other, their creativity in trying to render these new concepts into Chinese.



Figure 1 East Asian representation of the twelve Zodiac signs from Butsuzōzu'i 仏像図彙

<sup>42</sup> *jale tu mīnadvayamantyarāśih* (YJ 1.25).

<sup>43</sup> I thank Michio Yano for pointing this example from the Mogao cave to me.

<sup>44</sup> The “double” quality of the Chinese Virgo might have resulted from the misinterpretation of the biocorporeal sign which Virgo belongs to. See Mak 2015, *op. cit.*, p. 69.



**Figure 2 “Man-horse” (Sagittarius) from Mogao grotto 61 (Xixia, eleventh century?)**



**Figure 3 “Double Maiden” (Virgo) from Mogao grotto 61 (Xixia, eleventh century?)**

By the eleventh century, the Zodiac, together with other elements of Buddhist horoscopy went nearly into extinction in China after esoteric Buddhism lost ground to the indigenous Buddhist schools such as Chan and Pure Land. The Zodiac signs were reintroduced to China a few more times by other foreigners, namely, the Christians of the Church of the East (also known as Nestorians or followers of *Jingjiao* 景教), the Arab astronomers and eventually the Jesuits. Nonetheless, they remained largely foreign and were not widely known to the Chinese until the modern time.<sup>45</sup> In Japan,

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<sup>45</sup> For horoscopy in China after the Song period, see Xia Nai 夏鼐. 〈从宣化辽墓的星图论二十八宿和黄道十二宫〉. 《考古学报》 2 (1976): 35-58. Also

Buddhist horoscopy survived until the fifteenth century and the names of the Zodiac signs as well as other terms of Buddhist astral science are preserved in the Japanese language through the spread of Esoteric Buddhism.<sup>46</sup>

To sum, in the case of the Zodiac, a concept which was largely foreign to the Chinese, the translation was relatively free. The choice of translation depends largely on the knowledge and interpretation of the translators, resulting in the variation in translation, which is in turned reflected in the hybridity of the iconography unique to East Asia.

### 3. Conclusion

In considering the translations of the *jyotiṣa* terms found in the Chinese Buddhist Canon, we can see how the Chinese materials collectively mirror the astronomical/astrological development in Indian subcontinent, reflected through the evolving concepts of *nakṣatra* and *rāśi*. These include the shift from lunar astrology to horoscopy, the replacement of the older 28 *nakṣatra*-system by the more mathematically rigorous system of 27 *nakṣatra*-s and the Hinduization of the *rāśi*-s. The body of data provided by the CBT, though complicated by factors such as interpolation and translation difficulties, is nonetheless immensely useful given the fact that Indian materials are often hopelessly conflated and their historicity a perennial problem for the philologists.

For the translators who were responsible for introducing new concepts to the recipients, we see various strategies to find the best matches in the target language. In the case of the asterisms, there were different attempts to map the Indian *nakṣatra*-s to their Chinese counterpart. The tension between the Indocentric approach on one hand and the pervasive sinification on the other can be seen in the evolution of their translation.

In the case of the Zodiac signs which represented concepts completely novel to the Chinese translators, the translation

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Sen, Tansen. "Astronomical Tomb Paintings from Xuanhua: Maṇḍalas?" *Ars Orientalis* 29 (1999): 29–54. Curiously, horoscopy did not go into complete extinction in China. Some elements of horoscopy was absorbed into various syncretistic Chinese divinatory systems although their astronomical significance had been completely lost.

<sup>46</sup> Yano 1986, *ibid*, pp. 164–178.

remained throughout the centuries unstandardized. The absence of an indigenous match made their assimilation into the Chinese lexicon a difficult one. While other groups of foreigners would continue to refer back to the Chinese Buddhist translation when they attempted reintroduce the Zodiac signs and other aspects of Western astral science to the Chinese, they remained largely foreign to this day.

### Abbreviations

AŚ	<i>Arthaśāstra</i>
AvP	<i>Atharvavedaparīśiṣṭa</i>
AvŚ	<i>Atharvaveda</i> (Śaukuna)
Ābh	<i>Āryabhaṭīya</i>
BJ	<i>Bṛhajjātaka</i>
BS	<i>Bṛhatsaṃhitā</i>
Cv	<i>Cullavagga</i>
CBT	Chinese Buddhist Translation
DN	<i>Dīghanikāya</i>
QYRZJ	<i>Qiyao rangzai jue</i> 七曜攘災決
MN	<i>Majjhimanikāya</i>
MSN	<i>Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra</i>
Mv	<i>Mahāvagga</i>
SN	<i>Samyuttanikāya</i>
ŚKA	<i>Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna</i>
SN	<i>Samyuttanikāya</i>
SS	<i>Sūryasiddhānta</i>
T	Taishō
XYJ	<i>Xiyao jing</i> 宿曜經
YJ	<i>Yavanajātaka</i>

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# **On the Fence Between Two Wor(l)ds: Theory and Practice in Translating Indian and Indo-Tibetan Texts<sup>1</sup>**

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Modern words are round, ancient words are square,  
and we may as well hope to solve the quadrature of the circle [...]  
(Max Müller)

## **1. Why It Matters**

As is well-known, reflecting on the practice of translation has a history of more than 2000 years, possibly dating back to the considerations of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE) in his *De optimo genere oratorum*.<sup>2</sup> However, at least until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, there were only non-systematic reflections that still did not delineate a field of independent research. It is only since the early '50s, along with the development of generative linguistics and information technology, that we observe an increasing interest in translation as an autonomous field of investigation, which was soon diversified into various currents. Here, for a brief outline, we rely on the classification presented by Siri Nergaard, who identifies three major currents among the recent research trends.<sup>3</sup> These are:

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<sup>1</sup> We thank Kristen de Joseph for her help in revising the English text of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Nergaard 1993. See also below note 26.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Nergaard 2007<sup>2</sup>: 5–17.

1) *Translation science*, focusing on the translation of single words and syntagmata, while disregarding the texts in their complexity. This field of study is therefore chiefly interested in technical texts, with the aim of laying down rules for automatic translation, also by means of computing systems. Much in vogue in the 1950s and 1960s, it primarily involved linguists as well as mathematicians and engineers, being especially influenced by the generative grammar of Avram Noam Chomsky. As Nergaard notes, '[i]l compito principale della disciplina veniva individuato nella costruzione di una teoria in grado di stabilire dei criteri stabili e fissi su come fare una *traduzione equivalente* all'originale. La teoria prendeva perciò una direzione molto normativa'.<sup>4</sup>

2) *Translation theory*. This research trend started in the late '70s and was premised on opposition to the normativeness and source-orientedness that deeply characterised the previous approach. The aim of its scholars was to elaborate a 'global theory' of translation. Rather than finding rules for translating single words and stock phrases, their work focussed on the observation and description of the practice of translating literary texts, seen in their broad context.

3) *Translation studies*, developing from the 1980s, has a much wider perspective, as it deals not only with texts, but also with their cultural context and the way it influences their translation. In this approach all types of texts are taken into consideration, overcoming the dichotomy between literary and technical works. It is worth noting that translation studies, analogously with the translation theory, is not meant to be prescriptive but, rather, descriptive. The translated texts are analysed in order to detect the norms and conventions that, within a specific social, cultural and historical environment, have influenced the process of translating.

The general tendency of the scholarship has therefore moved from a rather reductionistic perspective, mostly limited to linguistic analysis, to a more holistic one, in which translation is seen as a form of communication between cultures. More importantly, in the light of the latest developments in this field of studies, the

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<sup>4</sup> Nergaard 2007<sup>2</sup>: 7. 'The main task of the discipline was identified in the construction of a theory capable of establishing stable and fixed criteria on how to make an *equivalent translation* of the original. The theory took a very normative direction' (emphasis added by us). Unless otherwise indicated, the translations in the notes are the authors'.

translated text acquires the status of an independent work, in some cases even getting the same intellectual recognition as its source text. Translating is not regarded, so to speak, as a lesser evil, but something that lies at the core of cultural exchanges and contaminations.

A deep inquiry into the applicability of modern theories of translation to Indic and Indo-Tibetan studies has not been conducted yet, since the few Indologists and Tibetologists who have reflected on the issue of translating have mostly focussed on the study of specific cases;<sup>5</sup> nor has the practice of translating Indic and Tibetan texts, and Asian classics more generally, been taken into account by translation theorists, who instead base their reflections primarily on Western literatures.<sup>6</sup> Although this topic could easily be analysed from many different perspectives — one could, for instance, chose to focus on the highly-debated issues of the many texts being translated from Sanskrit into the main Asian languages throughout early and late medieval times — our focus in this essay will primarily be on modernity and, more specifically, on modern and contemporary attempts at translating Indian texts into Western languages, and the hermeneutical implications of this activity. For one can rightly believe that these translations, along with the textual and philological research underlying them, are the spark from which the intellectual engagement of European and American scholarship with the Indic world was generated; at the same time, they have nurtured the interests of a vast array of literati and educated readers.

In the cultural milieu of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the target readership was on average fluent in more than one of the modern and ancient Western languages, but the knowledge and study of Asian languages was extremely marginal,<sup>7</sup> translating an Asian text into a European language had a different cultural and historical weight, greater than other translations of texts produced

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<sup>5</sup> Cf., for instance, the contributions published in Garzilli 1996.

<sup>6</sup> There are however notable exceptions, for which see Lefevre 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Translations and travel reports were often the only vehicle for learning about different and sometimes even distant cultures and their intellectual (literary, religious, scientific and philosophical) production. Very important were also translations and studies conducted by Christian missionaries. For a survey of their activities in India see Halbfass 1988: 36–53.

from closer and better-known languages and cultural areas. This lack of linguistic knowledge and the greater cultural distance between Western, primarily European, and Asian cultures force us to think about the special function of translating an Asian work. To a certain extent, these premises may seem obvious, but the consequences deriving from them are certainly not.

The first consequence is that the early translators of Indian and Tibetan texts had to make a difficult cultural mediation without being able to rely on an established hermeneutical tradition. For the rendering of some concepts (especially in the translation of philosophical and religious texts), in certain cases they even felt compelled to coin new words<sup>8</sup> or use known terms with different meanings, at times creating potentially misleading overlaps.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, the lack of support from a long-lasting tradition of learning also implied less rigidity for the translators, who enjoyed a greater freedom, and in part still do. Moreover, facing a *terra incognita*, the translators had greater responsibility in creating a specific collective imagery of the culture on which they were operating, projecting onto it their own worldview and expectations even just by selecting certain works over others.

For these reasons, a survey of the experience of translating South Asian texts first of all suggests that, for a better assessment, we should shift the focus of our analysis from the work of translating, understood as a complex and elaborate factor in the process of cultural communication, to the intellectual role and responsibility of the translators themselves, who are the main actors of this process. As is perhaps common knowledge, the translator is ideally responsible for the reproduction in the target language of all the features and functions that the author attributes to the original text. In practice, however, translators can never fulfil this role perfectly, because, as we know from hermeneutics, they are always part of the process themselves; more than this, they

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<sup>8</sup> On this topic, see, for instance, the remarks by Andrey Vsevolodovic Paribok in the introduction to his Russian translation of the *Milindapañha* (Paribok 1989: 16–18).

<sup>9</sup> In our opinion, this is the case, for example, of the term ‘gnosis’, which has been used by several Buddhologists to translate the Sanskrit *jñāna* and the Tibetan *ye śes*, while in the West (despite some exceptions), gnosis — as well as Gnosticism, with which it is closely associated — refers primarily to a dualistic worldview, which by contrast is absent in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

are the first and inalienable actors of the process, those who, consciously or not, interpret (and sometimes modify) the text according to their understanding, expectations and preconceptions, as well as according to the expectations of their audience.<sup>10</sup>

André Lefevere (1945–1996) observes that great intellectuals of the past had access to some of the most influential literary works of their generation only by means of translations and rewritings.<sup>11</sup> The latter play therefore an essential role as cultural vehicles. Every time a text is translated, not only is the recipient culture enriched by a ‘newcomer’, but the text, put into a new cultural context, also adopts a new semiotic horizon by which it is to some extent ‘vivified’. Translating means to bring new life to a text, which in turn enriches the culture into which it is introduced. Again, however, we must observe that, in practice, this process never occurs in a neutral and abstract world, as the influence of the translator is always something very concrete with which we have to deal.

Lefevere points out that the images that the translators create of an author, a book, a literary genre, and the context in which it was produced tend to overlap and exceed the reality with which they compete.<sup>12</sup> This dynamic has been little studied to date in relation to translations of Indian and Tibetan texts,<sup>13</sup> and a thorough examination would certainly be a desideratum, particularly if we consider the role that these ‘superimpositions’ have had in portraying and understanding Indian and Tibetan

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<sup>10</sup> As Bassnett and Lefevere masterfully put it: ‘Translation is [...] a rewriting of an original text. All rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way’ (*General editors’ preface* in Lefevere 1992: vii); ‘Whether they produce translations, literary histories or their more compact spin-offs, reference works, anthologies, criticism, or editions, rewriters adapt, manipulate the originals they work with to some extent, usually to make them fit in with the dominant, or one of the dominant ideological and poetological currents of their time. Again, this may be most obvious in totalitarian societies, but “different communities” that exist in more open societies will influence the production of rewritings in similar ways’ (Lefevere 1992: 8).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Lefevere 1992: 5.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lefevere 1992: 5.

<sup>13</sup> General remarks on this topic are in Hallisey 1995.

cultures. Let us consider, for example, the image of the Buddha as a Victorian gentleman, conveyed by translations of the Pāli canon by Thomas William Rhys Davids (1843–1922) and his wife, Caroline Augusta Foley (1858–1942); or even the depiction of the Buddha as a prototype of ‘spiritual virility’ in the writings of Julius Evola (1898–1974),<sup>14</sup> suggested, at least in part, by the translations of Giuseppe De Lorenzo (1871–1957) and Karl Eugen Neumann (1865–1915). This dynamic also involves the concealment of texts and doctrines that turn out ‘inconvenient’ for the interpreter. An example of this is the almost complete silence of modern and contemporary westernized Theravāda environments concerning the stories of the miracles of the Buddha, which are however expressly referred to in the Pāli canon.<sup>15</sup> The strategy, in this case, was and still is simply not to translate those parts of the canon, because they are seen as conflicting with the image of Buddhism as a ‘rational spirituality’, which constitutes much of its allure in the modern world.

The creation and ‘demolition’ of stereotyped images may also stem from the decision to act against an established tradition in the translation of some terms and expressions. For instance, in a recent Italian translation of the *Manusmṛti*, the word *dharmā* is always translated with ‘norma’ (norm) or related expressions (‘atti normati’, cf. 4.238–239); this also happens when *dharmā* is opposed to *adharmā*, and where the context suggests that, from the semantic point of view, the term implies the co-occurrence of multiple meanings, including, for example, that of ‘virtue’. Translating *dharmā* with ‘norm’ in all its occurrences is a strong choice, as acknowledged by the same translators,<sup>16</sup> one that can also be justified as a reaction to other traditional translations in which the term has often been left untranslated, even though a translation was possible and desirable. One of the consequences of leaving the two terms (*dharmā* and *adharmā*) untranslated is that, in all its

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Evola 1957.

<sup>15</sup> For some references see Talim 2002–2003.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Squarcini and Cuneo 2010: lviii–lix, where the translators explain the reasons of their choice and refer to recent secondary literature on the subject.

occurrences in the text, the word *dharma* always seems to acquire religious or ethical dimensions.<sup>17</sup>

Words have long histories and multiple meanings, depending on their contexts, or on the interpretations given by the commentarial tradition, which especially in India and Tibet has an important cultural weight. Sometimes, one has to choose between meanings that can be equally valid historically and supported by the commentarial tradition. Consider, for example, the case of the compound *ekāyana*, which occurs in connection with the teaching on the four *satipaṭṭhānas* in the Pāli canon (*ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo [...] yad idaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*)<sup>18</sup> as well as in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* (*ekāyano 'yaṃ bhikṣavo mārgo yad uta smṛtyupasthānāni*, ed. p. 529). The available translations are based on two opposite interpretations: the interpretation of those, on the one hand, who wanted to read into this term a heavy emphasis on the uniqueness, exclusiveness and superiority of the teaching at issue (and indirectly on the superiority of Buddhism with respect to other soteriological paths); and of those, on the other hand, who preferred to understand the word as a simple reference to the directness of the *satipaṭṭhāna* teaching in obtaining *nibbāna*, the ultimate goal. The first interpretation of *ekāyano maggo* is represented in translations such as ‘the one and only way’ (Conze), ‘this one way’ (Horner), ‘[i]l n’y a qu’une voie’ (Lamotte), ‘the sole way’ (Ñāṇaponika), ‘the one and only path’ (C.A.F. and T.W. Rhys Davids), ‘la seule voie / la voie unique’ (Seyfort Rugg), ‘the only way’ (Soma); the second, in translations like ‘the direct path’ (Anālayo, Bodhi), ‘il veicolo diretto’ (Cicuzza), ‘la diritta via’ (De Lorenzo), ‘der direkte Weg’ (Ñāṇatiloka). This second set of translations has the advantage of finding a parallel in *Majjhima Nikāya* 12.37–42, in a context where the rendering of *ekāyana* with

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<sup>17</sup> In the translation by Johann Georg Bühler (1886), for instance, the word *dharma* is rendered in several ways; just to quote a few instances: ‘sacred law’, 1.2, 2.13; ‘merit’, 1.26, 2.112; ‘Dharma’, 1.81–82. In a recent German translation of the text, Axel Michaels (2010) has opted for leaving *dharma* and *adharmā* untranslated in most of their occurrences, whereas he has translated the terms and inserted the correspondent Sanskrit words in brackets in the cases in which they assume a more specific meaning; see, for instance, *Manusmṛti* 1.26, where Michaels translates *dharma* and *adharmā* as ‘Ordnung (*dharma*)’ and ‘Unordnung (*adharmā*)’.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Dīgha Nikāya* 22.1, *Majjhima Nikāya* 10, *Samyutta Nikāya* 47.1, 18, 43.

‘direct way’ definitely seems more appropriate, and also has the advantage — as Anālayo points out — ‘of avoiding the slightly dogmatic nuance conveyed by the translation “the only path”’.<sup>19</sup> However, as emerges from the very useful analysis made by Rupert M. L. Gethin,<sup>20</sup> to which we refer for references, the term is difficult to translate, and the commentarial tradition, although being centuries later than the composition of the Nikāyas, contemplates both interpretations as well as adding other explanations that, despite being secondary, were certainly considered valid and plausible by Theravāda practitioners since at least the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, *ekāyana* could also be translated as the path that must be travelled alone; the path of the One, namely of the Buddha; the path that goes to one place only, that is, *nibbāna*. Historically speaking, we cannot reject any of these interpretations, despite the translation ‘direct path’ being more faithful to the original and compatible with our modern sensibility.

In translating, just like in textual criticism, the ‘Protestant’ preoccupation with a return to the original text,<sup>21</sup> combined with the implicit blame of historical developments, which are deemed as a corruption of pristine purity, may cause one to disregard the various interpretations that have sedimented over time and that, historically speaking, played a role in the interpretation of the readers and users of the text. In some cases, the translator must deal with a problem that is very similar to the one faced by the philologist, who establishes a critical text and chooses one variant instead of another, despite the latter possibly having been accepted in certain environments at some points in history. Just like the philologist who gives an account of the variants he rejects, setting up an apparatus that reflects and describes the diachronic development of the work, so too should the translator at least keep in mind the history of the reception and interpretation of the text and, if possible, give an account of it in critical notes.

The possibility of comparing the work of the philologist with that of the translator is not just a hypothetical claim, but a concrete reality once we turn our attention to the issue of translating from

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<sup>19</sup> Anālayo 2003: 27, n. 36.

<sup>20</sup> Gethin 2001: 59–66.

<sup>21</sup> For more general remarks on the ‘Protestant presuppositions’ in the study of Indian Buddhism, see Schopen 1991.

the ‘classical’ languages, both of Europe and of Asia. As a matter of fact, in these cases we lack the figure of the professional translator, so that the publishers who are interested in Indian and Tibetan literary works,<sup>22</sup> or the General Editors of specialized series — such as the *Clay Sanskrit Library* of the New York University Press, or the newly launched *Murty Classical Library of India* of the Harvard University Press — have to knock on the doors of universities and academies. In translating from classical languages in general, and from Indian classical languages in particular, the figure of the scholar ends up overlapping with that of the translator. This is a crucial point for understanding some of the trends of contemporary translations from Indian languages, since the interests and energies of scholars who deal with texts, their genesis, influence and authorship, as well as the historical and cultural context in which they were produced, are mainly absorbed by other tasks, namely the interpretation of these texts, the study of their manuscript transmission and, at times, the production of critical and reliable editions; hence, the work of translation may often be regarded secondary and instrumental. The unwanted consequence of this is that translations, especially of technical literature, which include not only philosophical, but also religious and scientific texts and commentaries, may tend to be very literal. Conceiving the task of translating as an accessory enterprise can above all make one oblivious to the historicity of — and, thus, the responsibility attached to — this activity, which has been and still is a culturally-driven and, at times, politically-influenced act of interpreting and bridging cultures that, just as all products of history, reflects its times and will, at a certain point, necessarily be surpassed. Neither mere mechanical transpositions of words nor highly literary pieces can fulfil the cultural responsibility that rests on the translator’s shoulders, if these translations are not really the products of a conscious effort to balance the cultural word of the source with the cultural word of the target, while also contemplating the history of the reception and interpretation of the text. An overview of the practice of translating from Indian and

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<sup>22</sup> For instance, Gallimard, Les Belles Lettres and Éditions de Boccard in France; Oxford University Press in England; Reclam and Verlag der Weltreligionen in Germany; Adelphi, Einaudi, Marsilio and Mondadori in Italy; J.E. Brill in the Netherlands.

Tibetan texts in the past shows us that finding this balance has sometimes proven difficult, if not impossible.

## 2. Two Kinds of Translation

In recent years, scholars of translation studies have analysed translations according to two main categories that are already traceable in Friedrich Schleiermacher's essay *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens*.<sup>23</sup> These categories are 1) *source-oriented translation* ('foreignizing' in Lawrence Venuti's terminology), in which the translator tries to remain as faithful as possible to the original, aiming at formal equivalence (lexical, syntactic, morphological, stylistic, etc.); and 2) *target-oriented translation* ('domesticating' in Venuti's terminology), in which one tries to mediate with the language and culture of the recipient.<sup>24</sup> The original text is, therefore, adapted to the culture and taste of the users. A target-oriented translation is based on what is sometimes defined as 'dynamic communication' or 'dynamic equivalence';<sup>25</sup> it consists in 'rewriting' the text according to the principle that a faithful translation does not correspond to the literal rendering of each sentence, but takes into consideration the whole work in its context. This kind of translation involves a complexity of factors, both semiotic and cultural, that go beyond the strict adherence to words and language.<sup>26</sup>

Starting at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and especially during the next two centuries, the number of translations from Indian and Tibetan texts increased exponentially in all major European languages, with the exception of Spanish and Portuguese and with

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<sup>23</sup> Schleiermacher 1813: 152.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Venuti 1995: 20.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Nida 1964: 159 and ff.

<sup>26</sup> The forerunner of this view can be considered Cicero ([...] *non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servavi. Non enim ea me adnumerare lectori putavi oportere, sed tamquam appendere* [*De optimo genere oratorum* § V.14]), followed by Horace (65–8 BCE) (cf. *Ars Poetica*, vv. 128 ff.) and by Saint Jerome (ca. 347–419), who, paraphrasing Cicero, prefers not to translate word for word, but meaning for meaning (*non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu* [*Epistola lvii ad Pammachium* § V]).

the growing prevalence of English.<sup>27</sup> The target-oriented translations were particularly popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They are characterized by a refined prose, by the choice of rare, polished expressions, and sometimes by the rendering of the versified original into metrical compositions, a choice that could also result in the distortion of the original text, although efforts were made to contrast this. The translations made by Ralph Thomas Hotchkin Griffith (1826–1906) represent some of the most significant examples of this style. Besides the English versions of Vedic scriptures, he translated in rhyme the entire *Rāmāyaṇa* and the first seven chapters of the *Kumārasambhava*. A couple of quotations will suffice to give an idea of his work. The first citation is taken from the very beginning of the *Rāmāyaṇa*:<sup>28</sup>

To sainted Nārad, prince of those  
Whose lore in words of wisdom flows.  
Whose constant care and chief delight  
Were Scripture and ascetic rite,  
The good Vālmīki, first and best  
Of hermit saints, these words addressed:  
'In all this world, I pray thee, who  
Is virtuous, heroic, true?  
Firm in his vows, of grateful mind...

It is an elaborate versification, inspired by the English poets of the time, that also tries to reflect the metre of the original text, in this

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<sup>27</sup> Among the various bibliographies and reference books, for Buddhist studies (essays and translations) see Hanayama 1961, Pfandt 1986 and Sueki 1998 (upgraded since 1999 and available also online: <http://www.cbs.ugent.be/file/19>). For Indian studies, see Indian Council for Cultural Relations 1964 and Potter 1970 (upgraded and available also online: <http://faculty.washington.edu/kpotter/>).

<sup>28</sup> Griffith 1870–1874: 1–2. The Sanskrit text reads as follows: *tapahṣvādhyāyanirataṃ tapasvī vāgvidāṃ varam | nāradaṃ pariṣapraccha vālmīkir munīpuṅgavam || ko nu asmin sāmprataṃ loke guṇavān kaś ca vīryavān | dharmajñāś ca kṛtajñāś ca satyavākya dṛḍhavrataḥ ||* (*Rāmāyaṇa*, Bālakāṇḍa 1.1–2).

Compare the recent translation by Robert P. Goldman: 'Valmīki, the ascetic, questioned the eloquent Nārada, bull among sages, always devoted to asceticism and study of the sacred texts. "Is there a man in the world today who is truly virtuous? Who is there who is mighty and yet knows both what is right and how to act upon it? Who always speaks the truth and holds firmly to his vows?..."' (Goldman 2005: 29). The rendering of *kṛtajñāḥ*, which here likely means 'grateful', in Goldman's translation does not seem convincing to us.

case *anuṣṭubh*, which consists of four feet of eight syllables each. The second example is drawn from the celebrated beginning of Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava*, in *upajāti* metre (four feet of eleven syllables each). Here too Griffith adopts a different metre in his English rendition:<sup>29</sup>

Far in the north, HIMĀLAYA lifting high  
His towery summits till they cleave the sky,  
Spans the wide land from east to western sea,  
Lord of the Hills, indistinct with Deity.

Griffith's work is not an isolated case. Another voluminous work of rhymed translation is due to Michele Kerbaker (1835–1914), who translated more than 14,000 stanzas of the *Mahābhārata* into Italian *ottava rima*,<sup>30</sup> as well as many hymns of the *R̥gveda*.<sup>31</sup>

Among the target-oriented translations, we can also include the Latin versions of August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767–1845),<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Griffith 1853: 1. A survey of Griffith's metrical choices in relation to the changes of the metre in the Sanskrit *Kumārasambhava* would deserve an elaboration of its own. The Sanskrit text runs as follows: *asty uttarasyām diśi devatātmā himālayo nāma nagādhirājah | pūrvāparau toyanidhī vigāhya sthītaḥ pṛthivyā iva mānadaṇḍaḥ ||* (1.1).

Compare the recent translation by David Smith: 'There is in the north / the king of mountains, / divine in nature, Himālaya by name, / the abode of snow. / Reaching down / to both the eastern / and the western oceans, / he stands / like a rod to measure the earth' (Smith 2005: 25).

<sup>30</sup> Most of his translations from the *Mahābhārata* were published posthumously by his students Carlo Formichi and Vittore Pisani (cf. Kerbaker 1933–1939). As noted by Stefano Piano (forthcoming), Kerbaker's translations include 7424 octaves, most of which render two *anuṣṭubhs*.

<sup>31</sup> For an idea of his work, see for instance Kerbaker's rendering of *R̥gveda* 10.125.1 (Kerbaker 1880: 459): 'M'odi. Coi Rudra alto passeggio e regno, / Mi son gli Adīṭja ed i Vasú compagni; / Mitra e Váruna in me trovan sostegno / E i due gemelli Aṣvini ed Indra ed Agni.' The original text is as follows: *aham rudrebhir vasubhiś carāmy aham ādityair uta viśvadevaiḥ | aham mitrāvaruṇobhā bibharmy aham indrāgnī aham aśvinobhā ||*.

<sup>32</sup> Christian Lassen and A.W. von Schlegel: *Hitopadesas, id est Institutio Salutaris. Textum codd. MSS. collatis recensuerunt interpretationem latinam et annotationes criticas adjecerunt*, Bonn 1829–1831; *Bhagavad-Gita, id est Thespesion melos, sive Almi Crishnae et Arjunae colloquium de rebus divinis, Textum recensuit, adnotationes criticas et interpretationem latinam adiecit Aug. Giul. Schlegel. Editio altera auctior and emendatior cura Christiani Lasseni*, Bonn 1846, Academia Borussica Rhenana (*editio princeps* 1823).

Franz Bopp (1791–1867),<sup>33</sup> Christian Lassen (1800–1876)<sup>34</sup> and Adolf Friedrich Stenzler (1807–1887),<sup>35</sup> as well as the famous translation of the *Dhammapada* by Michael Viggo Fausbøll (1821–1908).<sup>36</sup> Their use of Latin was not only meant to address their translations to an audience of educated Westerners at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but to also achieve something more sophisticated: by the use of Latin, the works of Kālidāsa and Jayadeva, as well as other Indian traditional works, were raised to the same level and status as the classics of Latin and Greek literature. Although there are no explicit statements in this regard, this can be read as an attempt to insert these works into the Western literary canon *tout court*, classical Latin culture being the common background of European cultural identity.<sup>37</sup>

The translations of Georg Martin Dursch (1800–1881) and Peter von Bohlen (1796–1840) may represent an important transition point. Bohlen’s edition of the *Ṛtusamhāra* (1840)<sup>38</sup> is accompanied by both a Latin translation and a German rendition

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<sup>33</sup> *Nalus, Carmen sanscriticum e Mahābhārato, edidit, latine vertit, et adnotationibus illustravit, Franciscus Bopp*, Londini, Parisiis et Argentorati 1819.

<sup>34</sup> Christian Lassen: *Gymnosophista, sive Indicæ Philosophiæ documenta. Collegit, edidit, enarravit Christianus Lassen*. Voluminis I. Fasciculus I. *Isvaracishnae Sankhya-Caricam tenens*, Bonn 1832; *Gita Govinda, Jayadevae poetæ Indici drama lyricum, textum ad fidem librorum manuscriptorum recognovit, scholia selecta, annotationem criticam, interpretationem latinam adiecit Christianus Lassen*, Bonn 1836.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *Brahma-vaivarta-purāni specimen; textum e codice manuscripto Bibliothecae regiae Berolinensis edidit, interpretationem latinam adiecit et commentationem mythologicam et criticam praemisit Adolphus Fridericus Stenzler*, Berlin 1829; *Raghuwansa, Kālidāsaē carmen Sanskritae et Latine edidit Adolphus Fridericus Stenzler*, London 1832; *Kumāra Sambhava, Kālidāsaē carmen Sanskritae et Latine edidit Adolphus Fridericus Stenzler*, Berlin-London 1838.

<sup>36</sup> *The Dhammapada: Being a collection of moral verses in Pali*, Copenhagen 1855.

<sup>37</sup> In the preface to his translation of the *Nalopākhyāna*, Franz Bopp justifies the use of Latin on the basis of purely linguistic motivations: *Ante alias linguas ad Sanscritum auctorem vertendum, eodem conservato verborum ordine, Latina praecipue apta est* (‘The Latin language is more suitable than other languages for translating a Sanskrit author, since the same word order is kept’) (Bopp 1819: iv).

<sup>38</sup> *Ṛtusanhāra id est Tempestatum cyclus, Carmen sanskritum, Kālidāso adscriptum, edidit, latina interpretatione, germanica versione metrica atque annotationibus criticis instruxit P. a Bohlen*, Lipsiae 1840.

called *Interpretatio Germanica*.<sup>39</sup> Only a few years earlier (1833), his edition of Bhartṛhari's *Śatakatraya* and Bilhaṇa's *Caurapañcāśikā* contained only the Latin version.<sup>40</sup> His German translation is also metrical and precedes the metrical translations of Griffith and Kerbaker by a few years. Dursch behaves in a similar way. His edition of the *Ghatakarparakāvya*, which was published in Berlin in 1828, is accompanied by a translation into German, French and Latin,<sup>41</sup> whereas his edition of the *Hitopadeśa*, which appeared in 1854 in Tübingen,<sup>42</sup> exclusively preserves the German version. The decision to adopt only the German translation is not without significance. As a matter of fact, unlike other European countries, during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Germany was the scene of a rather important debate on the topic of translation, which involved public figures such as the above-mentioned Schleiermacher, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, August von Schlegel, Alexander von Humboldt and Georg Wilhelm Hegel.<sup>43</sup> This was

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<sup>39</sup> See for instance Bohlen 1840, pp. 49 (latin text) and 74 (German translation): *Coxarum globulis pulchro amiculo cinctis, papillis margaritarum sero ornatis santaloque adpersis, et capillis suffitus fragrantia suave olentibus, mulieres calorem tranquillam amantium*; Den Seidengurt um runde Hüst' geschlungen, / Mit Perlenschnüren ihrer Brust geschmückt, / Und in den Locken Wohlgerüche, haben / Die Schönen ihres Freundes Herz entzückt. The text of the Sanskrit original reads as follows: *nītababimbaiḥ sudukūlamekhalaiḥ stanaiḥ sahārābharanaiḥ sacandanaiḥ | śīroruhaiḥ snānakasāyāvāsitaiḥ striyo nidāghaṃ samayanti kāmīnām || 4.*

<sup>40</sup> *Bhartriharis Sententiae Et Carmen Quod Chauri Nomine Circumfertur Eroticum, Ad codicum mstt. fidem edidit latine vertit et commentariis instruxit Petrus a Bohlen, Berolini 1833.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ghatakarparam oder das zerbrochene Gefäß: Ein sanskritisches Gedicht*, Berlin: Dümmler. The French translation is a reprint of the rendition made by Antoine-Léonard Chézy (1773–1832) in *Journal Asiatique* 1823.

<sup>42</sup> *Die älteste praktische Pädagogik des heidnischen Alterthums. Hitopadesas, oder heilsame Unterweisung, angeblich von Wischnusarman zur Belehrung königlicher Prinzen verfaßt. Aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche übersetzt.*

<sup>43</sup> In a perspicuous essay, to which we refer the reader for further study, Saverio Marchignoli (2002: 88–89), points out that '[L]a cultura tedesca assumeva su di sé il ruolo di "ponte" tra l'Europa moderna ed ogni alterità culturale. L'antichità e l'"Oriente", la Grecia e l'India, dovevano passare attraverso la mediazione tedesca prima di divenire accessibili al resto dell'Europa. [...] Non è esagerato dire che nel corso della *Goethezeit* la vocazione all'appropriazione attraverso le traduzioni divenne una componente essenziale dell'autorappresentazione della cultura tedesca' ('German culture took upon itself the role of "bridge" between modern Europe and every cultural otherness. The antiquity and the "East",

not motivated entirely by a dispassionate interest in other cultures, but intersected with the issue of the role of the German language, which some authors (Goethe *in primis*) considered to be the most appropriate tool in conducting cultural mediation. It is also perhaps no coincidence that a scholar like Stenzler, who adopted Latin at first, since 1848 only used German for his translations.<sup>44</sup>

In the choice of the target-oriented translation, which was so successful in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as the aforementioned examples show, the translators are not called to give up to their ‘authorship’, as they themselves become actors in the foreground of a process of cross-cultural communication.<sup>45</sup> However, such communication is achieved only partially, since what prevails in this phase is the idea and wish of assimilating the translated texts into the cultural milieu of the translators.<sup>46</sup> This is also true for the reverse operation, that of translating or adapting into Sanskrit the classics of European culture, such as the works of Shakespeare<sup>47</sup> or even the *New Testament*, rendered from Greek into Sanskrit by William Carey (1761–1834)<sup>48</sup> with the assistance of Bengali pandits in 1808 —

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Greece and India, had to go through German mediation before becoming accessible to the rest of Europe. [...] It is no exaggeration to say that during the *Goethezeit* the vocation to appropriation through translations became an essential component of the self-representation of German culture’).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Yājñavalkya’s Gesetzbuch, Sanskrit und Deutsch herausgegeben von Dr. Adolf Friedrich Stenzler*, Berlin-London 1849; *Indische Hausregeln. Gr̥hyasūtrāṇi. Sanskrit und Deutsch*, Leipzig 1864–1878.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Nergaard 2007<sup>2</sup>: 15–16.

<sup>46</sup> In this case we cannot speak of ‘the translator’s invisibility’ (Venuti 1995); what tends to be invisible are the differences between the source-culture and the target-culture, which are basically eliminated and flattened.

<sup>47</sup> Cf., in chronological order: 1. *Vāsantikasvapnam* (= *Midsummer-Night’s Dream*), adaptation by R. Krishnamachari, Kumbhakonam 1892; 2. *Venīśa Sārthavāhaḥ* (= *Merchant of Venice*), by Ananta Tripathi Śarma, 1969; 3. *Dīnārkarājakumārāhemalekham* (= *Hamlet*), by Sukhamay Mukhopadhyay 1971; 4. *Ūthikā* (= *Romeo & Juliet*), by Revaprasad Dvivedi, 1978; 5. *Candrasenah Durgadeśasya Yuvārājah. Sanskrit adaptation of Shakespeare’s Hamlet, the prince of Denmark*, translated by S. D. Joshi, Vighnahari Deo and R. G. Takwale, 1980. For a study on Shakespeare’s Reception in India, see Mohanty 2005.

<sup>48</sup> *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; in Sanscrit*, Translated from the Greek by the Calcutta Baptist Missionaries, with Native Assistants, Calcutta 1808 (1886<sup>3</sup>): Baptist Mission Press.

although in the latter case, as well as in the translation of the *Holy Bible* published in four volumes in Calcutta between 1848 and 1872,<sup>49</sup> there is also a patent evangelizing intention. In spite of the intentions of their authors, these translations are not really contributing to a cultural exchange: the source culture is not valued in its peculiarity, nor enriched, but overwhelmed by the semiotic values of the target culture.

In the course of time, the tendency to produce target-oriented translations has waned, but has not disappeared. However, there have been more intermediate situations, namely cases in which, although the categories and concepts typical of the target culture are clearly discernible and sometimes even predominant in the work of the translator, the operation of mediation can be said to have been historically successful. An example from the field of Indian philosophy is the work of Theodor Ippolitovich Stcherbatsky (1866–1942). His rightly celebrated work *Buddhist Logic* (2 vols., 1930–32), for instance, which contains also a translation of the *Nyāyabindu* by Dharmakīrti with the *Tīkā* by Dharmottara, is deeply influenced by Kantianism. This ‘domestication’ of the so-called Buddhist *pramāṇa* tradition probably did not contribute to a true understanding of all specific aspects of Buddhist philosophical terminology, which have been partially ‘hidden’ by the Kantian frame of reference,<sup>50</sup> but there is no doubt that it has given a significant positive boost to the study of Buddhist logic in the West.

There can be little doubt that the early translations did impact the literary and cultural world of their times. Suffice it to recall here that the upsurge of European and American interest in Buddhism, especially starting from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, owes much to the work of the first translators of Buddhist

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<sup>49</sup> *The Holy Bible in the Sanskrit Language, Translated out of the Original Tongues by the Calcutta Baptist Missionaries with Native Assistants, Vol. I. containing the five books of Moses and the book of Joshua*, Calcutta 1848; *Vol. II. containing the historical books from Judges to Esther*, Calcutta 1852; *Vol. III. containing the poetical and devotional books from Job to Canticles*, Calcutta 1858; *Vol. IV. containing the prophetic books*, Calcutta 1872: Baptist Mission Press. The missionaries involved in this project, who belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, were J. H. Gill (dnr), John Wenger (1811–1880) and William Yates (1792–1845). See also Halbfass 1988: 49–50.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Chattopadhyaya 1969: xxiv.

texts, and that their activity even managed to imprint and nurture the Asian revival movements that would contribute to throw off the yoke of colonialism.<sup>51</sup> A telling example is that of Philippe-Édouard Foucaux (1811–1894), who, in 1850, published his Tibetan-to-French rendition of the *Lalitavistara*, which then became the source of inspiration for Edwin Arnold (1832–1904)'s *The Light of Asia* (London 1879). This fictional book had a great impact on the knowledge and dissemination of Buddhism in Europe and America among the educated middle classes and, paradoxically, at a certain point it was even used in Asia to teach Buddhism in schools.<sup>52</sup>

Another significant example are Neumann's translations of many parts of the Pāli canon into German. Although these translations were strongly criticised (for instance by Rudolf Otto Franke [1862–1928]),<sup>53</sup> they became very popular, and their contribution to the wider knowledge of Buddhism in Germany and Austria (and indirectly in Italy, through his translation, together with De Lorenzo, of the *Majjhima Nikāya* into Italian) is no doubt evident.<sup>54</sup> Among the intellectuals who were deeply influenced by

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<sup>51</sup> On the knowledge of Buddhism in Western Europe and the impact of the activity of 'textualization' of a religion, see especially Almond 1988; on the notion of Buddhist 'modernism' and its cultural and political implications, see McMahan 2008.

<sup>52</sup> The same function of popularising Buddhism in the West (and the East) played by Arnold's work was also carried out by *A Buddhist Catechism* (Madras 1881), by Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), and *The Gospel of Buddha* (LaSalle 1894), by Paul Carus (1852–1919), each strongly based on the available translations of Buddhist texts in Western languages.

<sup>53</sup> Cf., for instance, Franke 1893. On the reception of Neumann's translations in the German-speaking world, see Hecker 1986: 270.

<sup>54</sup> The Italian translation of the *Majjhima Nikāya* was published in three volumes in 1907, 1925 and 1927 (Bari: Laterza). A review of the first volume was published by the influential Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce (1866–1952) in the fifth issue of *La Critica. Rivista di Letteratura, Storia e Filosofia*. Since Croce was rather critical of Buddhism, which he conceived in a nihilistic and quietist way, his review must have helped to curb the interest in Buddhism in Italy rather than promoting it. Buddhism is defined there as 'un'intuizione della vita che esclude la conoscenza e l'azione, e si rivolge tutta all'annullamento del dolore mediante l'annullamento del desiderio' ('an intuition of life that excludes knowledge and action, and focusses on the annulment of pain through the cancellation of desire') (Croce 1907: 158).

Neumann's translations were Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Rainer Maria Rilke, Carl Gustav Jung and Hermann Hesse.<sup>55</sup>

There have been cases, then, in which this influence was restricted to the world of literature. In 1879, Kerbaker published a poem entitled *All'Aurora (To the Dawn)*, a rhymed translation of passages drawn from several hymns of the *Rgveda*. The result is a miscellaneous hymn that can certainly be considered a form of target-oriented translation, with the aim of appropriating the text in order to make it consonant with the contemporary Western, particularly Italian, literary taste. The knowledge of Kerbaker's poem was not limited to a small circle of 'Orientalists', for it certainly inspired one of the greatest Italian poets of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Nobel laureate (1906) Giosue Carducci (1835–1907), who used Kerbaker's hymn for at least two of his poems. Carducci published the hymn *All'Aurora (To the Dawn)* in 1881, after a 15-year long revision, and subsequently introduced it in the second edition of the *Odi Barbare (Barbarian Odes)*, which appeared in 1882.<sup>56</sup> The debt of Carducci towards Kerbaker's *All'Aurora* is evident from a comparison of the two texts. He not only uses identical expressions, but also seems to rely on the structure of Kerbaker's poem, as shown in the following example (note that text in bold is absent in the original texts):

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<sup>55</sup> For more details and references see Miglio 2009: 82–89.

<sup>56</sup> The *Odi Barbare* was published numerous times between 1873, when the first core appeared, and 1893. In the first edition of 1877, the work numbered only 14 compositions. Other editions of the text appeared in 1886, 1889 and 1893. See Ferrari 1912: 23.

Kerbaker, *All'Aurora*, st. 2

**Le rosse giovenche** dall'atre caverne  
Ai paschi ella scorge del prato divin,  
E il retto cammino da lunge discerne,  
Dei mondi dischiusi vegliando al confin

Kerbaker, *All'Aurora*, st. 5

Ha **infrante alla suora gelosa le stalle**

E il furto che ascoso negli antri tenea,

**Col candido armento le bionde cavalle**

Ai campi celesti radduce la Dea,

Già gli agili **Aśvini** la rosea sorella  
Han posto sul carro dai vari color,  
E a gara coi Numi la Diva più bella  
Del celere agone riporta l'onore

Carducci, *Il comune rustico*, st. 34<sup>57</sup>

E **le rosse giovenche** di su 'l prato  
Vedean passare il piccolo senato,

Carducci, *All'Aurora*, lines 19–22

Pastorella del cielo, tu, **frante a la suora gelosa le stalle**, riadduci le rosse vacche in cielo.

Guidi le rosse vacche, guidi tu **il candido armento**  
e **le bionde cavalle** care a i fratelli **Aśvin**

The two authors choose different metres, but in both cases their choices are rooted in the classical Greek and Latin tradition: Kerbaker composed quatrains of iambic senarii, which are the Italian version of the traditional metres of the dialogic portions of Latin tragedy and comedy, while Carducci preferred the elegiac couplet (made up of one hexameter and one pentameter).

In the case of the first 19<sup>th</sup>-century translations, the prevalent aim of the translators thus seems to have been that of 'domesticating' the texts that were considered relevant from the religious, philosophical and literary point of view, and putting them on the same level as the great works of various European national literatures. This tendency of subsuming the Indian world into one's own, which was certainly also driven by the lesser acquaintance that the European culture of the time had with Asia in general, was however gradually abandoned.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The poem *Il comune rustico* appeared in the *Rime nuove* in 1885. Cf. Ferrari 1912: 21–46. On the hymn *All'Aurora* of Kerbaker, see also Ardito 1879: 221 ff. and Trezza 1881: 233–238.

<sup>58</sup> Lionel David Barnett's translation of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, for example, which was published in New York in 1909, groups together the stanzas of the text in various blocks in prose without attempting to produce a stylistically refined version, not to say a poetical work.

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a significant impetus to the strenuous activity of translating Asian texts came from some editorial projects of great ambition and importance, among which it is definitely worth mentioning the series founded by Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900), *The Sacred Books of the East* (50 volumes published between 1879 and 1910), and the series of translations of Buddhist texts promoted by the Pali Text Society. In order to grasp the spirit animating this enterprise, or at least its pioneering founder, one should read a few words from his introduction to the English translation of the *Rgveda*.<sup>59</sup>

I mean by translation, not a mere rendering of the hymns of the Rig-veda into English, French, or German, but a full account of the reasons which justify the translator in assigning such a power to such a word, and such a meaning to such a sentence. I mean by translation a real deciphering, a work like that which Burnouf performed in his first attempts at a translation of the Avesta,—a *traduction raisonnée*, if such an expression may be used. Without such a process, without a running commentary, a mere translation of the ancient hymns of the Brahmans will never lead to any solid results.

The intention of Max Müller in writing these lines was to claim that his translation of the *Rgveda* could in fact be regarded as the first one; although this was technically not the case, it was the first in which philological acumen was accompanied by the study of a traditional commentary, namely that of the 14<sup>th</sup>-century author Sāyaṇa, the ‘tradition of India’ as Müller calls it (1869: xv). A higher awareness of the history and life of the translated texts thus marks the emergence of a new trend, more respectful of the sources and not only focused on the target. This tendency does not entirely replace the previous one, as the two continue to co-exist for some time. It suffices to compare Max Müller’s statements with what a contemporary scholar, the above-mentioned Michele Kerbaker, would write ten years later concerning this same topic, namely the issue of translating the *Rgveda*.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Müller 1869: xv–xvi.

<sup>60</sup> ‘A poetic translation of the *Rgveda* must therefore represent to readers all accessory ideas that the words of the text remind the philologist; in other words it must supply, with appropriate paraphrase, the analytical and scholarly commentary. Such kind of interpretation runs various risks and mainly this: the

Una traduzione poetica del *Rigveda* deve pertanto rappresentare ai lettori tutte le idee accessorie, che le parole del testo richiamano alla mente del filologo, deve, cioè, supplire, con acconcia parafrasi, al commento analitico ed erudito. Siffatto genere d'interpretazione corre diversi rischi e principalmente questo: che l'interprete sia tratto talvolta ad ammodernare soverchiamente la poesia antica, per renderla intelligibile e ravvicinarla, come si dice, alla coscienza moderna. Ma l'assunto di dare un'immagine viva e colorita, quanto più sia possibile, della poesia Vedica, mi parve così utile da compensare, in parte, i difetti inevitabili di siffatto lavoro.

Kerbaker shows awareness of the risk of the interpreter appropriating the original text according to his own categories, of modernizing it too much in order to make it intelligible to the modern mind, yet he prefers to take the risk in order to transmit, as he says, the vividness of the poetry. Thus, for the Italian scholar, poetic taste had to be preferred over interpretive tradition. As a matter of fact, however, Kerbaker does not entirely disregard the philological implications of the translators' work, as in the notes that usually accompany his translations of Vedic hymns he provides the reader with a philological commentary and, at times, a literal rendering. His translations from the *Mahābhārata* are all published posthumously and contain no philological notes.<sup>61</sup>

### 3. Modern Tendencies and Old Problems

The coexistence of these two main approaches to translating has persisted in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and up to present time, although in the fields of Indology and Indo-Tibetology the habit of target-oriented translation has shrunk significantly, with a few remarkable exceptions.<sup>62</sup> Especially in the case of technical

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interpreter sometimes tries excessively to modernize the ancient poetry, to make it intelligible and bring it closer, so to say, to the modern sensitivity. But the assumption of giving as much as possible a vivid and colorful image of Vedic poetry seemed so useful to me to compensate, in part, the inevitable defects of such work' (Kerbaker 1879: 333).

<sup>61</sup> See above note 30.

<sup>62</sup> See, e.g., the translation of Dāmodaragupta's *Kuṭṭanīmata* by Goodall and Dezső (2012).

literature, the source-oriented translation may in fact even seem to be preferable, being justified on account of the fixed terminology and phraseology used by these texts, which scholars are now trying to make into an established jargon. It is assumed that these translations do not have literary intent, that they should be solely or primarily ‘instrumental’ for the sake of other interpretations of the text. The advantage of these translations, which are honest and thus valuable attempts at offering an accurate rendering of the texts by means of a technical terminology, lies primarily in their being an aid to other scholars and students. In this, they are certainly more useful than some very well-known paraphrases, like those authored by Ganganath Jha (1872–1941) on some of the classics of Indian thought.<sup>63</sup> At the same time, one cannot disagree with the arguments of Lawrence McCrea and Parimal Patil, who, while dealing with the translation of Buddhist epistemological texts in the introduction of their translation of Jñānaśrīmitra’s *Aphaprakaraṇa*, note with regret that too-literal translations, i.e. renderings produced by what they define ‘the long-standing European philological tradition’, cannot really be understood outside the circle of specialists and paradoxically require the knowledge of the original language of the texts that they should make accessible to all.<sup>64</sup> As they explain in the introduction,<sup>65</sup> their

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<sup>63</sup> Cf., e.g., his famous English translations of the *Ślokavārttika* by Kumāriḷa (Calcutta 1908), of the *Nyāyasūtra* with the commentaries by Vātsyāyana and Uddyotakara (repr. in 4 vols., originally published in *Indian Thought* 1912–1919), of the *Tantravārttika* by Kumāriḷa (2 vols., Calcutta 1924), and of the *Tattvasaṅgraha* by Śāntarakṣita and its *Pañjikā* by Kamalaśīla (2 vols., Baroda 1937, 1939).

<sup>64</sup> ‘Most translations of Buddhist epistemological texts have been products of the long-standing European philological tradition. This tradition emphasizes the editing of texts through meticulous and critical study of existing manuscript materials and the production of studiously literal translations that are maximally faithful to the words on the page. Scholars in this tradition try very hard to preserve the text’s lexical and syntactic features, including ellipses, ambiguity of pronouns, and the like. Furthermore, they make a conscious effort not to allow their understanding of the text’s overall argument and content to shape their translation of specific words and passages. This results in translations that are highly accurate but nearly impossible for those who do not have firsthand knowledge of the primary languages to really understand. Such work is necessary for developing a rich, detailed understanding of these materials. But if these materials are to be made accessible to a broader range of educated readers, we must produce translations and studies of Sanskrit philosophical texts

translation provides the reader with a smoother, more intelligible text by applying a method that we might call the ‘principle of explicitness’. For instance, they decide to avoid the use of brackets to insert information that is missing in the text; to supply the unstated agent of an action or the name of the authors or the title of the quoted texts if these are supposed to be well-known to the original audience of the work; to explicitly state unspecified referents for some substantivized adjectives, as well as the unstated agents of participles and agentive adjectives, etc. These stylistic choices make this type of translation more useful to scholars and students of Western philosophy, provided that they do not want to check or verify the Sanskrit or Tibetan original. It is undeniable that, if they wanted to get closer to the original text, even without aspiring to become Sanskritists or Tibetologists, what McCrea and Patil define ‘more philologically minded translations’ at least have the advantage of being didactic, allowing the non-specialist armed with good will to follow the path of the translator more easily.

As regards the translation of literary works, the question may be different. The assumption that a word-for-word rendering is after all a lesser evil, and perhaps more respectful both to the author of the original text and to the reader, clashes even more strikingly with the evidence that the outcome of this ‘conversion’ is often a failure, the result being a text of little success, tough and substantially dry, unable to convey even a small portion of the aesthetic sense of the original. Nevertheless there have been attempts to justify the ‘literal approach’ also for the translation of literary texts. Its defence has been made, for instance, in the 1970s by Lee A. Siegel in his study on the *Gītāgovinda*.<sup>66</sup> At a certain point he states:<sup>67</sup>

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that can be read and understood by those with no knowledge of Sanskrit and with little or no previous exposure to the philosophical traditions to which they belong. Without such work, Sanskrit philosophers will never find a place in contemporary academic discourse and public consciousness comparable to that of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, or Wittgenstein’ (McCrea and Patil 2010: 34–35). Partly similar considerations on translating Indian philosophical texts can also be read in Taber 2013: 138–141, in particular p. 138.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. McCrea and Patil 2010: 35–40.

<sup>66</sup> Siegel 1978: 233–238.

<sup>67</sup> Siegel 1978: 235.

Neither the literary nor the literal approach can convey the sensual impact of the poem, the sense-sound of the original; nor can they convey that intensity in *kāvya* which arises from the compactness and condensity achieved by compounding groups of words into monolithic units. *Kāvya* is untranslatable because it is not only *in* Sanskrit, it *is* Sanskrit.

But the literal approach can, I believe, convey at least the intellectual impact of the poem, the sense-content of the original, particularly if it is supplemented with notes and discussion to make explicit information which could have been implicit to the original audience.

On the basis of this, either reacting against the earlier scholarly tradition or on account of a more advanced philological awareness, Siegel criticizes some of the previous English translations of the poem, not only those impressionistic and paraphrastic renditions of Duncan Greenless (Madras 1962), Bankey Behari (Jodhpur 1964) and Monika Varma (Calcutta 1968), but also those target-oriented versions of the first English translators: William Jones (Calcutta 1792), Edwin Arnold (London 1881) and George Keyt (Bombay 1940). Siegel's words are diametrically opposed to those written about a hundred years earlier by Kerbaker, which we have quoted above, and which can be considered illustrative of the predominant sensibility among late-19<sup>th</sup>-century translators.

There are also examples of translations that can rightly be called a compromise between the two positions described above: renderings that are faithful to the original, but which seek to offer a sophisticated text also in the target language. Some translators, especially of poetry, try to imitate the figures of speech of the original and, in the case of Sanskrit texts, to maintain some of the ambiguity allowed by nominal composition. An example can be seen in the Italian translation of Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda* by Giuliano Boccali. Stanza 6.4 (= 133) runs as follows:

vihitaviśadaviśakiśalayavalayā |  
jīvati param iha tava ratikalayā |  
nātha hare |  
sīdati rādhā vāsagr̥he | |

In this verse, as throughout the entire work, Jayadeva makes a wise use of rhymes (*yamaka*) and alliterations (*anuprāsa*). Boccali has tried to reproduce both effects, but without enforcing any that would

have allowed the Italian text to stray too far from the Sanskrit. The result is a literal translation, attentive to the figures of speech of the original composition.

Con bracciali intrecciati di boccioli e steli teneri,  
vive solo per le tue arti in amore:  
signore Hari,  
Rādhā languisce nell'asilo della sua dimora.<sup>68</sup>

Although, inevitably, the rhyme is not perfect in Italian (-*eri/-ari*, -*ore/-ora*), the reproduction of the alliteration in the first line is particularly successful. The Sanskrit text plays around a triple alliteration: the repetition of the syllable *vi/va*, the repetition of the syllable *śa* and the repetition of the syllables *laya*.

**vi**hitaviśadaviśakiśalayavalayā  
vihitaviśadaviśakiśalayavalayā  
vihitaviśadaviśakiśalayavalayā

The Italian translator has also tried to reproduce three alliterations: the repetition of the syllable *ccia/ccio*, the repetition of syllables *ali/oli/eli/eri* and the repetition of the syllables *ti/te*.

Con bracc**iali** intrecciati di boc**cioli** e steli teneri  
Con bracc**iali** intrecciati di boc**cioli** e steli teneri  
Con bracciali intrecciati di boccioli e steli teneri

#### 4. The 'Semiotics of Faithfulness'

In the same way that a one-sided criticism of literal translation does not take into account its advantages and function, in our opinion it is not only ungenerous, but also conceptually wrong to radically criticize the target-oriented approach, not only for its obvious advantages, which have been briefly described above, but also because a strict adherence to its opposite model presents at least two weaknesses. And it is the analysis of these two weak points that allow us to draw some conclusions.

First of all, a literal translation promises only an illusory faithfulness to the original because in fact each word in the original context often, if not always, presupposes a different semiotic horizon.<sup>69</sup> As we have seen, even an advocate of the 'literal

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<sup>68</sup> Boccali 1982: 84.

<sup>69</sup> For some considerations on this topic see Jakobson 1959.

approach' like Siegel is aware that a word-for-word translation is not able to faithfully transmit the meaning of the original text, and in fact he expects a translation to be accompanied by notes and explanations. Thus a translator must not only apply himself/herself to the rendering of words, but also to the rendering of concepts, that is, the 'horizon of meaning' that lies behind words, but which is often not easily expressible and sometimes, perhaps, even inexpressible. Already in 1879, in the introduction to the first volume of the series *The Sacred Books of the East*, Max Müller expresses this concept in a masterly way, along with other rather interesting considerations on the role and limits of translations that are worth quoting in full.<sup>70</sup>

Many poets have translated Heine into English or Tennyson into German, many painters have copied the Madonna di San Sisto or the so-called portrait of Beatrice Cenci. But the greater the excellence of these translators, the more frank has been their avowal, that the original is beyond their reach. And what is a translation of modern German into modern English compared with a translation of ancient Sanskrit or Zend or Chinese into any modern language? It is an undertaking which, from its very nature, admits of the most partial success only, and a more intimate knowledge of the ancient language, so far from facilitating the task of the translator, renders it only more hopeless. Modern words are round, ancient words are square, and we may as well hope to solve the quadrature of the circle, as to express adequately the ancient thoughts of the Veda in modern English.

We must not expect therefore that a translation of the sacred books of the ancients can ever be more than an approximation of our language to theirs, of our thoughts to theirs. The translator, however, if he has once gained the conviction that it is impossible to translate old thought into modern speech, without doing some violence either to the one or to the other, will hardly hesitate in his choice between two evils. He will prefer to do some violence to the language rather than to misrepresent old thoughts by clothing them in words which do not fit them. [...] I only wish to warn the reader once more not to expect too much from a translation, and to bear in mind that, easy as it might

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<sup>70</sup> Max Müller 1879: xxvii–xxviii.

be to render word by word, it is difficult, aye, sometimes impossible, to render thought by thought.

A strict adherence to literal translation also involves a second problem, which is closely connected with the first one we have seen — we sacrifice the *possibility* of a semiotic enrichment of the translated text, especially in the translation of literary works, where there is more room for the translator's choice and where the translation, instead of being simply instrumental, *can* become an independent work of genius.

This possibility is based on the assumption that each literary work possesses a 'seminal' function, namely an ability to generate new or related meanings, even beyond the intention of the original author, which becomes evident once the text is placed in another semiotic horizon. Translating a text does not just mean keeping it alive as a museum piece, but giving it a second life that comes along with the new language.<sup>71</sup> A translated text interacts on diverse levels with the 'cultural actors' of the target culture (i.e. target-language, translators, readers), which are not simply passive with respect to the newcomer.

All this seems to push us into a specific direction, a direction that we glimpsed at the beginning of this essay: the focus should be put on the translators and their activity, rather than on the distinction between the two above-mentioned types of translations, the target- and the source-oriented, in favour of what Umberto Eco (1932–2016) defines 'semiotica della fedeltà' ('semiotics of faithfulness').<sup>72</sup>

According to this principle, which we have tried to formulate in our own way, translating has a twofold nature. On the one

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<sup>71</sup> This viewpoint stands in direct contrast to the theoretical assumptions of the Descriptive Translation Studies, as they have been expressed by Gideon Toury: 'DTS starts from the notion that any research into translation, whether it is confined to the product itself or intends to proceed to the reconstruction of the process which yielded it (and on from there), should start from the hypothesis that *translations are facts of one system only*: the target system. It is clear that, from the standpoint of the source text and source system, translations have hardly any significance at all' (Toury 1985: 19).

<sup>72</sup> '[T]radurre significa rendere il testo comprensibile a un lettore di lingua diversa, ed è in questa tensione che si articola il problema della "fedeltà", che è sempre fedeltà-per-qualcuno, ovvero *fedeltà di qualcuno rispetto a qualcosa d'altro al servizio di qualcun altro ancora*' (Eco 2007: 124). Cf. also Meschonnic 2007: 55.

hand, it is *one of the forms of hermeneutics*. Faithfulness, in this case, means reconstructing the intention of the author — as already pointed out by Schleiermacher — or at least the intention of the text to be translated, in accordance with the language and the context in which it was produced.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, translating is *one of the forms of exegesis*. Faithfulness, in this case, means rewriting, adapting, reproducing the spirit of the original. ‘If it is necessary to bring the reader to understand the semiotic universe of the original, it is also necessary to transform the original, adapting it to the semiotic universe of the reader’.<sup>74</sup> All this could be summarized by simply saying that translating means reading (= interpreting) and making others read (= explaining). The crucial point is that the mediation between the two natures of the translation process can never be the result of a mechanical process; it resides in the intention and in the genius of the translator, in his/her sensitivity, flexibility and ability to interpret and synthesize, which, as the exponents of the Manipulation School teach, is in its turn historically determined — each translation is produced in a specific socio-cultural context and for a particular group of readers with specific expectations.<sup>75</sup> In fact, since any process of translation is obviously tied to a specific place and time, each generation is entitled to its own translations, we could say as a motto, and it is in

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<sup>73</sup> ‘Il concetto di fedeltà ha a che fare con la persuasione che la traduzione sia una delle forme dell’interpretazione [...] e che l’interpretazione debba sempre mirare, sia pure partendo dalla sensibilità e dalla cultura del lettore, a ritrovare non dico l’intenzione dell’autore, ma l’intenzione del testo, quello che il testo dice o suggerisce in rapporto alla lingua in cui è espresso e al contesto culturale in cui è nato. In tal senso una traduzione non è mai soltanto un affare linguistico, e non lo sarebbe neppure se esistesse un criterio assoluto di sinonimia’ (Eco 2007: 123).

<sup>74</sup> ‘[S]e occorre portare il lettore a capire l’universo semiotico dell’originale, occorre parimenti trasformare l’originale adattandolo all’universo semiotico del lettore’ (Eco 2007: 125). This passage continues with the following words: ‘Di fronte alla domanda se una traduzione debba essere *source* o *target oriented*, ritengo che non si possa elaborare una regola, ma usare i due criteri alternativamente, in modo molto flessibile, a seconda dei problemi posti dal testo a cui ci si trova di fronte’ (Eco 2007: 125).

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Campanini 2000. See also above note 10.

the nature of the translating process itself that it must be periodically renewed.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> And this is also true for the translations produced in the same language. From this point of view any claim to produce perennially valid translations is simply destined to clash with the reality of the facts.

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# On Translating Buddhist Texts: A Survey and Some Reflections

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## Abstract

This paper surveys topics relating to the *translation* of Buddhist texts from Indian originals into Tibetan, to the feasibility of *retrotranslation* from Tibetan into Sanskrit (as opposed to textual *reconstruction*), and to the rendering of these texts into a modern European language. Emphasis is placed on important differences between literal and literalist translation and between technical and literary translation. The important part played by translations in the development of the classical Tibetan written language (*chos skad*) is noted. Also addressed are the topics of translatability, linguistic convention and the semantically arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign, as well as the need for regular and systemically well-grounded European translation-equivalents for technical terms. In an Excursus, consideration is given to still only partly resolved problems concerning semantics in tantric texts and, sometimes, in other Buddhist texts also. In particular — and within the overarching frame of the central principles of the interconvertibility of antonymic opposites (*samatā* ‘Equality/Sameness’, a special kind of *coincidentia oppositorum*), non-duality (*advaya*), and Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of reified self-existence (*svabhāva* ‘aseity’) — attention is directed to philosophical *deconstruction* (a kind of ‘dereification’) which, in Mahāyānist thinking, dissolves conceptual constructs (*kalpanā, vikalpa*) and can assume the form of *prasaṅga*-type reasoning in Mādhyamaka philosophy, to *prasajya*-type propositional negation (*med dgag*), to the characterization of ultimate reality by means of semantic inversion (*viparyaya* ‘enantiosis’), and to neutralization of ordinary quotidian semantics (a kind of ‘desemanticization’) in the language of some Mahāyāna texts and, especially, in the ritual and yogic codes of Mantranaya/Vajrayāna. Reflections together with some tentative explanations are offered concerning these complex matters.

## I

Translating in the comprehensive sense of the word is a vital human activity. It operates between different languages and also between distinct levels or registers of what counts as one and the

same language, for example in the cases of diglossia and interpretative paraphrase. It may be oral or written, or both. Oral translation is often known as interpreting, whereas written translation is considered translation *par excellence*. Usually translation is a deliberate act; but in certain situations it may be a more or less automatic act of transcoding. It can make communication possible between two or more persons having no common language. These persons may be contemporaries or distant in time or place. Here distance may be measured also in relation to attitudes and ways of thinking. One kind of translation may even be internal, taking place in the mind of a single person: in an only partly metaphorical sense one ‘translates’ into discursive concepts, then into still unspoken words, and thence into articulated speech and writing. As a process, translation may be thought of as an art or as a science, and also as a combination of the two. As for the translator, he is regarded as a faithful intermediary and conscientious interpreter, a reliable Dolmetscher, but possibly also as a betrayer or traducer — *traduttore traditore* as the Italian saying has it. This has to be a sobering thought for us when addressing the problem of translating: even in the best of circumstances, the process of translating may extend a sort of veil shrouding the full communicative significance of the original message conveyed in an utterance or text. (This might happen even when a message has been correctly understood by the translator.) Much that is linguistic as well as paralinguistic and contextual may fall by the wayside and be lost in translation. This can hold even for what is regarded as a ‘good’ translation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This paper, which surveys some topics arising in connexion with the translation of Buddhist texts from Sanskrit and Tibetan, supplements and also builds on D. Seyfort Rugg, ‘Some reflections on translating Buddhist philosophical texts from Sanskrit and Tibetan’, *Asiatische Studien / Études asiatiques* 46 (1992), pp. 367–91 (with further bibliography); and id., ‘La traduction de la terminologie technique de la pensée indienne et bouddhique depuis Sylvain Lévi’, in: L. Bansat-Boudon et R. Lardinois (ed.), *Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935), Études indiennes, Histoire sociale* (Bibliothèque de l’École des Hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses, Turnhout, 2007), pp. 145–71 (also with further bibliography). Places where the present writer has previously discussed certain issues, and where salient points addressed in this article have already been treated in the secondary literature, are referred to in the footnotes.

The question of translation in relation to philosophy has been considered by several contributors in J.-F. Mattei (ed.), *Le discours philosophique: Encyclopédie philosophique universelle*, t. IV (Paris, 1998): ‘Les chemins de la

A positive and very favourable view of interlingual translation and of translators has dominated in Tibet. The project of translating the ‘canon’ of the Buddhist dharma into Tibetan, and along with it a very considerable part of the commentarial riches of Indo-Buddhist civilization serving to interpret and contextualize this dharma, was initiated on a grand scale in Tibet at the end of the eighth century, and it continued, on a larger or smaller scale, through succeeding centuries into the present. This project of translation, which was usually anything but mechanical, can rightly be regarded as one of the great and most remarkable intellectual achievements of humanity. The significance of this project of collecting in Tibetan translations an extensive corpus of canonical texts (*āgama* = *lun*) — Vinaya texts, Sūtras and Tantras, i.e. writings held to be the Word of the Buddha (*sans rgyas kyi bka’* = *buddhavacana*) which came to be known as the ‘Kanjur’ (bKa’ ’gyur) ‘Word in translation’ — along with a large number of related treatises (*bstan bcos* = *śāstra*) and commentaries on religion, philosophy, grammar, poetics, and the arts known as the ‘Tanjur’ (bsTan ’gyur) ‘Treatises in translation’ has seldom received the full recognition that this undertaking so clearly merits. The project was magnificent because the first of these two collections was finally to comprise over 100 weighty and beautifully produced tomes, and the second was to consist of more than 200 large volumes. And it was technically and materially colossal because this work of translating and preservation required the mobilization of immense resources, both human and material. (The physical extent of these two Tibetan collections may be measured against the extent of the literature of Greek and Latin antiquity, most of which is to be found in the Loeb Classical Library begun in 1912 and now embracing, one century later, some 500 small bilingual volumes.)

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traduction’, pp. 977–1200. The present writer’s views differ concerning what in this publication, in the contribution by J.-R. L’Admiral (pp. 979–80), are called ‘sourciers’ (‘sourcers’) and ‘ciblistes’ (‘targeters’). Two opposed positions have there been ascribed to these two groups, with that of the first being described as tainted by irrationality, illusion and romanticism; the same article has, however, conceded that these two positions may converge in the actual practice of translation. Interesting reflections on translation, considering in particular the views of W. von Humboldt and F. Schleiermacher, have been published by M. de Launay, *Qu’est-ce que traduire?* (in: ‘Chemins philosophiques’, J. Vrin: Paris, 2006), where the ‘extreme opposition’ between ‘sourciers’ and ‘ciblistes’ has been briefly addressed (p. 120).

Very many of the works in these two Tibetan collections are no longer extant in their original languages and would now be unavailable to us were it not for their Tibetan translations in the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur.<sup>2</sup>

This project of translation was undertaken under the auspices of Tibetan rulers. Early manuscripts of the translations were kept, *inter alia*, in two palaces belonging to the Tibetan sovereign (*btsan po*), the *pho bran* of sTon than lhan/ldan (d)kar and the *pho bran* of 'Phan than. And two ninth-century catalogues of the already very considerable number of translated scriptures and ancillary texts held in these two palaces are known as the *lDan/lHan (d)kar ma* and the *'Phan than ma*. Many early manuscripts of translations into Tibetan have been found at Dunhuang. Some centuries later, the reproduction of texts in Tibetan underwent a sort of 'Gutenberg revolution' following which books printed from woodblocks began to circulate. In 1410, under the Yongle emperor of the Ming dynasty, the earliest reported printing blocks were made for the bKa' 'gyur in China. Manuscripts and xylographs were generally kept in temple and monastery libraries, and no doubt also in private collections held by individual monks and laymen.<sup>3</sup>

Tibetan words for translator are *sgra sgyur* and *skad sgyur*. A great translator of the eighth/ninth century in particular — and sometimes of later times too — was a greatly revered figure known as a *lo tsā ba (chen po)*, a Tibetan word etymologized as derived from Sanskrit *lokacakṣus* 'eye of the world (of living beings)'.

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<sup>2</sup> A relatively small number of no longer extant Indian texts are also available in other Central Asian languages: Khotanese, Sogdian and Uigur; and very many of them are available in Chinese translation.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning old Tibetan blockprints of non-canonical works, see H. Fushimi, 'Recent finds from the old Sa-skya xylographic edition', *WZKS* 43 (1999), pp. 95–108; and L. van der Kuijp, 'Faulty transmissions: Some notes on Tibetan textual criticism and the impact of xylography', in: A. Chayet *et al.* (ed.), *Édition, éditions* (Collectanea Himalayica 3, Munich, 2010), pp. 447 ff.; Shen Wei-rong, 'Reconstructing the history of Buddhism in Central Eurasia', *ibid.*, pp. 356–7 (on the use of movable wooden type in the printing of a Tibetan book from Khara Khoto). — Tibetan books printed under the auspices of leading figures of the Mongol dynasty are known as *hor par ma*. It seems that original (i.e. non-canonical) Tibetan works were printed earlier than the great bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur collections. On books in Tibet more generally, see K. Schaeffer, *The culture of the book in Tibet* (New York, 2009); and A. Chayet *et al.*, *op. cit.*

All this demonstrates Tibetans' love and respect for books as repositories of the Buddha-word (*sanis rgyas kyi bka'* = *buddhavacana*) and as 'Word-supports' (of sacred speech, *gsun rten*), as well as their immense regard for and confidence in the work of translating.

A major outcome of the early work of translation was the formation and progressive standardization of the classical Tibetan literary language — the *chos skad* — at the end of the eighth century and in the early ninth century, that is, in a remarkably short period of time. By being made the linguistic medium for conveying advanced and complex ideas originally expressed in genetically unrelated languages such as Sanskrit, the Tibetan language was then developed into a fit instrument for thinking and verbalization, and for relaying in translation and expressing in original compositions many of the great intellectual and spiritual treasures of mankind.<sup>4</sup>

## II

A not infrequent confusion needing to be dispelled from the outset concerns what is called literalness in translation. A literal translation is, of course, not automatically an accurate and faithful one; equally, an accurate and faithful translation might not be what is called a literal one. Nor is a word-for-word translation necessarily a literal, or rather literalist, one.<sup>5</sup> There does, however,

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<sup>4</sup> Compare the part played centuries later by the translation of texts of classical antiquity in the formation of the English and French languages. Translations of the Bible into German and English also exercised a deep influence in the establishment of High German and the standardization of English.

<sup>5</sup> It seems useful to distinguish between a translation that is *literal*, i.e. word for word (*mot-à-mot*, *wortwörtlich/wortgetreu*), and a rendering that is *literalist* (*au pied de la lettre*). These can be two very different things, the last being, in Buddhist hermeneutics, *yathārutam* = *sgra ji bžin pa*, while the former may well be *yathārtham* = *don ji bžin pa*, i.e. not literalistically bound to *akṣara* or *vyañjana* = *tshig 'bru* 'letter'. To rely not on the letter but on the sense (*artha* = *don*) is, indeed, the first of four *pratisaraṇas* (*rton pa*) in Buddhist hermeneutics, where the *artha* is then subdivided into a provisional sense still requiring to be interpreted in a further sense (*neyārtha* = *drañ don* — which is accordingly *ābhīprāyika* 'intentional') — and a final or definitive sense (*nītārtha* = *nes don*). The importance of translating without violating the sense, but still in fluent Tibetan, has been affirmed in the *sGra sbyor bam gñis* (ed. Simonsson, *Indo-tibetische Studien I* [Uppsala, 1957], p. 247: *dam pa'i chos bsgyur ba'i lugs ni don dan yañ mi 'gal la bod skad la yañ gar bde bar gyis śig*).

appear to exist a correlation between literalness (as distinct from literalism) and faithful accuracy, above all when specialist philosophical, religious and other technical works are to be translated. Every word or lexeme in such writings needs to be rendered in the target-language in some appropriate way. (An exception may exist when there is verbal redundancy in the source-text.) The opposite may be true in the case of literary and imaginative writing. The balance between accuracy, fidelity and literalness is a delicate one. It is scarcely necessary to recall that accuracy and fidelity concern primarily the contents of a text, whereas literalness relates in the first place to its verbal expression.

A widely held view has asserted that a good translation should read as if it had been composed by the author of the source-text in the target-language, and even as if it were somehow 'contemporary'. Yet if a translation of an ancient text were to read so easily and smoothly, and if it were to appear so up-to-date, this could in some cases give rise to the legitimate suspicion that it is far from entirely accurate and faithful. After all, the original source-text itself might not have been written in a smooth and easy style; it might even have been readable only with effort. This could happen for example when an author was treating a difficult or a new subject to convey which he was still searching for an appropriate verbal expression. Absence of verbal felicity and smoothness in translation may occur also when the wording or style of the original text was itself obscure, deliberately or otherwise.<sup>6</sup>

There arises the question of the usefulness, or necessity, of commentaries when we translate a basic text (*mūla* = *rtsa ba*), which may on occasion be very concise or obscure for us. If an autocommentary is available, its importance is, of course, clear and undeniable; and it can then be fitting to translate it together with the basic text. The same may be the case also when a commentary by a direct disciple of the author of the basic text is available. Still, even then, we have to reckon with the possibility that a commentary, or auto-commentary, might carry the subject matter forward, perhaps in a direction not (yet) envisaged by the author of

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A Tibetan calque based on a Sanskrit original can then be literal without being necessarily literalist.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion, see 'Some reflections on translating' (as in n. 1 above), pp. 369 ff.

the *mūla*. This can be the case even for an autocommentary, where an author expands and develops his material or takes up a special position in his comment. (An example is Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*, the versified *kārikās* of which set out the Vaibhāṣika philosophical position, and his prose *Bhāṣya*, which explains the Sautrāntika view.) When the only available commentaries are by writers other than the author, and in particular by much later ones such as the Tibetan interpreters of texts of Indian origin, the situation will be less clear; this is of course so especially when different later commentators have gone their own ways in their interpretations. But, even then, a commentary should not be automatically set aside by a translator with the argument that anything short of an autocommentary is irrelevant to his task.<sup>7</sup> Even a later Indian commentary on an old Indian text, or a later Tibetan commentary on an old Indian or Tibetan text, may on occasion transmit valuable interpretations and interesting variant readings for the *mūla*.

Needless to say, the work of translation needs to be founded on a philologically reliable text, and if possible on a critically established one (when this is feasible and relevant). But, in the case of Indian texts, this is very often not feasible because a unique (and sometimes defective and fragmentary) manuscript — or perhaps, in the case of Tibetan texts, a single print — is the sole textual witness, or exemplar, available to the translator. Sometimes also textual witnesses are interconnected in contaminated textual traditions. The translator has no choice then but to use a received text (a *textus receptus*), which may be a so-called vulgate.<sup>8</sup> This situation may be unsatisfactory, but it is often unavoidable.

In our times, globalization and dialogue between civilizations are beholden to translators and their translations. The ever-growing concern with translation in Tibetan and Buddhist studies may be seen as a move in the direction of a closer and deeper engagement with what is contemporary, and with a worldwide public, in a field of highly specialized study that has often been perceived as bearing only on the ancient and

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<sup>7</sup> See 'Some reflections on translating', p. 374 ff.

<sup>8</sup> See further D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'Some reflections on the place of philosophy in the study of Buddhism', *JLABS* 18 (1995), pp. 163 ff. (the printing of this article was regrettably defective and omitted many diacritics).

antiquarian, the remote and the ‘other’. But true reflection in a field of humanistic study — a *Geisteswissenschaft* —, including that directed toward the very old, will, by its very nature, possess a facet that is contemporary — and indeed eminently present — once it is so to say actualized in the acts of thinking and translating. Translation may perhaps even possess a further dimension that is political — in the proper and historical sense of relating to a (more or less extended) *polis*; this is a way of saying that a translation and its source-text are also social phenomena. They have to do with communication through a source-text and a target-text that is realized in a contemporary interface between the author(s) of the source-text, the maker(s) of the translated text, and their respective audiences which, nowadays, can be worldwide.

A further factor bearing on our concern with translation in Tibet is, of course, an awareness that, as an organized and sustained activity, it has played such a major role in the cultural history of that land beginning at the latest in the eighth century.

### III

In India the topic of translation seems to have been little thematized and theorized, even though very many Indians have been (and are) bilingual or multilingual owing to the social and historical conditions that have prevailed (and continue to prevail) in that land. In classical Sanskrit, there exists no single specific word to denote interlingual translation. In a more recent stage of this language, the word *anuvāda* — meaning in traditional exegesis an illustration or explanation as opposed to a rule or injunction (*vidhi*) — is used for the purpose. Apte’s English-Sanskrit dictionary adds derivatives of *parivṛt-* and (*vi*)*pariṇam-*. But, given its ritualistic view of speech (*vāc*, *śabda*) and the language of Vedic revelation (*śruti*) as well as its attitude to ‘incorrect’ speech forms (*apaśabda*, *apabhraṃśa*) deviating from the norm, classical Brahmanical civilization evidently did not generally feel the need for a science of interlingual translation. For ‘to translate’, beside *anuvādeti*, Buddhadatta’s English-Pali dictionary lists (*bhāsantaraṃ*) (*vi*)*parivatteti* (‘turn’, the same metaphor as in older English); these words belong to a later stage in the development of the Pali language.

One Sanskrit expression deserves mention here. In Sanskrit dramas, the word *chāyā*, meaning ‘shadow’, is used to designate the Sanskrit version of a passage in Prakrit spoken by certain

categories of actors in a drama. This Sanskrit *chāyā* is thus a sort of shadowed projection of a Prakrit composition. (In Tibetan, furthermore, the ‘verbal icon’ represented by the bKa’ ’gyur, the Buddha-word in translation, is termed a *gsun rten* or ‘Word-support’; here a somewhat different idea of projection seems to be latent. In Buddhist thought, moreover, a visual icon of the Buddha has often been conceived of as a shadow, an artist’s projection or ‘translation’, of his true form. In Tibetan, this sacred image is called a *sku rten* ‘Body-support’.) Following the metaphor of the shadow or reflected projection, a translation might then be regarded as a sort of reflex of its source-text. It may perhaps be thought of as somehow projecting, in new linguistic garb, an original that is not fully and integrally translatable. (This particular situation is to be distinguished from the further issue in Buddhist thought of conceptually and linguistically concretized projections of an essentially ineffable insight relating to ultimately inexpressible reality, a matter addressed below in Section IV.)

In indological secondary literature, relatively little attention seems to have been given to translation as an art and a science. (Of course, in this scholarly literature, ample discussion has been accorded to the question of how to render particular Sanskrit terms and expressions. A well-known example is Vedic *ṛta*, which has been rendered either as cosmic order or as truth; further examples are *brāhman* and *satya*.) In the secondary literature of Buddhist studies, too, it is remarkable how little systematic attention has been devoted to the translation of even such important and indeed fundamental technical terms as *rūpa* and *saṃjñā* (Pali *saññā*), these names of two of the five *skandhas* being often (but only very approximatively) translated as ‘form’ and ‘perception’ (rather than as ‘[visible] matter’ and ‘idea, concept’).<sup>9</sup>

In the history of Indian Buddhism, translation has none the less been an activity of major importance. Whilst Theravāda Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia has retained the language we call Pali for transmitting its canonical literature (*pāli/pālī*), other traditions of Buddhism in India have transmitted their canons in

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<sup>9</sup> See ‘Some reflections on the place of philosophy’ (as in n. 8 above), p. 146; and D. Seyforth Ruegg, ‘Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries and some problems in Indo-Tibetan philosophical lexicography’, in: B. Oguibénine (ed.), *Lexicography in the Indian and Buddhist cultural field* (Studia Tibetica IV, Munich, 1998), pp. 137–8, 141.

various other Prakrits and in Sanskrit. Some of these renderings were more transpositions than translations properly speaking. This was presumably because, at the time, transposing one Indo-Aryan version of a canonical text into another may have seemed straightforward enough. The Theravāda tradition of Sri Lanka does, however, know of two old and very important Buddhist translation projects; these were the translation into Sinhalese of a corpus of commentaries on the canon brought there by the princely monk-elder Mahinda in the third century BC, and then, more than half a millennium later, the translation of this *Sīhaḷaṭṭhakathā* into the language of the canon (the so-called *māgadhā nirutti*, i.e. Pali) at the time of Buddhaghosa (c. 370–450?) (see the extended *Mahāvamsa* xxxvii.242–244, where the verb *parivattesi* ‘turned’ has been employed to express the action of translation; the same word was used for the ‘turning’ of sūtras into the Sinhalese *nirutti* or language at xxxvii.175).

#### IV

Translation of the dharma self-evidently presupposes its translatability in principle. And as a consequence it also raises the theoretically prior question of the very expressibility through concepts and words of the Buddha’s ineffable insight. A brief consideration of the cognitive status of the text — the object of our translating activities — is therefore appropriate here.

In Buddhist tradition, the insight achieved by the Awakened Buddha (*anuttarasamyaksambuddha*) has been regarded as essentially inexpressible and incommunicable — as is ultimate reality in itself (*[niṣparyāya]-paramārtha* = *[nam graṅs ma yin pa’i] don dam pa*), which is described as discursively inexpressible (*avācya, anabhilāpya* = *brjod du med pa*). After his Awakening (*anuttarā samyaksambodhiḥ*), the Buddha is indeed related to have hesitated to teach something so deep, and he had to be implored to do so by Brahmā Sahā(ṃ)patī, the divine protector of the world of living beings (*sahālokaadhātu*). In the *Tathāgataguhyasūtra* and the line of thinking that it represents, it even is stated that, from the night of his Awakening to the time of his *parinirvāṇa*, the Buddha actually uttered not a single syllable (*akṣara*).<sup>10</sup> He is frequently represented as being perpetually in meditative concentration (*samādhi*), free

<sup>10</sup> See Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā* xviii.7 and xxv.24.

from all conceptualization (*vikalpa*) and conceptual-linguistic development (*prapañca*), and hence as having truly kept the silence of the Noble (*ārya-tūṣṇībhāva*). The Sanskrit word *muni* — a standing epithet of a Buddha, as in the name Śākyamuni — has often been understood in terms of silence (*mauna*, *mauneya*, notwithstanding its standard Tibetan equivalent *thub pa*). Under these conditions, however, there would clearly be little that is translatable into discursive concepts and language, much less something translatable interlingually. Alternatively, it has been held that the Buddha communicated his entire dharma in one single sound (*ekasvara*[*ghoṣa*]).<sup>11</sup> This, too, would be untranslatable discursively.

Still, in order to communicate with and teach his disciples, the Buddha — the omniscient one (*sarvajña*) who knows the world (*lokavid*, i.e. mankind) — is said to master languages and dialects; and he is described as learned (*bahuśruta*). In the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā* (Chapter xxx, ed. Wogihara, p. 941), furthermore, a certain *samādhi* is said to be accompanied by skill in the sounds made by all sentient beings (*sarvasattvarutakauśalyānugata*); another *samādhi* is termed the production of the various sounds, words and syllables (*nānārutapadavyaṅjanābhīnirhāra*) made by sentient beings; and the same text even mentions a *samādhi* named *nāmaniruktiṭpadavyaṅjana*. Mastery of languages may, therefore, be regarded as an aspect of the Buddha's skilfulness in salvific means (*upāyakauśalya*).

In the philosophy of Buddhist thinkers classified as Svātantrika-Mādhyamikas, conceptualizable ultimate reality ([*sa*]paryāyaparamārtha, Tib. *mam grañs pa'i don dam pa*, i.e. a notional and notational ultimate) — in other words, the *paramāsthānukūla* (Tib. *don dam pa dan mthun pa*) or level that accords with ultimate reality — embraces discursivity and expression in language, as distinct from ultimate reality in itself, which is not discursively conceptualizable and expressible in language (the [*ni*]paryāya-]*paramārtha*; see note 14 below). In the philosophy of Vijñānavāda thinkers, the relative level of expression (*udbhāvanāsamvṛti*, Tib. *brjod pa'i kun rdzob*) — i.e. an indication or showing (*samsūcanā*) through

<sup>11</sup> See *Śatasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā* (ed. P. Ghōṣa, Bibliotheca Indica), pp. 75–76; *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* xii.9 (ed. Lévi, p. 80.28). Cf. A. Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule* (Paris, 1955); E. Lamotte, *Le traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, pp. 1985 ff., 2281 ff., 2325 ff.

words — is the level on which the expression in language of ultimate reality is thought possible.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, in the technical language of some later Madhyamaka philosophers classified as Prāsaṅgikas, holding that existents (*yod pa mams*) are simple names/designations (*min tsam = nāmamātra(ka)*) — or simple signs (*brda tsam = saṃketamātra*) and pragmatic-transactional conventional expressions (*tha sñad = vyavahāra*) — means that existents — including even (the concepts of) *nirvāṇa* and the ultimate — belong to the domain of conceptualization and conventional linguistic expression (i.e. *vyavahāra*). This is what will make interlingual translation possible.

Tson kha pa has explained in his *Drañ nes Legs bśad sñin po* that, in the Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka philosophical system, the technical term ‘mere name/designation’ (*min tsam = nāmamātra*) denotes neither epistemological idealism nor metaphysical nominalism. According to him, the meaning of *nāmamātra* is that, were one to seek an objective referent (*don = artha*) [i.e. some object possessing reified self-existence (*svabhāva*, ‘aseity’)] for a conventional expression (*tha sñad = vyavahāra*), none is findable; *nāmamātra* refers neither to the existence of a name/designation when no *artha* exists, nor to the non-existence of an *artha* in the absence of a name/designation. Here, although an existence in *vyavahāra* of any thing at all postulated by the mind (*blo = buddhi*) superimposing (‘*dogs pa*) the *vyavahāra* of names (*min gi tha sñad*) is not maintained, neither is an existence in *vyavahāra* not postulated by a mind superimposing *vyavahāra* maintained.<sup>13</sup> This explanation can be construed as a conventionalism (or nominalism) that holds

<sup>12</sup> See *Madhyāntavibhāga* iii.10, with Sthiramati, *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, p. 134: *tathatādīśabdair nirabhilāpyasya dharmadhātor yā saṃsūcanā sodbhāvanā | tayā dharmadhātor vyavahāra udbhāvanāsaṃvṛtiḥ*. Compare *racanodbhāvanā* in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* xi.65, and *udbhāvanāmanaskāra* in *MSABhāṣya* xi.65.

<sup>13</sup> This explanation is a good example of philosophical exegesis as practised in Tibet. It concerns Candrakīrti’s comment, in his *Prasannapadā* i (ed. La Vallée Poussin), p. 66, on the relational construct of *lakṣya-lakṣaṇa* and the metaphors of the *śilāputraka* and *rāhuśiras*. The relevant passage of Tson kha pa’s (1357–1419) *Drañ nes mam ’byed Legs bśad sñin po* reads (f. 67 = p. 450.3–4): *min tsam gyi don ni sñar ltar tha sñad kyi don btsal ba na mi rñed pa la byed kyi | min yod cin don med pa’am min ma yin pa’i don med pa ni ma yin no | |’dir min gi tha sñad ’dogs pa’i blos gañ gžag thams cad tha sñad du yod par mi bžed kyan tha sñad ’dogs pa’i blo’i dbaṅ gis ma bžag pa’i tha sñad du yod pa mi bžed do*.

discursive concepts and language to be effective on the level of *vyavahāra* = *tha sñad* ‘pragmatic-conventional expression/usage’.

In their respective ways, these views held by Vijñānavādins and Mādhyamikas accordingly recognize the existence of a level of notional (conceptual) and notational (linguistic) discursus which is the domain of conceptual thinking and expression in language. This level is contrasted with non-discursive ultimate reality (termed [*niṣparyāya*]-*paramārtha* by some), which is regarded as discursively inexpressible and ineffable.<sup>14</sup> The aforementioned theories of (*sa*)*paryāyaparamārtha* and *udbhāvanāsaṃvṛti*, and of *nāmamātra*, do not, of course, bear directly and immediately on interlingual translation; but they can contribute to defining the semantic conditions under which *vyavahāra*, inclusive of the discourse of philosophy, is realized. By setting the parameters for intralinguistic and interlingual translatability in Buddhist thought, they account for the possibility of speaking and writing about reality, and they thus ground the possibility of actually engaging in translating what has thus been spoken.

However the cognitive status of the content (*don* = *artha*, *abhidheya* = *brjod bya*) of a philosophical or religious text is to be described with regard to ultimate reality or to the conventional surface level, the fact remains that, as the product of conceptual thinking (*vikalpa* = *mam par rtog pa*) and as consisting in linguistic expression (*sgra* = *śabda*, *abhidhāna* = *rjod byed*), the conceptual and linguistic form expressing this content — i.e. the text as the object of translation — will be assignable to the level of *vyavahāra*, in other words to the surface-level of the relative (*saṃvṛti* = *kun rdzob*).

The understanding that our source-texts are indeed conceptual-linguistic products and hence translatable will show

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<sup>14</sup> On the inexpressibility of *paramārtha* in Buddhism, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, *La théorie du tathāgatagarbha et du gotra: Études sur la sotériologie et la gnoséologie du bouddhisme* (Paris, 1969), Part III, Chapter V (briefly summarized in ‘On the knowability and expressibility of absolute reality in Buddhism’, *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū / Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 20/1 [1971], pp. 1–7). In a simplifying formula, it may be said that the (*niṣparyāya*)-*paramārtha* is ineffable and discursively inexpressible, but that it is still knowable, immediately and non-discursively, through Gnosis (*jñāna* = *ye šes*). See D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘On the authorship of some works ascribed to Bhā(va)viveka/Bhavya’, in: D. Seyfort Ruegg and L. Schmithausen (ed.), *Earliest Buddhism and Madhyamaka* (Leiden, 1990), p. 67; id., ‘The Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika distinction’, *IJ* 49 (2006), pp. 327–8.

that the view reflected in some contemporary writing on Buddhism, which implicitly or explicitly takes for granted that these texts are only paraphrasable (rather than properly translatable), is not well founded. Rigorous translation of Sanskrit and Tibetan works into a European idiom may indeed be an arduous undertaking, and it may well pose many a problem; but it will not be radically and in principle impossible. It is true, nevertheless, that in translation we have to reckon with the loss, to a greater or lesser extent, of the resonances and associations proper to semantic fields; in translation as well as in paraphrase, these semantic fields are almost inevitably distorted or disrupted. This can be observed also in translations from an Indian language into Tibetan notwithstanding their carefully thought-out vocabulary of equivalents for the original Indian terms.

A discussion has taken place among scholars concerning the question whether the allusion in the Vinaya (the Pali *Cullavagga*) to fixing (*ārop-*) '*sakāya niruttiyā*' what the Buddha taught actually consisted in translating (presumably orally) the *buddhavacana* from one language into another, or whether the expression *nirutti* employed relates rather to features of oral delivery and intonation. That is, was this truly an act of interlingual translation, or was the reference perhaps rather to permitted prosodic ('suprasegmental') variation in the recitation or chanting — but *not* the singing (e.g., in the manner of the Brahmanical Sāmaveda) — of the Buddha-word (*buddhavacana*)? It seems that the latter alternative is deserving of serious consideration. At all events, the fact remains that Buddhists both transposed their sacred texts into various historically related languages of India and later translated them into several languages of Central Asia, Inner Asia and East Asia.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For a discussion see D. Seyfort Rugg, 'On the expressions *chandaso āropema*, *āyataka gītassara*, *sarabhañña* and *ārṣa*', in: R. Tsuchida and A. Wezler (ed.), *Harānandalaharī* (M. Hara Felicitation Volume, Reinbek, 2000), pp. 283–306. — At the price of some simplification, it does not seem illegitimate to postulate the existence in earliest times of collections of Buddhist texts describable as an 'Urkanon', or at least as a 'proto-canon'. At first, an Urkanon or proto-canon would have been recited and transmitted orally. Texts belonging to any such postulated Urkanon or protocanon were likely to have been composed in a Prakrit that was presumably an eastern one (a language named 'Alt-Ardhamāgadhī' by Heinrich Lüders), describable as its 'Ursprache' or, more cautiously, as a 'langue précanonique' (Sylvain Lévi). The postulated language may well have been a hybrid *koiné*. Evidence for a protocanonical language has

So much, briefly and following some Buddhist sources, for the question of the translatability of the Word of the Buddha, and hence of the Buddhist dharma, and for the theoretically important prior issue of the expressibility in discursive concepts and language of the insight to which Awakening (*bodhi*, *samyaksambodhi*) relates.

## V

In the history of Tibet the place occupied by translation has been very different from what it was in India. The linguistic difference between the Indo-Aryan canonical idioms of Buddhism — Sanskrit, Pali, Gāndhārī, etc. — and the Tibetan language is of course obvious and fundamental: it cannot be bridged by the expedient of linguistic transposition that evidently seemed feasible in India between Indo-Aryan languages. It therefore raised the issue of interlingual translation properly speaking, this activity being of primary importance for the introduction and diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet.

Unlike classical Sanskrit, the Tibetan language has one standard word for translating as an action: (*b*)*sgyur ba*. A translation as a product is designated by the word *'gyur (ba)*, as in the words *bka' 'gyur*, *bstan 'gyur*, *mñin 'gyur*, *gsar 'gyur*, *sña 'gyur*, *phyis 'gyur*. An original (i.e. primary) translation of a text is called a *gži 'gyur*, and a revised translation is termed *'gyur bcos*. Revision and correction of a

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been located by scholars in surviving texts transmitted by various Nikāyas (i.e. the Buddhist vinaya and doctrinal schools). As for the question of a hypothetical 'Urtext' forming part of an 'Urkanon', it is complicated by the fact that old manuscripts containing texts in Indo-Aryan languages — Pāli, Gāndhārī, (Buddhist) Sanskrit — in use in the Buddhist Nikāyas bear witness to the existence of distinct and variant versions of texts that would presumably have belonged to an Urkanon or to a proto-canon. It is recognized that a vinaya school would have possessed a Prātimokṣa composed in its own canonical language. The possibility cannot be excluded that some Nikāyas at least entertained mutual contacts and that their sacred texts (and canons) were therefore open to common developments. In very many cases no 'Urtext' of variously transmitted texts can now be accurately reconstructed from these surviving variant versions with any high degree of confidence. In the circumstances sketched above, the idea of a *stemma codicum* is not relevant. (The textual history of the bKa' 'gyur as a whole and of its individual component texts including duplicate translations is, of course, different. Tibetan translations of individual canonical texts are usually — but not invariably — attributed to named translators and revisers. The textual traditions of the different bKa' 'gyurs now accessible are often philologically contaminated.)

translation is termed *žu(s) dag*. Words for a translator are *sgra sgyur*, *skad sgyur* and *lo tsā ba* (sometimes spelt *lo tstsha ba*). The expression *žu chen* refers to an authoritative reviser responsible for a definitive and officially recognized translation. Such revision was already taking place in Tibet by the early ninth century; and the word *žu chen gyi lo tsā ba* designates a person engaged in this revision (an example being sNa nam Žaṅ Ye šes sde).<sup>16</sup> Even later translators who executed a definitive and officially recognized translation/revision are sometimes referred to as *žu chen gyi lo tsā ba*, an example being Tshul khriṃs 'byuṅ gnas sbas pa (1107–1190), who (with \*Alaṅkadeva ~ Alaṅkāradeva) was responsible for the translation of Guṇaprabha's large autocommentary on his *Vinaya-sūtra*.<sup>17</sup>

The currency of such established terms was due to the very important fact that, from quite early times in their history, Tibetans have been engaged in the work of translation from Indian languages, and from other languages of Buddhism as well. Today Tibetan-speakers are still engaged in paraphrasing, translating and explaining the dharma in other Asian and in European languages, and also in the work of retrotranslation (i.e. back-translation from Tibetan to Sanskrit, on which see §VII below).

In the course of their centuries-long work of translation into Tibetan, Tibetans could not be unaware of philological problems posed by variant readings found in Sanskrit manuscripts, and also in earlier Tibetan translations. At least some Tibetans then became philologists, and even indologists *avant la lettre*.<sup>18</sup>

Early manuscripts of texts that came to be included in the bKa' 'gyur or bsTan 'gyur collections have been found at

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<sup>16</sup> The word *žu chen* designates a (principal) reviser (*žus dag gtoṅ mkhan gtso bo*) and also, evidently, a revision (as in the phrase *žu chen gyi lo tsā ba*); see also *sGra sbyor bam gñis* (ed. Simonsson), p. 259. Connected problems have been discussed by N. Simonsson, *Indo-tibetische Studien I*, pp. 210 ff., 223 n. 2, 224 n. 1.

<sup>17</sup> In his *Deb ther sion po*, pha, f. 22a, 'Gos lo tsā ba gŽon nu dpal has included this translation in a list of original translations (*gži 'gyur*) and revised translations (*'gyur bcos*). In his dKar chag of the sDe dge bsTan 'gyur (p. 812), Tshul khriṃs rin chen, whose own name is prefixed with the title *žu chen*, has referred to this Tibetan translator as a *žu chen gyi lo tsā ba*. On Guṇaprabha's text see the Appendix at the end of this paper.

<sup>18</sup> See D. Seyfort Rugg, *Literature of the Madhyamaka school of philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden, 1981), p. viii.

Dunhuang and Tabo, and inscriptions containing canonical texts have also been found at Tabo.<sup>19</sup> Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364) was the collector-editor of an early manuscript bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur. Even earlier, bCom ldan Rigs pa'i ral gri (1227–1305) occupied himself with manuscript collections that came to be known as the bKa' 'gyur, as dBus pa Blo gsal (13<sup>th</sup> c.) did also.<sup>20</sup> Editorial activity and the reproduction of texts were subsequently to continue over the centuries.<sup>21</sup> The earliest reported set of printing blocks for the bKa' 'gyur were produced in 1410 under the Yongle emperor of the Ming dynasty in Beijing, as noted above; other Beijing 'editions', beginning with the Wanli (1606, now partly available in Kraków), then followed (for which blocks of a preceding Beijing 'edition' could be used). Blocks for the printed 'Jañ Sa tham ('Li thañ') bKa' 'gyur appeared in 1609–1614. In the eighteenth century, the scholar and noted grammarian Si tu Chos kyi 'byuñ gnas (1699/1700–1774) and his collaborators were responsible for the printed sDe dge bKa' 'gyur (1729–1733), the Co ne blocks having already been made in 1721–1731 and the sNar than ones in 1730–1732. A printed bsTan 'gyur appeared in Beijing under the Qianlong emperor of the Qing (Manchu) dynasty in 1724. Tshul khriṃs rin chen (1697–1774), known as *žu chen* or great corrector, was responsible for the printed sDe dge bsTan 'gyur (1737–1744), which has been held to be better edited (but which sometimes seems over-corrected).<sup>22</sup> The sNar than

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<sup>19</sup> Beside the various catalogues of Tibetan texts from Dunhuang, see for the Tabo texts E. Steinkellner, 'A report on the "Kanjur" of Tapho', *East and West* 44 (1994), pp. 115–36 (= *Tabo Studies I*); id., *Sudhana's miraculous journey in the temple of Ta pho* (Rome, 1995); C. Scherrer-Schaub and E. Steinkellner (ed.), *Tabo studies II* (Rome, 1999); and L. Petech and C. Luczanits (ed.), *Inscriptions from the Tabo Main Temple* (Rome, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> See recently K. Schaeffer and L. van der Kuijp, *An early Tibetan survey of Buddhist literature: The Bstan pa rgyas pa rgyan gyi nyi 'od of Bcom ldan Ral gri* (Cambridge, Mass., 2009), p. 9 ff.

<sup>21</sup> On some later manuscript bKa' 'gyurs see recently C. Cüppers, 'Some remarks on bKa' 'gyur production in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Tibet', in: A. Chayet *et al.* (ed.) (as in n. 3), pp. 115–28.

<sup>22</sup> On the Si tu, Tshul khriṃs rin chen and the sDe dge printing house, see E. G. Smith, *Among Tibetan texts* (Boston, 2001), pp. 87–96; P. Verhagen, 'The "editor" Si tu Pañ chen', in A. Chayet *et al.* (ed.), *Édition, éditions*, pp. 465 ff.; R. Chaix, 'Aspects économiques', *ibid.*, pp. 91 ff.

bsTan 'gyur appeared almost simultaneously, in 1741–1742; and the Co ne bsTan 'gyur, which is closely related to the sDe dge 'edition', appeared in 1753–1773. There exists also a Tibetan canon prepared in the twentieth century in Urga. In 1934, under the supervision of rDo sbis dge bšes Śes rab rgya mtsho and others, there appeared the printed lHa sa bKa' 'gyur based on the sNar thañ and sDe dge ones, which belong to two distinct branches of the textual transmission of this canonical collection (this 'edition' became the object of criticism from some Tibetan scholars for its editorial practice). Over the past half-century facsimile reprints have been published of both canonical collections. More recently, printed editions of the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur collating variant readings have appeared in Beijing.<sup>23</sup> Extensive translation projects as well as important cataloguing, editorial and general philological work are also under way in areas where Tibetan has been at home, as well as in the wider world outside.<sup>24</sup>

The 'digital revolution' has had an immense impact on Tibetan studies also, the 'canon' as well as a large number of non-canonical texts having been made accessible in electronic form in recent years. In particular, under the leadership of its founder, the late Gene Smith, the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC) in New York has made available a very large number of canonical and post-canonical works in Tibetan together with important bibliographical information on them.

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<sup>23</sup> A work on variant readings in bKa' 'gyur xylographs was composed in the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century by the Mongol bsTan dar snaḡs rams pa (ed. Lokesh Chandra, New Delhi, 1982).

<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that Tibetan printed books — or more accurately stated: issues or impressions of these books — have been open to alterations and editorial corrections made to the woodblocks used to print them. As a consequence, prints at first sight made from the same blocks may in fact not always be entirely identical with each other. Attention has been drawn to this fact with regard to the bKa' 'gyur by H. Eimer, *Ein Jahrzehnt Studien zur Überlieferung des tibetischen Kanjur* (Vienna, 1992). The dates given above for the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur blocks — the term 'edition' is not altogether appropriate in this connexion — follow Eimer's work and P. Harrison, 'A brief history of the Tibetan bKa' 'gyur', in: J. Cabezón and R. Jackson (ed.), *Tibetan literature* (Ithaca, 1996), pp. 70–94.

## VI

Already at the end of the eighth century the large Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon of Buddhist terms known as the *Mahāvīyutpatti* was compiled by a group of scholar-translators working under royal auspices; in Tibetan this work is entitled *Bye brag tu rtogs byed chen po*. Several years later, in the early ninth century, there was promulgated by royal command a translators' manual known as the *sGra sbyor bam (po) gñis (pa)*, the origins of which evidently go back to the end of the eighth century. In this manual — known also as the *Bye brag tu rtogs byed 'brin po* or *Madhyavyutpatti* — there are listed a large number of Tibetan equivalents for terms in Sanskrit accompanied by etymological or hermeneutical explanations justifying their interpretation and Tibetan renderings. The introduction to this work contains rules to be followed by Tibetan translators.<sup>25</sup> The influence of these two works of philology and lexicography was still perceptible in the eighteenth century, when lCañ skya Rol pa'i rdo rje (Ye šes bstan pa'i sgron me, 1717–1786) was in charge of the translation of the Buddhist canonical scriptures from Tibetan into Mongolian. To this end this scholar compiled, for the various Indo-Buddhist knowledge-systems, a register of topics with the relevant Tibetan and Mongolian technical terms entitled the *Dag yig mkhas pa'i 'byun gnas* (in Mongolian: *Merged yarqu-yin oron nereti toytaγaγsan dag yig*). Particularly in its introduction are found the echoes of the *sGra sbyor*.<sup>26</sup>

In the introduction and at the close of the *sGra sbyor*, in connexion with the translation rules and vocabulary with which this manual was mainly concerned, reference has been made to the *chos (kyn) skad* 'dharma language' and to the *skad gсар* 'new

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<sup>25</sup> For details see D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries and some problems in Indo-Tibetan philosophical lexicography' (as in n. 9 above), pp. 115–42.

<sup>26</sup> Rol pa'i rdo rje's work is found in vol. ja of his bKa' 'bum. Both the Tibetan and Mongolian texts of its first part have been published by R. E. Pubaev and B. D. Dandaron, *Istočnik mudretsov* (Ulan Ude, 1968). See D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'On translating the Buddhist canon', in: P. Ratnam (ed.), *Studies in Indo-Asian art and culture*, vol. 3 (Raghu Vira Commemoration Volume, New Delhi, 1973), pp. 243–61. On Rol pa'i rdo rje see H.-R. Kämpfe, *Ñi ma'i 'od zer / Naran-u gerel* (St. Augustin, 1976); and Wang Xiangyun, 'The Qing court's Tibet connection: Lcang skya Rol pa'i rdo rje and the Qianlong Emperor', *HJAS* 60 (2000), pp. 125–163.

language’, terms referring to the language being developed at the time for the purpose of translating Indian texts into Tibetan. Mention is also made there of a *bkas bcad (pa)*, an expression that refers to an official decree instituting the use of this new language; what is thus referred to is the *sGra sbyor* as an instruction on the ‘new language’ composed at the command of the Tibetan ruler Khri lDe sroñ btsan.

This language is there described as officially recognized linguistic usage or vocabulary (*min du btags pa*) collected in a register or repertory (*dkar chag*); it was binding and not to be deviated from.<sup>27</sup>

If until relatively recently the *sGra sbyor bam gñis* has received less scholarly attention than it deserves, this may be because it was not fully appreciated that etymologies recorded in it were not just fanciful ‘popular etymologies’ but, rather, hermeneutical (i.e. *nirukta*-type) ones justifying the chosen Tibetan translation-equivalent(s) by explaining the semantic resonance and values of a word. Thus, in this work, the term *arhat* is explained hermeneutically as *ari-han-*, meaning that the person so designated has destroyed (*han-*) the defilements — the *kleśas* — that are regarded as enemies (*ari*); the standard Tibetan translation-equivalent selected for the term was accordingly *dgra bcom pa* ‘enemy-vanquisher’. But that the scholars engaged in preparing this translator’s manual also knew that the Sanskrit word is derived linguistically from the root *arh-* ‘to be worthy’ is shown by the fact that this etymology is provided by them too. For the Buddha’s epithet *bhagavant*, both a hermeneutical etymology (from the Sanskrit root *bhañj-* ‘break, defeat’) and a linguistic one (from the noun *bhaga* ‘excellence’) are provided; the standard Tibetan equivalent *bcom ldan ’das* is then said to express the fact that the

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<sup>27</sup> For the terms *bkas bcad* and *skad gsar bcad*, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries’ (as in n. 9), pp. 120–122. — The term *bkas bcad* has (at least) two historically distinct uses. One refers to the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* (known as the *bkas bcad dan po*), the *sGra sbyor bam po gñis pa* (known as the *bkas bcad gñis pa*), and the no longer available *\*Svalpavyūtpatti* (known as the *bkas bcad gsum pa*); the second use denotes successive periods in the process of translating and revising the canon in the Tibetan language. See *ibid.*, pp. 121–122. Without reference to this article, parallel results differently expressed were published by K. Schaeffer in his article on Bu ston’s *Yig mkhan mams la gdams pa*, *JAO* 12 (2004), p. 271 f. The expression has been examined also by C. Scherrer-Schaub, ‘Enacting words’, *JLABS* 25 (2002), pp. 263–40.

Buddha's excellent qualities are transmundane. For *dharma*, a notoriously polysemic word hardly translatable by any single lexical item, *chos* was selected as the standard translation-equivalent in Tibetan.<sup>28</sup> In earlier times, the Tibetan transliterations *dharma/darma* were also in use; they survived in the Tibetan proper name D(h)arma (e.g. Dharma grags, Darma rin chen). (It is interesting to note that the standard Mongolian rendering of *dharma* = *chos* is *nom*, a translation-equivalent ultimately derived from Greek *nómos* 'law' and rendering just one of the several recognized meanings of Skt. *dharma*.)

For the purposes of the exacting activity of translation into Tibetan, teams consisting of at least one Indian scholar — called a *paṇḍita* — and at least one Tibetan translator — called a *lo tsā ba* — were constituted. This arrangement — a very important one for both intellectual history and the sociology of knowledge — was doubtless intended to ensure both the faithful accuracy and the fluency of the translation. The Indian *paṇḍita* could also certify the Indian origin of the text being translated and very possibly vouch for the authenticity of its lineage of explanation and practice.

It is hard to imagine how, in all instances, the teams of translators whose names figure in the colophons could have executed personally and alone the very large number of translations sometimes attributed to them; it is possible in some cases that these persons were supervisors of large translation bureaus for whose work they were responsible. (The historicity of the information we have regarding these teams and the technical organization of the translation process itself no doubt require case-by-case investigation; our information mostly comes either from translation-colophons (*bsgyur byañ*), which are usually early editorial additions to the translations proper, or from references scattered through a large number of later Tibetan histories, biographies and *gsan yig* or records of textual reception.)

Tibetan equivalents for Indian technical terms may be monosyllabic (e.g. *chos*) or polysyllabic words or expressions (e.g. *dgra bcom pa*, *bcom ldan 'das*). They may even be lexicalized analytic

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<sup>28</sup> This seems to have been an otherwise rare lexeme in Old Tibetan, and it may be for this reason that it was selected to provide a conventional, and technical, Tibetan translation-equivalent for a Sanskrit word having several distinct meanings.

compounds (e.g. *de bžin gšegs pa'i sñin po* = *tathāgatagarbha* alongside *bde gšegs sñin po*, literally *sugatagarbha*). The technical Tibetan translation-equivalent often appears in abbreviated form (e.g. *med par dgag pa* > *med dgag* = *prasajyapratishedha*, i.e. non-implicative and non-presuppositional propositional negation, contrasted with *ma yin par dgag pa* > *ma yin dgag* = *paryudāsa*, i.e. implicative and presuppositional term or predicate negation, a fundamental distinction in philosophical logic and semantics). The Tibetan language in fact possesses two distinct negatives: *ma yin (pa)/min (pa)* generally used for term or predicate negation, and *med (pa)*, used for propositional negation. The corresponding Tibetan positives are *yin (pa)* for the copula and *yod (pa)* for the substantive verb. Such examples reveal how nuanced and precise the Tibetan system of translation could be made.<sup>29</sup>

In Tibetan translations, the syntax very often closely follows the syntax of their Indian originals. Little attempt seems in many cases to have been made by most Tibetan translators to make their translations read as if they had been originally composed in the Tibetan language; in an important respect, therefore, both their aims and requirements have differed from those of the Western literary translators mentioned above. Because the terminology and sometimes also the syntax of the target-language — the canonical and scholastic Tibetan language termed *chos skad* ('dharma-language') — were modelled on those of the Indian source-language, these literal (but not literalist) renderings having been termed *calques*.

The language of these Tibetan translations should, however, not necessarily be derided as being composed in inexpert and awkward 'translationese', even if, lexically and syntactically, it is on occasion perhaps somewhat unidiomatic and artificial when compared with the language of the relatively few old and original Tibetan texts now available going back to the same period but which are not translations and belong to different literary genres.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> However, concerning the lack of complete isomorphism between logic and linguistic usage — pointed out e.g. by Tsoñ kha pa in his *Dran nes nam 'byed Legs bśad sñin po* (f. 108b = p. 518) — see D. Seyfort Rugg, 'Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries' (as in n. 9 above), note on pp. 126–7.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. T. Takeuchi, 'Problems for the reconstruction of Old Tibetan', *Annuaire de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses*, 111 (2002–2003), pp. 139–40.

The Tibetan *chos skad* was in fact a language carefully and purposefully developed by Tibetans in association with Indian scholars in order to fulfil the task they were setting themselves of making Buddhism and Indo-Buddhist civilization known in Tibet through their work of translation. The *chos skad* then came to be employed also in original Tibetan writings on Buddhism not translated from an Indian language, an early example being the translator Ye šes sde's *lTa ba'i khyad par*.<sup>31</sup>

From the standpoint of the history of the Tibetan language, then, the contribution of the translation projects undertaken by Tibetans — beginning mainly at the end of the eighth century and continuing for centuries thereafter — was the part they played in shaping what became the standard written Tibetan literary language.

A comparable, yet very different, undertaking was represented by translations into Chinese executed some centuries earlier than the corresponding ones into Tibetan. Some Chinese translations even belong to a period antedating the rendering of the *Sīhalatthakathā* into Pali, but they postdate the rendering into Sinhalese of old canonical commentaries placed in the time of Mahinda. Chinese translations did not influence the development of classical Chinese to the extent that the older Tibetan translations shaped the classical *chos skad*.

A noteworthy large-scale translation project that was initiated, like the Tibetan one, in the ninth century was that from Greek, Syriac etc., into Arabic under the Abbasids in Baghdad and associated with al-Kindī.

## VII

Compiled towards the beginning of the Early Diffusion of the dharma in Tibet (*sna dar*), at a time when translations into the Tibetan language were beginning to be made on a grand scale, the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* and the *sGra sbyor* served to guarantee both accuracy

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<sup>31</sup> See D. Seyforth Ruegg, 'Autour du *lTa ba'i khyad par* de Ye šes sde', *JJA* 1981, pp. 207–29. Questions of literalness, syntax (*skad kyi go rims*), adaptation (*snor ba*) and calques were already addressed in the *sGra sbyor bam gñis* (ed. Simonsson), pp. 242, 245, 248. — Concerning the idea of a *chos skad*, see recently the observations of C. Scherrer-Schaub, 'Considérations sur le travail de traduction et d'édition des textes indiens au Tibet', in: A Chayet *et al.* (ed.), *Édition, éditions* (as in n. 3), pp. 307 ff.

and regularity in the translation work being undertaken, as indicated earlier in this paper. Translating was thus to be made as faithful and uniform as possible, and as rigorous as could be expected in what is also an art.

From this it should not, however, be concluded that such renderings were always entirely regular and mechanical: much more was involved than mere machine-like transcoding. Total uniformity in language and terminology is scarcely to be expected throughout the hundreds of volumes making up the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur collections, which contain works translated by different translators over a period of many centuries.<sup>32</sup>

Anyone who has, for example, examined the two Tibetan versions of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* included in two branches of the bsTan 'gyur tradition, one attributed to the translators Sudhana and Vasudhararakṣita and the other to Kanakavarman, will appreciate the problems that can be posed by the existence of quite different translations of a single Sanskrit work. The parallel translations by different *lo tsā bas* of the verses of Nāgārjuna's *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā*, one a separate one consisting of the verses only and the other embedded in Candrakīrti's commentary, also provide an example of parallel translations of a text. And for Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra*, there are known both Pa tshab's revised version of Nag tsho's translation (included in the bsTan 'gyur) and Nag tsho's original translation (some verses of which have been quoted by Tsoñ kha pa). Another interesting case is represented by the two Tibetan translations of the *Prajñāpāramitāstotra* attributable to Rāhulabhadra — one appended to a translation of the *Aṣṭāsāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (found in the Phu[g] brag manuscript bKa' 'gyur under the title *rNam par mi rtog pa'i bstod pa* and attributed to Nāgārjuna, translated by Śāntibhadra and Tshul khriims rgyal ba) and the other in the bsTan 'gyur (bsTod tshogs, Beijing no. 2018 and sDe dge no. 1127, under the title of *Šes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i bstod pa* and also attributed to Nāgārjuna, translated by Thig le bum pa / Tilakakalaśa and Blo ldan šes rab). In this pair of

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<sup>32</sup> Noteworthy examples of variation in the translation of important expressions are to be found for example in the Tibetan renderings of two major sources of the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine: the *Śrīmālādevīsīmhanādasūtra* and the commentary on the *Ratnagotravibhāgavibhāga* (RGVV). See D. Seyfort Rugg, 'Textual and philological problems in the translation and transmission of *tathāgatagarbha* texts', in *BSOAS* 78 (2015), pp. 317–32.

translations of the same work, stylistic, terminological and religio-philosophical variation demonstrates that Tibetan translations have not always been literal to the point of being mechanical and perfectly transcoded into an artificial language.<sup>33</sup>

Much work comparing parallel Tibetan translations of Indian works remains to be done. This comparison should reveal much about individual translation techniques and the development of the Tibetan *chos skad*.

Rather than the *restoration* strictly speaking of an Indian text lost in its original language, the best that can usually be achieved is probably a *reconstruction* from Tibetan using all surviving fragments, citations and close textual parallels of that original text. Such restoration may be likened to the technique of *anastylosis* in archaeology and conservation work. This is not to assert, however, that informed and careful *retrotranslation* from Tibetan into Sanskrit will be a totally useless undertaking. Quite the contrary in fact: not only may a careful retrotranslation from Tibetan into Sanskrit be useful to readers familiar with Sanskrit but not with Tibetan, but, very importantly, it can help modern scholars better to represent to themselves and their readers what may have stood in a no longer available Indian text and thus to engage with it more closely.<sup>34</sup>

### VIII

Turning now from translation into Tibetan from an Indian language and from retrotranslation from Tibetan back into Sanskrit to the problem of translating Buddhist texts together with their technical language into a modern European language — in other words into some form of so-called ‘Standard Average European’ — several approaches can be discerned.<sup>35</sup>

When he published his French translation of the *Mahāyāna-sūtrālamkāra* in 1911, Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935) offered a striking solution to the problem of rendering Buddhist technical (in this

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<sup>33</sup> See D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘Some reflections on translating’ (as in n. 1 above), pp. 383–4. Cf. Jampa Samten, *Catalogue of the Phug brag manuscript Kanjur* (Dharamsala, 1992), p. xxii. Examples of variation in the Tibetan translations of a Sanskrit text will be discussed below in the Appendix at the end of this article.

<sup>34</sup> See ‘Some reflections on translating’ (as in n. 1 above), pp. 385 ff.

<sup>35</sup> For details on the following, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘La traduction de la terminologie technique de la pensée indienne et bouddhique’ (as in n. 1 above).

case philosophical) terminology into a modern European language.<sup>36</sup> For this purpose he developed a system of translation whereby original Sanskrit terms were rendered in the French target-language by uniform equivalents, many of which were newly coined by him. For example, *dharma* was rendered by ‘Idéal’, *saṃjñā* by ‘Connotation’, *saṃskṛta* by ‘Opéré’, and *saṃkleśa* by ‘Toute-passion’. Such translated technical terms he marked typographically by initial upper case letters. In subsequent publications, Lévi was to refine his system of technical equivalents, the last version being found in the *Hōbōgirin* (1929 ff.), an invaluable encyclopaedia in French of Buddhist terminology in the Sino-Japanese tradition. The reasoning behind Lévi’s system is clear: it would help to achieve the disambiguation and precision necessary for good translation. It helped also to preserve semantic fields. But Lévi’s system of regular technical equivalents has found little favour with most subsequent scholars and translators. It required the reader to internalize an artificial, and often somewhat counter-intuitive and awkward, Western terminology hardly suited to a developed natural language like French.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> See S. Lévi, *Asaṅga. Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra, Exposé de la doctrine du Grand Véhicule dans le système Yogācāra* (Paris, 1911). Lévi’s last major publication in which he employed his system was *Matériaux pour l’étude du système Vijñaptimātra* (Paris, 1932).

<sup>37</sup> In the introduction to his publication of 1911 Lévi wrote (pp. \*27–28): ‘Je ne suis pas philosophe: les hasards de la recherche m’ont conduit à étudier un traité de philosophie. J’ai seulement essayé de le traduire en philologue honnête. [...] J’ai pu, j’ai dû plus d’une fois rendre les termes techniques par des équivalents malvenus. [...] Dans le monde de la pensée, on passe difficilement d’une civilisation à une autre; la conception des phénomènes spirituels, leur représentation, leur analyse, leur classement comportent trop d’arbitraire pour fournir des coïncidences rigoureuses. Je me suis du moins appliqué à conserver uniformément les équivalents une fois adoptés; je me suis attaché aussi à rendre les termes issus d’une racine commune par des formations apparentées, en allant même jusqu’à fabriquer sur des types connus des mots nouveaux. La méthode rigoureusement littérale des traducteurs tibétains m’a paru un modèle à imiter; en traduisant un à un tous les éléments qui entrent dans la composition du mot original, ils n’en éclaircissent pas le sens à coup sûr, mais ils permettent de le retrouver avec précision. [...] J’ai affecté d’une majuscule tous les mots employés dans un sens spécial, et qu’il faut se garder de prendre dans leur sens courant.’ In 1937, in his obituary article on Lévi contributed to the *Mémorial Sylvain Lévi* (Paris, 1937), L. Renou, a former student of Lévi, would write (p. ii): ‘On a parfois critiqué le système d’équivalents français, à base étymologique, qu’il a instauré pour rendre les termes techniques du bouddhisme. Il est vrai que l’aspect insolite de beaucoup d’entre eux n’est pas fait pour faciliter la lecture de

It is true that Lévi's system calls to mind the system of regular translation-equivalents developed a millennium earlier by Tibetan *lo tsā bas* for the dharma-language (*chos skad*) and registered in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*. But the linguistic and historical situations in modern Europe and in old Tibet differ. On the one side, the written Tibetan language c. 800 was in a still early stage of development; and, most importantly, in Tibet there existed an authority — the ruler — who could order the adoption of a new and purpose-made, but often artificial, system of translation-equivalents. The situation prevailing in Tibet at the time was thus favourable to the creation of a system intended to obviate irregularity and ambiguity when translating into the Tibetan dharma-language (*chos skad*). On the contrary, by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the main European literary languages had already been in existence for centuries, and they were resistant to the introduction of new and specially created, but artificial, vocabularies. Above all, in the West, there has existed no authority able and willing to impose the use of a uniform system of technical equivalents, however well thought-out it might be (as was Lévi's).

About the same time — but independently of Lévi, whose translations of major Buddhist works were yet to be published — F. I. Ščerbatskoj (Th. Stcherbatsky, 1866–1942) took an approach to translation that was the very opposite of Lévi's. He asserted the desirability, ideally speaking, of making two parallel translations of a technical work on philosophy, one philological or 'literal', and the other properly philosophical.<sup>38</sup> This double requirement is, however, hardly realizable in practice, at least when large-scale

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ses traductions. Mais à l'usage ils se sont révélés un outil pratique si habilement forgé dès l'abord qu'il a pu servir tel quel, sauf de légères modifications, pour la traduction de Vasubandhu faite quinze ans plus tard et pour de nombreux autres travaux.' In his contribution to *Hommage à Sylvain Lévi pour le centenaire de sa naissance* (Paris, 1963), Renou, striking a slightly different note, wrote of Lévi's scrupulous philology which, 'apte à saisir les doctrines, fait revivre en un français hardiment refaçonné la technique verbale, les arcanes scolastiques d'Asaṅga et de Vasubandhu.' Except for the *Hōbōgirin*, Lévi's system has, however, had practically no emulators in French; and a different terminology was employed by his pupil J. Filliozat in his contributions to *L'Inde classique*.

<sup>38</sup> See his *Teorija poznanija i logika* (St Petersburg, 1903–1909); and his *Buddhist logic*, vol. 1 (Leningrad, 1932), p. 521 n. 2: 'A double translation into Russian [of Dharmakīrti's *Samtānāntarasiddhi*], the one literal, and the other free, has been published by me'.

works are to be translated; and Ščerbatsoj himself usually preferred the second kind of rendering, sometimes adding in his notes what he called a philological translation.<sup>39</sup> He came strongly to oppose what he called the ‘method of non-translation’ — the ‘absolutely unintelligible rigmarole’ — which, he wrote, characterized the work of some of his contemporaries.<sup>40</sup> He accordingly avoided untranslated terminology also. Instead of creating a new target-language terminology specially created for the purpose like Lévi’s, he was therefore ready to borrow terms current at the time in Western philosophy. This was in large part the terminology of Kant and the Neo-Kantians. (Successors of Ščerbatsoj have taken ideas and terms from other philosophers and movements; thus, half a century after him, H. V. Guenther drew, at various times, on contemporary philosophers and their vocabularies beginning with C. D. Broad and moving through Phenomenology and Heideggerian authenticity of being to other recent forms of thought.) At first sight, perhaps, this approach to translating philosophical texts may seem attractive: it avoids problems involved in creating for the work of translation an artificial, and perhaps rather private, language, which only few readers would probably have the wish or the time to master, and it seems very ‘up to date’. But this approach revealed itself not to be truly sustainable because different translators — and sometimes indeed the same translator in the course of time — adopted terms and expressions taken from various contemporary Western

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<sup>39</sup> See for example his *Conception of Buddhist Nīrvāṇa* (Leningrad, 1927), *passim* in the footnotes to his translation.

<sup>40</sup> See *Buddhist logic*, vol. 2 (Leningrad, 1930), p. v; and his translation of the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1936), p. iv: ‘This translation aims at an intelligible rendering of Buddhist ideas; it therefore, with rare exceptions, avoids untranslated terminology, it tries to render Buddhist technical terms by more or less corresponding equivalents borrowed from European philosophy. This method seems to me not hopeless, because, in my opinion, Indian philosophy has reached a very high standar[d] of development and the princip[al] lines of this development run parallel with those which are familiar to the students of European philosophy.’ The great Russian scholar’s conclusion seems logically questionable, even if there should be little disagreement concerning his first premise stating that Indian philosophy reached a high level of development; but his second premise is hardly established, namely the assertion that terms can be readily borrowed from the language of Western philosophy because of a supposed parallel development between it and Indian thought.

vocabularies that were disparate, and on occasion scarcely compatible. The procedure advocated by Śčerbatskoj fell into the trap of adopting non-indigenous — i.e. exogenous and ‘etic’ — terms that did not fully satisfy the requirement of accurately rendering the original — i.e. the endogenous and systemically constructed ‘emic’ — terminology and semantic fields of the texts to be translated into a modern European language.

Interestingly, Śčerbatskoj’s approach to the problem of translation was not so very distant from the ‘meaning-matching’ (*ko-i*) that characterized earlier Chinese renderings of Buddhist texts, a method which was to be largely superseded in China by the system of the great translator Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang, 602–664).

In 1935, Stanisław Schayer (1899–1941) took up the vexed topic of translation, making some noteworthy observations.<sup>41</sup> He concluded that it is often preferable — indeed necessary — to retain the original technical terminology of the source-language, providing explanations in the target-language whenever required. Alternatively, and in the final analysis, given the difficulties and serious misunderstandings that can arise when seemingly equivalent terms are borrowed from Western philosophers, he considered that an accurate rendering is possible only on the basis of a formal language (*formalisierte Sprache*). This view was understandable in the intellectual climate in which Schayer was working in the 1930s, when studies on Aristotle and the history of Western logic by his senior Warsaw colleague Jan Łukasiewicz (1878–1956) were acquiring considerable influence.<sup>42</sup> Schayer’s first suggested alternative (*viz.* retaining the original technical term) was in agreement with the practice of classicists, and of writers on ancient and mediaeval philosophy, who regularly employ original Greek and Latin terms, many of which have in fact become part of the vocabularies of philosophy and the modern European languages.

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<sup>41</sup> See S. Schayer, ‘Das mahāyānistische Absolutum nach der Lehre der Mādhyamikas’, *OLZ* 1935, col. 413–5.

<sup>42</sup> See S. Schayer, ‘Studien zur indischen Logik: Der indische und der aristotelische Syllogismus’, *Bulletin int. de l’Académie polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres*, Classe d’histoire et de philosophie, 1932, pp. 98–102; *id.*, ‘Altindische Antizipationen der Aussagenlogik’, *loc. cit.*, 1933, pp. 90–96.

Indological and Buddhist studies could doubtless benefit from taking cognizance of and reflecting on Schayer's observations. But a drawback in his approach is, of course, the fact that a rendering in a formal language would no longer be translation in the usually understood sense. (It has to be noted that this objection does not apply to Schayer's own translations of chapters from Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* published in 1931 where he did not employ a formalized language.) Schayer's brief treatment of the issue published in 1935 did not resolve the problem of translating, and of communicating the meaning of the work being translated to an educated but non-specialized audience. And his advocacy of the use of a formal language has proved problematic: efforts to 'translate' Indian and Buddhist texts into a formal language employing the logical calculus or symbolic logic have not infrequently turned out to be unsatisfactory or, at least, hardly illuminating.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> This was because languages of modern logic might be thought ordinarily to presuppose, tacitly if not explicitly, the real existence of significata; for — beside the logical calculus concerned with a syntactics of signs (and also beside a pragmatics) — there is latent in them a semantics concerned with the link between signifier and signified. But, in many Buddhist philosophical works being translated, the ontological reality of the signified entities may not be admitted. Thus, in Madhyamaka thought (which has sometimes been described as anti-realist), no substantial reified entity (*bhāva* = *dnos po*) possessing hypostatized self-existence (*svabhāva* = *ran bžin, no bo űid*) is postulated in terms of any of the putatively exhaustive positions of the tetralemma (*catuṣkoṭi* = *mu bž'i*); the possibility of the existence of a causal relation between self-existent entities is analysed and then rejected; no thesis (*pratijñā* = *dam bca'*) asserting the existence of such an entity is asserted (*abhyupagam-* = *khas len pa*); and the kind of negation employed in the Mādhyamika's statements is typically not of the predicate or term variety (*pariyudāsa* = *ma yin par dgag pa*) but of the propositional variety (*prasajyapratishedha* = *med par dgag pa*) wherein a subject having self-existence is not presupposed and the contradictory of the proposition negated is not posited by implication. On the semantic level, then, Madhyamaka thought is largely concerned with deconstructing (or 'zeroing') conceptual constructs that attach to discursive thought and language. The objectives and methods of, e.g., Nāgārjuna and the Madhyamaka and those of modern formal logic thus appear dissimilar. And, in earlier scholarly research, the language of the Mādhyamikas has lent itself very much less well to treatment in a formalized language of logic than in a natural language. But this does not of course entail excluding the examination of the formal, syntactic, structure of the reasonings found in Madhyamaka (or other Buddhist philosophical) texts. A kind of formalization using words from ordinary language, and associated with the name of Phya pa Chos klyi señ ge, made an appearance in Tibetan scholasticism at the seminary

Several of Louis de La Vallée Poussin's (1869–1938) later translations — those subsequent to his early and fluent French translations of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* from Sanskrit (1905–1907) and of part of Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* from Tibetan (1907–1911) — were written in a language combining French with original technical terms and stock phrases from the works he was translating. Examples are his rendering of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* (1923–1931) and his *La Siddhi de Hiuan-tsang* (1928–1929), where the somewhat 'macaronic' style of translation adopted may seem defensible but not really unavoidable.<sup>44</sup>

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of gSañ phu sNe'u thog; and it came to be applied to most knowledge systems. Much earlier also, in India, Buddhist thinkers did not refrain from examining and categorizing the forms of reasoning being used in their schools.

See 'Some modern interpretations of the *catuṣkoṭi*', in: D. Seyforth Ruegg, 'The uses of the four positions of the *catuṣkoṭi* and the problem of the description of reality in Mahāyāna Buddhism', *JIP* 5 (1977), Appendix II, p. 39 ff. (referring in particular to H. Nakamura and F. Staal, and to the semiologists L. Mäll and J. Kristeva); cf. id., *Three studies in the history of Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka philosophy* (Vienna, 2000), Section 2. Over the last decades contributions have appeared seeking to apply modern methods of logical analysis to Madhyamaka. M. Tachikawa published a 'Logical analysis of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*' in: M. Nagatomi *et al.* (ed.), *Sanskrit and Indian studies* (Essays in honour of D. H. H. Ingalls, Dordrecht, 1980), pp. 159–81, and S. Katsura explored the use of Venn diagrams in 'Nāgārjuna and the tetralemma', in: J. Silk (ed.), *Wisdom, compassion and the search for understanding* (G. M. Nagao Volume, Honolulu, 2000), pp. 201–20. T. Tillemans published a useful article entitled 'La philosophie bouddhique est-elle une logique non-classique ou déviante?', in *Les cahiers de la philosophie* 14 (1992): *L'Orient de la pensée, philosophies en Inde*, pp. 183–98. (The applicability to Nyāya philosophy of modern logical methods was once considered by J. M. Bocheński, 'Die indische Gestalt der Logik', in his *Formale Logik* [Freiburg, 1956], p. 481 ff.) See also S. Schayer, 'Über die Methode der Nyāya-Forschung', *Festschrift für Moritz Winternitz* [Leipzig, 1933], pp. 247–57.) — The issue is in the final analysis not just one of 'translation' into a formal language of logic but also one of 'translating' over borders in comparative philosophy and intercultural dialogue. This problem cannot be further pursued in this place, except perhaps to point to the question of *epoché* and bracketing. Cf. recently, and generally, F. Chenet, 'Du sens de la philosophie comparée', in: J. Lacrosse (ed.), *Philosophie comparée: Grèce, Inde, Chine* (Paris, 2005), pp. 79–97; id., 'Catégories de langue et catégories de pensée en Occident et en Inde', in: F. Chenet (ed.), *Catégories de langue et catégories de pensée* (Paris, 2005), pp. 9–67.

<sup>44</sup> In his 'Notice sur Louis de La Vallée Poussin' in: *Académie Royale de Belgique, Annuaire pour 1965*, E. Lamotte wrote (p. 158): 'Ses ouvrages se présentent donc sous la forme d'une version mi-française mi-sanskrite, déconcertante pour les non-initiés, mais commode pour le spécialiste. Par ce procédé, il se séparait de

Ščerbatskoj's castigating of what he called the 'method of non-translation' applies, albeit in different ways, to La Vallée Poussin's polyglot style of translation and to Lévi's monolingual method with its artificial system of French translation-equivalents. The translations by Lévi and La Vallée Poussin of treatises belonging in particular to the Vijñānavāda school of Buddhism thus differed markedly in method and style.

What might be described generically as a fourth, more or less eclectic, style of translation has been employed by many recent scholars. In one form or other, of course, this style of translation goes far back in indological and Buddhist studies; but it is characteristic in particular of renderings of Buddhist philosophical works that have been made more recently. This style represents a pragmatic approach that seems not to be based on any particular *theory* of translation; it recognizes the qualities possessed by the first two approaches noticed above while at the same time seeking to overcome shortcomings and failings perceived in them. Its very character has ineluctably resulted in a marked heterogeneity of style and terminology observable between modern translators — and sometimes in disparities between successive periods within a single translator's work.

Among successful examples of the more recent approach to translation of Buddhist texts were renderings made beginning in the 1930s by a disciple of La Vallée Poussin, Étienne Lamotte. In his French translations, this scholar usually placed in round brackets the relevant Sanskrit (or other original) terms and expressions (if not each time they are found in a text, then at least the first time they appear). His method of translation was essentially philological and sought to preserve the best in other methods. It has drawn the criticism — rather exaggerated and unjust — that the resulting printed pages were overburdened and hard to read.<sup>45</sup> Erich Frauwallner and his followers also adopted a

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Th. Stcherbatsky dont les traductions tendent vers la paraphrase, et de S. Lévi qui rendait les termes techniques indiens par des équivalents français forgés de toutes pièces de manière à répondre à la structure même du mot original.'

<sup>45</sup> In 1938, in the introduction to his translation of the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (*La Somme du Grand Véhicule*, Louvain, p. vii), Lamotte succinctly described his own approach to translation. And a quarter of a century later, in the introduction to his rendering of the *Vimalakīrtinīrdeśa* (Louvain, 1962), he wrote (p. vi): 'Le texte français a été truffé de termes techniques, de formules et de clichés sanskrits,

philological approach to the practice of translation, even if their renderings read somewhat differently from Lamotte's; usually, for example, they have made less use of bracketed original terms.<sup>46</sup>

Present-day translators of Buddhist texts mostly employ some form of the fourth style of translation, basing their work on philologically improved textual editions, variant readings and a steadily expanding selection of parallel sources while, in the process, refining their terminology. They differ among themselves in the extent to which they include in their renderings bracketed technical terms from the source languages and in their use of contemporary logical, philosophical, psychological and religious terms and ideas. The outcome is that distinct target-language dialects and idiolects belonging to individual translators have come into use so that, quite often, there is lacking a common terminology shared by most if not all translators into a given language. A remedy is either to add to translations the original technical terms in brackets (as was done for instance by Lamotte) or to print the full original text on a facing page (something that can be practically done only fairly rarely).

## ***LX***

The principle of semantic convention — something that can be both compared and contrasted with the Saussurean *arbitraire du signe linguistique*<sup>47</sup> without, of course, being reducible to it — and the kind of conventionality that attaches in particular to the work of translation have not gone entirely unnoticed (if perhaps only tacitly) by translators. But its full implications seem often to have been little heeded or entirely overlooked in many a discussion of the issues involved in interpreting across boundaries and

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imprimés en italiques et mis entre parenthèses. Il ne sont pas de mon invention, mais puisés à des sources authentiques [...]. Pareil étalage philologique paraît relever de la manie ou de la pédanterie et, de toute manière, ne facilite pas la lecture courante [...]. Mais ceux qui veulent aller jusqu'aux sources auront l'impression — du moins, on l'espère — d'entrer en contact direct avec l'original indien du texte.'

<sup>46</sup> For a discussion see 'La traduction ...' (as in n. 1 above).

<sup>47</sup> See the important restrictions expressed by É. Benveniste, 'La nature du signe linguistique', in: *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, vol. i (Paris, 1966), pp. 49–55, an article first published in 1939 that is still worthy of attention.

‘translating’ between cultures, philosophies and religions. This is so especially if the exogenous and the ‘etic’ are allowed to overshadow or displace the endogenous and the ‘emic’. It would appear that both philological-historical investigation and systemic, i.e. ‘emic’, analysis are preconditions for pursuing comparative, and ‘etic’, analysis: to attempt to jump to the latter without first engaging thoroughly with the former is to ‘jump the gun’ methodologically.

Briefly stated, the dialogue of civilizations, philosophies and religions so much sought after these days needs to be prepared through the prior step of systemic analysis. Otherwise, participants in this would-be dialogue will hardly be in a position to communicate, and so truly to dialogue, with one another. And, very possibly, we shall then be confronted either with that cacophonous and fateful clash of civilizations of which we hear so much or with the silence of the deaf. But once the step of ‘emic’ investigation has been taken — and when we have learnt to ‘think along’ with the authors and texts we study and propose to translate — there will exist very much less of an unbridgeable barrier between self and alterity — between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ of anthropological discourse and between the ‘us and them’ of popular discourse —, the perceived dichotomy between which will have been somewhat resolved (if not necessarily altogether dissolved) through both historical-philological investigation and systemic analysis. Then, and probably only then, can the comparative and the ‘etic’ find a methodologically and intellectually well-grounded place as a second step in the study of civilizations and in translating between them.<sup>48</sup>

It has not always been recognized clearly enough (notwithstanding Sylvain Lévi’s pertinent remark made already in 1911 and cited in note 37 above) that technical terms and expressions borrowed from a European language and system of thought, and selected (if only in a process of ‘meaning-matching’) as equivalents for the purpose of translation into a European target-language, have to be understood in accordance with the

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<sup>48</sup> Concerning the categories of the emic and etic, see the discussion in ‘Some reflections on the place of philosophy in the study of Buddhism’ (as in n. 8 above), pp. 156 ff.; and ‘The *Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika* distinction in the history of Madhyamaka thought’, *IJ* 49 (2006), pp. 334, 341.

definitions and/or uses of these terms and expressions in the original sources. Definitions of the selected equivalents provided in current dictionaries of European languages may be inappropriate or quite irrelevant.<sup>49</sup> Briefly stated, then, once it has been adopted for translating into the target-language, the European translation-equivalent for a technical term or expression of the source-language will require to be interpreted and defined strictly in conformity with its use(s) and/or definition(s) in Sanskrit, Pali, and Tibetan (etc.) texts.

It might perhaps be objected that this approach to translation would take the principle of semantic convention too far.<sup>50</sup> Yet the fact cannot be overlooked that, were this requirement

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<sup>49</sup> An extreme case is presented by the polysemic word *dharma*. Rather than selecting one single translation-equivalent applicable everywhere by stipulative convention — something which is perhaps theoretically desirable and was actually done in Tibetan where, for instance, the single technical translation-equivalent *chos* has been universalized, but which is in practice hardly possible for a modern European language — *dharma* may be translated by different European equivalents according to the various contexts in which it appears in the source-texts. This is in fact the solution actually adopted by many translators. Alternatively, it can be left untranslated, which is tantamount to incorporating the word into the (specialized) vocabulary of the target-language (English, etc.). This second solution has been adopted by some translators; and it was one of two possibilities envisaged by S. Schayer (see above). But in very many if not the overwhelming majority of cases, it is possible to assign a single, conventional and technical, translation-equivalent to an original Sanskrit or Tibetan philosophical (etc.) term, as has been done by Tibetan translators and then by S. Lévi. This third solution would have the advantage of maintaining intact, on the level of linguistic expression, the semantic fields of the original Sanskrit (or Tibetan, etc.) source-language through time and through distinct philosophical schools. With regard to the target-language, and to the level of content, both the first and the last choice involve some degree of artificiality, linguistic or semantic. As for the word *dharma*, it represents an extreme case rather different from that of very many other technical terms of philosophy.

<sup>50</sup> Over the years, ideas about the translation and interpretation of texts have tended to be predominantly historicist and positivistic, and often decidedly essentialist, in their presuppositions and methods. Such positivism — often going hand in hand with a certain aversion to philosophical and even linguistic theory — has been in evidence in wide areas of indology. The semantic conventionality of the linguistic sign and, in particular, the kind of conventionality that attaches to the work of translation of specialist works, philosophical and otherwise, have not always been clearly recognized. More recently, the predominance of historical-philological positivism has been in part overtaken by theories and doxas currently in vogue but possessing only limited applicability to the study of

to be put aside, it will scarcely be possible to translate the technical terminology of a Sanskrit or Tibetan text into any other natural language. And the call, made by Schayer, for recourse to a formalized language might then have to be followed. Alternatively, we would be thrown back on Lévi's approach to translation employing, in the target-language, specially created, and often artificial, technical translation-equivalents. The not inconsiderable problems connected with the approaches to translation advocated by Lévi and Schayer, entirely different though they were, will then have to be accepted and made the best of. But if neither Lévi's nor Schayer's approach to translation is to be adopted because they have both been found wanting, we are left with the many shortcomings of Ščerbatsoj's approach, which recalls the 'meaning-matching' of earlier Chinese translators. Even today, meaning-matching with all its inadequacies and pitfalls has not fallen entirely out of favour with many translators. Unless carefully controlled, however, this meaning-matching may produce translation-equivalents that are unstable if not unintelligible.

Accordingly, in view of the limitations and shortcomings of each of the first three methods of translating noticed above — those of Lévi, Ščerbatsoj and Schayer — some version of the fourth approach will probably be the most suited to precise translation. This fourth approach allows for subvarieties — exemplified by Lamotte and Frauwallner — to be adopted depending on circumstances and the requirements of individual source-texts and target-languages.

## X

In Tibetan translation technique, the treatment of Sanskrit prefixes/preverbs (*ñe bar bsgyur ba* / *ñer bsgyur* = *upasarga*) provides illustrations of semantic convention. Thus, to render the Sanskrit prefix/preverb *nis-* in its various uses, Tib. *nes par* is regularly employed with no reference to the independent lexical meaning of *nes pa*, i.e. 'certain(ly)'. Similarly, Tib. *lhag par* is employed to render Skt. *adhy-* in its various uses with no necessary reference to the independent lexical meaning of *lhag pa*, i.e. 'addition(al), superior'.

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India and Tibet. They seek to analyse the materials in dependence on some fashionable, and often reductionist, ideology that lays these materials out on the Procrustean bed of preconceived theory or speculation, sociological or other.

Further examples of this procedure are too numerous to list here. This feature of Tibetan translation technique may allow the reconstruction of a Sanskrit prefix/preverb from a Tibetan translation. Yet counter-examples abound. Thus Tib. *so sor* can be used to render Skt. *prati-*; but this is far from having been the case universally because this prefix is polysemic and has not in fact been systematically exploited in the standard Tibetan translation-equivalents of, e.g., the important Sanskrit philosophical terms *pratijñā*, *pratyakṣa* and *pratītyasamutpāda*. The Sanskrit prefixes/preverbs *ud-* and *upa-* also very often find no corresponding equivalent in a Tibetan translation. Further examples could be cited showing that a precise restoration of an original Sanskrit word on the basis of its Tibetan translation alone is frequently quite problematic.<sup>51</sup>

Another feature of Tibetan translation technique is its treatment of words which, in Sanskrit, have basically the same referent (even if, in Sanskrit usage, they are not full synonyms interchangeable with each other). An example of this is the treatment of the Skt. words *maṇi* and *ratna*, both translatable into English by 'jewel' or 'gem'; in Tibetan, however, these two lexemes have received different standard translation-equivalents, *nor bu* and *rin chen* respectively (a procedure justified by the need to render the Sanskrit compound *maṇiratna*). Variation in translation-equivalents appears in more specialized and technical expressions also. Thus, for Tib. *yi ge*, the Sanskrit original (*skad dod*) may be *akṣara* (e.g. in grammar), *vyāñjana* (e.g. in Abhidharma), *varṇa* or *lipi*. For *tshig 'bru*, the Sanskrit original may be *akṣara* or *vyāñjana*. And *tshig* alone may translate different Sanskrit words, including *pada* (e.g. in grammar) and *vākya*. In Abhidharma, *tshig (gi tshogs) = pada(kāya)* means 'sentence', while *min = nāman* means 'word' (see *Abhidharmakośa* ii.47). Even in the case of such an important philosophical term as *niḥsvabhāva(tva/tā)* '(the fact of being) without self-existence, non-substantial(ity)', two Tibetan renderings have been in use: *ran bžin med pa (ñid)* and *no bo ñid med pa (ñid)*. The term was not included in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*; but in the list found there of eighteen forms of *sūnyatā*, *svabhāvasūnyatā* is rendered by *no bo ñid ston pa ñid*, and *prakṛtisūnyatā* by *ran bžin med pa ñid*. In these cases variability of

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<sup>51</sup> The *sGra sbyor bam gñis* (ed. Simonsson, p. 255) already addressed the translation into Tibetan of Sanskrit preverbs and particles (*tshig phrad = nipāta*).

treatment in translation stands in contrast to the procedure adopted when rendering Skt. *dharmā* which, although polysemic, has the single standard translation-equivalent *chos*. Thus, while a single lexeme of Sanskrit, *dharmā*, attracts the single technical translation-equivalent *chos* in Tibetan even though it is polysemic, the single technical term *niḥsvabhāva* is translated by two distinct Tibetan translation-equivalents which are, however, synonyms. And two different, but virtually synonymous, lexemes of Sanskrit such as *ratna* and *maṇi* could also attract separate translation-equivalents, as already noted;<sup>52</sup> in this last case, it was evidently the existence of two different lexemes in Sanskrit that determined the use of two corresponding standard Tibetan translation-equivalents. As for the use of two translation-equivalents for *niḥsvabhāva*, it may well have been determined by the history of Tibetan translation method and terminology rather than by the existence of a difference in philosophical meaning.

Differences in treatment such as these can scarcely be accounted for by the principle of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign alone. We find here irregularities in the employment of translation-equivalents which are doubtless to be expected in the execution of an immense translation project lasting centuries and relying on numerous translators (but which an expanded and more exhaustive *Mahāvīyutpatti* might perhaps have standardized).

A glance at a Sanskrit-Tibetan or Tibetan-Sanskrit glossary reveals, then, that the practice of Tibetan translators has not been totally regular and mechanical and that different Tibetan renderings of the same Sanskrit word are attested. As already observed, this feature of Tibetan translation practice makes problematic if not impossible a precise restoration (as distinct from either a reconstruction or a retrotranslation) of lost Indian texts on the basis of their Tibetan translations alone. Still, an effort was doubtless made by the Tibetan *lo tsā bas* to minimize variation in the rendering of fundamental terms in the vocabulary of

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<sup>52</sup> This difference in translation practice runs parallel to a distinction made in Sanskrit lexicography between a homonymic dictionary, grouping together words having different meanings (*anekārtha*), and a synonymic dictionary, bringing together in one *varga* = *sde tshan*, co-referential lexemes, i.e. different words regarded as having the same (or a very similar) meaning (*ekārtha*, *samānārtha*).

Buddhism, this being already the purpose of the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* compiled in an early period of Tibetan translation activity.

In summary, both convention and imperfect regularity in translation into a natural language have to be reckoned with when studying the vocabularies of writings, philosophical or other, in Tibetan just as in other natural languages.<sup>53</sup>

### Outlook

Following on this review of a number of topics that concern translating as the action of rendering the Buddhist dharma into another language and translation as the product of this action, it may be asked: What is the outlook for the present and future? And, to begin with, what in the case of Buddhism is the disciplinary scope of this undertaking?

The issues considered in this paper pertain to various areas of Buddhist tradition and intellectual history inclusive of the Indo-Buddhist knowledge-systems or sciences (*vidyāsthāna* = *rig gnas*). In Indo-Tibetan tradition, a very noteworthy distinction has been drawn between so-called ‘worldly’ or ‘mundane’ (*laukika* = *’jig rten pa*) knowledge-systems — namely those which in India were shared in common by Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike, with only limited differences between the relevant traditions — and a ‘transmundane’ (*lokottara* = *’jig rten las ’das pa*) science — i.e. the Buddhist *adhyātmaśāstra* = *nan gi rig pa* or ‘interior science’, which is so called because its philosophical and soteriological aims are specifically Buddhist and not felt to be shared with other Indian traditions.<sup>54</sup> The authoritative Tibetan-Mongolian register of terms prepared by lCañ skya Rol pa’i rdo rje for the purpose of translating the bKa’ ’gyur and bsTan ’gyur into Mongolian<sup>55</sup> accordingly includes expressions taken not only from Buddhist philosophy, Vinaya and Mantranaya but also from the Indo-Buddhist knowledge-systems of logic, grammar, lexicography, arts and crafts, and medicine, which were all regarded as important

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<sup>53</sup> For some further examples, see the Appendix to the present article on some translation-variants in the *Vīnayasūtra*.

<sup>54</sup> See D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel dans la pensée bouddhique de l’Inde et du Tibet* (Paris, 1995), Part 2, especially pp. 101 ff.

<sup>55</sup> See above, pp. 211–212 with n. 26.

auxiliary sciences aiding the understanding and practice of Buddhism. Translation of the Buddhist dharma can, therefore, embrace topics and disciplines not usually regarded as belonging strictly to the domains of religion or philosophy as usually defined nowadays in keeping with the high degree of compartmentalization current in academic disciplines.

At the beginning of this paper it was observed that translating can be both an art and a science. As for the translator, he will be at the same time a philologist-historian seeking to understand the text he is rendering both in itself and in its historical and intertextual contexts, and an interpreter, who strives to reach across linguistic and cultural boundaries — or, eventually, barriers — and to transmit the meaning and import of his source-text with the help of instruments assisting transmission to a new audience. Among these instruments are hermeneutics and philosophy. The new audience will very likely be far removed in time and space, and accordingly in its mental categories and presuppositions, from the times and the civilization in which the source-text originated. Hence, while at the outset concerned with the systemic and the emic, the translator-interpreter's task may come also to embrace the diachronic, the cross-cultural and the etic. His undertaking may indeed be only a little less demanding etically than are the tasks of the hermeneut and philosopher wishing to understand an ancient text and way of thinking. The translation of texts belonging to sūtra traditions can thus be very challenging with respect to their terminology as well as to their contents taken as a whole. As for tantric texts, they can prove to be especially demanding owing to forms of expression found in them. (See the Excursus at the end of this paper.)

The work of the contemporary hermeneut or philosopher may in addition involve examining the question whether an old hermeneutical or philosophical tradition has valuable things to say in the world today. Their work might even have in view global 'world philosophy', perhaps even 'fusion philosophy'. As for the translator as philologist-historian, he will seek to advance contemporary understanding of an old text with the help of instruments taken from the toolkits of modern hermeneutics and philosophy. Like the first approach just mentioned — that of the contemporary hermeneut or philosopher —, the historical-philological approach may then hope in some way to incorporate

the contents of a text — the work of an ancient author or authors — into modern cultural, philosophical and religious investigation and discourse. But whilst in his work the translator-interpreter proceeds forwards starting from the past — the source-text being translated — and ending in the present — the translation being newly produced by him —, the contemporary hermeneut or philosopher will be likely to proceed in the opposite direction, from the present back to the past, which he may hope, in certain circumstances, to be able to integrate into a new and evolving world of thought.

In sum, whilst the latter approach will belong, in the first place, to the hermeneut, philosopher and historian of civilizations, the approach of the translator-interpreter may turn to the resources of modern thought in so far as he also seeks to communicate across boundaries in the present. This is because in his role of interpreter the translator may set out to address a wide and non-specialist audience, calling on pertinent developments in the humanities and sciences that belong to our own times. This is one reason for the fact that, even in classical disciplines — and hence also in Indology, Tibetology and Buddhist Studies —, each place and time has interests and concerns of its own and may, consequently, feel the need for ever new renderings of even previously translated classics.<sup>56</sup>

Towards the two ends mentioned, and for the purposes of translating which is central to both, there needs to be compiled a lexicon rendering coherently and systemically the technical terms

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<sup>56</sup> This is not the place to address Axel Michael's concept of what he has called 'Ethnoindology', presented by him in publications since his 'Wissenschaft als Einheit von Religion, Philosophie und Poesie: Die Indologie als frühromantisches Projekt einer ganzheitlichen Wissenschaft', in: G. Brandstetter / G. Neumann (ed.), *Romantische Wissenspoetik* (Würzburg, 2004), pp. 325–339. It might simply be observed that, in accord with a historically well-attested wider use of the word 'philology', indology can readily find place for and accommodate Indian philosophy and religion, and, no doubt, even Michael's 'Ethnoindology' (as well as a possible 'Ethnotibetology' and 'Ethno-Buddhist Studies'). But, unaccountably, indology and other such 'philologies' have come to be defined excessively narrowly in dependence on cleavages in the academy and on administratively convenient disciplinary divisions; the problem is, of course, that such divisions do not in fact meet the actual requirements of the study of Indian civilization that indology needs to be. Far from having solved the problem, area studies seem only to have exacerbated it in practice.

and expressions of the source-texts into a ‘dialect’ of Standard Average European (Benjamin Whorf’s SAE).<sup>57</sup> Very importantly, once carefully selected these technical translation-equivalents will have to be understood and employed in keeping with the definitions and usages attested in the original Buddhist source-texts themselves, rather than only following a definition provided in our dictionaries of English or French or German (and so forth).

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<sup>57</sup> This is not to be understood as a call to revert to Sylvain Lévi’s method of translation mentioned above, pp. 216–217 (§VIII). Nor is it a recommendation to resort to so-called ‘Buddhist Hybrid English’, the discussion of which has too often been marred by a flawed understanding of the complex issues involved.

## EXCURSUS

### **Semantics and Transformative Semiosis in Buddhist Texts in Relation to their Poetics and Translation: Semantic Neutralization, Ontological Deconstruction and the Interconvertibility of Opposites**

Together with hermeneutics, questions of semantic convention — in Sanskrit *saṃketa* ‘sign, (linguistic or other) convention’ and in Tibetan *brda* ‘symbol, word’, a term registered in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* as the translation-equivalent of *saṃketa* — and of semiotics come to the fore when we encounter the oblique language of enigmatically indirect statements (Skt. *abhisamḍhi* = Tib. *ldem por dgois pa*) found in certain teachings described by Buddhist hermeneuts as ‘intentional’ (*ābhiprāyika* = *dgois pa can*), as well as in the oblique and intentional language (*saṃdh[y]ābhāṣa/bhāṣā*, Tib. *dgois pa’i skad, gsañ ba’i skad*) deployed in Buddhist tantric (Mantranaya/Vajrayāna) texts.<sup>58</sup>

In the latter, ordinary linguistic usage (*vyavahāra* = *tha sñad*), together with the quotidian *saṃketa* ‘convention’ linking word (*śabda* = *sgra*) and meaning (*artha* = *don*), would appear sometimes to be deliberately brought under stress and made to break down by being subjected to seemingly transgressive subversion or, more precisely, to deliberate dislocation and nullification. This procedure might be described as a ‘zeroing’ of the standard linguistic sign made up of a signifier and a signified standing in a conventional yet fixed semantic relation in ordinary linguistic usage.<sup>59</sup> In Vajrayāna, this processing of language — a ritual and

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<sup>58</sup> For *abhisamḍhi* in non-tantric texts, see below. Concerning the *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* of Vajrayāna, see, e.g., *Hevajratāntra* ii.3. Compare i.7 on *choma/chomā* (Tib. *(ts)tsho ma, brda*), which is not strictly a verbal and linguistic sign but a more or less covert bodily or vocal signal; this word of Prākṛit origin, an equivalent of *chāima*, corresponds to Skt. *chadman* ‘covering, disguise, pretence’. See D. Seyforth Ruegg, ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness in Buddhist texts: *saṃdhā, samḍhi, saṃdhya* and *abhisamḍhi*’ in: C. Caillat (ed.), *Dialectes dans les littératures indo-aryennes* (Paris, 1989), pp. 295–328; and the further secondary literature cited n. 59 below.

<sup>59</sup> The use of the expression ‘to zero’ here and in the following pages is *not* meant to suggest a dependence of the Skt. terms *sūnya* and *sūnyatā* in Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka thought on the mathematical zero also termed *sūnya* in Sanskrit. Cf. D. Seyforth Ruegg, ‘Mathematical and linguistic models in Indian

yogic poetics of a special kind — was apparently meant to dissolve ordinary semantics grounded in conceptual constructs (*kalpanā*, *vikalpa*) together with the usual semantic connexion between a vocable (the signifier, *vācaka*) and its meaning (the signified, *vācya*) as well as its meaning or reference.<sup>60</sup> This particular kind of semantic neutralization does not, however, necessarily occur in the statements of any and every *ābhīprāyika* or ‘intentional’ text, even those intended to deconstruct quotidian concepts or to convey a teaching obliquely. In the latter type of text, deconstructive *intentionality* and *indirection or obliqueness* of language evidently involved not a *breakdown* of quotidian semantics but, rather, an *inflection or deflection of meaning*. This can also occur in non-tantric texts regarded as *ābhīprāyika* within the hermeneutical system of a given school of thought.

In Vajrayānist intentionality and obliqueness of language, however, it looks as if ordinary semantics was sometimes very deliberately nullified or emptied (‘zeroed’ for want of a better word). The semiotics and codes — the ciphers as it were — of Vajrayānist ritual and yoga together with their interpretation may,

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thought: the case of zero and *śūnyatā*, *WZKS* 22 (1978), p. 171 ff. Yet there does seem to exist a certain convergence between usages of the term *śūnya(tā)* in some areas of Buddhist thought and the notion of zero and zeroing in mathematical thought, a convergence which is not obviously historical or etymological but which can nevertheless allow the former sometimes to parallel the latter.

<sup>60</sup> The Indian Vaiyākaraṇas’ and Mīmāṃsakas’ thesis of the ‘permanent/constant’ (*nitya*) nature of the semantic connexion between word and meaning (*śabdārthasambandha*) was not accepted in Buddhist philosophy. The theory of relationship between signifier and signified most closely associated with Buddhism, *anyāpoha* = *gṛāṇ sel* ‘exclusion of the other’ developed by the Buddhist epistemologists and logicians, uses a different semantic model (which is, however, not quite the same as that of the ‘arbitrariness’ of the linguistic sign).

For further details on Buddhist intentional language, see D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness in Buddhist texts’ (as in n. 58); in particular, regarding deliberate polysemy, see pp. 319–322. For observations on convention — *saṃketa* and *saṃaya* — and on intention (to express) — *vivakṣā* — in relation to translation, see ‘La traduction de la terminologie technique’ (as in n. 1 above), p. 158 ff. And concerning the requirement that European translation-equivalents of Indian or Tibetan technical terms once selected are to be understood in accordance with their definitions and/or uses in the original source-texts, rather than following definitions of the selected European translation-equivalents in dictionaries of European languages, see p. 158 of the last article, and ‘Sanskrit-Tibetan and Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionaries’ (as in n. 9 above), p. 140.

therefore, pose much greater problems in translating than do intentional deconstructive statements in non-tantric Buddhist texts. The methods of interpretation that will be pertinent here are distinguishable from those applicable when translating *śleṣa* ‘double meaning’ often found in Sanskrit literary texts.<sup>61</sup> In addition, the rendering of Vajrayāna texts has to take account of ritual and yogic structures and practices. In the Kālacakra, for example, these relate to the three levels of macrocosm (*bāhya* = *phyi*, i.e. the external *lokadhātu*; *adhideva[ta]m*, microcosm (the internal, *nani*, i.e. *deha* ‘body’; cf. *adhyātmam*) and the ritual/yogic mesocosm (*gḥan*; cf. *adhiyajñam*).<sup>62</sup> In translating, the special semiotic conventions of

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<sup>61</sup> Suggestion (*vyañjanā*) in Indian linguistic theory and, above all, the poetic suggestion (*dhvani* ‘resonance’) of some Indian literary theorists do, however, present possible points of contact. An attempt was made to understand several of the processes involved in D. Seyfort Ruegg, ‘Purport, implicature and presupposition: Sanskrit *abhiprāya* and Tibetan *dgoñs gḥi* as hermeneutical concepts’, *JIP* 13 (1985), pp. 313–14, and ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness in Buddhist texts’ (as in n. 58), pp. 317–18. The *avivakṣitavācya* form of *dhvani*, noted in these two articles, is perhaps closest to the situation in Vajrayāna, where the quotidian semantics of the linguistic sign with its meaning reference breaks down. The theoreticians of the Indian *dhvani* school subdivided the *avivakṣitavācya* form into two: *atyantatiraskṛtavācya*, where the surface meaning is entirely cancelled, and *arthāntarasamkramitavācya*, where the surface meaning is changed into another meaning. That form of *dhvani* where the expressed content is meant even though another, unexpressed, meaning is actually the one intended (*vivakṣitānyaparavācya*) should also be mentioned. But an important difference from *dhvani* theory lies in the fact that, in Buddhist thought, intentional and oblique language (especially in Vajrayānist form) is employed within the overarching philosophical frame of the principle of *niḥsvabhāvatā* and *svabhāvasūnyatā* and in connexion with the associated principle of non-duality (*advaya*). See below.

<sup>62</sup> In Indian linguistic philosophy there is found a discussion of the meaningfulness (*arthakatva*) of *mantras* in virtue of their function on the *adhyātmam*, *adhidaivam* and *adhiyajñam* levels; this implies the meaningfulness of *mantras*. But other Brāhmaṇical thinkers argued for their *ānarthakya* or meaninglessness; see Kautsa’s view cited in Yāska’s *Nirukta* (i.15) and compare Bhartṛhari, *Vākya-padīya* ii.256 ff. In relation to this issue, some authors distinguished between the ‘formal’ sense of a word (its *svarūpārtha*) and its ‘objective’ or referential sense (the *bāhyārtha*). In the absence of a specific ritual application (*vinīyoga*), which makes them meaningful, the sense of a word is ‘formal’; and it is this that allows words to be employed in derived senses (*gauṇārtha*). Concerning *mantras* as *anarthaka/nirartha* in Buddhism, see ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness’ (as in n. 58), p. 322; it might perhaps be preferable to speak of an indeterminateness of

Vajrayāna have accordingly to be rendered by means of a suitable device, a task that may be fraught with difficulties.

In early times in Tibet, the translation of Tantras was restricted — and even prohibited in a decree issued by the Tibetan sovereign — owing to a concern that their oblique and enigmatically allusive language might be misunderstood or even misused.<sup>63</sup> Neither antinomianism — and the way of the Cynic in the original and strict sense of this expression — nor antiphrasis, paronomasia and paradox will be entirely adequate descriptions of the semiotic processes involved, which are neither just behavioural nor purely rhetorical and literary.<sup>64</sup>

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meaning. The theme of Vedic ritual and the ‘meaninglessness’ of *mantra* has been explored by J. F. Staal in a number of publications.

<sup>63</sup> See *sGra sbyor bam gñis* (ed. Simonsson), pp. 260–1, referring to *ldem po nag tu bśad pa*, i.e. to expression in oblique or intentional speech (*saṃdhā/saṃdhyābhāṣā*). In the eighteenth century, a reference to restrictions placed on the translation of Vajrayāna texts is still found in the introduction to ICañ skya Rol pa'i rdo rje's *mKhas pa'i byuñ gnas*, where *gab tshig* ‘covert/enigmatic expression’ and *gab pa'i dgos pa* (*dgoñs pa?*) are mentioned; see ‘On translating the Buddhist canon’ (as in n. 26 above), pp. 254 and 260. Concerning wider issues involved, see C. Scherrer-Schaub, ‘Contre le libertinage’, in R. Torella *et al.* (ed.), *Le parole e i marmi* (R. Gnoli Felicitation Volume, Rome, 2001), pp. 693–733.

The hermeneutics (and hence also the translation) of Buddhist Tantra involves four exegetical ‘modes’ (*caturvidhākhyāyikā* = *tshul bži*) and six ‘points’ (*ṣaṭkoṭi* = *mtha' drug*), consisting of *nītārthaḥ* | *neyārthaḥ*, *saṃdhyā-bhāṣitam* | *na saṃdhyā-bhāṣitam*, and *yathārutam* | *na rutam* and constituting one of seven ‘ornaments’ (*saptālamkāra* = *rgyan bdun*) in Vajrayānist hermeneutics. Widely attested in the Tibetan exegetical literature on Tantra, this system is found for instance in Candrakīrti's comment on the *Guhyasamāja*, the *Pradīpoddyotana*, whose chapters bear the subtitle *Ṣaṭkoṭivyaḥkhyā*. — Cf. E. Steinkellner, ‘Remarks on Tantristic hermeneutics’, *Proceedings of the Csoma de Körös Symposium* (Budapest, 1978), pp. 445–58; and D. Seyfort Rugg, ‘Purport, implicature and presupposition’, *JIP* 13 (1985), pp. 309–10 (with n. 5 containing a bibliography of secondary literature on the subject, to which may be added P. Arènes, ‘Herméneutique des *tantra*', *JLABS* 21 [1998], pp. 173–226).

<sup>64</sup> A notable example of tantric use of language is found in the prose at the beginning of the *Guhyasamāja* and *Hevajra Tantras*. There, in the *nidāna*, there stands the statement that the Lord (*bhagavant*, a word interpretable as ‘bhaga possessing’) was dwelling in the *bhagas* (a term left untranslated in the Tibetan translation) of the Vajra-Maidens (*vajrayoṣid* = *rdo rje btsun mo*), these being described as ‘heart-essences’ (*hṛdaya* = *sñin po*) of the Body, Speech and Mind schemata of all Tathāgatas. (In commentarial literature, this dwelling has been explained in terms of *mahāsukha* = *bde ba chen po*, in tantric technical terminology ‘Great Bliss’, i.e. the highest level of tantric realization). This example represents

We are confronted here with processes that reverberate on the levels of semantics and ultimately of semiosis.

Rooted as it is in the philosophical principle of non-duality (*advaya*) within the overarching Mahāyānist frame of non-substantiality (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) of all entities and Emptiness of self-existence (*svabhāvasūnyatā*), the operation of transformative semiosis in Vajrayāna may on occasion appear playful or even highly colourful and gross. But, in many cases, it would in fact appear to have been a form of expression meant to be non-hypostatizing (i.e. non-essentialist) and counter-conceptual — and also ‘parasemantic’ and ‘parareferential’, or, rather, trans-semantic and trans-referential — and thus to lend heightened expression to what was considered to be ultimately inexpressible (*anabhilāpya*).<sup>65</sup>

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a quasi- (or pseudo-) etymological *figura*. For uses of the word *bhagavān*, see Vrajvallabh Dvivedī’s and ’Phrin las Rām Śāśnī’s *Bauddh tantra koś*, Pt. I (Sārṇāth, 1990), pp. 84–85, and Pt. II (Sārṇāth, 1997), p. 88. This lexicon continues research work initiated by Jagannāth Upādhyāya under the directorship of Zam gdon Rin po che at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies at Sārṇāth (Vārāṇasī).

<sup>65</sup> Vajrayāna has combined ritual with yoga and with religious, psychological and even medical and philosophical exploration in difficult territory. Modern studies on Buddhist Mantranaya/Vajrayāna have yet to develop adequate instruments making possible a full account of its symbolic systems in hermeneutical and semiotic terms; contemporary interdisciplinary vocabularies required for the purpose have still to be perfected. In the remarks made above, a distinction has been drawn between, on the one side, semantics as relating to the binary linguistic sign and its objective referent and, on the other side, a para-linguistic and para-semantic or, rather, trans-semantic, and transformative, semiosis belonging to ‘ciphers’ and symbolic systems extending beyond the scope of the linguistic sign and its objective reference. (The distinction made here between the semiotic and the semantic is not meant to coincide with E. Benveniste’s distinction between the semiotic and the semantic as once proposed in his article ‘La communication’, in *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, Vol. 2 [1974], Chapter 3.)

Being possessed of semiotic virtuality, however, what is stated to be meaningless may still be possessed of semiosis, of ‘signification’. Might it then be preferable to speak here of indeterminateness of meaning instead of meaninglessness (without this being intended to echo Quine’s ‘indeterminacy of translation’)? At this point it seems useful to introduce a possibly important distinction. In the case of the *sūtra*-type hermeneutics of non-tantric texts and of their intentionality (*abhiprāya* and *abhisamdhī*), the idea of indeterminateness appears to be pertinent. For once the appropriate hermeneutical analysis has been properly effected in terms of systemic exegesis of the text through the careful application of the three criteria of intentionality — viz. the existence of a

In Mahāyāna, and in Vajrayāna in particular, the processing of language consisting in what may be called semantic neutralization ('desemanticization') continues and complements analytical philosophical deconstruction, that is, the kind of reasoning applied in Mahāyāna whereby conceptual constructs (*kalpanā*, *vikalpa*) and correspondingly posited hypostatized entities (*bhāva*) are nullified or emptied ('zeroed'), in particular through *prasaṅga*-type reasoning and philosophical analysis using the *catuṣkoṭi* or tetralemma.<sup>66</sup>

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*dgoñs gzi*, a *dgos pa* and a *dños la gnod byed* (see below, n. 77) — any indeterminateness of meaning will be lifted but *semantics* will still remain in operation. But in a case of tantric *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*, where ordinary semantics might be supposed to be inoperative *ab initio* as a result of the nullification, or 'zeroing', of the regular semantic relation between signifier and signified, it would seem possible to speak of meaninglessness in semantic terms even at a time when a certain *semiosis* is in operation.

Concerning recourse to the use of *apaśabdās* from the Prakrit and Apabhraṃśa languages instead of Sanskrit *śuśabdās*, this was not principally due to their supposed 'popularity' (as has sometimes been suggested in the past). Rather, these languages would have been employed because of the polysemy and multivalence they allow, and because of the resulting allusive intentionality of statements couched in these languages, having in view the oblique indication of an ultimately intended (yet truly inexpressible) sense wherever a range of virtualities latently present in the utterance is evoked (as suggested in 'Allusiveness and obliqueness...', p. 322). In this particular case, then, the idea of either semantic indeterminateness or of meaninglessness would be pertinent. Hence it might well be that obliqueness and intentionality — and also absence of literalism in certain teaching contexts — should be kept distinct from the 'meaninglessness' claimed for mantra, where absence of any linguistic-conceptual denotation is not occasional or accidental but essential for the ritualist. This meaninglessness may be no less essential for the yogi in the context of tantric *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*. Meaninglessness would then be not only distinguishable from indeterminateness of meaning but it would have a different mode of signification so to say. (At all events, neither case will be directly connected with the linguist's principle of the *arbitraire* of the linguistic sign.) What is said here is, of course, preliminary and only tentative. The topic of *miñ tsam = nāmamātra* as a cognitive and ontic problem has been touched on in §IV above in connexion with translatability.

<sup>66</sup> See e.g. D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Literature of the Madhyamaka school of philosophy in India* (Wiesbaden, 1981), pp. 11–12 (with index s.v. *prasaṅga/prasaṅgāyate*). The idea of deconstructive philosophical analysis nullifying conceptual construction and ontological postulation when applied to Madhyamaka thought is, of course, not derived from J. Derrida's 'déconstruction'; see D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'The Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika distinction in the history of Madhyamaka thought', *IJ* 49 (2006), p. 334.

In the following pages of soundings in the vast ocean of Buddhist sūtra and tantra it will not be possible to pursue in detail the complex matter of semantic neutralization. A few examples of *intentional*, *oblique* and *enigmatic* language drawn from both non-tantric and tantric (i.e. Mantranaya/Vajrayāna) texts may, however, be briefly considered here. In the following, derivatives from Skt. *saṃ-dhā-* ‘have in mind, intend, allude to (obliquely)’ — in particular the nouns *saṃdhā* and (*abhi*)*saṃdhi* translated by Tib. *dgoṅs pa* — will be rendered by ‘(oblique) intention’, even though this intention may well operate in distinct ways in different texts and contexts. The absolutive *saṃdhāya*, usually translated by Tib. *dgoṅs nas*, means ‘having in mind, intending, alluding to (obliquely)’ depending on the context. Skt. *abhisam̐dhi*, Tib. *ldem por dgoṅs pa*, is rendered as ‘(oblique, enigmatic) intention’. Skt. *abhiprāya*, translated by Tib. *dgoṅs pa*, and Skt. *ābhiprāyika*, translated by Tib. *dgoṅs pa can*, are rendered respectively by ‘intention’ and ‘intentional’. The terms and usages found in the sources, original and translated, are not fully standardized, however, and on occasion they prove to be ambiguous. A translation into some idiom of ‘Standard European’ may therefore pose problems when an attempt is made to demarcate related, but nevertheless hermeneutically distinct, processes. Thus, according to the context, the word *abhiprāya* may mean either ‘intent, (immediate) purport’<sup>67</sup> or ‘(indirectly expressed) intention’. And *saṃdhā(vacana)* ‘(expression of) intent, intention’ can refer to what is immediately intended, whereas *abhisam̐dhi* in sūtra hermeneutics and *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* in Vajrayāna refer to an obliquely expressed intention relating to a sense that is indirectly and covertly expressed.

The remarks that follow are not meant to set out a new theory of intentional, oblique and enigmatic language as attested in non-tantric and tantric texts of Buddhism, nor to propose a new theory of translation: this would require the individual examination, case by case, of a vast number of examples easily filling a book.<sup>68</sup> The aim here is rather to gather together

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<sup>67</sup> In this use, *abhiprāya* is close in meaning to the Indian exegetes’ *tāṭparya* ‘purport’.

<sup>68</sup> The cognitive and ontic status of ‘names’ or linguistic expressions in pragmatic usage (*vyavahāra*), rather than their semantics and semiosis, has been touched on in §IV of the main part of this paper in connexion with translatability.

utterances/statements classifiable hermeneutically as examples illustrating *abhiprāya*, (*abhi*)*saṃdhi* or *saṃdhā* as well as instances of the codes of *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* drawn from Vajrayāna texts while drawing attention to explanations offered in commentarial traditions. These examples will show how language — in its semantics in particular but sometimes even in its phonology — has been processed in a way meant to convey important principles in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna.

In Buddhist tradition, canonical utterances not originating in the tantric corpus such as

*asāre sāramatayo viparyāse ca susthitāḥ |*  
*kleśena ca susaṃkliṣṭā labhante bodhim uttamām | |*  
*(sñiñ po med la sñiñ por šes | | phyin ci log la šin tu gnas | |*  
*ñon moñs kun nas rab ñon moñs | | byañ chub dam pa thob par 'gyur | |),*

and

*mātaraṃ pītaraṃ hatvā rājānaṃ śrotriya dvayam |*  
*rāṣṭra <m> sānucaraṃ hatvā śuddha ity ucyate naraḥ | |*  
*(pha dañ ma ni bsad byas šin | | rgyal po gtsaṅ sgra can gñis dañ | |*  
*yul 'khor 'khor dañ bcas bcom nas | | mi de dag par 'gyur žes bya | |),*

and

*aśrāddhaś cākṛtajñaś ca saṃdhicchettā ca yo naraḥ |*  
*hatāvakāśo vāntāsaḥ sa vai uttamapurusaḥ | |*  
*(yid mi ches dañ byas mi gzo | | mi gañ khyim 'bigs byed pa dañ | |*  
*go skabs bcom dañ skyugs pa za | | de ni skyes bus mchog yin no | |)*

have all been cited as examples of *abhisamdhi* (Tib. *ldem por dgoñs pa*), in particular of the variety termed transformational (*pariṇāmanābhisamdhi*).<sup>69</sup> These riddle-like sentences exhibit verbal incompatibility

<sup>69</sup> See D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Théorie du tathāgatagarbha et du gotra* (as in n. 14), p. 374 f.; *Le Traité du tathāgatagarbha de Bu ston Rin chen grub* (Paris, 1973), pp. 83–84 with note; and ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness...’, p. 300 ff. The three canonical verses quoted above have been cited together as examples of *nāmakāyapadakāyavyañjanakāyānām anyasmin arthe pariṇāmanā* in Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (ed. Pradhan, p. 107; ed. Li Xuezhong, *ARRIAB* 17 [2013], pp. 204–05); their Tibetan translation is found in the sDe dge bsTan ’gyur, ri, fol. 119b-120a). A translation and interpretation have been offered by W. Rahula, *Le compendium de la Super-Doctrine (philosophie)* (Paris, 1971), pp. 185–5. Compare *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra(bhāṣya)* xii.16–17; and Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* ii.31. Closely related versions of these intertextually floating verses are found in *Udānavarga* xxix (Yugavarga) 3, 23, 24, 29, and xxxiii (Brāhmaṇavarga) 61, and in the Pali *Dhammapada* 11, 97 and 294–5. A textual-philological investigation of the last two verses was offered by F. Bernhard, ‘Zur Textgeschichte und

— a sort of *virodhābhāsa* — and incongruity — i.e. the absence of the semantic congruence or *yogyatā* to be expected in sentences that are well-formed grammatically and semantically. They indeed seem calculated to generate puzzlement and productive uncertainty — somewhat like doubt in philosophical zetetics — and thus to induce reflection about what they are actually intended to convey. There is, of course, nothing peculiarly Buddhist about riddle-like sentences; parallels are to be found elsewhere in Indian literature and outside it. But while the meanings of the canonical utterances just cited may appear incongruous or contradictory, the hermeneut will still have to elicit an appropriate sense (in certain cases, even more than one sense might be elicited). Such determination of meaning may be achieved by substituting for the linguistically expressed an unexpressed value that is in some way homologous and shares a common feature or property with what is literally expressed. In this case, the domain of semantics, which includes figurative usage (*upacāra*, *lakṣaṇā*), is not entirely left behind. In other cases, the homology or common quality will perhaps be difficult to identify, at least on the same level of reference.

It is important to underline the fact that the examples of *pariṇāmanā* just cited are not tantric, and that they evidently did not have their origin in Vajrayāna. Interpretation of these sentences belongs to non-tantric hermeneutics; and they are distinct from Vajrayānist codes where a special value may be assigned to a vocable, which is then deemed to convey an ‘intentional’, or oblique and enigmatically expressed, sense beyond ordinary linguistic meaning and the objective reference of the vocable used. Nevertheless, in non-tantric as well as in Vajrayānist hermeneutics, an inadequacy for whatever reason of ordinary semantics or its dislocation on the level either of the syntagma or of the individual

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Interpretation der Strophen: Dhammapada 294, 295’, in: *Festschrift für Wilhelm Eilers* (Wiesbaden, 1967), pp. 511–26; there Bernhard argued against what he called allegorical interpretations of the verses — which, in Asaṅga’s *Abhidharma-samuccaya*, are cited rather as examples of *pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhi*. For *pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhi* see also Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* ii (§31).

It is possible, moreover, to understand an example of *pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhi* as one of *arthāntarābhīprāya*; see Bu ston, *mDzes rgyan*, fol. 8b, with *Le Traité du tathāgatagarbha*, p. 84 n. 1. There will be no contradiction because the four *abhīprāyas* have been regarded as all included in *pariṇāmanābhīsamdhi*.

linguistic sign will cause the receiver to pause and reflect on its sense, and on the teacher's soteriological intention, a concept that has been variously expressed by the terms *abhiprāya*, *abhisam̐dhi* and *saṃdhā/sam̐dhi*. In the interpretation of both non-tantric and tantric texts, the translator also will be obliged to pause and engage in reflection on what is truly intended.

A point of interest is the fact that dislocation in Vajrayāna of a fixed and constant (i.e. *nitya*) semantic connexion between form and content — signifier and signified — has been stated to be achievable by interrupting the clinging (*graha*) to grammatically correct forms of words (*suśabda*), and even by the use of non-standard linguistic forms (*apaśabda*). This sort of linguistic dislocation is said to promote the receiver's taking recourse to the truly intended sense (*arthāśaraṇatā*).<sup>70</sup>

The employment of such non-standard grammatical forms may also be understood on occasion as furthering polysemy and poignancy or pregnancy of meaning. Moreover, the use of non-standard — so-called *Āṛṣa* — forms in the *buddhavacana* has also been understood as countering literalist attachment to the letter (*vyaiñjana*) and as fostering recourse to the truly intended sense (*arthapratisaraṇa*). At the same time, an oft-cited maxim declares 'the well-formulated (*subhāṣita* = *legs par bśad pa*) [as to sense] to be Buddha-Word (*buddhabhāṣita*)'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *Arthapratisaraṇa* constitutes one of the four great recourses (*pratisaraṇa*) recognized in Buddhist exegesis and hermeneutics.

In Puṇḍarika's *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on *Kālacakratānta* I.iii (ed. Jagannāth Upādhyāya, pp. 29–30), use of *apaśabdas* is said to be an antidote against clinging to standard, grammatically correct linguistic forms (*suśabdagraha*), taking pride in these (*suśabdābhimāna*), and thus failing to take proper recourse to the true sense (*arthāśaraṇatā*). (Such might perhaps be regarded as a sort of linguistic antinomianism.) This 'paragrammatical' view could then be cited to explain and justify the occurrence in *buddhavacana* of so-called non-standard, i.e. *āṛṣa*, linguistic forms. (A comparable view of the use of Apabhraṃśa is found in Maheśvarānanda's autocommentary on *Mahārthamañjarī* [71], a work belonging to Kashmir Śaivism; this view states that pure allusive indication [*sūcanamātra*] of a hidden sense [*artharāhasya*] due to multiple meaning is found in Gāthā songs in Prakrit.) For further observations, see 'Allusiveness and obliqueness ...', pp. 319–22.

<sup>71</sup> cf. D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'The place of philosophy in the study of Buddhism', *JIAS* 18 (1995), n. 53.

When it comes to the matter of using the concepts and discourse of philosophy to speak — albeit paradoxically — of ultimate reality (*paramārtha*, *tattva*) which is discursively inexpressible (*anabhilāpya*, *avācya*), Buddhist thought has engaged in noteworthy investigations that have a bearing on semantics and logic. A major topic here has been the *catuṣkoṭi* (*mu bži*) ‘tetralemma’, whereby a concept or correspondingly posited entity is analysed in terms of statements or propositions that are in form respectively (1) positive, (2) negative, (3) both positive and negative (i.e. expressed in the conjunction ‘both ... and’), and (4) neither positive nor negative (viz. the bi-negation ‘neither ... nor’), each of these four predicated positions (which together are exhaustive of all conceivable possibilities for an entity) being negated — or more precisely emptied and ‘zeroed’ — through propositional negation (*prasajyapratishedha* = *med par dgag pa*). Thus, at the beginning of his *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, Nāgārjuna has sought to show by philosophical analysis that no hypostatized entity (*bhāva* = *dños po*) could properly be posited in terms of any of these four positions. The same analysis can be applied to any verbally signified thing, and by extension also to a correspondingly posited entity, so that all constructs (*kalpanā*, *vikalpa*) and entities (*bhāva*) are deconstructed by means of analyses using this *prasaṅga*-type reasoning or the negated tetralemma. Taken together, the four negated *koṭis* can then serve to point to ultimate reality as being free of all four positions (*catuṣkoṭivīnirmukta*), and hence as empty of self-existence (*svabhāvaśūnya*). (However, it should be noted that, in other contexts, the unnegated ‘neither ... nor’ formula, which in its wording is identical to the fourth *koṭi* of the negated tetralemma, has been employed to characterize or point to ultimate reality.)

In Buddhist thought such philosophical analysis has a bearing on semantics inasmuch as it pertains, directly, to the status of all signified things and, indirectly, to the ontic status of ultimate reality. In Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* xxiv.18, designation in dependence (*upādāya prajñaptiḥ*) has been listed as a component of the Middle Way (*madhyamā pratīpat*) together with Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and origination in dependence (*pratītyasamutpāda*).<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> See D. Seyforth Ruegg, ‘The uses of the four positions of the *catuṣkoṭi* and the problem of the description of reality in Mahāyāna Buddhism’, *JIP* 5 (1977), pp.1–71; the use of the unnegated ‘neither ... nor’ formula’ to characterize reality is noted at pp. 31–34. See also id., ‘Theses, philosophical positions and

Moreover, a positive characterization of the ultimately real — the *paramārtha*, which is by definition unconditioned (*asaṃskṛta*) and inexpressible — has sometimes been effected by reversing concepts and qualifiers that ordinarily define the conditioned (*saṃskṛta*), which does lend itself to conceptualization and linguistic expression. Thus, through this device of *inversion* (*viparyaya* = [b]zlog pa), *tathāgatadharmakāya* and *tathāgatadhātu*, and also *tathāgatagarbha*, have been characterized (or pointed to) by means of the qualifiers ‘permanent/constant’ (*nitya*), ‘pure’ (*śuci*, *śuddha*), ‘blissful’ (*sukha*), and ‘self’ (*ātman*) — in other words by the opposites of the very qualifiers regularly used in Buddhist thought to characterize the conditioned. When thus attached to the ultimately real, these qualities have been termed *guṇapāramitās* (*yon tan [gyi] pha rol tu phyin pa*) ‘qualification perfections’.

Cataphatic qualifiers thus employed are not, however, considered to bring the unconditioned and inexpressible ultimate within the scope of discursive conceptualization (*kalpanā/vikalpa*) and duality, the relative domain of conceptual dichotomies and potential logical antinomies. Rather, they point to it. It can be suggested that such characterization by inversion is not unrelated to the semantic neutralization (‘desemanticization’) of linguistic usage that has sometimes accompanied the deconstruction of concepts and conceptually hypostatized entities (*bhāva*) in Mahāyānist thought.<sup>73</sup> As for ordinary cognitive reversal, however,

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contention in Madhyamaka thought’, in *Three studies in the history of Indian and Tibetan Madhyamaka philosophy* pp. 139 ff. (on p. 203 ff., the use of the ‘neither ... nor’ formula has been discussed in connexion with Go rams pa). Concerning the use of the description *catuṣkoṭivīnirmukta* to characterize absolute reality, see *ibid.*, pp. 142–3. In the interpretation of philosophical analysis founded on the *catuṣkoṭi*, the difference in both logic and semantics between *prasāṅgyapratishedha* (*med par dgag pa*, i.e. propositional negation which is non-presuppositional and non-implicative) and *paryudāsa* (*ma yin par dgag pa*, i.e. predicate negation which is presuppositional and implicative) is of critical importance.

<sup>73</sup> Striking examples of semantic neutralization accompanying the deconstruction of conceptual constructs and correspondingly posited entities are found in Prajñāpāramitā texts. In the *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā* for example, this neutralization has been expressed in the formula: ‘*x*, *x*’, O Subhūti, no-*x* is it declared by the tathāgata; therefore it is called ‘*x*’ (and in variants of this formula).

it will of course be nothing but misapprehension and error (*viparyāsa* = *phyin ci log pa*).<sup>74</sup>

Clearly, characterization by means of the device of inversion or enantiosis in the sūtra doctrine of *tathāgatagarbha* on one side and on the other side the use in tantra of *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* are not identical processes. To characterize the unconditioned *paramārtha* as opposed to the conditioned *vyāvahārika* or *sāmvṛta* level, it may suffice simply to reverse the qualifiers employed in a proposition expressing or characterizing the latter in order to point to the former in concepts and words. This can be achieved by cancelling a negative (e.g. *anīya* > *nīya*, *anātman* > *ātman* etc.), as seen in the case of the cataphatic characterization of ultimate reality and *tathāgatagarbha*. Or it can be achieved by using an antonym. The process accordingly remains linked with conceptualization and language, and here no breakdown of ordinary semantics occurs. (Such linguistic characterization is, however, incapable of *fully* conveying the inexpressible true nature of *tathāgatagarbha* or of *paramārtha*.)

Now, *tathāgatagarbha* has been identified with *śūnyatā*.<sup>75</sup> By commentators this identification has been interpreted in terms of two distinct ideas of Emptiness, namely the *rañ stoñ* (*svabhāva-śūnya[tā]*, ‘Empti[ness] of self-existence’) and the *gžan stoñ* (‘Empti[ness] of the other/the heterogeneous’). For the advocate of the first, the Rañ stoñ pa, the identification will be in conformity with the definition of definitive sense (*nītārtha* = *nes don*) provided in the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśasūtra*, where it is stated that this sense refers to *śūnyatā*. But advocates of the second concept of Emptiness, the gžan stoñ pas, understand this identification otherwise in so far as as their concept of *śūnyatā* is specific to them.<sup>76</sup> Still other

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<sup>74</sup> See *Ratnagotravibhāga* i.35–36. On the problem of characterizing, determining or defining — and of ‘pointing to’ or ‘showing’ — absolute reality, see *Théorie du tathāgatagarbha et du goṭra*, pp. 362 ff. (and ‘Allusiveness and obliqueness...’, p. 305 f.). An example of ordinary *viparyāsa*, where the conditioned is misapprehended and has misapplied to it the qualities of *nīya*, *sukha*, *śuci* or *ātman*, has been pointed out, e.g., in *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāṣya* xii.16–17.

<sup>75</sup> See *Ratnagotravibhāga* commentary, i.154–5, on *tathāgatagarbhaśūnyatārthanaya*. This identification is not an ordinary equivalence, however, for it is stated that *tathāgatagarbha* is *śūnyatā*, but *not* that the latter is the former.

<sup>76</sup> It could perhaps be said that these two doctrines represent incommensurable theories of *śūnyatā* located on distinct levels of reference, in different universes of

interpreters have regarded the *tathāgatagarbha* teaching (or at least versions of it) as being of provisional meaning requiring interpretation in a further sense (*neyārtha* = *draṅ don*). In doing so, they have followed a passage in the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and Candrakīrti's interpretation in his *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (vi.95), where this teaching is explained as having been given with the intention of attracting (*ākaraṣaṇa* : *draṅ ba < 'dren pa*) disciples still in need of introductory training.<sup>77</sup>

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discourse, rather than radically contradictory and irreconcilable theories on the same level. Not only will the two theories be not contradictory because they are incommensurable, but the matter may itself be undecidable since the absolute (here called *sūnyatā*) is held to be discursively inexpressible and indeterminable (cf. Heisenberg's Unbestimmtheitsrelation, Unsicherheitsrelation). Among works traditionally attributed to Nāgārjuna, the scholastic treatises (known in Tib. as the *riḡs tshogs*) have been understood by interpreters to expound the *raṅ stoṅ* view, while the hymns (known in Tib. as the *bstod tshogs*) have been understood by some interpreters to represent the *gžan stoṅ* theory. Such complementarity would constitute (hermeneutical) incommensurability rather than (logical) incompatibility and contradiction.

<sup>77</sup> cf. D. Seyfort Rugg, 'Textual and philosophical problems in the translation and transmission of *tathāgatagarbha* texts', *BSOAS* 78 (2015), p. 320.

Such *ākaraṣaṇa* '(propaedeutic) attraction', which would seem to correspond to the hermeneutical idea of *pudgalāśayābhīprāya*, could perhaps also be interpreted as an example of *avatāraṇābhisamdhī* 'intentional allusion (for the purpose) of introduction (of a disciple)', or as an example of *arthāntarābhīprāya* 'intention (relating to) a different meaning (from the directly expressed one)'. — This variety of intentional utterance might be compared with the *vivakṣitānyaparavācyā* form of *dhvani*, where the expressed content is not nullified even though a further, unexpressed, meaning is actually the one intended. The final purpose of the intentional procedure of *ākaraṣaṇa* could even lead to comparing it with the form of *dhvani* termed *avivakṣitavācyā* (see n. 61 above).

In the Mahāyānist *Mahāparinirvāṇa(mahā)sūtra*, there arose the fundamental question as to whether the Buddha's teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* was in fact a covert intentional statement (*saṃdhāvācana* = *dgoṅs pa'i tshig*) that is *ābhīprāyika* and *neyārtha*, especially since it has seemingly accommodated the *ātmavāda* of the heterodox Tīrthikas. The problem in this Sūtra was that this teaching, which expounds *tathāgatagarbha* or *tathāgatadhātu* in cataphatic terms using the qualifiers *ātman*, *nitya*, etc., — i.e. the reverse of the qualifiers used to describe the *saṃskṛta* or conditioned — appears to result in a convergence with the Brāhmaṇical *ātman* doctrine, and thus to represent an unacceptable accommodation with Tīrthika teachings. However, for Buddhist hermeneuticians who understand the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha* to be *ābhīprāyika* and *neyārtha*, such convergence and accommodation would no doubt pose no real problem; for the teaching would then have been given only provisionally, and propaedeutically, by the Buddha for the sake of attracting and instructing auditors not yet

In the Mahāyānist *Mahāparinirvāṇa(mahā)sūtra*, cataphatic language has been employed for teachings relating to the *tathāgata* and *tathāgatagarbha*. This Sūtra employs the expression *saṃdhāvācāna* (*dgoṅs pa'i tshig*) in a compound that refers to the elucidation (*prakāśana*), for the sake of trainees (*vainayika : vineya*), of the method (*netrī = tshul*) belonging to various texts of teachings where this *saṃdhāvācāna* bears on the 'mode' of Emptiness (*śūnyatākāra*), this being described as the 'supreme mystery' (*paramaguhyā*) of Mahāyāna.<sup>78</sup> In this Sūtra, then, the expression *saṃdhāvācāna*

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prepared to accept his true and definitive teaching. But for proponents of the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine who understand it to be *nūtārtha*, there was, at least *prima facie*, a major difficulty: would the Buddha's teaching on a matter of major importance then actually differ from Tīrthika doctrine? To respond to this problem, this Sūtra has deployed hermeneutical devices that did not exclude antiphrasis and paradox. The term used in it for the utterances in question is *saṃdhāvācāna* (*dgoṅs pa'i tshig*) 'intentional expression'; but unlike what appears to be the case in Vajrayānist *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*, no breakdown of ordinary semantics seems to take place here, even if the relevant utterances are seen as intentional. See *Le Traité du tathāgatagarbha*, pp. 72–73, 80 ff.; and *Buddha-nature, Mind and the problem of Gradualism in a comparative perspective*, pp. 22–3 n., 31 f., 50 ff. This issue will be addressed immediately below with respect to the use in this Sūtra of the expression *saṃdhāvācāna*.

Buddhist hermeneuticians have listed three hermeneutical criteria necessary for determining whether a given *sūtra* teaching is intentional (*ābhīprāyika*) and of provisional meaning requiring interpretation in a further sense (*neyārtha*). The criteria enumerated are: (1) the existence of a truly intended ground (*dgoṅs gzi*) — e.g. *dharmakāya*, *tathatā* and *prakṛtiśhaṅgotra*, or *śūnyatā* — not actually expressed explicitly on the relevant text's surface level; (2) the presence in the verbal meaning of the text of an incompatibility with the truly intended subject matter (*dios la gnod byed : mukhyārthabādha*); and (3) the existence of a motive (*dgos pa = prayojana*) for the Buddha's having taught a doctrine only provisionally and intentionally. See, e.g., Bu ston's *mDzes rgyan*, f. 12a–25a, with *Le Traité du tathāgatagarbha*, pp. 90–119; and D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'Purport, implicature and presupposition: Sanskrit *ābhīprāya* and Tibetan *dgoṅs pa/dgoṅs gzi* as hermeneutical concepts', *JIP* 13 (1985), p. 309 ff.; 'An Indian source for the Tibetan hermeneutical terms *dgoṅs gzi* "intentional ground"', *JIP* 16 (1988), pp. 1–4; and 'Allusiveness and obliqueness ...' (as in n. 58). The matter of *ātman* vs. *anātman*, and then of neither the one nor the other, in the Buddha's teaching has been discussed in another perspective in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* xviii.6 and its commentaries; cf. D. Seyfort Ruegg, 'The uses of the four positions of the *catuskoṭi* and the problem of the description of reality in Mahāyāna Buddhism', *JIP* 5 (1977), pp. 7–9.

<sup>78</sup> See H. Habata (ed.), *Die zentralasiatischen Sanskrit-Fragmente des Mahāparinirvāṇa-Mahāsūtra* (Marburg, 2007), p. 3 with pp. 7, 74. The key expressions are to be found in the intricate compound on p. 3: *mahāyānaparamaguhyā-*

relates to a teaching in terms of which the *tathāgata* endures beyond *parinirvāṇa* ‘extinction’ and is therefore characterized ‘intentionally’ as *nitya*, *dhruva*, *śāśvata* and *sukha*, this being the project and message of this Sūtra.<sup>79</sup> As observed above, *tathāgatagarbha* also is characterized by the same set of *guṇapāramitās*. Significant is the fact that *saṃdhāvācāna* bears on what the Sūtra describes as *śūnyatākāra*, the *paramaguhya* of Mahāyāna. Evidently, then, *saṃdhāvācāna* is not here *ābhīprāyika* ‘intentional’ in the strict technical sense of the four *ābhīprāyas* and four *abhisamdhis* of fully developed and systematic sūtra hermeneutics, where the intended sense, the true purport, is *indirectly and intentionally expressed* and where being *ābhīprāyika* relates accordingly to a sense considered ‘intentional’ because of being provisional (*neyārtha*) rather than definitive (*nītārtha*).<sup>80</sup> But it does appear to be ‘intentional’ in so far as it alludes to the enduring nature of *tathāgata*, a matter made clear in the course of the Sūtra’s teaching. It is, therefore, ‘intentional’ and oblique in the sense that a *prima facie* incompatibility exists between the idea of the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa* or ‘extinction’ on one side and the Sūtra’s characterizing *tathāgata* as ‘permanent’ (*nitya*), stable (*dhruva*), everlasting (*śāśvata*), etc., on the other side. This difficulty is lifted by specifying that, in

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*śūnyatākārasandhāvācanavivādhaharmamukhanetrīprakāśanārtham ...* (Tib. *theg pa chen po’i mchog tu gsañ ba ston pa ñid kyi mam pa dgoñs pa’i tshig mam pa sna tshogs kyi chos kyi sgo’i tshul bsad par bya ba’i phyir ...*). (For the meaning of *netrī* = *tshul*, cf. *Le Traité du tathāgatagarbha*, p. 69 n. 2.) Compare the pregnant expression *tathāgatagarbhaśūnyatārtha* in the *avatanikā* to the *Ratnagotravibhāga* Commentary on i.154–155 (?).

In the same Sūtra (pp. 63, 87) the positive, cataphatic, qualifiers *nitya*, *dhruva*, *śāśvata*, *acala* and *sukha* are applied to *tathāgata/bhagavant*; and at p. 87 it is added that all sentient beings have *tathāgatagarbha* (which has been similarly characterized elsewhere; see *Théorie*, p. 363 f.).

<sup>79</sup> The question whether, after death, a *tathāgata* (rendered in the Tibetan translation of the *Abhidharmakośa* by *de bžin ’oñs pa* rather than by *de bžin gśeys pa* !) exists, does not exist, both, or neither, is in fact one of the undetermined points (*avyākṛtavastu*) to be set aside (*sthāpanīya*) in Buddhist thought beginning with the canon. This is a separate matter.

<sup>80</sup> See above, n. 77 with nn. 5, 59. — It is worth noting that when endeavouring to show that the *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine is *ābhīprāyika* ‘intentional’ and not of definitive sense, Bu ston has referred in his *mDzes rgyan* both to the longer *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* translated from Chinese, which occupies a separate section of the bKa’ ’gyur, and to a shorter text bearing the same name contained in the Sūtra section of this canonical collection.

the Sūtra, *saṃdhāvacana* has been stated to bear on the ‘mode’ of Emptiness (*śūnyatākāra*) described as the ‘supreme mystery’ (*parama-guhya*) of Mahāyāna.

In the interpretation of intentional and enigmatically oblique language (*saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*) in Vajrayāna, a fundamentally important principle takes on a leading role when hermeneutics proceeds from what is expressed directly in plain text to what is indirectly intended in a tantric text (and its commentarial tradition[s]). This is the principle of non-duality (*advaya*) within the overarching Mahāyānist frame of non-hypostatization, that is, the non-substantiality (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) or Emptiness of self-existence (*svabhāvaśūnyatā*) of all things.<sup>81</sup>

Now, Emptiness will hold both for what is referred to in an utterance or text and for what has remained unexpressed in the oblique and enigmatically intentional speech of *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*. The two ‘poles’ of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are to be understood as being equally *niḥsvabhāva/svabhāvaśūnya*. In statements pertaining to these themes, transformative semiosis may be understood to point to the ontic inasmuch as it is grounded in the principle of non-substantiality. What has been verbally expressed and what remains unexpressed being equally *svabhāvaśūnya*, a kind of convertibility between the two will supervene precisely in virtue of the fact that, ontically, they are non-reified. This is referred to as their non-duality. By virtue of this ‘zeroing’ in *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*, therefore, neither the verbally expressed nor the unexpressed will be objectively referential and enter into a fixed (albeit conventional) conceptual and semantic relationship. But if quotidian *semantics* appears nullified here, a kind of oblique, and ‘intentional’, transformative *semiosis* will still operate in statements of Vajrayāna texts.

Convertibility between two levels appears, however, to differ in two of the cases considered above. In the first, that of the cataphatic description through enantiosis of *tathāgatagarbha*, linguistic inversion starting from the level of the relative and conditioned and pointing to the level of the absolute and unconditioned is achieved formally, and almost mechanically, by either

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<sup>81</sup> The principle of non-duality is of course not confined to Vajrayāna alone. In *tathāgatagarbha* doctrine, *sattvadhātu* and *dharmakāya* are non-dual, any difference being only ‘literal’ (*vyāñjanamātra*); see, e.g., *Ratnagotravibhāga* i.153 and the commentary on i.50. This principle of non-duality appears to be close to that of Equality or Sameness (*samatā*), on which see below.

reversing a negation or employing an antonym, but with no semantic breakdown occurring. In the case of *pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhi* or transformational intention in non-tantric hermeneutics, too, there can occur meaning-transfer (*upacāra*, *gaunī vṛttih*); and here also ordinary semantics remains in operation. But in Vajrayānist *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* there do appear to occur both a deliberate dislocation and breaking down of quotidian semantics and the emergence of a special ritual-yogic semiosis, namely that occasioned by the use of intentional and enigmatically oblique speech.

Language appears in the last case to be made to mirror, or rather to ‘shadow’, this special ritual-yogic semiosis, which may not be expressed, or even suggested, in a semantically standard manner — that is, in terms of the semantic functions (*vṛtti*) of *abhidhā* ‘denotation’ and *lakṣaṇā* ‘secondary (figurative) usage’ (or *upacāra*).

In connexion with oblique and intentional language, it would probably not be too far from the mark to speak of a poetics (sometimes quite experimental) of sūtraic and tantric compositions. A possible link with the theory of *vyāñjanā* ‘suggestion’ in Sanskrit linguistics and of *dhvani* ‘poetic resonance’ in Sanskrit poetics has been noted above (n. 61).<sup>82</sup>

In accordance with the overarching principles of non-duality and non-substantiality, language is processed in Mahāyāna, and especially in Vajrayāna, in such a way that the standard semantics of the linguistic sign is as it were overshadowed quite deliberately. In doing this, the Vajrayānist yogi-practiser ‘zeroes’ the linguistic signifier and its signified content, shadowing — but at the same time foregrounding *en creux* — the non-substantiality and non-duality of all individual articulations ascribable to the domains of (*saṃ*)*kleśa* (affect/impurity) and *vyavadāna* (purity). For him, signifiers and their signified contents are cipher-like, i.e. ‘zeroed’. (The word ‘cipher’ is in fact historically connected with the word ‘zero’.) And the ‘zeroed’ articulations of *saṃkleśa* and *saṃsāra* — including the every-day and, also, the highly expressive and

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<sup>82</sup> Elements of *rasa* theory have also been made use of in Vajrayāna. See D. Seyfort Ruegg, *Ordre spirituel et ordre temporel dans la pensée bouddhique de l’Inde et du Tibet* (Paris, 1995), p. 126.

colourful<sup>83</sup> — are then utilizable in such a way as to ‘shadow’ *vyavadāna* and *nirvāṇa*. The paired terms *saṃsāra* : *nirvāṇa* and *saṃkleśa* : *vyavadāna* will not, therefore, denote separate reified entities.<sup>84</sup>

In short, what is nullified in Mahāyāna and also in Vajrayāna is the conceptual and ontological duality of a mistakenly posited antonymic *saṃkleśa/saṃsāra* and *vyavadāna/nirvāṇa* together with all opposed concepts and entities subsumed by them, which are all ‘zeroed’ in the frame of the principles of *advayatā* and *niḥsvabhāvatā/svabhāvaśūnyatā*. This procedure appears to go further than the one belonging to the Vajrayānist codes of *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*, where the semantic connexion between the two sides of the linguistic sign — signifier and signified — are also cancelled or nullified, but without transformative ritual and yogic semiosis being lost. The latter procedure might be termed para-semantic, whereas the former can be described as anti-essentialist.<sup>85</sup>

Various denominations in Buddhist tradition — and distinguishable though they are in their modes of operation extending from riddle-like utterances in the form of transformational intention (*pariṇāmanābhisaṃdhī*) in sūtra-hermeneutics to counters or ciphers in *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* and, finally, to the nullification of the duality of *saṃsāra/saṃkleśa* and *nirvāṇa/vyavadāna* with all their articulations, pure and impure —, expressions employed in the relevant discursive operations have in common

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<sup>83</sup> The Buddha’s teaching is regarded as both meant for all people universally, and also as modulated in a way suitable for each and every person individually according to his/her predispositions (*anusāya*). As teacher, he employs expertise in means (*upāyakauśalya*) and manifests an (at least apparent) conformity with the ways of people in the world (*lokānuvartanā*). The Buddha is, moreover, represented as declaring that it is not he who quarrels with people, but that it is people who quarrel with him; see, e.g., Saṃyuttanikāya iii, p. 138, with Candrakīrti’s quotation of the Sanskrit version in *Prasannapadā* xviii.8 (p. 370): *loko mayā sārđhaṃ vivadati nāhaṃ lokena sārđhaṃ vivadāmi*. In Buddhist thought, the mundane (*laukika*) in all its articulations has found a place, albeit one subordinate to the transmundane/supramundane (*lokottara*). This situation is probably better described as symbiosis than as syncretism.

<sup>84</sup> The ‘shadowing’ in play here is, of course, different from the case where, in a *chāyā*, a Sanskrit word replaces a Prakrit one, referred to above on p. 199 (§III).

<sup>85</sup> See for example the quotation from the *Satyadvayāvatāra* in n. 86 below.

the feature of being linguistically *indirect* or *oblique*: the apparent surface meaning understood literalistically will not then be the intended deep meaning. The translator and the reader of such texts must therefore be attentive to these virtualities of linguistic expression in sūtra and tantra texts.

While Mahāyāna sūtras and Madhyamaka texts had already been concerned to deconstruct conceptual constructs (*kalpanā*, *vikalpa*) and all associated reified entities (*bhāva*), the Vajrayānist yogi would appear to have proceeded to empty — to ‘zero’ — the dyad of signifier and signified (and the triad of signifier, signified and referent in the semantic triangle). That is, while the first group of thinkers was concerned in particular with demonstrating the non-substantiality (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) of all entities mistakenly posited as having self-existence (*svabhāva*) by examining them in the light of philosophical analysis based on the Mahāyānist principles of *śūnyatā* ‘Emptiness’, *pratītyasamutpāda* ‘origination in dependence’ and *upādāya prajñaptiḥ* ‘relative designation’ — i.e. the three factors stated to constitute the Middle Way (*madhyamā pratipat*) in Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (xxiv.18) —, and to have availed themselves of standard semantics in order to do this, Vajrayānists would seem to have gone on to dislocate quotidian semantics in *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* while still admitting a special ritual and yogic semiosis. The procedures employed on both sides culminated finally in showing the non-duality and non-substantiality of the pairs *saṃkleśa* : *vyavadāna* and *saṃsāra* : *nirvāṇa*. If the final ends envisioned in these two currents of thought — Mahāyānist and Vajrayānist — were largely either complementary or identical in effect, the linguistic and expressive means employed by them have frequently been distinctive.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> In Tibetan scholastics, the currents and methods in Vajrayāna as well as the schools and techniques of Mahāyāna philosophy have been carefully classified, analysed and individuated in considerable detail (and some variety). The themes of non-production, non-multiplicity and non-duality (*advaya*, as distinct from a monistic unity) pervade Mahāyāna Buddhist thought. For an example from the Madhyamaka tradition, see Candrakīrti’s long citation from the *Satyadvayāvātārasūtra* in his *Prasannapadā* xviii.9 (pp. 374–5): *yat samaṃ nirvāṇam tat samaḥ saṃsārah | yat samaḥ saṃsārah tat samaḥ paramārthataḥ saṃkleśaḥ | yat samaḥ paramārthataḥ saṃkleśaḥ tat samaṃ paramārthato vyavadānam | ... yaḥ saṃkleśaḥ sa paramārthato ’tyantānutpādatā | yad api vyavadānam tad api paramārthato ’tyantānutpādatā | saṃsāro ’pi paramārthato ’tyantānutpādatā | yāvan nirvāṇam api paramārthato ’tyantānutpādatā | nātra kimcit paramārthato nānakaraṇam | tat kasmād hetoḥ |*

The yogi-practiser's processing of language — a poetics of a special kind — can on occasion appear playful, making use of paronomasia, paradox, antiphrasis and hermeneutical (*nairukta*) etymologies, and also of meanings of the *rūdhī*-type based on usage as opposed to strictly linguistic etymology (i.e. *yoga* and *yaugika*). A striking example of hermeneutical etymology is found in the pseudo-etymological linking of the vocable *bhagavant*, the title of the Buddha-Bhagavat, and the vocable *bhaga* (see n. 64 above). Examples of code that do not rest on word-play are vocables such as *karpūrakam* for *śukra*, *bol(ak)am* for *vajra* and *kakkol(ak)am* for *padma* (*vajra* and *padma* being themselves Vajrayānist technical terms, these expressions involve double encoding).

Important is the fact that in Mahāyāna, as well as in one of the forms of Vajrayānist linguistic expression considered above, no need was evidently felt to dislocate and nullify the standard semantic connexion between signifier and signified (and referent), contrary to what appears to be the case with code-words in *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā*. Expressed in plain text, and as technical terms of Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, expressions such as *advaya* and *svabhāva-śūnyatā* are able to convey the sense required of them without semantic neutralization being needed. It was only required that these two forms of expression should be correctly understood as themselves devoid of self-existence and as non-reifying.<sup>87</sup> But

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*paramārthato 'byantānutpādatvāt sarvadharmāṇām*. Candrakīrti concludes his citation by remarking: *tad evam anānārthatā tattvasya lakṣaṇam veditavyam śūnyatayaikarasatvāt*.

In the teaching of *tathāgatagarbha/dhātu*, which has been characterized by reversing qualities ascribed to the conditioned, the *dhātu* 'Element' is said to found all forms of saṃsāric existence (*gati*) as well as the realization of *nirvāṇa*, as stated in the verse quoted in the commentary on *Ratnagoṭravibhāga* i.149–152:

*anādikāliko dhātuḥ sarvadharmasamāśrayaḥ |*  
*tasmīn sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhiḡamo 'pi ca ||*

The Vajrayāna seems to go a step further.

<sup>87</sup> The Mādhyamika may, moreover, maintain a thesis (*pratijñā*) provided that it is understood that words in his thesis do not objectively cause, or create (*kr-*), the substantial existence of what they are used to express; rather, they are *indicative* of — technically they 'make known', *jñāpaka* — the meaning expressed by the thesis. This was a major theme in Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī*; see 'Theses, philosophical positions and contention in Madhyamaka thought', in: *Three studies in the history of Indian and Tibetan thought*, Section 2. This circumstance does not, of course, detract from the fact that a radical critique of language, occasionally even to the point of apparent logophobia, has sometimes come to the fore in Buddhist thought, according to the generally accepted principle that (*nispary-*

another form of Vajrayānist linguistic usage that employs the codes of *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* appears to dissolve — i.e. deliberately to break down — the quotidian semantic relation connecting expression and meaning in the binary linguistic sign.<sup>88</sup>

### Conclusion

Generally speaking, from the point of view of semantics, the connexion linking a vocable as signifier (*vācaka*) with its signified content (*vācya*) appears unbroken and operative in Mahāyāna texts, but with the crucially important restriction that concept and corresponding referent are not to be regarded as reified in the form of a hypostatized and objectified entity possessing self-existence (*svabhāva*, aseity). Ontologically speaking, the dyadic connexion of signifier and signified — and by extension the triadic network of signifier, signified and referent — are deconstructed in Mahāyānist thought through philosophical analysis without, however, being nullified (‘zeroed’) semantically. Still, the semantic relation between signifier and signified are on the way to being nullified in Prajñāpāramitā thought and in Madhyamaka to the extent that all entities are shown through philosophical analysis to possess no independent self-existence because all conditioned things are produced in dependence (*pratītyasamutpanna*) on transient causes and conditions (*hetupratyaya*); accordingly, all entities are to be understood as *svabhāvaśūnya*, *niḥsvabhāva*. Here deconstructive philosophical analysis is employed to ground the understanding of these fundamental philosophical principles. While the semantic connexion (*sambandha*) between a vocable as signifier and its signified content (*artha*) was retained, the connexion was no longer considered to be either permanent (*nitya*, as in Mīmāṃsā and Vyākaraṇa, or in Bhartṛhari’s Śabdādvaita) or divinely established (as in Nyāya). It is different also from the semantic link posited by those modern semiologists who assign a realist status to signified content and by those who operate with the semantic triangle of signifier, signified and objective reference.

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*āya*)*paramārtha* is, *per se*, inexpressible (*anabhilāpya*). Yet the fact remains that Buddhist thinkers have used discursive language to lend expression to their thinking.

<sup>88</sup> Such is the case for a monk having taken the vow of chastity (*tshais spyod* = *brahmacarya*).

Semantic neutralization — the ‘desemanticizing’ processing of language — found in Mahāyāna texts reached its acme in Vajrayānist codes. There the quotidian semantic connexion between a signifier and its signified content are deliberately dislocated and made to break up. (It is not entirely clear what relation the Vajrayānist procedure might have borne historically to the doctrine of the exclusion of the other (*anyāpoha* = *gžan sel*) developed by the logical-epistemological school of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti and then by many later Buddhist philosophers.) Still, even though the quotidian semantic connexion between signifier and signified appears to be deliberately dislocated in Vajrayānist codes, ritual and yogic semiosis is not thereby lost.

Very important from the point of view of logic, furthermore, is the fact that propositional negation has been employed in statements concerning fundamental principles of Mahāyānist and Madhyamaka thought, and then in Vajrayāna, as in the case of the four negated positions of the tetralemma (*catuṣkoṭi*). This type of negation, termed *prasajyapratishedha* (*med dgag*, translatable as ‘it is not the case that ...’), is non-presuppositional (i.e., it carries no commitment to the reified existence of the subject of negation) and non-implicative (i.e., it implies no alternative affirmative position in place of the negated one). In this respect *prasajyapratishedha* differs from *pariyudāsa* (*ma yin dgag*) negation, which is both presuppositional and implicative.

In virtue of the Mahāyānist principles of Emptiness and non-duality, *samatā* ‘Equality/ Sameness’ — i.e. a kind of interconvertibility between things — is stated to obtain even between opposed concepts and entities. This understanding continues to hold for the Vajrayānist yogi-practiser; and numerous signifying terms — many of them the same as those that were in use in classical Mahāyāna thought — continue to be employed in Vajrayāna in a semantically regular way as signifiers having a signified content. Yet the discursive and hypostatizing opposition between (*saṃ*)*kleśa* and *vyavadāna* having been rendered ontologically and semantically inoperative through philosophical analysis, it will be understood that *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* also are not to be posited as self-existent entities to which reified articulations — such as, respectively, the impure and the pure — could be ascribed: all semantically signified articulations ascribable to (*saṃ*)*kleśa/saṃsāra* — including even the most colourful and earthy — are cancelled

or nullified. Furthermore, in the intentional and oblique language (*saṃdh[y]ābhāṣā*) of Vajrayāna, where special linguistic codes have been in use, the opposition ordinarily supposed to exist between the pure and the impure appears deliberately dissolved and sublated both semantically and ontologically.<sup>89</sup>

The procedure of conceptual and ontological cancellation or nullification (‘zeroing’, for want of a better term) may sometimes lend a seemingly paradoxical and radically subversive quality to the still semantically regular language used in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna; above all, it does so to the semantically neutralized (‘desemanticized’) codes in use in Vajrayāna. Yet texts composed in the *saṃdh(y)ābhāṣā* will still possess a special, transformative, semiosis connected with tantric ritual and yoga. A quality that is both deconstructive and linguistically ‘desemanticizing’ will then attach to language relating to *sāmarasya* ‘Merged Nature’ (< *samarasa* = *ro mñam pa*, or *ekarasa* = *ro gcig pa*), *mahāsukha* (*bde ba chen po*) ‘Great Bliss’, and the like. This language will point to *advayatā* ‘non-duality’ and *samatā* ‘Equality/Sameness’ — an interconvertibility that is grounded in *advayatā* — and in the final analysis to *śūnyatā* ‘Emptiness’ and *tathatā* ‘Thusness’.<sup>90</sup>

Such processing of language is hardly to be understood as just some form of antinomianism, linguistic or other. It may recall certain modernist practices in art and poetics, however. Examples from the twentieth century are Dadaist meaninglessness, collage, ready-mades and ‘bruitisme’, sometimes also colourful expressiveness of language — in some way signalling loss of meaning/nothingness/nihilism. Kurt Schwitters’ ‘*Merz*’ — the final syllable of the word *Kommerz*, but evoking the words ‘*ausmerzen*’ and ‘*merde*’ — may come to mind. Lévi-Straussian ‘bricolage’ might do so also. However, being transformative and in

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<sup>89</sup> For the related concept expressed by the word *sama*, see n. 86 above. And concerning the deconstruction of conceptual constructs (*kalpanā/vikalpa*) and hypostatized entities (*bhāva*) being reinforced by ‘desemanticization’, see above. Compare, e.g., *Vajracchedikā* (ed. Conze, pp. 48–49): *yaś ca subhūte tathāgatena dharmā ’bhisambuddho deśīto vā tatra na satyaṃ na mṛṣā | tasmāt tathāgato bhāṣate: sarvadharmā buddhadharmā iti | tat kasya hetoḥ | sarvadharmā iti subhūte adharmās tathāgatena bhāṣitā[h] | tasmād ucyante sarvadharmā buddhadharmā iti |*

<sup>90</sup> The cognitive and ontic status of ‘names’ and linguistic expressions (rather than their semantics and semiosis) has been touched on in §IV of this paper with regard to the meaning of *miñ tsam* = *nāmamātra*.

alignment with the overarching principles of non-duality and Emptiness, semantic neutralization in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna is not reducible to rebellious provocation or transgressive subversion, even though, in the final analysis, it does indeed serve, alongside deconstruction, to overturn dichotomizing conceptualization and ontological reification.<sup>91</sup> Non-duality and Emptiness of self-existence lie behind not only deconstruction but also the ‘desemanticizing’ processing of language, and these principles are understood to ground what is said in Mahāyānist and Vajrayānist texts. In *samdh(y)ābhāṣā*, moreover, this processing of language has served to break down the quotidian semantic connexion between signifier and signified, without transformative semiosis belonging to ritual and yoga being lost.

If Mahāyānist and Vajrayānist processing of language has served to dislocate semantic links (and to dissolve discursive oppositions and logical antinomies too) and ultimately to point to non-duality and to no-thing — i.e. to non-substantiality and non-hypostatization — this will be neither nihilism nor monism (contrary to some current views of the matter). Its end, which is transformative, is *fresh* rediscovery — if such an expression, seemingly a paradox if not an oxymoron, be allowed here. Discovery of the unconditioned absolute — be it termed *tathāgata-garbha* or ultimate *dharmakāya* — cannot but be rediscovery that is fresh; for, otherwise, the ultimate absolute would be an entity that is conditioned as a consequence of the process of its discovery and cognition. But this aporia will not arise in the frame of non-duality and *niḥsvabhāvatā*.

Although no doubt innovative, Vajrayāna retained deep links with historically antecedent and systemically anticipatory stages in the history of Buddhist thought. Texts where such deconstructive and ‘desemanticizing’ procedures have been

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<sup>91</sup> From early times, of course, Buddhism has criticized attachment to external practices and observances (*śīlavataparāmarśa*), which it regarded as a *samyojana* or fetter; but, at the same time, it placed the greatest emphasis on ethical living and practice, on the salutary (*kuśala*), and on avoidance of all *mithyācāra*. As for the inclusion of the ‘mundane’ or ‘worldly’ within the two-level *laukika-lokottara* schema of Buddhist thought (to which reference has been made above, n. 54 and n. 83), it surely represents more than recycling of the ready-made, ‘cut-and-paste’ collage, and bricolage, contrary to an opinion seemingly held by some writers.

deployed partake both in continuing tradition and in innovation — two things that can indeed be mutually reinforcing. Developments and refinements in thinking such as ontological deconstruction (in Prajñāpāramitā and Madhyamaka) and semantic neutralization in the processing of language (in Mahāyāna and, above all, in Vajrayāna), to which attention has been drawn in the observations presented above, embrace but also extend beyond the rejection of literalism (the *yathārutam*) in favour of sense (the *yathārtham*). In Buddhism, reliance not on the letter — *vyañjana* — but on sense — *artha* — was already a canonically enjoined *pratisarana* (see n. 5 above).

It is important to notice that these developments in Buddhist thought did not ineluctably terminate in logophobic jettisoning *en bloc* of texts and in a total rejection of textual learning: Vajrayāna as well as Mahāyāna have been strongly scholastic traditions attaching great importance to the book and possessing very considerable commentarial extensions. Nor did these developments necessarily end in what might be called out-and-out ‘ideoclasm’, any more than they did in iconoclasm.<sup>92</sup> It is true that ‘ideoclasm’ and the abandonment of book learning have not been totally absent from the history of Indian and Tibetan Buddhist thought, but they did not prevail to the exclusion of all else. In Tibet, ‘ideoclasm’ and ‘non-mentation’ (*gid la mi byed pa = amanasikāra*) came to be regarded as features characteristic of the so-called ‘View of the Hva śaṅ’, a ‘simultaneist’ (*cig char ba : yugapad*) view widely known, but also widely criticized, in that land. There these issues figured as central themes in the Great Debate of bSam yas at the end of the eighth century CE, when a Simultaneist movement represented by a Chinese Hoshang met a Gradualist (*rim gyis pa : krama*), and textually based, scholarly tradition represented by the great Indian scholar Kamalaśīla, who taught in Tibet at that time. In later Tibetan thought they remained live issues leading to possible controversy.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Aniconism was a feature of early Buddhist art, but later Buddhist art has been mainly iconic (if not always representational). The subject of the Indian icon has been studied recently by G. Colas, *Penser l'icône en Inde ancienne* (Turnhout, 2012).

<sup>93</sup> See D. Seyfort Rugg, *Buddha-nature, Mind and the problem of Gradualism in a comparative perspective*, where the two meditative procedures of Inspection-Bhāvanā (*dpyad sgom*) and Fixation-Bhāvanā (*'jog sgom*) have been discussed. As

## APPENDIX

### Translation-Variants in Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* i.1

Several issues discussed in this paper relating to translation from Sanskrit to Tibetan can be illustrated by even so short a text as the first *sūtra* of Guṇaprabha's *Vinayasūtra* together with its commentaries.<sup>94</sup>

Guṇaprabha is reported to have been a contemporary of King Harṣa Śilāditya, a dating that would place him in the seventh century. A couple of centuries later, his work was translated into Tibetan by the Vaibhāṣika Jinamitra and the *žu chen gyi lo tsā ba* (Cog ro) Klu'i rgyal mtshan according to information supplied in the bsTan 'gyur colophons. Guṇaprabha's Vinaya tradition belongs to the Mathurā (bCom brlag) school of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *nikāya*, its author being described as a Mūlasarvāstivādin in colophons of Tibetan translations of his work. His large autocommentary, the *Vṛtti* subtitled *Svayākhyāna* in its two-volume translation in the bsTan 'gyur, was rendered into Tibetan in the twelfth century by \*Alaṅkadeva ~ Alaṅkāradeva with Tshul khriims 'byuñ gnas sbas pa. In the bsTan 'gyur there is also found a one-volume rendering (translator[s] not named) of a \**Laghu-Vṛtti* ('*Grel chui*) ascribed in its author-colophon to Guṇaprabha, who is there described as a Sarvāstivādin. (The editor of the sDe dge bsTan 'gyur, Tshul khriims rin chen, expressed a doubt concerning this text in his *dKar chag*.) Subcommentaries on the *Vinayasūtra* are the *Tīkā* by Dharmamitra (said in the colophon to be a Vaibhāṣika from Tukhāra, i.e. a Northwesterner, and a holder of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins), translated — like Guṇaprabha's *mūla* — by Jinamitra and Klu'i rgyal mtshan; and the *Vyākhyāna* (*rGya cher 'grel pa*) by Prajñākara (translator[s] not named). Both the *Vinayasūtra*

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for *amanasikāra* = *yid la mi byed pa*, it was of course not confined exclusively to the so-called View of the Hva śāñ.

<sup>94</sup> This work has recently been examined by Luo Hong, 'A brief investigation of the Vinaya master Guṇaprabha', *South Asia Research* 2 (2008), pp. 69–77, and 'A brief survey of the Tibetan translation of the *Vinayasūtra*', in: K. L. Dhammajoti and Y. Karunadasa (ed.), *Buddhist and Pali studies in honour of the Venerable Professor Kakkapalliye Anuruddha* (Hong Kong, 2009) (not seen); and by P. Nietupski, 'Atha *niryāṇavṛttam*', *JLABS* 35 (2012), pp. 225 ff.

and its *Ṭīkā* are already listed in the IDan dkar/IHan kar Catalogue from the ninth century.

The very concise first *sūtra* of Guṇaprabha's work reads: *atha niryāṇavṛttam*. As the heading-aphorism for the entire *Vinayasūtra* — i.e. as its governing rubric (*adhikāra*) — this can be translated: 'Now [this (entire) composition is concerned with] the conduct of exit'. In the Tibetan translations, either *dbañ du byas te* or *gtogs pa ste* has been appended at the end of this first *sūtra*; both of these Tibetan expressions are attested as renderings of Skt. *adhikṛtya*, an absolute verbal form related to the noun *adhikāra* that is implicitly suggested by the context in the original Sanskrit text. In the Tibetan translation of Guṇaprabha's large *Vṛtti*, *de nas* corresponds to the initial Sanskrit indeclinable *atha*. This indeclinable has, however, not been explicitly rendered in the other Tibetan texts of this group; but *dbañ du byas te* may be considered to convey what is implied, in technical *sūtra*-style, by the initial Sanskrit indeclinable. As for the translation-variant *gtogs pa ste*, in the short *Vṛtti* and in Prajñākara's comment it is explained that it is to be construed (*yojanīya*) with the whole of what follows in Guṇaprabha's text. In other words, the topic of *niryāṇavṛtta* as the *adhikāra* is understood to 'recur' (by *anuvṛtti*) throughout the whole of the *Vinayasūtra*, which it governs. Guṇaprabha's large *Vṛtti* glosses the expression *niryāṇavṛtta* by *niryāṇagāmivṛtta* 'conduct leading to exit'. His comment indicates that Vinaya is concerned not only with monastic disciplinary and institutional matters — i.e. with novices, monks, and their community — but also, and importantly, with soteriological and even gnoseological matters.

Whereas the Tibetan translators of Guṇaprabha's large *Vṛtti* and Dharmamitra's *Ṭīkā* have rendered the key word *niryāṇavṛtta* with *ñes par 'byuñ ba'i tshul khrim*s, in the Tibetan renderings of the \**Laghu-Vṛtti* and of Prajñākara's *Vyākhyāna* this has been translated by *ñes par theg pa'i tshul*. Two distinct Tibetan equivalents for *niryāṇa* and *vṛtta* are thus to be found in our texts.

The aforementioned material prompts the following observations and questions.

(1) As just noted, the translation-equivalent *ñes par 'byuñ ba* is found in translations attributed both to Jinamitra with Klu'i rgyal mtshan and to Alaṃkāradeva with Tshul khrim s 'byuñ gnas sbas pa; and the alternative *ñes par theg pa* is found in the two texts the translators of which have not been named. Now questions may

sometimes arise concerning the reliability of Tibetan author-colophons (*mdzad byan*) and translation-colophons (*bsgyur byan*) in the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur. Since a very large number of translations have sometimes been ascribed to certain well-known individuals, it might perhaps be argued that it is not impossible that these named persons were at the head of large translation bureaus rather than the authors strictly speaking of the translations of each and every work attributed to them (but possibly executed only under their authority or supervision as part of an extensive translation project actually executed by numerous other persons). Still, while it is advisable to maintain an open and critical attitude and to weigh each piece of evidence carefully, it cannot be appropriate simply to adopt a position of systematic doubt calling into question each and every traditional attribution and thus to exceed legitimate methodological doubt: to do so would make much historical and philological work difficult if not practically impossible. Unless and until proved unreliable, colophons have to be regarded as providing data for working hypotheses.

(2) It is not without precedent that, in a basic text (*mūla*) and its commentary, different Tibetan translation-equivalents were employed for the same original Sanskrit term, in particular when the translations of a *mūla* and its commentary have been executed by different persons. That two distinct translation-equivalents — *nes par theg pa* and *nes par 'byun ba* — have here been employed to render *niryāna* is none the less worthy of notice. The use in both of *nes par* to render the Sanskrit prefix/preverb *nis-* is an example of the conventionality, and technicality, of Tibetan translation methods; although as an independent word *nes pa* means 'certain(ly)', as the conventional, and technical, equivalent of the Sanskrit prefix/preverb *nis-* it surrenders its full lexical meaning and is used, virtually automatically, to render this Sanskrit prefix/preverb regardless of the precise meaning of the latter in a compound. In his comment, Guṇaprabha has specified that *nis-* here signifies non-reverting (*apunarāvartana*). The use in Tibetan translations of the *Vinayasūtra* of both *tshul* (: *naya*) and *tshul khrim* (: *śīla*) for Skt. *vyāta* seems only slightly less noteworthy.

(3) Did the translators of this set of related works deliberately alter the preferred Tibetan equivalent for *niryāna*? Or is the variation noted perhaps only the sort of thing that could easily happen when different translators have been at work? In his

commentary, Guṇaprabha has specified that *yāna* here means not *gamana* ‘going’ but *prāpti* ‘reaching, attainment’. The expression *nes par theg pa* has the appearance of being a conventional, technical, equivalent that was possibly coined specially for the purpose by the unnamed translator(s). Whereas this term does not seem to carry with it any particular pre-existing lexical association, the alternative expression *nes (par) ’byuñ (ba)* has been in use as the standard equivalent for *niḥsarāṇa* ‘emancipation’, a term used also (e.g. in Abhidharma and Prajñāpāramitā works) to designate the fourth aspect of the *nīrodhasatya*. In Prajñāpāramitā literature *nes ’byuñ sgrub pa* translating *niryānapratīpatti* designates the final aspect of a buddha’s *sarvākārajñatā* ‘omnimodal gnosis’, when it is defined as being founded on the *bhāvanāmārga* ‘path of meditative realization’. The expression *nes ’byuñ* evokes in addition the term *rab tu ’byuñ ba* translating *pravrajyā* ‘entry into religious life’, a major topic in Vinaya. It resonates also with *nes par legs pa* translating *niḥśreyasa* ‘summum bonum’ (the correlate of *mñon par mtho ba* translating *abhyudaya* ‘[worldly] well-being, prosperity’). On the other hand, it is not impossible that the translation-variant *nes par theg pa* was a coinage considered to be suited, as an unpre-empted and technical translation-equivalent, to render the concept of *niryāna* specific to Vinaya. The question then arises whether one rendering was substituted for its alternative at some point in the history of the translation and transmission of this set of texts.

(4) In their commentaries, Guṇaprabha and his successors have not failed to bring out for Vinaya the cognitive and gnoseological dimension of *niryāna*. As already noted, *niryāna-pratīpatti* > *nes ’byuñ sgrub pa* denotes the final aspect of a buddha’s *sarvākārajñatā*. In Pali, *niyyāna* is linked in a semantic field with the idea of *nekkhamma* (Skt. *naiṣkramya* = Tib. *mñon par ’byuñ ba/spaṅs pa*) ‘deliverance’ and with the renouncing of the cycle of existences through entering the religious life.

(5) Given that Tib. *nes par ’byuñ ba* is a polysemic word corresponding to more than one Sanskrit original (*skad dod*), it would be practically impossible to restore the precise original Sanskrit wording on the basis of this translation-equivalent alone. But it would not be totally impossible to reconstruct the original Sanskrit term from the alternative Tibetan equivalent *nes par theg pa*. Interestingly, however, this translation-equivalent does not correspond perfectly with the explanation of the term *niryāna*

actually given in Guṇaprabha's large *Vṛtti*, where we read that *yāna* signifies not *gamana* 'going' but *prāpti* 'reaching, attainment', and that the prefix *niḥ-* signifies *apunarāvartana* 'non-reverting'.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> The explanation given in the Tibetan translation of the short *\*Laghu-Vṛtti* ascribed in the bsTan 'gyur to Guṇaprabha differs from that found in the translation of Guṇaprabha's large *Vṛtti*. In the former the explanation reads: 'By the prefix *niḥ-* [the topic of the *sūtra*] is established without a doubt as supreme *yāna*' (*ñes par ni bla na med pa'i theg par gdon mi za bar 'grub pa'o*).



# Chinese Translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist Texts in Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming Dynasties

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## 0. Introductory Remarks

Late Chinese Tantric Buddhist literature constituted the body of the Chinese translations of Tantric Buddhist texts that were circulated over the course of the Tangut kingdom of Xia (1032–1227), Mongol Yuan (1240–1368) and Chinese Ming dynasties (1368–1644). They were mostly translations of Tibetan originals by Chinese followers of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, though the originals of many texts stemmed from the Tangut period were yet to be identified; as such, they are all Tantric in nature, though they belong to different genres. Aside from a few translations of the root texts of the highest Yoga *tantras*, together with their commentaries, most of them are ritual texts, including *sādhana* (*sgrub thabs*), liturgy (*cho ga*), quintessential instruction (*man ngag* and *gdams pa*), *dhāranī* (*gzungs*), praise (*bstod pa*), supplication (*'debs gsol*), *mantra* (*sngags*), and so on. There are only a few block-prints that are recent translations of Buddhist *sūtras* and *tantras*, while the others are all handwritten manuscripts.

Although two major *yogottaratantras*, i.e. the *Guhyasamājatantra* (一切如來金剛三業最上秘密大教王經) and the *Advayasamtāvījayamahākālpārājatantra* (佛說無二平等最上瑜伽大教王經), and one *yoginitantra*, i.e. the *Hevajradākiṅjālasamvaratantra* (佛說大悲空智金剛大教王經), had already been translated into Chinese by the Early Song and included within the Chinese Buddhist canon (Taisho 885, 887 and 892; see Willemen, 1983),

they did not have a visible impact on Chinese Buddhism during the time of the Song. The Buddhist teachings and practices of the highest Yoga *tantras* were introduced into China Proper and the Central Eurasian regions during the Tangut Xia period. It was Tibetan Tantric Buddhism that dominated the religious faith of the various peoples that lived within the Tangut kingdom. A great number of Tantric Buddhist texts were translated from their Tibetan originals into both Tangut and Chinese at the same time, and the translation of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts into Chinese was ceaselessly undertaken during that period. Tibetan Tantric Buddhism became increasingly popular among Chinese Buddhists from the Tangut Xia to the Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming (Shen, 2010a).

A significant portion of the Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts still extant today can be identified among the Buddhist texts in the Khara Khoto collection. They are the earliest Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts so far known to us. The Khara Khoto collection of manuscripts, written mainly in Tangut, Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan, were recovered in 1908 by the Russian explorer Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlov (1863–1935) in Khara Khoto, an old Tangut city that was destroyed by Ming troops in 1372 in today's western Inner Mongolia, and are preserved today in Saint Petersburg, Russia (Kyčanov, 1999; Shen, 2010b). Another important section of the Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts was translated during the Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming Periods. At first, they were primarily circulated within the imperial court of the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, then successively leaked out among commoners within the Tantric Buddhist communities. They are now scattered across various museums and libraries both inside and outside Mainland China. New texts of the same kind have continuously come to light in recent years in large quantities. Archaeological surveys undertaken in the Northwestern provinces of China such as Gansu, Ningxia and Inner Mongolia have often yielded unexpectedly large numbers of Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist ritual texts.

It is rather unfortunate that these Chinese Tantric Buddhist texts were totally unknown, inaccessible or ignored by the scholarly world for more than a century. Most of them have only recently been either rediscovered or identified as such. Up to date, they are

still understudied and underappreciated. Accordingly, the history of Tantric Buddhism in China during the Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming periods passed in almost total obscurity for centuries. The full exploitation and utilization of the Khara Khoto manuscripts depends on an interdisciplinary and multilingual approach to the texts. The great potential present for reconstructing the history of Tantric Buddhism in China and Central Eurasia through painstaking examination and textual criticism of these invaluable texts has yet to be fully exploited.

**1. *The Khara Khoto Collection of Manuscripts*** 《俄藏黑水城文獻》 (Shi, Wei & Kychanov, eds. 1996–present)

The Khara Khoto collection of Tangut, Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan texts was undoubtedly the foundation for the establishment of modern Tangut studies. However, modern Tangut studies have so far put heavy emphasis on linguistic studies of Tangut scripts and the historical investigation of the institutional establishment of the Tangut kingdom. Studies of Buddhist history in the Tangut kingdom, meanwhile, have remained in their initial stage. Indeed, over 80 percent of the Chinese texts recovered from Khara Khoto are Buddhist in content, among which there are approximately 283 works in their integrity. Of this number, about a hundred comprise standard Chinese Buddhist scriptures, such as *Avataṃsakasūtra*, *Prajñāpāramitāsūtras*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*, and so forth. Another sixty or so are printed fragments of other common Chinese Buddhist works; thirty are fragments of commentaries, hagiographies, Chinese apocrypha, and other less common items. The remaining ninety-three or so items comprise tantric Buddhist works, both block-printed and manuscript texts (complete and fragmentary), that, apart from some popular *dhāraṇī* texts found in the Chinese canon, by and large did not make it into any standard Chinese Buddhist canon. Most were translated from Tibetan (a few possibly from Sanskrit), and are ritual guides for various types of yogic practices, meditation manuals, or compilations of *dhāraṇīs* and mantras. The existence of so many ritual guides of one sort or another testifies to the apparent popularity of such practices as the cult of Vajravārāhī and Mahākāla (who became the Mongols' tutelary deity) among local residents in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries alongside various other healing and protective cults.

Samvara-Vajravārāhī *maṇḍalas* and *thang kas* are particularly numerous in the Khara Khoto collection, as well as at least sixteen ritual texts in Tangut and seven in Chinese devoted to Vajravārāhī (Shen, 2010b; Dunnell, 2010).

Among the Chinese block-prints of Tangut Xia origin in the Khara Khoto collection, there are several new translations of Buddhist scriptures that are of notable Tantric nature. There are: (1) *The Mahāyāna Sūtra of Three Refuges* (佛說聖大乘三歸依經); (2) *The Mahāyāna Sūtra of Bodhisattva Jayamati* (聖大乘聖意菩薩經); (3) *The Heart Sūtra* (佛說聖佛母般若波羅蜜多心經), together with *The Quintessential Instruction of Holding and Reciting the Heart Sūtra* (持誦聖佛母般若波羅蜜多心經要門); (4) *The Dhāraṇī sūtra of the great compassion of Avalokiteśvara* (聖觀自在大悲心怱持功能依經錄); and (5) *The Dhāraṇī sūtra of the Buddha Uṣṇīṣavijayā* (勝相頂尊怱持功能依經錄). According to the colophon, all of these texts were purportedly translated from the Sanskrit original and printed in great numbers in the Tangut kingdom of Xia during the reign of Ren Zong (仁宗) (1139–1193). No corresponding texts are found in the Chinese *Tripitaka*, though their authenticity can be convincingly testified by the existence of their Tibetan parallels in the Tibetan canon.

Most of the Tantric ritual texts in the Khara Khoto collection are handwritten manuscripts written during either the Tangut Xia or Mongol Yuan time. A large part of these manuscripts is made up of a series of ritual texts related to the yogic practice of the Sixfold Doctrine of Nāroṇa (*Nā ro chos drug*). *The Sixfold Doctrine of Nāroṇa* was based on the esoteric teachings of the tenth century Indian Mahāsiddha Nāroṇa. *The Sixfold Doctrine of Nāroṇa* refers to inner heat (*gtum mo*), illusory body (*sgyu lus*), luminosity (*'od gsal*), the transference of consciousness (*'pho ba*), the transference of consciousness into another body (*grong 'jug*), and the intermediate state (*bar do*). Within the texts, the yogic practice of dream (*rmi lam*) often replaces the transference of consciousness into another body and stands alone as one of the six doctrines. The culminating meditations of the Great Seal (*mahāmudrā*, *phyag rgya chen po*) constitute the essence of the Mar pa bka' brgyud tradition. Among the Khara Khoto collections, there is a series of texts belonging to the same corpus of *The Sixfold Doctrine of Nāroṇa*. Some of these are: (1) *The Meaning of Luminosity of Nine Things* (九事顯發光

明義); (2) *The Quintessential Instruction of the Practice of the Intermediate Body* (中有身要門); (3) *The Quintessential Instruction of the Yogic Practice of Dream and Illusory Body* (夢幻身要門); (4) *The Quintessential Instruction of the Yogic Practice of the Intermediate Body of the Middle Stream of Nectar* (甘露中流中有身要門); (5) *The Quintessential Instruction of Abandoning Life* (捨壽要門); and (6) *Inner Heat illuminating Ignorance: The Mean of Holding and Circulating Wind* (拙火能照無明: 風息執着共行之法). Most of them were translated into Tangut at the same time, and the Tangut versions of these texts are now available in the Khara Khoto collection as well. At least one of them, *The Essential Instruction of the Yogic Practice of the Dream and the Illusory Body*, has been identified as the Chinese translation of the bKa' brgyud master sGam po pa bSod nam rin chen's (1079–1153) *Essential Instruction on the Illusory Body* (*sGyu lus man ngag*). It indicates that some of these texts originating from the Tangut Xia period in the twelfth century might have been transmitted by bKa' brgyud masters. However, the Tibetan originals of most of these texts remain unidentified.

The deity *yoga* is one of the most preeminent characteristics of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist practices. The basic principle of the practice is that the practitioner identifies or combines himself with his own *Yi dam* deity, Buddha or Bodhisattva alike, mainly through meditative visualization. The goal is to attain enlightenment and acquire the capabilities and magic powers that the *Yi dam* deity possesses. Texts on the yogic practices associated with various *Yi dam* deities among the Khara Khoto collection are outstanding in both quantity and quality, suggesting that the deity *yoga* was extraordinarily popular at the time. Among the numerous deities, Vajravārāhī and Mahākāla were the most common protective deities of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism both in the Tangut kingdom and the Mongol Yuan dynasty. Accordingly, a great number of *sādhanas* of Vajravārāhī and Mahākāla, among other numerous Buddhist deities, are seen among Chinese Buddhist texts in the Khara Khoto collection. Within the Mahākāla cult alone, for instance, there are numerous *sādhanas*, *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs* texts of this nature. To mention a few: (1) *The root mantra of the Great Black One* (大黑根本命咒); (2) *The quintessential instruction of the Great Black One* (慈烏大黑要門); (3) *The sādhana and the meditational guide of the Great Black One* (大黑求修並作法), (4) *Eight-legs Praise to the Auspicious*

*Great Black One* (吉祥大黑八足贊), and so on. It should be noted that all the Chinese Buddhist manuscripts in the Khara Khoto collection that were excavated by the archaeological institute of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in the 1980s are exclusively texts of the Mahākāla cult, be they *mantras*, praises, prayers, or liturgies. In addition, there are numerous *sādhana*s of other deities such as Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, Vaiśravaṇa, Cakrasaṃvara, the Buddhalocanā, the *ḍākinī* of Four Syllables, the Great Black Mother, and the Protecting Deity of Desire.

In summary, the Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts found in *The Khara Khoto collection of Manuscripts* are doubtlessly instrumental for the reconstruction of the history of Buddhism in Central Eurasia from the eleventh to fourteenth century. Since they were made accessible to scholars worldwide only very recently through xerographic reprints by Shanghai Classics Publishing House (上海古籍出版社), they have yet to be further explored. These texts are similar both in content and style not only to other classical Chinese texts of the same kind that we discovered successively in recent years, but also to the old Uigur Buddhist texts identified among *Turfan Uigurica* which were unearthed at the beginning of last century and are now preserved in Berlin, Germany. If we compare these texts in various languages within different collections, we will certainly know much more about the history of Tibetan Buddhism in Central Eurasia and China during that period.

## **2. *Dacheng yaodao miji* (大乘要道密集) (*The Secret Collection of Works on the Essential Path of Mahāyāna*)**

Before a large number of Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts in *the Khara Khoto Collection of Manuscripts* were identified, *Dacheng yaodaomiji* was the only known Chinese source regarding Tibetan Tantric Buddhism during the Mongol Yuan dynasty. We know very little about how these texts were collected and compiled together. It was said that the handwritten manuscripts, which eventually formed the *Dacheng yaodao miji*, were released from Jehol, the Summer Palace of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, in 1736 during the reign of Emperor Qianlong. These ritual texts were supposedly handed down from the court of Great Mongol Khans, to that of the Chinese Ming, and then into the

hands of the Manchu Qing emperors. The collection was first block-printed in 1930 in Beijing by a group of Chinese followers of a Mongolian master who taught Tibetan Tantric rituals there. For a long period, it was believed that the *Dacheng yaodao miji* had been compiled and translated by 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–1280), the first imperial preceptor of the Mongol Yuan dynasty, together with his disciple bSod nams grags (莎南屹囉). However, recent studies demonstrate convincingly that it is indeed a collection or compilation of Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism that were successively translated and circulated during the Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming dynasties. It remains the major textual source for Chinese practitioners of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism up to modern times.

Overall, the *Dacheng yaodao miji* is a collection of ritual texts of the Path with its Result teachings (*Lam 'bras*), which is the most important Tantric system of meditation practice and theory in the Sa skya school of Tibetan Buddhism. This fits with the fact that Sa skya masters were the imperial preceptors of Mongol Yuan emperors, and numerous Sa skya masters were very active within and outside the Mongol court. Altogether, the *Dacheng yaodao miji* is made up of 83 texts, the majority of which are translations of texts of various genres related to the Path with its Result teachings. Its first section consists of three major commentaries on *The Root Vajra Verses of the Path with its Result Teaching* (*Lam 'bras bu dang bcas pa'i rtsa ba rdo rje'i tshig rkang*) passed on by the Indian Mahāsiddha Virūpa. They are: (1) *The Collection of Extending the Luminosity of the Path with its Result* (道果延暉集); (2) *An Explanation of the Vajra Verses of the Path with its Result* (解釋道果語錄金剛句記); and (3) *Expelling difficulties of the Vajra Verses of the Path with its Result* (解釋道果逐難記). In *The catalogue of the collection of Jiangyun lou* (絳雲樓書目), a well-known private library in Qing Jiangnan, a text entitled *The Vajra Verses of the Path with its Result practice transmitted by the great Indian Mahāsiddha Virūpa* (密哩斡巴金剛句要) is listed. It very likely refers to a Chinese translation of *the Root Verses of the Path with its Result*. Unfortunately, it has yet to be located today.

The second section of the *Dacheng yaodao miji* includes 23 texts of quintessential instructions of various yogic practices and *sādhanas* related to the Path with its Result teachings. It is entitled *The Volume of the Path with its Result of Guru Virūpa* (密哩斡巴道果卷).

Within this volume, there are many texts that were written or transmitted respectively by early Sa skya masters such as the third, fourth and fifth Sa skya patriarchs, namely, Grags pa rgyal mtshan (1147–1216), Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1181–1251) and 'Phags pa Blo gros rgyal mtshan (1235–1280). In addition, the *Dasheng yaodao mijì* contains a series of short *sādhana*s of the *Sixfold Yogas of Nāroṇa*. They are mostly included within *The Volume of the Esoteric Meanings of the Path of the Union of Wisdom and Skillful Means based on the Śrīcakrasaṃvaratantra* (依吉祥上樂輪智慧方便雙運道玄義卷). There are: (1) *Sixteen Kinds of Essential Rituals* (十六種要儀); (2) *The Yogic Practice of Inner Heat* (拙火定); (3) *The Yogic Practice of Inner Heat of Nine Cycles* (九週拙火定); (4) *The Yogic Practice of Luminosity* (光明定); (5) *The Yogic Practice of Dream and Illusory Body* (夢幻定); and (6) *The Yogic Practice of Illusory Body* (幻身定). Besides, there are other similar texts which belong to the same text corpus, for instance, (1) *Distinguishing Signs of Death* (辨死相); (2) *The Pith Instruction of Transforming Appearance at the Moment of Death* (轉相臨終要門); (3) *Transference Coordinated with Three Intelligences and Four Intermediate States* (四灌遷神旨); (4) *Practices Combined with Transference of Consciousness, Ritual for Ransoming from Impending Death* (贖命觀); (5) *The Quintessential Instruction of Buddha Amitābha for Dying* (阿彌陀佛臨終要門), and so on. They are scattered in the *Dacheng yaodao mijì*. So far only two texts of this kind, namely, *The Yogic Practice of Inner Heat of Nine Cycles* and *Sixteen Kinds of Essential Rituals*, have been identified as similar to the two Tibetan texts *gTum mo dgu skor gyi gdams pa* and *Chos rje'i gsung sgros gtum mo'i lam rim bcu drug pa*, both of which were written by sGam po pa bSod nams rin chen. The Tibetan originals of all the other texts remain unidentified.

The third section of the *Dasheng yaodao mijì* consists of 21 texts on Mahāmudrā. Most of them have their Tangut counterparts in the *Khara Khoto Collection*, and thus are of Tangut Xia origin. Some of them are evidently attributed to the bKa' brgyud tradition, particularly to the transmission of Bla ma Zhang brTson 'grus grags pa (1122–1193). For example, *New Translation of the Quintessential Instruction of Supplementary Teaching of Uncommon* (新譯大手印不共義配教要門) was signed as having been compiled by the great Maitrīpa (986–1065), one of the most important Indian masters in the transmission lineage of the Mahāmudrā teachings.

However, most texts related to the practice of Mahāmudrā in the *Dasheng yaodao miji* are more likely attributed to Sa skya tradition, and belong to the category of the Tantra of Result of the Path with its Result teachings. Since we have so far been unable to identify the Tibetan originals of any of these texts, the history of the transmission of these Mahāmudrā texts remains unclear to us.

The fourth section of the *Dacheng yaodao miji* contains 21 texts on auxiliary practices that are mentioned in *The Root Vajra Verses of the Path with its Result*. One interesting note is that three texts were discovered in the *Dasheng yaodao miji* that were clearly works of non-Sa skya masters. One is *A Ritual of Stūpa Building entitled Supreme Blessing* (大菩提塔樣尺寸法, *Byang chub chen po'i mchod rten gyi tshad*) by Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290–1364), the other is *The Supplication Prayer called the General Explanation of the Teachings* (總釋教門祝禱, *bsTan pa spyi 'grel zhes bya ba'i gsol 'debs*) by Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan (1292–1362), the founding master of the Jo nang school. The third is *the Quintessential Instruction of Eating Stone* (服石要門, *'Byung ba rdo'i bcud len*) transmitted by Klong chen rab 'byams pa Dri med 'od zer (1308–1363), the most preeminent scholar of the rNying ma tradition during the fourteenth century.

Judging from the presence of these texts within the *Dacheng yaodao miji*, it is clear that the Path with its Result teaching of the Sa skya school, along with its various rituals and yogic practices, was the most popular teaching of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism at the court of the Mongol Khans. Given that many texts within the *Dacheng yaodao miji* are either directly of Tangut origin or have their corresponding Tangut versions in the Khara Khoto collection, it testifies to the fact that the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism came down in one continuous line from the Tangut Xia to the Mongol Yuan dynasties. The Mongol adoption of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism has a deep Tangut background; Sa skya masters actively spread their specific teachings in the Tangut kingdom before they gained the favor of the Mongol Khans. The Mahākāla cult, as a part of the Path with its Result teaching of the Sa skya school, was already popular in the Tangut kingdom by then. The yogic practices of the six doctrines of Nāropa were likewise extensively disseminated in the Tangut kingdom, and from there became extremely popular among Yuan followers of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism in China Proper.

### 3. Other Texts similar to those of the *Dacheng yaodao miji*

Obviously, the *Dacheng yaodao miji* does not include every Chinese translation of the Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts that originated from the time of the Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan, and Chinese Ming. An increasing number of texts of the same type have been discovered within various Chinese museums and libraries. In the National Palace Museum of Taiwan, there are two original Ming manuscripts of Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist ritual texts. Both manuscripts were written with golden powder during the fourth year of the Zheng Tong (正統) reign of the Ming (1439). They are considered to be the most precious of their kind within the museum's entire collection. They are (1) *The Spring Well of Nectar: The Feast Gathering [Gaṇacakra] of the Auspicious Hevajra* (吉祥喜金剛集輪甘露泉) and (2) *The Liturgy of the Realization of the Buddha Mother Uṣṇīṣavijayā* (如來頂髻尊勝佛母現證儀). Both are said to have been “orally taught by 'Phags pa of the Yuan (元發思巴述) and translated by the Buddhist monk bSod nams grags (釋莎南屹囉譯).” As a result, they are usually considered to be of Yuan origin. However, in the list of the transmission lineages of the masters in both texts, we see the name Niyana luoshimi (尼牙二合拿囉釋彌) or Yana luoshimi (雅納囉釋彌), at the end which is the Chinese transcription of the Sanskrit name Jñānaraśmi. Jñānaraśmi means “the Light of Wisdom” and refers to Zhiguang (智光) (1349–1435), the well-known great state preceptor of the early Ming. Thus, it is clear that both texts were in fact not of Yuan origin, but rather were translated/compiled during the early Ming. Accordingly, the most prolific translator of the time bSod nams grags was not a direct disciple of the Yuan Imperial Preceptor 'Phags pa, but rather a Ming translator.

After we carefully compared these two Chinese texts with numerous Tibetan texts that were thought to possibly be the originals of these two translations, it became evident that they are not translations of a single ritual text written by 'Phags pa bla ma, but are instead based on several texts written by various Sa skya masters including 'Phags pa bla ma. While the first one is a new compilation of five *sādhana*s of the *Hevajra Tantra* written by several early Sa skya patriarchs, the second one represents a complete

*sādhana* of the Buddha Mother Uṣṇīṣavijayā, which similarly integrates seven ritual texts written by early Sa skya masters. The identification of Zhiguang as a transmission master of two texts of the Sa skya tradition, and of bSod nams grags as a Ming translator, tells us the long forgotten truth that Tibetan Tantric Buddhism did not in any way stop its spread into the Chinese Ming dynasty, and that the Sa skya tradition of the Path with its Result teaching was perpetually popular among Chinese followers at least during the early Ming period.

This conclusion was further convincingly testified by the discovery of eight other classical Chinese texts of the Path with its Result teachings of the Sa skya school in the National Library of China in Beijing. These texts are very similar to those included in the *Dasheng yaodao mijì* in terms of both content and translation style. They are (1) *Dombiheruka's Sahajasiddhi* (端必瓦成就同生要); (2) *The Key Points of Mudrā written by Indrabhūti* (因得囉菩提手印道要); and (3) *Letterless Mahāmudrā* (大手印無字要一卷). These three texts belong to the eight subsidiary cycles of practice of the Path with its Result teachings. (4) *The Volumes of the Path with its Result of Master Virūpa* (密哩幹巴上師道果卷) appears to overlap in content with the text of the same title in the *Dacheng yaodao mijì*. It is worth noting that this volume is marked as the tenth one of the original compilation. This means there were at least ten volumes of the *Volumes of the Path with its Result of Master Virūpa* alone, though only two volumes are still extant today. Knowing that, we can only imagine how many more texts of the same kind besides those included in the *Dacheng yaodao mijì* were actually translated and circulated in Ming China. (5) *The Ritual of Self-empowerment of the Maṇḍala of Hevajra* (喜金剛中圍內自受灌頂儀) is the translation of 'Phags pa's work *dPal kye'i rdo rje'i dkyil 'khor du bdag nyid 'jug cing dbang blang ba'i cho ga dbang la 'jug pa*. Another work of the same ritual by the same author, namely, the (6) *dPal kye rdo rje'i dkyil 'khor du bdag nyid 'jug pa'i cho ga snying po gsal ba*, was translated into Chinese as well. It is entitled *The Ritual of Self-empowerment of the Auspicious Hevajra* (吉祥喜樂金剛自受主戒儀). It was possibly translated by IHa btsun Chos kyi rin chen (達宗着思吉冷禪), who was the last Song emperor and was exiled to Sa skya after the Song was overthrown by the Mongols. One copy of it was kept at Fazang monastery (法藏寺) in Dali, Yunnan Province. (7)

*Commentary of the Second Part of the Auspicious Hevajratātra* (吉祥喜金剛本續王后分注疏) is the translation of the second part (*brtag gnyis*) of 'Phags pa's annotated commentary (*mchan*) on the *Hevajratātra*. (8) *New Translation of the Condensed Cakrasamvaratantra, the Highest One of All, the Unsurpassable Yoginī, the Noble King of Blood Drinker* (新譯吉祥飲血王集輪無比修習母一切中最勝上樂集本續顯釋記, *dPal khrag 'thung gi rgyal po 'khor lo sdom par brjod pa mal 'byor ma bla na med pa thams cad kyi bla ma bde mchog bsdus pa*). It is a fragment of an important commentary on the *Sricakrasamvara Tantra* written by Cog ro Chos kyi rgyal mtshan, an early bKa' brgyud master from mDo khams. (9) Finally, *The Dharma Cycle of Practices* (修習法門) is not a single *sādhana* text but rather a compilation made up of eighteen *sādhana*s of the Avalokiteśvara cult. They were translated during different time periods, ranging from the Tangut Xia to Chinese Ming dynasties.

In the National Library of China in Beijing, there are nine other *sādhana* texts on Avalokiteśvara that were supposedly translated by Zhiguang (智光), the great state preceptor of the early Ming. They are: (1) *Quintessential Instruction to the Practice of the Auspicious Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara* (聖觀自在菩薩求修); (2) *The direct Realization of the Secret Practice of the Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara* (大悲觀音密修現前解); (3) *The Simultaneous Mandala of the Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara* (大悲觀音俱生中圍); (4) *The Condensed Quintessential Instruction to the Practice of the Auspicious Avalokiteśvara* (聖觀自在略求修); (5) *The Essential Method of the Practice of the Blue-Necked Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara* (青頸大悲觀自在菩薩修習要法); (6) *Quintessential Instruction to the Practice of the Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara* (大悲觀音求修); (7) *Quintessential Instruction to the Practice of Avalokiteśvara of Lion's Roar* (獅子吼觀音求修); (8) *Quintessential Instruction to the Distinction of Dreams of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara* (觀音菩薩辨夢要門); and (9) *The Extraordinary Quintessential Instruction to the Daily Practice of the Great Compassionate Avalokiteśvara* (大悲觀自在常修不共要門). These *sādhana* texts were mostly translated from Tibetan and are closely related to the Sa skya and Khro phu bka' brgyud traditions. However, the first of these nine texts was seemingly translated from the Sanskrit original. Indeed, Zhiguang was only responsible for the translation of the

first text; the others were again translations undertaken in different eras by various translators.

It is rather surprising that Chinese translations of Tantric Buddhist texts can be consistently found in other locations. For instance, there is a rich collection of Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts in the Fayuan temple (法源寺) in Beijing; some of them have already been compiled and published in a six-volume anthology entitled *Precious Canon of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism in China* (中國藏密寶典). Although the majority of the collection is made up of texts translated by Chinese practitioners in the early years of the Republic of China (1912–1949), there is at least one sizable text entitled *The Ritual of the Realization of the Auspicious Mandala of Cakrasamvara* (吉祥上樂中圍修證儀) which was certainly not a product of the twentieth century, even though its reprinting was based on a version preserved by the Beijing Bodhi Society (北京菩提學會). Its content and writing style are reminiscent of the prolific translator bSod nams grags' works from the Ming time. As some of its passages appear to be identical to the corresponding passages in the Taiwan National Palace Museum's version of *The Spring Well of Nectar: the Ganacakra Feast of the Auspicious Hevajra*, they could have originated from the same hand.

There is a bilingual Tibetan-Chinese text captioned *Xiuxifo tu* (修喜佛圖, i.e. *Paintings of the Yogic Practices of the Buddha of Bliss*). The paintings were assumedly various guides to the yogic practice of the Hevajra. Its content appears to be the quintessential instruction of the yogic practices of the magical wheel (*'khrul 'khor* or *Yantra yoga*) of the Sa skya tradition. It was transmitted primarily by the Phag gru pa rDo rje rgyal po (1110–1170), a close disciple of the first Sa skya patriarch Kun dga' snying po, and the third Sa skya patriarch Grags pa rgyal mtshan. It is believed that the *Xiuxifo tu* was circulated at the Manchu court of the Qing dynasty, but the date of its initial formation remains ambiguous. Once again, its writing style is reminiscent of the Ming translations of bSod nams grags. The yogic practice of the magical wheel would have already been popular within the court of the great Mongol khans. The notorious sex yoga referred to as *Yandieer* (演撲兒) by contemporaneous Chinese literati, which was supposedly performed by the last Mongol khan and his ministers at the Mongol court, might have been mistaken with the yogic practice of

the magical wheel. This unique practice of the body movement is also related to the practice of the Path with its Result teaching of the Sa skya school, and is one preliminary practice of the yogic practice of the Inner Heat (*gtum mo*). There is a fragmentary Chinese text entitled *The Magical Wheel of the Path with its Result* (道果機輪; *Lam 'bras 'khrul 'khor*) among *Three Fragments of the 'Yandieer' Practice* (演揲兒法殘卷三種) that was discovered by Luo Zhenyu (罗振玉) (1866–1940), an eminent scholar of late Qing and early republic era, among the Qing Archives, which will be discussed later in the paper. Although the *'Yandieer' Practice* was traditionally regarded as a type of sexual yogic practice by Chinese literati, the yogic practice of the magical wheel is actually a set of yogic exercises of breathing techniques and body movement. The yogic practice of the Magical Wheel illustrated in *The Paintings of the Yogic Practices of the Buddha of Bliss* does not contain any content related to Tantric sex. Thus, it was obviously a mistake made by early Ming historians to confuse the practice of *Yandie er*, that is, the magical wheel, with the practice of Tantric sex.

In 1909, Luo Zhenyu singlehandedly saved the imperial archives preserved in the great warehouse of the inner cabinet (內閣大庫) from being destroyed by a fire. Among these archives, he singled out fragments of three texts assumedly related to the notorious practice of Tantric sex performed at the Mongol court of Yuan under the guidance of Indian and Tibetan masters. He remarkably called them *Three Fragments of the 'Yandieer' Practice* (演揲兒法殘卷三種). These are: (1) *New Translation of the Condensed Tantra of Cakrasaṃvara, the Highest One of All, the Unsurpassable Yogini, the Noble King of Blood Drinker* (新譯吉祥飲血王集輪無比修習母一切中最勝上樂集本續顯釋記); (2) *The Fifth Chapter of the Root Tantra of the Great Secrecy, The King of the Tantra of the Vow of Net of the Dākinī of Hevajra* (喜樂金剛空行母網禁略集大密本續五卷下); and (3) *The Volume of the Profound Meanings of the Path of the Union of Wisdom and Skillful Means based on the Śrīcakrasaṃvara* (依吉祥上樂輪方便智慧雙蓮道玄義卷). The first title was identical to the one of the same title found among the previously mentioned eight titles discovered at the Chinese National Library collection; this fragment is likely the third chapter of the commentary of the *Śrīcakrasaṃvaratantra*. The second fragmental text is undoubtedly a fragment of a

Chinese translation of the *Hevajratantra*, one of the root *tantras* belonging to the mother *tantra* section of the Niruttarayoga system. This particular translation was made during the Tangut Xia period. So far, three Chinese translations of the *Hevajratantra* from three different periods, complete or fragmentary, have already been found within various collections. Finally, the last fragment is that of the same text seen in the *Dasheng yaodao miji* that includes several instructions on yogic practices related to the Path with its Result teachings of the Sa skya school. A substantial portion of the text comprises the quintessential instruction of the yogic practice of desire, or in other words, the practice of Tantric sex. The so-called secret teaching of supreme bliss (秘密大喜樂法), another notorious practice of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism popular in the Mongol court that was sharply criticized by Chinese literati, is the distorted version of the yogic practice of desire (*'dod chags chen po'i sbyor ba*) described in *The Volume of the Profound Meanings of the Path of the Union of Wisdom and Skillful Means based on the Śrīcakrasaṃvaratantra*.

#### **Ø. Concluding Remarks**

These Chinese translations of Tantric Buddhist texts discussed above are instrumental for the reconstruction of Buddhist history of Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming dynasties. The Khara Khoto collection of Buddhist texts in various languages, as well as other texts of the same kind originating from between the Tangut Xia and Chinese Ming periods, provide sufficient literary sources for the purpose of reconstructing the Buddhist history of Central Eurasia and China from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries and adding another colorful episode to the story of intercultural and interreligious interactions along the silk route. Preliminary studies on these texts clearly shows that Tibetan Tantric Buddhism spread widely throughout Central Eurasia and China Proper from the Tangut Xia period onwards, and penetrated deeply into the Buddhist societies of the Tanguts, Uygurs, Mongols and Chinese from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries. Its history forms a previously completely unknown chapter of the overall history of Buddhism in Central Eurasia and China. The Mongol Adoption of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism benefited from the existing predominance of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut kingdom. The Uygurs played a vital role in disseminating Tibetan Tantric Buddhism among the Tanguts and Mongols, and were

practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism for centuries as well. The Sa skya school was the most dominant school outside Tibet from the Tangut Xia to the Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming dynasties. The popularity of Tibetan Tantric Buddhism in and outside the Mongol court of Yuan left a long lasting legacy in subsequent dynasties. The number of Ming Chinese translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts far surpasses that of its predecessor and reveals the rich, but hitherto totally unknown, history of the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in Ming China.

Generally speaking, all still extant Chinese Translations of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts are of excellent quality in terms of translation skills. All the works included in the *Dacheng yaodao mijì* and these texts preserved at the National Library of China and National Museum in Taiwan should undoubtedly be counted as the best works of the same kind so far available to us. Since most of these translations do not provide us clear information on the name of their author and translator, nor the date and site of its completion, we are not yet able to reconstruct the history of the translation of Tibetan Tantric Buddhist texts during the Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming periods. One notable fact is that it is relatively easy to identify the Tibetan originals of most Yuan and Ming translations of Tantric Buddhist texts, while the originals of most texts stemming from the Tangut period remain nowhere to be found. For instance, the origin of 21 texts on Mahāmudrā in the *Dacheng yaodao mijì*, whose Tangut counterparts are also seen among the Khara Khoto collection, remains ambiguous. No exact Tibetan original of a single text among them has been identified so far. It is possible that these texts were not strict translations of Tibetan texts, but rather records of the oral transmissions of Tibetan masters penned by Tangut and Chinese disciples. They were the results of the collaborative works between Tibetan masters and their Tangut and Chinese followers. As a usual practice, the author of the text was commonly indicated as someone who created (*zao*, 造), collected and compiled (*ji*, 集), or narrated (*shu*, 述) the text in the Chinese Tantric Buddhist texts of the Tangut Xia, Mongol Yuan and Chinese Ming periods. However, some texts of Tangut origin marked clearly that they were transmitted (*chuan*, 传) or recorded (*lu*, 录) by someone. Accordingly, these texts were not exact translations of the original Tibetan texts, but rather records of the oral transmissions of

Tibetan masters. During the Tangut Xia period a large number of Tibetan masters were active in spreading Tibetan Tantric Buddhist teachings and practices among their Tangut, Uigur, Mongol and Chinese followers.

Although most of the Tantric texts of clear Yuan and Ming origin were leaked out from the Qing imperial court, they had once been circulated at the imperial courts of Mongol Yuan, Chinese Ming and Manchu Qing dynasties successively. However, they were not exclusively created by the imperial order for the purpose of serving the needs of imperial members who practiced Tibetan Tantric Buddhism. Only a small number of these works were entrusted by the imperial orders to be translated for a specific purpose. Most of them were produced to serve China's large Tibetan Buddhist communities. A considerable number of these texts were translated by a Ming translator named bSod nam grags (莎南屹囉). Judging by both the quality and quantity of all the translations attributed to him, his achievements in and contribution to the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in China Proper as well as to the interaction between Tibetan and Chinese Buddhism can be only compared to that of 'Gos Chos grub, the most eminent Sino-Tibetan translator of the ninth century. In a similar way to the case of 'Gos Chos grub, the true ethnic identity of bSod nam grags remains enigmatic and controversial up to the modern day. It is evident that he was not a Tibetan translator originated from Tibet, simply because he carries a common Tibetan name. The writing style and the erudition in Chinese Buddhist scripture reflected within his translations clearly testifies that bSod nam grags was a very well educated Chinese Buddhist scholar. Indeed, it was a common practice for many Chinese followers of Tibetan Buddhism to adopt either a Sanskrit or a Tibetan dharma name during the early Ming period. Thus, bSod nam grags might have just been a Chinese follower of Tibetan Buddhism who was comfortable with both Chinese and Tibetan. He belonged to the Buddhist Saṃgha of the Western Regions of the early Ming period in Beijing in which both the Chinese master, the great state preceptor Zhiguang, and the Tibetan master, namely, the Dharma king of Great Wisdom bKra shis dpal ldan, held the central position (Shen and An, 2011).

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## **Peering Through a Funhouse Mirror: Trying to Read Indic Texts Through Tibetan and Chinese Translations<sup>1</sup>**

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The present paper was prepared for a conference on translation, the theme of which was “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts,” an expression which seemed to me equally to encompass both translations made in historical times (from Indic languages into Chinese and Tibetan, for instance) and translations we ourselves attempt today.<sup>2</sup> Both of these realms of mediation represent prime examples of cross-cultural transmission. The polyvalency is, moreover, compounded by the fact that these two arenas, as vastly distant from each other in time and theoretical assumptions as they may be, are nonetheless bound together: our present-day assumptions, motivations and aims can most

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<sup>1</sup> This article was submitted in its final form in July 2013. Only updated references to the publications have been added.

<sup>2</sup> Cross-cultural transmission, to be sure, does not necessarily involve translation. For the purposes of the present paper, however, I leave aside other modes of such transmission, which would include issues of Church Language, for instance, as found in the historical transmission of Pāli texts through Southeast Asia, of *dhāraṇīs* throughout the Buddhist world, and of modern-day recitations of texts like the *Heart Sūtra* in North America: chanting of Japanese pronunciations of Chinese translations of Indic texts, including a mantra that is meant to be something like Sanskrit. This is not a new phenomenon by any means: a number of manuscripts found in Dunhuang preserve ninth century transliterations of Chinese translations (or compositions) in Tibetan script. Their purpose was to allow recitation of texts in Chinese language by those who could read Tibetan script but not Chinese. See for one example Thomas and Clauson 1927, the *Amituo jing* in Tibetan script.

meaningfully be examined only with reference to those of our forebears. Despite its centrality, however, modern scholars of Buddhism, both as a community and as individuals (not to mention students of translation more broadly),<sup>3</sup> have yet to give sufficient attention to the full range of problems raised by the translation of Buddhist scripture,<sup>4</sup> a lacuna which, needless to say, the present essay does not pretend to fill in its entirety. The methods and goals of those who have translated Buddhist scriptures and documents into modern languages have, in fact, probably received significantly less scrutiny than have some of the translation practices of the ancients. But there may be something to be learned by thinking about the two processes together, and it may even not be too much to wish for that a sort of consilience emerge from such comparative considerations.

A variety of starting points are possible with regard to problems of translation, to which the voluminous theoretical and practical literature on the subject attests. In the present contribution I will focus only on a very narrow window, that concerning issues raised by the translation of (putatively) originally Indic Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures, both classically into Tibetan and Chinese, and presently into modern languages.<sup>5</sup> Even thus delimited, there is much that I simply cannot address: questions of annotation, of registers of speech, of the sound of a translation, of technical language and the nonspecialist reader, of reading with a teacher or guide, and on and on. These are not only very important issues, but they are intimately interrelated; it is simply a matter of time and space that forces me to limit myself here. But

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<sup>3</sup> It is a sad testimony to our failure as Buddhist scholars to effectively communicate outside our field that the few mentions of Buddhism in the wider theoretical literature concerning translation are (at least as far as I have read) generally both naïve and unreliable.

<sup>4</sup> The same may also be said for practitioners, but I do not intend to address directly issues related to modern faith communities here.

<sup>5</sup> Different considerations might apply to works we know, for example, to have been composed in China. It is interesting in this regard to notice the genre of Tibetan translations from Chinese, some of which were transmitted in the Kanjur lineages, others of which we know only from Dunhuang manuscripts. As far as I know, there is no body of *sūtra* texts thought to have been composed in Tibet. For reasons of my own linguistic limitations I do not consider the perhaps equally important materials in Khotanese.

leaving aside a myriad of questions does not mean I do not cast my net wide, for it is always necessary to keep in mind big questions, such as: why translate at all? And in the specific context of what is to follow: Why translate translations, and what does it mean to translate a translation? Answers to these questions, and to the further questions they generate in their turn, hinge in part on who is doing the translating, and for whom. I do not aim to offer general answers to these questions so much as to begin to think about what answers might entail.

In a comparative survey of several modern translations of the oft-studied and repeatedly translated *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, Jan Nattier (2000: 236) introduced her topic as follows: “Every translator of a Buddhist text must confront, at the outset, two fundamental issues: from which version of the text will she translate (for in most cases, even when the text has been preserved only in a single language, these are multiple), and for what audience is the translation intended? Not all such decisions, however, are made consciously, much less clearly conveyed to the reader.” These considerations are relevant not only for modern translators, to whom Nattier was referring, but applied equally in the past, though with important differences. It is, first of all, highly unlikely that ancient translators had much, if any, choice in the version of a text they translated.<sup>6</sup> If they did, their criteria were more likely to be what we would consider theological than philological, a point to which I will return below. To take one example, while in principle Tibetan translators looked to India as the source of Buddhist scriptures, when scriptures were available elsewhere and not (directly) from India, they apparently did not hesitate to translate from these other sources as well—in the first place from Chinese, but also from Uighur, Khotanese and others. Preference however seems to have been given always to Indian sources when available. Moreover, while such ancient translators may have thought about their audience, we have few if any clues

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<sup>6</sup> We do know, however, that in Tibet those who made use of translations were able to pick in some cases between more than one version (as was very often the case in China, of course), and the retranslation of some texts could also speak to dissatisfaction with the nature of a version, and not to dissatisfaction only with the translation qua translation. As far as I know, however, these issues are not discussed explicitly in traditional contexts.

to the terms in which they did so.<sup>7</sup> What is clear is that in the historical past there was simply no possibility of an academic translation of any Buddhist text—a translation whose home, and also possibly whose audience, lies outside a community of faith and practice. Given this, the motive and intent of ancient translations could have been nothing other than the transmission of the salvific message of the Buddha: a missionizing intent is to be assumed a priori.<sup>8</sup> An academic translation has other goals, not to be sure ‘objective,’ but emphatically not, by definition, evangelical.<sup>9</sup> These facts stand as fixed posts in relation to which we can fruitfully consider issues of translation both old and new.

The central purpose of translation can be nothing other than (re)presentation: one wants to make present, or make present once again, something now distant (in time or space [including conceptual space], or both). This process implies some concept of the distant object, the ‘original.’ And although this view is to some degree controversial, at least as far as literary translation is concerned, the aim is often assumed to be to provide as close a point of access as possible to that original, since distance means degradation of the message, whether that be in a spiritual sense—that the pristine voice of God or of the Buddha is lost or garbled—or in a ‘degraded data’ sense. The latter in fact implies the former: if the data is degraded, the message must be as well, although one can accept the inevitability of the degradation of data without assuming a pristine originary message, this marking one difference

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<sup>7</sup> I leave aside—although I do not consider it unimportant—that Nattier’s pronoun would be anachronistic if applied to the past: as far as I know, there are no women recorded as translators in, at least, classical China or Tibet.

<sup>8</sup> I do not mean of course that translations were necessarily intended for missionizing to non-Buddhists, or that a (Buddhist) lay audience was conceived of as the target group. For a great many translations (of e.g. Vinaya or Tantra texts), we know that the intended target audience was strictly delimited. This does not correspondingly imply that ultimately the audience necessarily excluded ‘outsiders’; in China, for instance, translations could be and were read by non-Buddhists.

<sup>9</sup> Scholars and those with academic credentials may, of course, produce evangelical translations, just as ‘believers’ may produce scholarly academic ones. There is no necessary correlation between the ‘status’ of the translator and the result of his work. The same individual is quite capable of functioning in both modes—just not at the same time.

between faith-oriented and academic approaches.<sup>10</sup> For the audience of faith, moreover, later individuals never measure up to the founder,<sup>11</sup> an axiom that goes hand in hand with the assumption of degradation of the transmitted message. If we as academic translators are interested not in some ‘originary message’ but non-hierarchically in history as process—and with regard to texts, this means that we are not necessarily particularly interested in one phase of the life of a text more than another<sup>12</sup>—it follows that we have no reason to privilege the oldest form(s) of a scripture, and thus we do not *necessarily* need even to ask about these forms, other than as points on a historical continuum<sup>13</sup>—although we must remember that, in contrast, theoretically and ideally these are the only forms ultimately of interest to the faith community.<sup>14</sup> It may be obvious to some readers by this point that much of what I

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<sup>10</sup>It is interesting to recall here the idea, applied both to the translation of the Septuagint and to that of the King James Bible, that the translators themselves were inspired by God, thus neatly side-stepping the question of degradation of data in the process of translation. I also note but do not explore here the fact that at least in some Buddhist contexts translations can attain de facto higher status than the ‘original’ from which they were rendered. This is also not the place to explore the very important place of ‘Church Language’ in Buddhist traditions.

<sup>11</sup>This applies also in, for instance, Chan communities, which in some contexts claim to produce Buddhas, who should be, according to the rhetoric of the tradition, equivalent to the ‘historical’ Buddha but who, sociologically speaking, always remain in some senses hierarchically subordinate, even while it is their actual (physical) presence which may hold affective precedence.

<sup>12</sup>An approach at least in tune with, if not strictly identical to, the goal of the New Philology.

<sup>13</sup>This is not, it should be emphasized, a repudiation of philological method. As I will endeavor to explain below, it is based on a recognition of the nature of Indian Buddhist scriptural literature and its modes of development. It is still necessary to take account of stemmatic relations of manuscripts or printed editions, for instance, and the suggestion that we need to recognize the inherent equal interest of all phases in the life of a text does not extend to the idea that any copy, no matter how bad, is equally as interesting as any other, or that any edition, no matter how late, is equally as meaningful for understanding the/a tradition as any other. This is also a question that requires careful consideration.

<sup>14</sup>Of course, the text held sacred by a faith community is not necessarily—and probably in fact is rarely—the oldest form of a text—but it must be believed by the community to be so. See below.

have been saying about translation applies rather directly also to questions of the *establishment* of a text to begin with: these are problems of philology in its most basic sense.

Those approaching the question of translation from a faith perspective (using this expression somewhat vaguely to include a range of theoretical and theological stances) generally cannot but imagine that ultimately behind the form or forms in which a text is now available stand (or stood) an authentic original—in the Buddhist case, a record of the Buddha’s preaching.<sup>15</sup> An academic approach cannot make this assumption. Moreover, even if one accepts that some revelation stood at the ultimate starting point of extant scriptural transmissions, it is only realistic to conclude that in spite of the best efforts of text critics, the subsequent history of those transmissions places such an *ur*-form forever beyond us. When the situation *seems* less complex—when, as an example, the diverse materials presented concerning at least Indic Mahāyāna *sūtra* materials appear more uniform—the best explanation is likely to be that this unity is instead a result of the violence of tradition, which has eradicated other, more diverse varieties of evidence, not necessarily intentionally of course, but simply through the vagaries of transmission over the centuries.<sup>16</sup>

If it is simply not possible to locate an oldest, most authentic *ur*-form in the first place, both because extant evidence does not permit it and because it is the very nature of Buddhist scriptural literature (due to its possibly originally oral nature, or otherwise) that texts did not develop in a unitary linear fashion, what, then, could be the utility of Chinese and Tibetan translations for studies of scriptures in their Indic context(s)? In other words, if one assumes an archetype, then the collation of extant witnesses should allow some hypothetical reconstruction of this archetype. But if one posits *ab initio* a different sort of nonunitary ‘original,’ this model cannot apply. Of course, when only a single version—say a single Chinese translation—exists, we have no other choice

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<sup>15</sup>I assume this applies *mutatis mutandis* to tantric literature (perhaps replacing ‘the Buddha’ with ‘a buddha’), but I am not competent to discuss this domain of Buddhist traditions.

<sup>16</sup>In this regard, as in so many others, Buddhist philology is thoroughly in line with Hebrew Bible and New Testament studies, Homeric text criticism and so on.

than to base all we say about a particular text on its unique surviving witness. But given the existence of multiple versions, based on the assumption of the possibility of an archetype, one typical model of making use of primary translations<sup>17</sup> might be termed the triangulation approach: either in the absence of an Indic version, or as another set of coordinates alongside Indic sources, such translations (for instance, into Chinese or Tibetan) might be used to imagine some—however hypothetical—version(s) of an Indic text standing behind the extant witnesses. One does not have to go so far as to call the result an *w*-text, but to apply this model is at least implicitly to assume the existence of an archetype. It is often asserted that while this method is valid for authored texts, which are generally presumed to have had a single and unique form in the past, the nature of scriptural literature is quite different, and therefore this model is not directly applicable.<sup>18</sup>

I will return to the question of triangulation below, but it is also necessary to mention that assumptions about shared content—commonalities between sources—are what permit the ‘correction’ of one version by means of another, as for instance when it is asserted that a form found in an Indic source should be altered (‘corrected’) on the basis of a Tibetan translation. Making a claim such as this brings with it *huge* assumptions concerning the relationship of the two sources, assumptions which are generally not critically examined, or even recognized as assumptions at all. What is to my mind an even more radical version of the same basic pattern occurs when a (modern) translator chooses to render an incomplete source, supplementing missing portions from elsewhere. An example may be the case of a Sanskrit manuscript missing leaves, the missing portions then being translated from ‘its’ Tibetan translation—although we know full well that the *Vorlage* of

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<sup>17</sup>By this expression I mean to exclude, for example, Mongolian translations based on Tibetan translations, and the like. There is some theoretical discussion of ‘relay translations,’ but most of it is not relevant here, and I am not sure that the term is exactly applicable, while ‘retranslation’ is perhaps too broad.

<sup>18</sup>I wonder whether even its application to authored literature (roughly, to *śāstras*, but also *kāvya* and so on) is not open to question, as for instance the growing evidence about the text of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* of Nāgārjuna seems to suggest (see for example Ye 2007); it appears that variability in śāstric literature might in some cases also present serious challenges to the application of a strictly stemmatic model which assumes the possibility of an archetype.

the Tibetan translation was *not* identical with the extant Sanskrit text. This is a fairly normal procedure in Buddhist Studies, but it is rare indeed that any justification is offered for this mixing (conflating) of sources, which, in light of the critiques I offer here, comes to look more and more problematic.<sup>19</sup>

Translations are of necessity interpretations, implicit commentaries. In the case of traditional Buddhist translations, they present a reading at least differently, and probably in most cases better, informed than our own (better if only in the sense of being generally more deeply and richly traditional). In addition, in so far as translations ‘represent’ an Indic text, or a recension or version thereof (a ponderous expression we might use to avoid reifying ‘the’ text), they are witnesses to versions of texts to which we otherwise no longer have access. Finally, when we do have access to both a source and a translation—as we do for example with Tibetan translations from Chinese (Silk 2014)—the translation serves both as a commentary and as a source enabling us to retrovert a more exact form of its own *Vorlage*. An example is the fragmentary Tibetan translation of Kumārajīva’s *Amituo jīng* (阿彌陀經) translation of the Smaller *Sukhāvativyūha*. For this text we have extant Sanskrit manuscripts (and blockprints), a Tibetan translation preserved in the Kanjur (and not strictly parallel to the extant Sanskrit), and two Chinese translations, one of which, that of Kumārajīva, was also translated into Tibetan (roughly two thirds is extant in Pelliot tibétain 785). The transmitted Chinese text of the *Amituo jīng*, however, is not invariably literally attested by its Tibetan translation, suggesting at the very least that some version of the Chinese text slightly different from that available to us today may have been the translator’s source. What is more, in its function as commentary this translation provides a window onto how the Chinese translation itself was read and understood, minimally, by one educated contemporary reader, in probably 9th century Dunhuang.<sup>20</sup>

In my view, Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptural

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<sup>19</sup>I am certainly not the first person to mention this, of course.

<sup>20</sup>The same sort of window can sometimes be provided by commentaries as well, although most Chinese and Tibetan scripture commentaries function on a level of abstraction so far removed from the literal that their utility in this narrow regard is limited.

literature does not conform to the model of a unitary original text; our evidence seems rather to point to multiple simultaneous related ‘versions’ coexisting. Adding to this the non-systematic methods of translation of not only the Chinese but the Tibetans as well (at least in comparison with the Septuagint—see below), and the variable nature of the vocabulary and grammar of Buddhist Sanskrit and Middle Indic, we must conclude that the situation Buddhist scholars face is not precisely comparable to that discussed by Tov (2000) for Biblical translations, in which he suggests that editors who decline to reconstruct an *ur*-text in Hebrew or Aramaic nevertheless in fact do implicitly offer such a reconstruction when they translate. This may indeed be so in the context of a literature and a translation style, such as that of the Hebrew Bible, that is relatively consistent, grammatically and lexically delimited, and furthermore quite well understood; careful translations in this domain can offer implicit reconstructions of a text—they may serve as an implicit eclectic edition, so to speak. But for our materials, I believe this process simply is not possible (at present, and perhaps theoretically as well). This impossibility may be understood to imply that our own, modern day translations of Buddhist texts are not sufficiently precise, consistent or in fact even thoroughly accurate, since if they were, we might conclude, they would indeed represent their aimed-at (reconstructed) ‘original’ in a fashion at least more exact than what is presently accomplished. Put another way, if we really believe that the process of triangulation between Chinese, Tibetan and Indic *recovers* something Indic, even if not an *ur*-text, then it should follow that our translation of what is recovered—what is imagined through the guise of the translation(s)—has the same epistemic status as any other recovered source. But it is precisely because we cannot give priority to one source over another that this scenario fails to thoroughly parallel the Biblical case, in which—so it is hypothesized—a single authentic and authoritative text was kept in the Temple in Jerusalem and the goal—or one of the goals—of Biblical text criticism is to produce a text as close as possible to that archetypal version.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The same is often assumed, *mutatis mutandis*, for the Greek New Testament. This seems likewise to be Martin West’s aim with Homer, a quest which, however, is fiercely contested (for instance by Gregory Nagy and Graeme D. Bird).

As Nattier reminds us, if one wants to translate a text, one of the first questions one must ask is, ‘which text?’ For a modern traditionalist, as for any ancient who might have had the luxury of choosing between sources, the answer may well be, ‘that sanctified by tradition,’ and there ends the discussion.<sup>22</sup> The evidence for this attitude is generally negative, in the sense that simply no mention is made of sources.<sup>23</sup> At least for a scholar of Indian Buddhism, however, this answer is not available: the virtual disappearance of Buddhism from the Indian heartland in the 13th century implies the absence of any continuous tradition which might sanctify a text.<sup>24</sup> The choice, however, need not, or must not, be entirely arbitrary either. And the only way to avoid arbitrariness is to consider the aims of the translation. This necessitates not only considering for whom one is translating, but also what one wishes to convey with the translation. For once we accept that we can neither reach some original nor (again, in the case of Indian Buddhism) even represent some traditionally sanctified text, what should we do?<sup>25</sup>

A traditional translator’s central problem in conveying what the Buddha said might be termed one of negotiating between

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<sup>22</sup>This idea is by no means limited to scriptures; an avowed goal of some Homeric text criticism is to recover the text established by Aristarchus and others at the library of Alexandria, for instance.

<sup>23</sup>An example is found in Thomas Cleary’s translation of the monumental *Buddhāvataṅśaka* (1984–1987), in which not a single word is devoted to the Chinese source translated therein. In some sectarian translations the sources are those contained in the collected works of the sects, which are themselves ‘traditional’ rather than scientifically established.

<sup>24</sup>Such texts of course did however continue to be copied and used in Nepal, but at least as modern Buddhist studies has continued to interpret the traditions of the Kathmandu valley, these are seen as belonging to an area outside the Indian heartland. It is a curiosity that in the traditions for which the Pāli canon is sacred, translations have most normally been based on the ‘critical’ editions of the Pāli Text Society, rather than on traditional canons (of Burma, Sri Lanka or the like, for instance). In recent translation initiatives (such as the 84000 project), adherents of ‘the’ Tibetan tradition have apparently decided that the Derge Kanjur should be treated as the de facto *textus receptus*, although I am not aware that its primacy is explicitly argued for.

<sup>25</sup>There might be exceptions to the last stricture, as in the case of Pāla period manuscripts, materials indeed written in the Indian heartland and, often, by their materiality bearing witness to the honor in which they were held.

what his sources tell him the Buddha said and what the Buddha might have meant, in so far as he can express the latter in his own idiom, this tension of course not being in any wise unique to Buddhism. Choices must, then, be made between competing possibilities, if for no other than theological reasons. A scholarly translator, in contrast, has generally different goals, including the recovery or reconstruction of forms a given textual presentation may have had in the past (although it is to be confessed that most scholars do not bother to specify precisely which past they have in their sights). Ideally it is not possible, from this perspective, to privilege one form over another, since there is no fixed point which might serve as a frame of reference. While my primary focus here is on the scholarly approach, specifically related to Indic versions of scriptures now known to be extant only in translations in Tibetan and Chinese, it is crucial to simultaneously consider the contrasting paradigm. In the following I consider only a few issues, illustrating them with examples from my own work.

One of the basic problem areas—not, to be sure, limited to Mahāyāna *sūtras*, but central to their study—concerns vocabulary, since attempting to understand the written products of Buddhist traditions necessitates in the first place control over the vocabulary of the texts under consideration. To understand a text of Indic origin *in its Indic context* (as opposed to how such a text may have been appropriated in China, for instance), it is necessary to reconstruct as far as possible its Indic linguistic shape, at least as far as technical terms are concerned. Toward this end scholars often employ the above-mentioned ‘triangulation’ between Tibetan, Chinese and Sanskrit (or varieties of Middle Indic). While, as mentioned above, this approach may be suitable for dealing with works such as technical treatises (*śāstra*) or other literature which might reasonably be supposed to have a unique authorship, since the language of these texts may be *relatively* regular and formulaic (especially, it is thought, in Tibetan, or when rendered in Chinese by the school of Xuanzang), serious problems arise when we are dealing instead with scriptural literature (*sūtra*).

To begin with the most obvious, we have to face the well-known issue of the irregularity of translation equivalents, even in Tibetan after the establishment of the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*, although certainly its use went a long way toward imposing a set of standards (though often *not* one-to-one correspondences). Even

more serious, however, is the fluidity of the Indic source texts themselves. Although I present these as if they were two separate issues, in practice they are so intimately connected that one cannot be discussed without the other. Moreover, these questions confront us not only when we are dealing with ancient materials; they come back in nearly the same form as we attempt to translate ancient texts into modern languages.

Recognition of this problem is not new, of course. One particularly clear expression is found in Richard Robinson's review of Étienne Lamotte's French translation of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* in which, while characterizing the work as (1966: 150) "philologically the most adequate treatment of a major Mahāyāna sūtra to appear in a modern language," and labeling it "a milestone in Buddhist scholarship and in essential respects a model for future translators," Robinson went on not only to point out lapses—which are to be expected in the work of any human being—but also to question such common practices as the reconstruction of Sanskrit terms. Regarding these terms, he wrote (1966: 151), "If they are for the benefit of the reader who knows Buddhist Sanskrit, then the French translations are unnecessary. The Sanskrit terms are of little use to anyone else." He goes on to suggest that in the absence of a uniform European Buddhist terminology, as he calls it, for a translator like Lamotte who uses his translation equivalents regularly, a glossary should suffice. In addition, Robinson points out that many of Lamotte's restorations are questionable. Without going into detail here, I would suggest that when terms occur in other than regular contexts, it is probably impossible to restore them with confidence; I will return to this below.

Robinson offers (1966: 152) the solution of preparing two versions of a translation, "one using the standard vocabulary of the target language enriched by arbitrarily fixed equivalents for technical terms and the other employing the grammar of the target language but Sanskrit vocabulary insofar as it can be reconstituted. The first version would be for the general reader, and the second would be for the Buddhologist." He takes up as an example the following from Lamotte (§III.38):

Révérénd (bhadanta) Rāhula, tu es le fils du Bienheureux et, ayant renoncé à la royauté d'un roi qui fait tourner la roue (cakravartirājya), tu es sorti du monde (pravrajita). Quels sont, à ton avis, les qualités (guṇa) et les avantages (anuśaṃsa) de la sortie

du monde (pravrajyā)?”

As alternatives to this rendering, Robinson then offers the two following possibilities:

Version I (for ‘general readers’):

Révérend Rāhula, tu es le fils du Bienheureux et, ayant renoncé à la royauté d’un roi qui fait tourner la roue, tu es sorti du monde. Quels sont, à ton avis, les qualités et les avantages de la sortie du monde?

Version II (for ‘Buddhologists’):

Bhadanta Rāhula, tu es le fils du Bhagavant et, ayant renoncé le cakravartirājya, tu es pravrajīta. Quels sont, à ton avis, les guṇa et les anuśaṁsa de la pravrajyā?

Robinson has made some assumptions here which it is worthwhile to discuss. In the first place, although Robinson does not seem to credit it, there are specialists in Buddhist Studies who are not completely at home in Sanskrit, and for them his Version II would be well nigh incomprehensible. A second assumption seems to be that a real translation cannot be sufficiently precise to satisfy the specialist. But what is the putative ‘general reader’ meant to expect, if not an accurate translation? And what does the specialist need beyond this? If we are talking—as used to be done decades ago—about making available in Sanskrit materials now thought to be lost, but preserved for instance in Tibetan, then there should be no objection to following the path of Tucci and others and *translating* into Sanskrit (in Tucci’s case, avowedly for the benefit of Indian pandits who might be interested in Buddhist works).<sup>26</sup> This is quite a different thing from *restoring* a lost Sanskrit text, a practice rightly scorned by Regamey (1938: 10) as “a rather useless amusement.” Even if we think that some of our colleagues who might not, for instance, read Tibetan or Chinese might nevertheless like to read a text preserved only in Tibetan and/or Chinese translation, Robinson’s version II seems to me hardly a viable solution.

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<sup>26</sup>As in Tucci 1929. I dare say, however, that few such persons exist today, and even those who do are not likely to be very interested in *sūtras*. In a parallel to this, and for the same reasons, I find the decisions of the Vienna project editing Sanskrit manuscripts from China to present their editions not in analytically preferable romanization but instead in Devanāgarī very difficult to understand.

Let us go back to the passage upon which Robinson commented. The now published Sanskrit reads: *tvam rāhula tasya bhagavataḥ putras cakravartirāṅgam utsrjya pravrajitaḥ tatra ke te pravrajyāyā guṇānuśamsāh* |.<sup>27</sup> Lamotte’s reconstructions of technical terms from Tibetan are fully confirmed here, suggesting that in this key respect the extant Sanskrit text and the source of the Tibetan translation—but let us remember that this Sanskrit manuscript was preserved in Tibet!—corresponded. *But*: all three Chinese translations, those of Zhi Qian, Kumārajīva and Xuanzang, suggest that in the phrase “fils du Bhagavant” instead of the *bhagavant* suggested by the Tibetan (*bcom ldan ’das kyi sras*), their exemplars *may* have had instead *buddha*, since they read 汝佛之子, which *appears* to render ‘you [are a] son of the Buddha.’ Or—and this is not trivial—Zhi Qian’s version may have had *buddha*, and he was reverentially followed or copied by the two later translators. Or, to further complicate matters, as is commonly but not consistently the case for Zhi Qian, the word *we* understand to regularly represent *buddha*, namely *fō* 佛, may rather have been meant to render *bhagavant*.<sup>28</sup> However—and now the situation becomes even muddier still—it does not seem ever to have been the case for Kumārajīva or Xuanzang that in their own original translations (as opposed to cases in which they carry over elements from earlier translations) *fō* 佛 served as a legitimate rendering of *bhagavant*. If Kumārajīva and Xuanzang indeed copied Zhi Qian here (which seems beyond doubt), this very act of copying had the result of transforming the meaning of what was copied, because the signification of the key word—in *Chinese*—had changed over time. Although such echoing, if we may call it that, of earlier translations is not at all uncommon, it has yet to be systematically studied.<sup>29</sup> As

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<sup>27</sup> Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature 2006: 31. By using the definite article “the” Sanskrit I do not mean to imply any belief in the existence of a unique Sanskrit recension of the text.

<sup>28</sup> Nattier 2003: 234.

<sup>29</sup> I am not aware of systematic studies of the ways in which later translators took over and modified earlier Chinese translations, but inter alia such research would of course be essential for a correct appreciation of the independent value of such translations. It is better known that Tibetan translations of works which quote scripture (Indian *sāstras*) often utilize pre-existing translations instead of retranslating the quotations anew (Seyfort Rugg 1973), and this too is of potential significance for our understanding of the form and history of Indian

a phenomenon, however, it has of course important implications for the use we might make of Chinese translations.

How might we resolve the problems implicit in the textual questions raised above? The short answer is that we cannot. Does this mean, as some have claimed—often those who cannot read Chinese, let it be noted—that Chinese translations are not reliable guides to Indian sources (for us today, as they were not for Chinese historically)? An answer to this hinges on what one expects out of translation. If we are aware that having *some* Sanskrit source does not mean we have access to *the* Indian text, the gap between translation and ‘original’ suddenly seems to shrink significantly.

To reiterate, the basic principle of what I above referred to as the method of triangulation is that, in the absence of Indic language ‘originals,’ we can reconstruct terminology on the basis of independent Tibetan and Chinese translations; when they agree in pointing toward some Indic source term, we can speculate that this term stood in the common source from which these Chinese and Tibetan translations were independently produced. And indeed, this often seems to be successful, with speculations confirmed by parallels in other texts and contexts or by discoveries of Indic manuscripts. However, I am not aware of any case in which we know ourselves to be in possession of the original manuscript of a Mahāyāna *sūtra* from which an available Tibetan or Chinese translation was made.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, from a positivist point of view, it is not possible to be certain what *Vorlage* stood before the eyes of any given translator, despite the confidence we might be willing to place in the process of, as some Biblical scholars term it, retroversion. But the problem is even more serious.

How do we establish that we are dealing with ‘the same text,’ and even if we establish this, by fiat (that is, without any method to justify this assertion more rigorous than ‘It seems the same to me’), what do we do when the different versions—readable and understandable in themselves—disagree with each other? There are a number of ways in which this problem might

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scriptures, since the presence of identical quotations can unhistorically give the impression of a greater uniformity in the textual tradition than was actually the case.

<sup>30</sup> For an example of a tantric text for which this seems however to be the case, see Fan 2008.

manifest itself in an obvious and practical, rather than a purely theoretical and hypothetical, vein. To give only a simple example, the *Kāśyapaṭarivarta* (a title, incidentally, which may never have been used in India) falls easily into a number of logical paragraphs, recognized by its modern editor and already by its classical commentary (attributed to \*Sthiramati—another problem!).<sup>31</sup> The versions available to us in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese (more than one in each language!) correspond rather closely on the whole regarding content, but sometimes arrange the order of the sections differently. As editors we may choose to treat this diverse material diplomatically, editing a number of versions in parallel and noting their divergences; that is, we may renounce the idea of offering an edition of ‘the’ *sūtra* which superordinates a single version and correspondingly subordinates all others as ‘variants’ of ‘the’ text. However, as translators, what should we do? Should we renounce the idea of translating “the text” on the grounds that there is no such thing, that is, that all that exists are multiple texts, none inherently superior? If we choose this path, we meet a fundamental philosophical question: if there is no such thing as “the text,” what allows us to treat the diverse sources we have as versions of ‘the’ text, that is, as the *same*—according to us now, nonexistent—text at all?<sup>32</sup> What allows us, moreover, to correct or at all alter one version on the basis of another? One option would be to privilege one version, to take it as a base text, but then, on what basis? As one can see, the theoretical problems pile up rather quickly.

This is where, in an American idiom, the rubber meets the road: the very nature of Mahāyāna *sūtras*, in my opinion, precludes the establishment of a historical *ur*-text, which means that the very idea of aiming at the/an ‘original’ text is illusory. These facts taken

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<sup>31</sup> Respectively Staël-Holstein 1926, 1933. The text in Indian sources seems always to have been referred to as *Ratnakūṭa*. I spoke about this problem in a subsequent conference also held in Hamburg, in August, 2015, in a presentation titled “Sthiramati and the Question of the Authorship of the Commentary to the *Kāśyapaṭarivarta* (*Ratnakūṭa*): A Comparison with Passages in the *Madhyāntavibhāṅgāṅkā* Citing the *Sūtra*.”

<sup>32</sup> This question is raised in the context of the identity of early Chinese philosophical texts by Boltz 2007: 476–477, who wonders, for instance, why a text whose traditionally transmitted version shares no more than 40% of its content with a version found in an early tomb burial should nevertheless—more or less automatically—be considered the same text.

together should shake our faith in the power, and in the validity, of triangulation. Of course, this is not to deny that it often seems convincing, in the sense that extant Tibetan and Chinese translations point to a common (usually no longer extant) source. And this postulation of a common *Vorlage* may in fact often be valid, in the sense that indeed elements are shared between the respective sources of, for instance, extant Tibetan and Chinese translations of a given work. But in a great many cases—probably the majority—we have extremely limited sources at our disposal, and in the face of what seems to have been a fair degree of textual fluidity in Indic language sources this very limitation, by restricting the variability of the available and visible textual record, gives the impression of more uniformity than we are justified in assuming existed historically. The paucity of extant evidence, in other words, should not lead us to believe that the actual history of a text is only as complex as it looks today.

I mentioned above that retroversion or reconstruction is hazardous in anything other than formulaic situations, but in fact, even in such cases, it is fraught with danger, for the variability of Buddhist scripture reaches even into the formulaic. Whether such variability always ‘makes a difference’, and on what level, may be another question. As a simple example, what shall we do with the very first formulaic clause in a *sūtra*? Is it *evam mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye* (as our textbooks without exception tell us)—or does the phrase read rather *ekasamayam*? Or is it *ekam samayam*? All forms are well attested in Indic manuscripts. A translator is perhaps not overly troubled by this, since an appropriate translation that covers all the cases may suffice—or does it? Is it ‘at one time’ or ‘on one occasion’ or ‘on the one occasion that I have heard ...’? We notice here that the formula does not use the word *kāla*, which is perhaps the most normal Sanskrit and Pāli word for ‘time’, but instead *samaya*, which (elsewhere?) could be normally rendered ‘occasion.’ What should it mean to us as translators and as interpreters that the Tibetans and Chinese used ‘normal’ words for ‘time’ (*dus*, and *shi* 時) in their own formulaic translations, while they may also render *samaya* differently (for example with *tshe*, or *hui* 會, *hou* 候, etc.)? This leads us to one of the questions I promised would be central to these remarks: what are we reading, and thus translating, when we work with translations in Tibetan or Chinese? Are we attempting to render the source text from which we imagine the

translation to have been made (that is, is our translation a reconstruction in Tov’s sense)? How can we do this if we cannot retrovert, and we know that we can at very best only retrovert technical terms and formulae? Are we content, then, rather to aim at a rendering of the understanding of a, let us say, 5th-century Chinese translator? But then, by what stretch of the imagination can we justifiably translate the—imagined—Indic terminology lying behind certain terms, amidst the remaining sea of Chinese? What we inevitably end up with if we follow this course is neither fish nor fowl (and ultimately the situation is probably not very much better in Tibetan).

As if all of this were not yet enough, we know that both translators and scribes make mistakes. Originals (of whatever form) contain mistakes, traditional translations contain mistakes, and our own translations contain mistakes. Concerning the last category, there is not much to be said: we simply need to assist and to critique each other, and have faith that things will be improved by improved knowledge and by the process of revision. But what should we do—as editors, but perhaps even more importantly, as translators—with mistakes from the past? A good example comes from the *Ratnarāśīsūtra*, in which four times in the Tibetan translation we have *’jig rten pha rol tu kha na ma tho bas ’jigs par lta ba*, attested in Sanskrit in a quotation from the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (in my 1994 edition, §I.14) as *paralokāvadyabhayadarśi(n)*, “fearful of censure in the other world,” or more literally “being one who sees [or: does not see] the danger which will result in the other world from even the smallest faults.” The (formulaic) expression is quite clear, and refers to the need for vigilance with regard to even (seemingly) minor instances of behavior, in light of their future karmic consequences. At §III.15 the Chinese has only (*bu*) *weihoushi* (不) 畏後世, “(does not) fear the other world.” This rendering is not inspired, but it is reasonably understandable. However, §I.14 and §IV.1 render *wei yu houshi yuru jingang* 畏於後世, 喻如金剛, “fearful of the other world, for instance, like a *vajra*,” while §VII.24 has (*bu*) *jian houshi guowu yuru jingang* (不) 見後世過惡, 喻如金剛, “(does not) see the evil of sin in the other world, for instance, like a *vajra*.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>One might argue that for Chinese *houshi* 後世 ‘afterlife’ is better than ‘other world,’ raising questions of how much one should try to look through the Chinese toward some Indic original.

The Chinese translation contains an obvious error caused, I believe, by misunderstanding a term in Middle Indic, *vajra* < \**vaja* < *vadya*. If we were to translate the Chinese version, should we feel obligated to render the readable—but nonetheless, from one perspective, clearly ‘wrong’—text as it stands?<sup>34</sup> If we choose to correct it, on the other hand, when do we draw the line? Do we correct every sort of perceived error? On what basis should we do this? And if we do, what results from this? Does this bring us closer to some original? If it does, it simultaneously removes us from the text which belonged, and continues to belong, to actual Buddhist communities; do we not then create a text which had no life in any Buddhist community?

Another example: in the *Anūnatvāpūṇatvanirdeśaparivarta* (in my 2015 edition, §15i), we find the expression 住於彼岸清淨法中, “dwells among the pure *dharmas* of the other shore.” We are fortunate to have a corresponding Sanskrit expression, quoted in the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, *paramapariśuddhadharmatāyām sthitāḥ*, “fixed in the Absolute Reality [*dharmatā*] that is ultimately pure,” which makes better sense, and the difference can be relatively easily explained: the Chinese *sūtra* translator Bodhiruci seems to have misunderstood *parama* as *pāramitā*, either because he misread his source, or because his source already had this (mis)reading. Therefore, in place of Bodhiruci’s “dwells among the pure *dharmas* of the other shore”—which, it should be noted, is perfectly understandable—what may have been *meant* is rather “dwells in the Absolute Reality [*dharmatā*] that is ultimately pure,” or something along those lines. If I am translating the Chinese text—and this *sūtra* exists as a whole only in Chinese, so I have no other choice—should I *correct* the translator? If I do, what am I translating? I can hardly claim to be translating the Indic *Vorlage* if in most other cases (and less than half the text is available in Sanskrit) I have only Bodhiruci’s translation available, and thus no way to see beyond other possible instances of grammatical and readable, but potentially wrong, renderings. And if I am willing to go so far as correcting his meaning, why don’t I go all the way and rewrite the Chinese?<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>This is in fact precisely what was done in Chang 1983: 286, 296, 311, probably because the underlying expression was not recognized.

<sup>35</sup>Lozang Jamspal in fact did precisely this in some places in his Tibetan edition

Another passage (§21ii) in the same *sūtra* reads: 舍利弗, 此人以起二見因緣故, 從冥入冥, 從闇入闇。我說是等名‘一闡提’。 Here the corresponding Sanskrit quotation has *tān ahaṃ śāriputra tamasas tamo ’ntaram andhakārān mahāndhakāragāminas tamobhūyiṣṭhāḥ* |. The Chinese can be rendered: “Because these people, Śāriputra, entertain these two views, from obscurity they enter obscurity, from darkness they enter darkness. I speak of these terming them ‘*icchantika*.’” The whole second sentence—perfectly grammatical and coherent in itself—has nevertheless no equivalent in Sanskrit, and since I judge it incompatible with the *sūtra*’s otherwise expressed theology (a position I argue for in the Introduction to my edition), I conclude that the translation process somehow introduced the clause about the *icchantika* into an original which lacked it. Shall I therefore remove it from my translation, and if so, upon what grounds would I make such a change? Once again, what would I be translating if I manipulated the core source text in this manner?

Space permits brief consideration of only one more interesting problem for a translator, this concerning how to deal, once again, with specific vocabulary, but in this case vocabulary which is clearly intentionally polyvalent. Texts contain ambiguities, and depending on the form in which we find such ambiguities we might be willing to decide that these are intentional, and not merely artifacts of our own inadequate knowledge and understanding. Sometimes we label such things ‘word play,’ or in German *Wortspiel*, but I do not know a precise word for the type of non-humorous word play I refer to here. An excellent example comes once again from the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*, although precisely the same thing is found elsewhere.<sup>36</sup> The central notion of this text revolves around the *sattvadhātu*, a term which means—to be reductionistic about it—both the realm or extent of living beings (how many beings there are in existence) and the essence or quintessence of living beings. Let us look at four passages in the

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of the *Bodhisattvagocaropāyaviṣayavikurvāṇanirdeśa*; see Silk 2013.

<sup>36</sup>An extreme example of the same form of paronomasia is evident in a passage in the *Suvikrāntavikrāmipariprechā*, for which see Hikata 1958: 14,20–15,24. This is translated in the Introduction to my edition of the *Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta*.

order in which they appear in the *sūtra*:<sup>37</sup>

A) 世尊，此衆生聚、衆生海爲有增減，爲無增減，“World-honored One! Does this mass of beings, this ocean of beings, undergo increase and decrease, or does it not undergo increase and decrease?”

B) 舍利弗，大邪見者：所謂，見衆生界增，見衆生界減，“It is a greatly mistaken view, Śāriputra, to see the realm of beings as increasing or to see the realm of beings as decreasing.”

C) 舍利弗，此二種見依止一界，同一界，合一界。一切愚癡凡夫不如實知彼一界故，不如實見彼一界故，起於極惡大邪見心，謂：衆生界增，謂：衆生界減，“These two views, Śāriputra, rely on the single realm, are the same as the single realm, are united with the single realm. Because all foolish common people do not know that single realm in accord with reality, because they do not see that single realm in accord with reality, they entertain ideas of extremely evil greatly mistaken views, that is, that the realm of beings increases or that the realm of beings decreases.”

D) 是故，舍利弗，不離衆生界有法身，不離法身有衆生界。衆生界即法身。法身即衆生界。舍利弗，此二法者，義一名異， found also in Sanskrit: *tasmāc chāriputra nānyaḥ sattvadhātuḥ nānyo dharmakāyaḥ | sattvadhātuḥ eva dharmakāyaḥ | dharmakāya eva sattvadhātuḥ | advāyam etad arthena | vyañjanamātrabhedāḥ |*, “Therefore, Śāriputra, there is no quintessence of beings separate from the dharma-body, there is no dharma-body separate from the quintessence of beings. The quintessence of beings is precisely the dharma-body, the dharma-body is precisely the quintessence of beings. These two things, Śāriputra, have one meaning; [only] the names differ.”

In this text the term *dhātu*—realm/quintessence—contextually undergoes a shift in meaning as the text goes on to link this *sattvadhātu* with *dharmadhātu*, a term which could be rendered as ‘dharma realm’ but equally well as ‘quintessence of dharma’, although neither rendering is terribly meaningful on its own. In passage A, the key technical term is not used and the mass of beings is expressed differently (the underlying Sanskrit is not clear). The second passage B introduces the *sattvadhātu* as the realm of beings, the domain containing all beings (thus functionally

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<sup>37</sup> In my edition §§2d, 3iia, 8iia–c, 15ii = Johnston 1950: 41.15–17.

equivalent to the entirety of *samsāra*). While the sense of the key term in passage C remains ambiguous, D has gone all the way toward another sense of *dhātu*. However, while we can well accept that he understood the intent of the *sūtra*, the Chinese translator chose to render *dhātu* with the same Chinese term throughout (*jie* 界). Doubtless he struggled with the choice between rendering the shifting meaning, and thus losing verbal connection, on the one hand, or retaining the verbal connection at the price of a translation which, we should probably conclude, is not meaningful as Chinese, since the resultant Chinese translation *jie* does not, naturally, share the semantic range of its source term *dhātu*.

There are many questions here, but precious few answers. It is indeed the case that classical (in the senses of premodern, ‘canonized,’ and so on) translations can be of great assistance to the modern translator in a variety of ways, not the least of which is in bringing to the fore the existence of multiple versions of a text, and thereby challenging the very notion of *the* text and *its* translation in the first place. Moreover, for most Indian Buddhist Mahāyāna literature, at present we have access only through such translations, and thus their study is essential. Can we, however, take away anything positive and helpful from this discussion? Can we extract some guidelines useful for a translator? I believe that the ‘deconstruction’ of the notion of a unitary text, and the challenges posed by the types of complications discussed or mentioned above, in fact are of great use to translators, in the first place because they compel any translator to think careful and explicitly about his or her source text, on the one hand, and the status of the result of a modern translation on the other. There is no correct stance toward either of these poles, but only a demand for awareness. As in almost any relationship, honesty is the key to communication, and we should expect nothing less from ourselves as editors and translators. When we make explicit our choices, we prepare the ground for our readers to approach the results of our work with greater appreciation and with clearer expectations. This, in the end, may be the very best we can ever expect.

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## **On the Permeable Boundary between Exegesis and Scripture in Late Tantric Buddhist Literature**

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In his *Indian Esoteric Buddhism*, in a chapter entitled “Siddhas, literature, and language”, which contains much food for thought, Ronald Davidson wrote (2002: 252):

The subculture of tantric composition (especially the *yoginī tantras* [sic!]) exhibited clearly different values from those of the commentarial subculture: one is creative and outrageous while the other represents rapprochement with institutional norms.

Although there is quite a lot in the said chapter that would disprove, or at least partially invalidate this statement, the sentence encapsulates a neat dichotomy that has proven rather influential in scholarly thinking about Tantric Buddhism, especially when it comes to trying to identify the social groups behind the two types of composition, scripture and exegesis. According to this thinking, exegesis was, at least for the most part, the duty of the monastic community, or at least some kind of group that would try to ‘tame’ the *tantras* and make them more palatable for the larger Buddhist fold. It follows therefore that the *tantras* themselves came from a different environment.

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While there is probably some truth to this line of thinking, since quite a lot of evidence could be cited and plausibly interpreted in such a way as to support this dichotomy, in my view there is substantial evidence to point to the fact that such a well-defined borderline does not hold as neatly as one would like it to. Davidson himself recognizes that some authors—he cites Padmavajra and his famous *Guhyasiddhi* as a prime example—occupy some sort of middle ground, “offer[ing] voices that side with one, then with another”, as he says, “just to keep life interesting” (*ibid.*: 292). He also alludes to the case of the so-called explanatory *tantras* (*vyākhyā-* or *uttaratantras*), which, although technically scriptures, often seek to elucidate statements from the so-called basic (*mūla-*)*tantra*, sometimes radically changing the message therein. (This is by no means their exclusive role, since they can contain what might be termed as additional revelations.)

The present brief paper proposes to draw attention to some, mostly unpublished, texts from the canon of the *yoginītantras* that might change, or better said, put some more subtle shades on the problem of texts and passages that are in this greyish middle, between outright scripture and outright exegesis. As I hope to show through some examples, scriptures can sometimes become scriptures as if by accident, or they can be created from exegesis, partially or entirely. By examining the texts and passages in question, I shall briefly discuss—if at all discernible—the (mostly not too subtle) *modus operandi* of the compiler (or compilers), and offer some reflections concerning their presumable reason for acting in the way they did. The overall aim is to present evidence that would allow a more nuanced understanding of scriptural production in the later phase of Tantric Buddhism.

### 1. The Misclassification of the So-called \**Mantrāṃśa*

The \**Mantrāṃśa* (Tōh. 429<sup>2</sup>), according to Tibetan authorities, whose judgement decided the position of this text in the Tibetan Canon, is one of the explanatory *tantras* of the *Catuṣpīṭha* (Tōh. 428). I have already published a small article on this problem in

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<sup>2</sup> I refer to all canonical Tibetan translations according to the numbers in Hakuju Ui, Munetada Suzuki, Yenshō Kanakura, & Tōkan Tada, *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons (Bkaḥ-ḥgyur and Bstan-ḥgyur)*. Sendai: Tōhoku Imperial University, 1934.

2008, but I now realize that my phrasing may have given room for misunderstanding (see Wedemeyer 2013: 250, n. 54). I shall therefore reiterate my conclusion as briefly as possible here.

The *\*Mantrāṃśa* is considered scripture only by Tibetans. Originally it was part of an initiation manual (*maṇḍalopāyikā*), the author of which may or may not have been [an] Āryadeva. The recension history of this text is somewhat complicated, and we are very fortunate to have witnesses in Sanskrit for at least three stages of the text. The first stage—better said, parts that allow us to infer that such a primitive stage existed—survives as additions in a manuscript of the *Catuspīṭhatantra* itself. This stage is most importantly characterized by the fact that the main deity is still not Yogāmbara, but Jñānaḍākinī, as taught by the *tantra*. A next stage survives only partially: here the main deity is already Yogāmbara, and the text contains as its “fourth chapter” what we now have as the *\*Mantrāṃśa* in the Tibetan Canon. The last stage contains only what used to be the first three chapters of the above recension, with different chapter-markers. We have it on the authority of a small fragment dated 1153 CE, an anonymous commentary on some verses of the “fourth chapter” of the *maṇḍalopāyikā*, that is to say the “*\*Mantrāṃśa*”, that the text was known in India as one authored by Āryadeva.

In other words here we have a text (or part of it) that due to its contorted transmission south of the Himalayas somehow came to be known as a *tantra* for Tibetans. The reason or reasons for this could have been manifold. Given the identity of the Indian translator, the (in)famous Gayādhara (see Davidson 2005: 167 *passim*), it could be suspected that the misattribution was conscious, since translating a scripture presumably came with greater prestige than the translation of a *śāstra*. However, we must remember that the Indic author, whether it was [an] Āryadeva or not, consciously sought to emulate the ungrammatical style of the *Catuspīṭhatantra*, therefore a mere look at the text by somebody who was familiar with the curious language of that scripture could have plausibly resulted in the judgement that the text is in fact an explanatory *tantra* of that cycle.

## **2. The *Yogāmbaramahātantra*, an Anthological Scripture**

To stay within the cycle of the *Catuspīṭha*, our second example is probably a Nepalese composition—or better said, compilation—,

which although identifying itself as a *tantra*, is in fact a collage of scriptural and non-scriptural passages (overwhelmingly in verse), and a meditation manual. Several manuscripts survive under this title, but I have had the opportunity to consult only two: IASWR<sup>3</sup> MBB-II-120 (Nepalese paper, ff. 55, common Newar script, undated) and Buddhist Library, Nagoya,<sup>4</sup> Takaoka Ka 51-1 (Nepalese paper, ff. 43, common Newar script, dated 1908 CE).

The *tantra* is split into two *paṭalas*. The first chapter mysteriously identifies itself as *yogāmbaramahātantrē vajrasattvasya samvegacittaparīkṣāsūtrapāṭalaḥ*, while the second ends with another somewhat obscure colophon: *śrīyogāmbaramahātantrarāja ātmāpīṭhaḥ samāptaḥ*. In actual fact the first chapter is a *subhāṣita* anthology of esoteric and exoteric Buddhist principles and serves as a kind of theoretical basis, whereas the second forms the practical part.

This, the second, part is nothing else but the text of a well-known *sādhana* manual, that of Jagadānandajīvabhadra, a Nepalese author, which is extant in several Sanskrit manuscripts (to my knowledge the best of which, though still rather inferior, is Kaiser Library no. 125 = NGMPP<sup>5</sup> C 14/3) and a Tibetan translation (Tōh. 1611).

The first part is an anthology of 129 scriptural and non-scriptural verses (the number of prose passages is negligible). There does not seem to be any clear method or organizing principle in the way these verses follow each other. I could not identify the provenance of each and every stanza, but I am quite confident that a separate, more in-depth study could trace most of the remaining verses.

Among verses that are lifted from other scriptures, as expected, the ones from other *tantras* are in the greatest number. The sources are: the *Hevajra*, the *Dākinīvajrapaṅjara* (102–105 = 1.31–34<sup>6</sup>), the *Guhyasamāja*, the *Kālacakra* (and sometimes the

<sup>3</sup> [Christopher George & William Stablein,] *Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts. A Title List of the Microfilm Collection of The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions*. New York, 1975.

<sup>4</sup> Hidenobu Takaoka, *A Microfilm Catalogue of the Buddhist Manuscripts in Nepal*. Vol. I. Nagoya: Buddhist Library, 1981.

<sup>5</sup> <http://catalogue.ngmcp.uni-hamburg.de/>

<sup>6</sup> Tōh. 419, 380v–381r. With this single exception I have not given the loci for other scriptures, since these are not immediately relevant for the discussion.

“*Ādibuddha*” as quoted in the *Vimalaprabhā*), and the *Abhidhānottara*. Sūtric sources include the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*, the *Candrapradīpa*, and the *Prajñāpāramitā* corpus.

Verses from non-scriptural sources are again dominated by tantric material, especially from authors of the so-called *Ārya* exegesis of the *Guhyasamāja* and the works of Advayavajra. I have identified the following from the first group (the first number is the verse no. in my draft transcript of the *Yogāmbaramahātāntra*): *Pañcakrama*<sup>7</sup> (1 = 4.38, 2 = 3.10, 5 = 5.11), *Svādhiṣṭhānakramaprabheda*<sup>8</sup> (4 = 47), *Pradīpodyotana*<sup>9</sup> (59–61 = first three verses). Advayavajra’s<sup>10</sup> verses are even more numerous: *Kudrṣṭinirghātana* (47 = 4), *Pañcathāgatamudrāvivarāṇa* (28 = 1), *Pañcākāra* (36 = 4), *Premapañcaka* (37–38 = 3–4), *Tattvaparakāśa* (49–50 = 6–7), *Tattvaratnāvalī* (47–48 = on p. 22), *Mahāyānavimśikā* (35 = 8), *Mahāsukhaprakāśa* (54 = 17, 64 = 14), *Māyānirukti* (55 = 6), *Yuganaddhaprakāśa* (118 = 2), *Sekanirdeśa* (27 = 35, 33–34 = 33–34, 86 = 19, 87–88 = 21–22, 89–91 = quoted as 7–9, 92 = quoted as 10, 93 = quoted as 11, 94–99 = quoted as 12–17). There is a minor presence of *Kālacakra* authors as well: *Paramārthasevā*<sup>11</sup> (85 = 163), *Hevajrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā*<sup>12</sup> (100 = 1.59).

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<sup>7</sup> Katsumi Mimaki & Tōru Tomabechi, *Pañcakrama. Sanskrit and Tibetan Texts Critically Edited with Verse Index and Facsimile Edition of the Sanskrit Manuscripts*. Bibliotheca Codicum Asiaticorum 8. Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko, 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Janardan Pandey (ed.), *Buddhalaghugranthasamgraha [A Collection of Minor Buddhist Texts]*. Rare Buddhist Texts Series 14. Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1997, pp. 169–177.

<sup>9</sup> Chintaharan Chakravarti, *Guhyasamājantrapradīpodyotanaṭīkāṣaṭkoṭivyaḥkhyā*. Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series No. 25. Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1984.

<sup>10</sup> For all following works see Haraprasad Shastri, *Advayavajrasamgraha*. Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927.

<sup>11</sup> Francesco Sferra, “Fragments of Puṇḍarīka’s *Paramārthasevā*”. In: Konrad Klaus & Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *Indica et Tibetica. Festschrift für Michael Hahn*. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 66. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studies Universität Wien, 2007, pp. 459–476.

<sup>12</sup> Francesco Sferra, “The Laud of the Chosen Deity, the First Chapter of the *Hevajratrapīṇḍārthaṭīkā* by Vajragarbha”. In: Shingo Einoo (ed.), *Genesis and Development of Tantrism*. Institute of Oriental Culture Special Series, 23. Tokyo: Institute of Oriental Culture, 2009, pp. 435–468.

Nāgārjuna is well-represented by the following verses: *Ratnāvalī*<sup>13</sup> (39 = 2.12, 40 = 4.58, 41 = 4.56, 42 = 4.55, 43 = 4.57, 65 = 1.6, 66–67 = 1.20–21), *Yuktiśaṣṭikā*<sup>14</sup> (32 = 6), *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*<sup>15</sup> (6–7 = 61–62, 13 = 68, 36 = 57<sup>16</sup>), *Acintyastava*<sup>17</sup> (44 = 44). Miscellaneous authors include Candrakīrti, *Trīśaraṇasaptati*<sup>18</sup> (83ab = 35cd); Dharmakīrti, *Pramāṇavārtika*<sup>19</sup> (63 = *pratyakṣapariccheda* 285); Kambala, *Ālokamālā*<sup>20</sup> (101 = 274), and Kṛṣṇācārya, *Vasantatilakā*<sup>21</sup> (110 = 1.12). All in all close to half of the first chapter of this tantra can be traced back to works the authors of which are well-known, indeed, one may say, “classics”.

Although the number of untraced verses remains quite large, judging by the above list it is perhaps not implausible to accept as a working hypothesis that they are not original but simply untraceable for the time being. The *Yogāmbaramahātānta* would

<sup>13</sup> For the first chapter see Giuseppe Tucci, “The Ratnāvalī of Nāgārjuna”. In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 2, April 1934, pp. 307–325. For the second and fourth chapters see Giuseppe Tucci, “The Ratnāvalī of Nāgārjuna”. In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 2, April 1936, pp. 237–252.

<sup>14</sup> Christian Lindtner, *Nagarjuniana. Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna*. Buddhist Traditions vol. II. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987 [reprint of 1982]. As Lindtner notes on p. 105, (the second half of) this verse is also quoted in the *Advayavajrasaṅgraha* (more precisely, in the *Pañcākāra*).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* Vv. 61–62 and 68 were at that time not known to have been extant.

<sup>16</sup> As Lindtner has already noted (op. cit., p. 203 and n. 57), this verse is quoted by Advayavajra (again in the *Pañcākāra*).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Per K. Sørensen, *Candrakīrti - Trīśaraṇasaptati. The Septuagint on the Three Refuges*. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 16. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studies Universität Wien, 1986. This half-verse was at that time not known to have been extant.

<sup>19</sup> Rāhula Sāṅkrtyāyana (ed.), *Pramāṇavārtikam by Ācārya Dharmakīrti*. Appendix to *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, vol. XXIV, 1937.

<sup>20</sup> Christian Lindtner, “A Treatise on Buddhist Idealism: Kambala’s *Ālokamālā*”. In: Christian Lindtner (ed.), *Miscellanea Buddhica*. Indiske Studier V. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1985, pp. 109–221.

<sup>21</sup> Samdhong Rinpoche & Vrajvallabh Dwivedi (eds.), *Vasantatilakā of Caryāvratī Śrīkṛṣṇācārya with Commentary: Rahasyadīpikā by Vanaratna*. Rare Buddhist Text Series 7. Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1990.

thus merit an in-depth study, especially since some of the verses listed above are (again, for the time being) not known to have survived elsewhere in Sanskrit.

In spite of the fact that there seems to be no clear reason as to why these verses were selected and why were they arranged in this way, the compilation was almost certainly a conscious act. The most plausible reason, at least to my mind, for the creation of this compilation could have been the fact that Yogāmbara did not possess his own scripture.

### 3. Bhavabhaṭṭa's *Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti* Enshrined as Scripture

Up to this point I have used the word “exegesis” somewhat loosely, making it refer not only to commentaries proper, but to any kind of treatise the author of which is known. However, there are cases where commentaries proper are either partially incorporated into or almost entirely recycled as scripture.

An example for the first case is one \*Bhago's commentary on the *Vajrāmṛtatantra* (Tōh. 1651).<sup>22</sup> I have dealt with this case elsewhere (Szántó, 2013) and the details ought not be repeated here. In short, sub-chapter 7.4 of the *Samputodbhava*, a very influential *yoginītantra* from the late tenth century, contains prose passages that are almost an exact match with the Tibetan translation of \*Bhago's commentary. The parallel is interrupted merely by a few vocatives (e.g. *bhagavan*) and speaker-markers (e.g. *bhagavān āha*), presenting the commentators' standard question-answer format as if it were a dialogue between a petitioner and a deity addressed as “Lord” revealing a *tantra*. The text lifted over from the commentary ends abruptly. We shall see a similar case just below.

An even bolder repackaging of exegesis proper was pointed out to me by Prof. Alexis Sanderson. IASWR MBB-I-70–73, a late Nepalese manuscript, has the following description of its contents in the colophon (139v4–5): *āryacakrasaṃvaravivṛttau mahātantrarāje hūṃkāranirgata-oḍiyānasapādalakṣād uddhṛtaḥ*. The colophon thus betrays that the compiler was aware of the original title,

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<sup>22</sup> Since the last draft of this paper, Prof. Francesco Sferra has located a Sanskrit manuscript of this commentary in China and he has kindly communicated to me the name of the author in the colophon: Śrībhānu.

*Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti*, and that he made it into a scripture by prefixing it with *ārya-*, and styling it as a “great king of *tantras*”. The opening of the text is almost word-for-word the opening section of the *Samputodbhava*. The editor was, however, careful, and wherever the title of that *tantra* appeared, he changed it to *Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti*. E.g. the *Samputodbhava* has this petition (ed. Skorupski<sup>23</sup>, p. 216):

*śrotum icchāmi jñānendra sarvatantranidānaṃ rahasyaṃ samputod-  
bhavalakṣaṇam |*

But our text has (1v7–2r1):

*śrotum icchāmi jñānendra sarvatantranidānaṃ rahasyaṃ **cakra-  
saṃvaravivṛttau** lakṣaṇam |*

After some further initial verses from the *Samputodbhava*, on f. 3v4 we start having the text of Bhavabhaṭṭa’s *Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti*<sup>24</sup> proper, picking up in mid-sentence: p. 3, l. 6 in the Sarnath edition. It is to be noted that two of the codices (Kha and Ga) used by the Sarnath editors also become available from exactly this point. It is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that the compiler had access only to the/an ancestor of these manuscripts that lacked the beginning. Could it have been the case that he piously thought he was merely restoring the beginning of a fragmentary scripture?

#### 4. Śāstric Passages in the *Samputatilaka*

It could be argued that “recycling” exegetical passages into scripture was a late Nepalese phenomenon, since both the *Yogāmbaramahātantra* and the *Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti* as a *tantra* are extant in late Nepalese manuscripts. However, the case of \*Bhago’s commentary in the *Samputodbhava* seems to invalidate such a proposition, since the *Samputodbhava* is very likely not a Nepalese, but an East-Indian composition. In other words, the procedure of recycling commentaries as scripture was already in vogue in tenth-century East India.

<sup>23</sup> Tadeusz Skorupski, “The Saṃputa-Tantra, Sanskrit and Tibetan Versions of Chapter One”. In: *The Buddhist Forum: Volume IV*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1996, pp. 191–244.

<sup>24</sup> Janardan Shastri Pandey (ed.), *Śrīherukābhīdhānam Cakrasaṃvaratantram with the Vivṛti Commentary of Bhavabhaṭṭa*. Vols. I–II. Rare Buddhist Texts Series 26. Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2002.

The *Samputatilaka*<sup>25</sup> is sometimes transmitted as the eleventh chapter of the *Samputodbhava*, but the two old manuscripts that do so are Nepalese, therefore it could be suspected that it was compiled in Nepal. However, the *Samputatilaka* shares many passages with an anonymous commentary on the *Samputodbhava* called the *Prakaraṇārthanirmaya* (Kaiser Library no. 228 = NGMPP C 26/1), and the only known manuscript in which this text is transmitted is undoubtedly from East India, more precisely from the scriptorium of the famous Vikramaśīla monastery. The direction of borrowing is not entirely clear for the time being: as a working hypothesis I will assume that the *Prakaraṇārthanirmaya* is lifting over without attribution large chunks of the *Samputatilaka*, but the opposite could also be the case, especially in light of the evidence presented below, namely that the *Samputatilaka* contains fairly long passages from śāstric texts.

Either way, the matter I wish to focus on here is something of a different nature. Up to this point we have seen that recycled material is overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, tantric. The *Cakrasaṃvaravivṛti* is a prominent example of Vajrayāna exegesis, and even the first chapter of the *Yogāmbaramahātantra* is dominated by tantric authors such as Advayavajra. Verses by non-tantric authors (or works that do not, at least primarily, discuss tantric matters) are almost incidental. Furthermore, it can be suspected that some of these non-tantric verses were not lifted over from the original work, but from quotations in tantric exegesis. For example, although *Yogāmbaramahātantra* v. 26 ultimately is from the *Candrapradīpasūtra*, the same verse is quoted by e.g. Advayavajra in his *Pañcatathāgatamudrāvivarāṇa*. Similarly, v. 101 = *Ālokamālā* 274 is also quoted in the same work, and v. 63, traced back above to the

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<sup>25</sup> Although there are some more manuscripts of the text, I shall here use only the two oldest, palm-leaf witnesses with the following sigla: W = Wellcome Institute Library ε 2, ff. 186, palm-leaf, old Newar, undated, perhaps 11th century (miscatalogued as a *Saiva tantra* in Dominik Wujastyk, *A Handlist of the Sanskrit and Prakrit Manuscripts in the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine*. Vol. 1. London: The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1985.); R = Royal Asiatic Society, London, Hodgson Ms. no. 37, ff. 127, palm-leaf, old Newar, undated, but very likely from the middle of the 11th century (E. B. Cowell & J. Eggeling, “Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Possession of the Royal Asiatic Society (Hodgson Collection)”. In: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, new series 8,1, 1876, pp. 1–52).

epistemologist Dharmakīrti, is quoted e.g. in Ratnarakṣita's *Padmīnī*,<sup>26</sup> a commentary on the *Samvarodaya*.

The *Samputatilaka* also borrows passages from tantric works. For example, the very last portion of the text (given here in the appendix as 2a and 2b) corresponds to a section of the *Tattvasiddhi*<sup>27</sup>, a famous apology of antinomian practice by [a] Śāntarakṣita. Editorial intervention is kept to a minimum. In 2a, just before the quoted verse, the *Samputatilaka* introduces two vocatives (*bhagavan kulaputrāḥ*) that defy interpretation, but do lend a “scriptural” flavour to the text. Similarly, in 2b instead of *evaṃ te rāgādaya āśayaviśeṣabhāvīno viśiṣṭaphalāvāhakā bhavantīti* we have *evaṃ te **kulaputrā** rāgādaya āśayaviśeṣabhāvīno viśiṣṭaphalāvāhakā bhavantīti*. A more serious, rather ad hoc intervention comes at the very end. In the original, Śāntarakṣita presents his reasoning in a standard formulation (introduced by the word *prayogaḥ*), identifying his *hetu* as the *svabhāvahetuḥ* at the end. The *Samputatilaka*, however, changes this to *svabhāvasuddhāḥ*, which sounds rather mystical, but does not make good sense in the context. If one were to edit the *Samputatilaka* without knowledge of its sources, one would often, such as here, be hard-pressed to find any plausible meaning.

But it is not only tantric works that are recycled in such a way. The passage immediately before the one discussed above, has a somewhat surprising provenance: the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and its *Bhāṣya*.<sup>28</sup> I have presented this passage with its corresponding loci in appendix 1a and 1b, not only to demonstrate how it is turned into scripture, but also because of the relative rarity of sources for this very important text.

The śāstric text is “scripturalized” in an unobtrusive way. As in the case of the *Samputodbhava* and \*Bhago's *Vajrāmyta* commentary, the compiler took advantage of standard exegetical style and by inserting speaker-markers turned the text into a dialogue between a petitioner and a revealer. Thus, introducing v. 4.4, Vasubandhu

<sup>26</sup> Ms. Buddhist Library, Nagoya, Takaoka CA 17, f. 22r. Tōh. 1420, 42v.

<sup>27</sup> For this text see the forthcoming edition of Toru Tomabeche (the section number in the appendix also refers to this edition). I have access to a preliminary draft for which I owe many thanks to the author.

<sup>28</sup> Gadgin M. Nagao, *Madhyāntavibhāga-bhāṣya. A Buddhist Philosophical Treatise Edited for the First Time from a Sanskrit Manuscript*. Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1964.

writes: *katame pañca doṣā ity āha* and then gives the text of the *kārikā*; in the *Samputatilaka* we have *katame (/katame te) pañca doṣāḥ | bhagavān āha* followed by the *kārikā* introduced by a somewhat mysterious and superfluous *tatra*. Similarly, introducing *pāda* a of verse 1.18, the *Bhāṣya* has: *kimarthaṃ ca prapadyate* [scil. the bodhisattva], followed by the text of the *kārikā*: *śubhadvayasya prāptyarthaṃ*. Again, the commentator's *avataṛāṇikā* is turned into a question of a petitioner: *kimarthaṃ (/kimarthaṃ ca) pratipadyate (/prapadyate) | bhagavān āha | śubhadvayasya prāptyarthaṃ*. The insertions are no doubt intentional: they show that the compiler knew very well that he was modifying the status of the text.

What is more difficult to ascertain is why these particular passages were selected and why they were arranged in this order. At least to my mind, they do not add anything to our understanding of any part of the *Samputodbhava*. Moreover, the running theme of one passage is strongly disrupted by the following unit. This is most evident in the (non-existent) transition between 1b and 2a: 1b ends in mid-sentence with *tatra sūnyatāyāḥ piṇḍārthaḥ*. The *Bhāṣya* continues with the rest of the sentence: *lakṣaṇato vyavasthānataś ca veditavyaḥ*; however, the *Samputatilaka* jumps to incorporating a passage from the *Tattvasiddhi* that deals with something completely different.

If I am right in thinking that there is no logic in the sequence in which these passages follow each other, we must face the somewhat disturbing hypothesis that the compiler was simply copy-pasting almost randomly. In the present case we are fortunate to have the source-texts available, and we can show that e.g. the half-sentence mentioned just above is indeed the original reading, in spite of the fact that it is a meaningless one. Were we to edit the text without knowledge of the *Madhyāntavibhāga/bhāṣya* and the *Tattvasiddhi*, cruces of desperation would have to be used profusely. But if a scriptural statement does not have good meaning, what then is its role?

### Conclusion

I hope to have managed to identify several further grey areas between scripture/*tantra* and exegesis/*śāstra* in the literature of late tantric Buddhism. It would seem that sometimes texts that did not claim to be scripture became just that by accident. It would also seem that commentaries and treatises, sometimes of well-known

authors were often consciously recycled, in whole or in part, as scripture. I find it difficult to believe that nobody in Buddhist communities took notice of this fact, but, unfortunately, as to this date I have been unable to find any traces suggesting that the problem was ever raised or debated. Furthermore, it can be shown that such compositions were mostly done in a very unsubtle and careless manner, the result often being nothing more than a strange collage of non-sequiturs and half-sentences that defies traditional philological criticism.

## Appendix

The text given here, the concluding part of the *Samputatilaka* discussed in section 4, is a diplomatic transcript of ms. W with the variants or R given in brackets. <kiṃcit> denotes an addition/correction; ≤kiṃcit≥ denotes deletion; as in kiṃ + t, + with spaces on both sides denotes loss of an entire *akṣara*, in kiṃ+it it refers to partial loss of an *akṣara*; om. abbreviates ‘omission’, including that of *danḍas*; I occasionally use asterisks \*to denote larger units to which a critical note is added\*. Although the four passages here given as 1a, 1b, 2a, and 2b run as continuous text in the *Samputatilaka*, for the sake of convenience I have split it up according to the textual units they copy. Some standardization has been applied, such as removal of gemination after -r-.

[1a]

*Samputatilaka* [W 181v2–183v4, R 124v2–126r1] = *Madhyāntavibhāga* 4.1–6 with the *Bhāṣya* [ed. Nagao, pp. 50–52]

pratipakṣasya bhāvanā bodhipakṣa<sup>29</sup> (bodhipakṣ<ā> R) bhāvanā (bhāvanān R) idānīm vaktavyā | tatra tāvatādau (tāvad ādau R)

dauṣṭhulyāt tṛṣṇāhetutvād  
adhimohataḥ | (avimo≤kṣata≥hataś R)  
catu(catuḥ- R)satyāvatārāya  
mrtyupasthāna(smṛtyupasthāna- R)bhāvanā

kāyena hi dauṣṭhulyaṃ prabhāvyate | (om. R) tatparīkṣayāya (tatparīkṣayā R) duḥkhasatyam avatarati | tasya dauṣṭhulya (dauṣṭhulyasya R) saṃskāralakṣaṇatvāt | dauṣṭhulyaṃ hi saṃsāra+ḥ + + + (saṃskāraduḥkhata tayā R) sarvaṃ (sārdhaṃ R) sāsra-vam avastv ādyā (sāsravañ cādṛṣṭvāryā R) duḥkhata<ḥ> paśya-≤|≥ntīti (paśyamntīti R) | tṛṣṇāhetu vedanā (tṛṣṇāhetu verdanā R) tatparīkṣayāya (tatpar<si>īkṣayā R) samudayasatyam avatarati | [W182r] ātmāniveśavastu (ātmābhiniveśavastu R) citta (cittaṃ R) tatparīkṣayāya (tatparīkṣayā R) nirodhasatyam avatarati | ātmācchedatayāpagamāt | (ātm≤ābhiniveśavastu≥chedabhayāpagamāt R) dharmaparīkṣayāya (dhurmaparīkṣayā R) sāmkleśikavyavadānāni + + + saṃmohāt (sāmkleśikavy<aiya>vadānikadharmā-

<sup>29</sup> Insertion mark, presumably for -sya, but insertion lost due to a partial tear of the lower margin.

saṃmohāt R) | mārgasatyam avatarati | ata ādau (≤dā≥<ā>dau R) catu(catuḥ- R) satyāvatārāya smṛtyupasthānabhāvanā (smṛtyu- <pa>sthānabhā[R123r (sic! for 125)]vanā R) vyavasthāpyate | tataḥ (ataḥ R) saṃprahānabhāvanā | (saṃ-prā<hā>ṇabhāvanā R) yasmāt

parijñāne vipakṣe ca  
pratipakṣe ca sarvathā (sarva≤ta≥thā≤ga≥ R)  
tadavagamāya (R adds: \*vīryaṃ  
caturdhā saṃpravartate

smṛtyupasthānabhāvanā yā vipakṣe pratipakṣe ca sarvaprakāraḥ | parijñāto vipakṣāpagamāya\*) pratipakṣāpagamāya (pratipakṣāva- gamāya ca R) vīryaṃ caturdhā saṃpravartate | utpannānāṃ pā- pānāṃ (pāpakānāṃ R) akuśalānāṃ dharmāṇāṃ prahāṇāyeti vīsta- raḥ | (vīstara≤ta≥ḥ R) prak kathita iti [ed. Nagao, p. 51]

karmatāsthite | (karmaṇyatāsthites R) tatra  
sarvārthānāṃ saṃbuddhaye (saṃrddhaye R)  
pañcadoṣaprahāṇāṣṭa- (-prahāṇā<yā>ṣṭa- R)  
saṃ[W182v]skārasedhanānaya (-saṃskārasevanānvayāḥ | | R)

tasmā (tasmāt R) tadigamāya (tadadhigamāya R) vīryabhāvanayā  
cittasthite (cittasthiteḥ R) karmaṇyatā | catvāra rddhipādāḥ (rddhi- padāḥ R) | sarvārthasamrddhihetutvāt | (om. R) sthitiḥ atra citta- sthiti (citrasthitiḥ | R) samādhir veditavyāḥ (veditavyā R) | ataḥ samyakprahāṇāntaraṃ (-prahāṇānantaraṃ R) rddhipādāḥ sā punaḥ karmaṇyatā | (om. R) pañcadoṣaprahāṇāṣṭa(-prahāṇāyāṣṭa- R)saṃskārabhāvanātvayā veditavyā (veditavyāḥ R) | katame (kata- me te R) pañca doṣāḥ | (| | R) bhagavān āha | tatra

kausīdyam avavādasya  
saṃmoṣo laya uddhata eva ca (layaḥ | uddhataḥ R) |  
asaṃskāro 'rtha ('tha R) saṃskāraḥ  
pañca doṣā ime matā (mat≤āḥ≥<e> R) |

tatra layoddhatyam (layoddh≤r≥atyam R) eko doṣaḥ kriyate | an- abhisamskāro layoddhatyaprasasanakāle (layauddhatyapra- samanakāla R) [R123v (sic! for 125)] doṣaḥ | anabhisamskāra (abhisamskāra R) prasāntau | eṣāṃ prahāṇāya katham aṣṭau prahāṇasaṃskārā vyavasthāpyante (vyavasthāpyante | R) catvāraḥ | (om. R) kausīdyaprahāṇāya cchandavyāyāmaśraddhāprasra- bdhayaḥ (-prasrabiddhayaḥ R) | te punar yathākramaṃ [W183r] veditavyāḥ |

āśrayo athāśriya (thāśritas R) tasya  
nimitaṃ phalam eva ca |

āśraya (āśrayas R) cchando (chando R) vyāyāmaḥ (vyāyāmasyā-  
śrito vyāyāmaḥ R) | tasyāśraya (-āśrayas R) cchandasya (chanda-  
sya R) nimittaṃ śraddhā | (om. R) sampratyaya (sampratyaye R)  
saty abhilāṣāt | (om. R) tasyāśrita (tasyāśritasya R) vyāyāmasya  
phalaṃ prarabdhi (prarabdhis R) sa cchandavīryasya (chanda-  
vīryasya R) samādhi[ed. Nagao, p. 52]viśeṣādhighamāt | (om. R)  
śeṣās catvāraḥ prahāṇasaṃskārāḥ smṛtisaṃprajanyacetanopekṣās  
(-opekṣās R) caturṇāṃ (caturṇāṃ doṣāṇāṃ R) yathāsaṃkhyāṃ  
pratipakṣaḥ (pratipakṣ<ā>ḥ R) | te punaḥ smṛtyādayo veditavyā  
yathākramaṃ |

ālambane asaṃmoṣo (ālambaṇne 'saṃmoṣo R)  
layoddhatyānubadhyatā  
tadvayāyābhisamkāra (tadupāyābhisamkāraḥ R)  
śāntau prasavavāhitā (prasa<va>ḥthavāhitā | R)

smṛtir ālambanāsaṃpramoṣaḥ | (ālambaṇ<ā>saṃpramoṣaḥ R)  
saṃprajanyam asaṃpramoṣe satī layoddhatyānubodhaḥ |  
abudhya (anubudhya R) tadupagamārthā'bhisamkāraś (tadapaga-  
mārtho 'bhisamkāraś R) cetinā (cetanā R) layauddhatyasya (la-  
yoddhatyasya R) upasāntau satyāṃ prasavavāhitā (prasa<tha>vā-  
hitā R) cittasya upekṣā (upekṣā | R) \*ṛddhipādā[W183v]nantaraṃ  
pañcendriyāṇi śraddhādīni teṣāṃ kathaṃ vyavasthānam

āropyate | mokṣabhā<sup>30</sup>ye  
cchandayogādhipatyataḥ |  
ālambane 'saṃmoṣau  
dhisārādhipatyataḥ |

adhipatyata iti vartate |\* (\*...\* om. R due to an eyeskip) ṛddhipā-  
dau (ṛddhipādaiḥ R) karmanya(karmanya- R)cittasyāvaropite  
mokṣabhāgīye kuśalamūla cchandādhipataḥ (cchandādhipatyataḥ  
R) prayogādhipatyataḥ | (<prayogādhipatyataḥ |> R) ālambanā-  
saṃpramoṣadhipatyataḥ | [R124r (sic! for 126)] avisārādhipatyataḥ  
| (om. R) pravicyādhipatyāś ca (-ādhipatyatasva R) yathākra-  
maṃ | pañca sraddhādīnindriyāṇi (śraddhādīnīndriyāṇi R) vedita-  
vyāni |

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<sup>30</sup> Space of one *akṣara*, presumably for an illegible -gī-.

[1b]

*Samputatilaka* [W 183v4–185r5, R 126r1–127r2] = *Madhyāntavibhāga* 1.17 (*kārikā* excluded)–22 with the *Bhāṣya* [ed. Nagao, pp. 25–27]

tatra bhokṭṛbhojanasūnyatām āhuḥ (āha R) | adhyātmikāny āyatanāny ārabhya bhojanasūnyatā bāhyāni | taddeha (+ ddehas R) tayor bhokṭṛbhojanayo (-bhojanayor R) d adhiṣṭhāna (yad adhiṣṭhānaṃ R) śarīraṃ tasya sūnyatā | (om. R) api paśyan akhinyaḥ (akhila- R) saṃskāraṃ parityajet (parityajate | R) kuśalasyākṣayāya ca (ca | R) nirupadhiśeṣe (nirupadhiśeṣe | R) adhyātmabahi-[W184r]rddhāsūnyatety (-sūnya tad R) ucyate | pratiṣṭhāvastu bhājanalokas tasya vistṛṇatvāt | sūnyatā (tacchūnyatā R) mahāsūnyatety ucyate | tac cādhyātmikāyatnādi (-āyatanādi R) yena sūnyam (sūnya R) dṛṣṭam (dṛṣṭa R) sūnyatājñānena tasya sūnyatā | (om. R) sūnyaśūnyatā (sūnyatāśūnyatā R) | yathā dṛṣṭam paramārthākāreṇa tasya (tac- R) sūnyatā (-chūnyatā R) paramārthasūnyatā | tadarthaṃ ca bodhisattvaḥ prapadyate | tasya sūnyatā | (om. R) kimarthaṃ (kimarthaṃ ca R) pratipadyate | (prapadyate || R) bhagavān āha |

śubhadvayasya prāptyarthaṃ

kuśalasya saṃskṛtā | saṃskṛtasya (saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛtasya R)

sadā sattvahitāya ca (ca | R)

atyantasattvahitārthaṃ (atyamrthaṃ sattvahitārthaṃ R)

saṃsāratyajanārthaṃ ca (saṃsārātyajanārthaṃ tu R) |

anavarāgrasya saṃsāra (saṃsārasya R) sūnyatām apasyaṃ (apaśyan R) khinnaḥ saṃsāraṃ parityajet |

kuśalamṣyākṣayāya (kuśalasyākṣayāya R) ca |

nirupadhiśeṣanirvāṇe pi yatnāvākirati (yan n<ā>vakirati R) notsrjati (notsrjati | R) tasya śū[R124v (sic! for 126)]n[ed. Nagao, p. 26]yatā | ana≤ka≥vakāśasūnyā (anavakārasūnyatā R)

gotrasya (≤śro≥gotrasya R) vi[W184v]ddhyarthaṃ (viśuddhyarthaṃ | R)

gotraṃ hi prakṛtiḥ (prakṛti R) svābhāvikatvāl

lakṣaṇavyaṅjanāptaye

mahāpuruṣalakṣaṇānāṃ sānuvyāṅjanānāṃ prāptaye

śuddhaye buddhadharmāṇām  
bodhisattva (bodhisattvā R) prapadyate (prapadyante | R)  
balavaiśāradīnām eva (evaṃ R) tāvac caturdaśānām śūnyatā-  
nām vyavasthānaṃ veditavyaṃ | (om. R) kā punar atra śūnyatā  
pudgalasyārtha dharmāṇām  
abhāvaḥ | (om. R) śūnyatā (śūnyatā | R) tarhi  
tadabhāvasya sadbhāva (sadbhāvas R)  
tasmin sā śūnyatā parā  
pudgaladharmatābhāvaś (pudgaladha+ma + bhāvaś R) ca śūnyatā  
| (om. R) tadabhāvasya (tadbhāvasya ca R) sadbhāvaḥ  
(saṃ≤d≥bhāvaḥ R) | tasmin yathoktādaḥ (yathoktabhoktrādaḥ R)  
śūnyateti śūnyatālakṣaṇakṣāpanārthaṃ (-khyāpanārthaṃ R) vi-  
dhāma te (dvidhāmate R) śūnyatā (śūnyatām R) vyavasthāpayati |  
abhāvaśūnyatā (-śūnyatām R) abhāvasvabhāvaśūnyatām ca (ca |  
R) pudgaladharmāsamāropasya | (pudgala + rmasamāropasya R)  
tacchūnyatāpadavādasya (tacchūnyatāpavādasya R) ca parihārā-  
rthaṃ yathākramam (yathākramaṃ | R) eva (evaṃ R) śūnyatāyāḥ  
pra<bhe>do (prabhedo R) vi[W185r]jñeyaḥ | kathaṃ sādhanam  
vijñeyaḥ (vijñeyaṃ R) |  
saṃkṣiptā ced bhava (bhaven R) nāsau  
muktā (muktāḥ R) syuḥ sarvadehinaḥ |  
viśuddhā ced bhaven nāsau (nā + R)  
vyāyāmo niṣphalo (niṣphallo R) bhavet |  
yadi dharmāṇā (dharmāṇām R) śūnyatā āgantukaiḥ saṃkleśair  
anutpanne [ed. Nagao, p. 27] ti (<'>pi R) pratipakṣe na saṃkṣiptā  
bhavet | saṃkleśābhāvāt | (saṃkleśābhāvād R) ayatnata eva mu-  
ktāḥ (muktās R) sarvasattvā bhavyeḥ (bhavyeḥ | R) athotpanne  
pi (athotpanna pi R) pratipakṣe (prati + [R127r] kṣe R) na (na R)  
viśuddhā bhavet | mokṣārthārambho niṣphalo bhavet | evaṃ (e-  
vaṃ ca R) kṛtvā  
na kṣiptā nāpi vākṣiptam (<nāpi vākṣiptā> R)  
śuddhāśuddhā nā caiva (na caiva ≤|≥ R) sā  
kathaṃ na kṣiptānām (n<ā>kṣiptānā R) śuddhā prakṛtyaiva (≤pra-  
tyava≥prakṛtyaiva R)  
prabhāsvaratvāc cittasya |  
kathaṃ nākṣiptā (na kṣiptā R) na śuddhā

kleśasyāgantukatvāt (kleś≤ā≥syā + + + tv<ā>t R) |

evaṃ ś+ + + (śūnyatāyā R) upadiṣṭa (uddiṣṭa<ḥ> R) prabhedataḥ  
| (prabhedaḥ R) sādḥito bhavati (bhavati | R) tatra śūnyatāyāḥ  
(śūnyatāyā<ḥ> R) piṇḍārthaḥ |

[2a]

*Samputatilaka* [W 185r5–185v3, R 127r2–127r4] = *Tattvasiddhi* §17  
(five lines from beginning)

tad (yad R) apy uktam | (om. R) nāga(rāga- R)pratipakṣo aśubhādi  
(śubhādir R) dveṣapratipakṣo maitrī | [W185v] mohapratipakṣaḥ  
(mo≤kṣa≥hapratipakṣ≤ā≥ḥ R) pratīyasamutpādaḥ | tatra katham  
rāgato (rā + to R) vinivṛttiḥ | (vinivṛttis R) tadviruddhatvād iti cet  
(itiś cet R) | nanu yad (yady R) eva (evaṃ R) rāgasyātmīyakaṛaṇe  
pi virāga<ḥ> (virāgaḥ R) syāt | tathā coktam (coktam | R) bhaga-  
van kulaputrā | (kulaputrāḥ | | R)

aho hi sarvabuddhānām rāgaññānam anāvilam |  
hatvā virāgam rāgeṇa (rāgena R) sarvasaukhyam dadanti te (te |  
R)<sup>31</sup>

+ + + gādīnām (na ca rāgādīnām R) prakṛtisāvadyamtvam (-sāva-  
dyatvam R) | anyathā śrotāpannasya rāgapratilambhaḥ (-pratila-  
mbha<ḥ> R) syāt tasya rāgādyaparihāreṇa (-aparihākāreṇa R)  
pravṛtteḥ |

[2b]

*Samputatilaka* [W 185v3–186v5, R 127r4–] = *Tattvasiddhi* §17  
(resuming after a short omission)

kiṃ tu santānaviśeṣād guṇaviśeṣā'vāhakā (kiṃ tu saṃtānaviśeṣāvā-  
hakā R) bhavanti | yathā ketakīpuṣpaṃ (ketakīpuṣpaṃ R)  
gandhahastinopabhuktaṃ kastūrikādibhāvena (kasturikādibhāvena  
R) pariṇamati | (pariṇamati | | R) itaraiś ca hastibhir upabhuktaṃ  
amedhyabhāvena pariṇamati | te<na> (tena R) na tatra ketakīpu-  
ṣpadoṣas (-doṣaḥ | R) tathā rāgādayo pi vistarasantānavartino (vi-  
śuddhasam + [R127v]navartino R) viśiṣṭam (vi≤śiṣṭa-nopi≥śiṣṭam  
R) eva phalam kurvam[W186r]ty (kurvanty R) āśayaviśeṣayogāt |

<sup>31</sup> The quotation is from the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha* (ed. Horiuchi 1,44,55).

yathā kṣīraṃ sarpādibhir upabhuḡyamānaṃ viṣādibhāvena pariṇa-  
mayati (pariṇamati R) | anyaiś ca punaḡ puruṣai bhujyamānam  
(puruṣair upabhuḡyamānam R) amṛtabhāvam (ṛtabhāvam R) āpa-  
dyate | (āpadyate + R) evaṃ te kulaputrā rāgādaya āśayaviśeṣa-  
bhāvino viśiṣṭaphalāvāhakā bhavantīti (bhavantīti | R) prakṛtinira-  
vadyatvāt prayoga + (prayogaḡ | R) + + (ye ye R) viśiṣṭasantāna-  
bhāvinas te ti (-bhāvinas te R) viśiṣṭaphalavāhakā (-phalāvāhakā R)  
yathā te (yathā R) ketakyādayo viśi + + + tānavartinās ca (+ śiṣṭa-  
santānavartinasva R) rāgādaya iti svabhāvaśuddhāḡ (svabhāva-  
≤vi≥śuddhā R) | |

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# A Rationale for Buddhist Textual Scholarship<sup>1</sup>

Dorji WANGCHUK (Hamburg)

## 0. Prologue

Each one of us engaged in the academic study of Buddhism may have his or her own motive or bundle of motives for doing so. In my case, it was my personal interest in Buddhist philosophy that provoked me to study Buddhism as transmitted via the Tibetan tradition—mainly the Ancient (rNying-ma) school of Tibetan

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<sup>1</sup> The present paper is a merged and slightly modified version of the opening speech that I gave on the occasion of the three-day international symposium on “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Theories and Practices of Translation” (July 23–25, 2012, Hamburg) organized by the Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship (KC-TBTS), Universität Hamburg, and the keynote speech that I had the honor to hold on the occasion of the Seventh Biannual Conference on “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Critical Edition, Transliteration, and Translation” organized and hosted by the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies, Mumbai, December 5–7, 2012). I had hoped to be able to revise and refine this paper for its publication, but given all sorts of anticipated and unanticipated pressing obligations, I was able to do so only minimally, merely introducing slight modifications and additions. The actual paper that I presented during the above-mentioned symposium in Hamburg was “Tibetans on the Phenomenon of Translation.” My initial attempt has been to systematically gather Tibetan materials that provide information on Tibetan theories and practices of translation. My pursuits repeatedly and invariably led me to what is referred to as “three imperial decrees” (*bkas bcad gsum*). The state of affairs regarding the identity of the three imperial decrees and their contents turns out, as is often the case, not at all clear or straightforward. It is hoped that I shall be able to publish two separate articles elsewhere, one on “Tibetans on the Phenomenon of Translation” and another on the “Three Imperial Decrees” (*bkas bcad gsum*). I also take this opportunity to thank Philip Pierce for proofreading my English of this contribution and of the foreword to the present volume as well.

Buddhism—for ten long years in a Tibetan monastic seminary in Mysore, South India. When I was on the verge of becoming a “preceptor” (*upādhyāya: mkhan po*), my knowledge of Buddhism appeared to me—from the perspective of a Buddhist intellectual, if not necessarily from that of a Buddhist practitioner—somehow deficient or incomplete for two reasons. First, it seemed inadequate to view and assess Buddhism from within the tradition alone. If to allude to a Tibetan notion, to get a better view of the “mountain over here” (*tshur ri*), it may be necessary to look at it from the “mountain over there” (*phar ri*).<sup>2</sup> One of my motives for pursuing a Western academic study of Buddhism, in other words, has been to try to gain both an *emic* and *etic* perspective of Buddhism. Second, my knowledge of Buddhism had been based exclusively on Buddhist sources in Tibetan translation, and it somehow seemed unsatisfactory to rely only on sources in translation rather than be able to trace the doctrinal roots in their original formulation. In sum, it was my desire to try to read Buddhist sources in their original Indian (mainly Sanskrit) form and learn Western academic methods that brought me to the Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies at the Universität Hamburg.

Retrospectively, it occurs to me that it has been naive to assume that there is just one Western academic approach to studying Buddhism. It did not take long to realize that one can study Buddhism in various disciplines and departments of Western academia. One can study Buddhism as a student of religious studies, philosophy, social anthropology, sociology, literature, and so forth. I have done so at the Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies of the Universität Hamburg, which is known for its appreciation of and rigor in applying historical-philological methods. While the standards set by the giants in the field of Buddhist Studies may be difficult for scholars such as myself to meet, the arguments for the need to investigate various aspects of Buddhism—particularly Buddhist religion, philosophy, intellectual history, and intellectual culture—based on textual material from the past and the employment of historical-philological tools and techniques, seem highly appealing and compelling.

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<sup>2</sup> I thank my friend and colleague Dr. Karma Phuntsho for sharing this idea with me.

When I took up the position as a professor for Tibetology, I was expected to define the profile and focus of Tibetan Studies at the Department. Despite the current trend, tendency, and at times even pressure to deemphasize text-based studies of Buddhist religion and philosophy, I made a commitment to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors by maintaining a strong historical-philological tradition of Tibetan Buddhist Studies, for which the Department has been all along well known. In keeping with this commitment and the vision and support of the Khyentse Foundation, we were able to establish the Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship (KC-TBTS) at the Department in January 2011.<sup>3</sup> As one of its several academic activities, the Center organized and conducted the symposium on “Cross-Cultural Transmission of Buddhist Texts: Theories and Practices of Translation,” which was a very rewarding experience for myself and, I hope, the other participants as well.

It is against the backdrop of this brief history that I venture to present a rationale for Buddhist textual scholarship, that is, so to speak, a philosophy of Buddhist philology, by trying to answer three questions, namely, *What* do I mean by “Buddhist textual scholarship,” and *why* and *how* is it to be practiced? Although my own field of interest and engagement is Textual Studies (i.e. mainly within the area of Indo-Tibetan Buddhism), I hope that the issues that I address here will be of relevance not only to Buddhist textual scholarship in general, but also to specific related issues, such as theories and practices relating to critical editing and translating, which ought to be of interest to those of us engaged in the investigation of the histories of the cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist texts and the ideas conveyed therein.

### **1. What is Buddhist Textual Scholarship?**

Let us now turn to the first question: What is Buddhist textual scholarship? The expression “textual scholarship” is understood and employed here as described and defined by David C. Greetham in his book *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (1994). What Greetham obviously intends to achieve with the employment of the term “textual scholarship” is to “co-opt” it “for the

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<sup>3</sup> For some details about the Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship (KC-TBTS), see <http://www.kc-tbts.uni-hamburg.de>.

procedures of enumerative bibliographers, descriptive, analytical, and historical bibliographers, palaeographers and codicologists, textual editors, and annotators—cumulatively and collectively perhaps a field somewhat like the old ‘philology’ of an earlier dispensation, the technical and conceptual recreation of the past through its texts, specifically the language of those texts.”<sup>4</sup> Greetham himself seems to have been inspired by G. Thomas Tanselle, for he states:<sup>5</sup>

In part, the employment of the term “textual scholarship” in this general sense is a recognition (as G. Thomas Tanselle put it in his inaugural address to the Society for Textual Scholarship in 1981) that “textual criticism” is associated with the “great tradition of classical and biblical [studies, and] forms but one branch of textual scholarship as a whole” (“Presidential Address,” *Text* 1, [1984]: 2). In part, it is a recognition that the various contributions of palaeographers, codicologists, bibliographers, editors and so on, are related to what elsewhere Tanselle has called the “single great enterprise” (*Rationale of Textual Criticism*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1989: 46) common to them all—the historical investigation of texts as both artifactual objects and conceptual entities, and the reconstruction of those stages in the transmission that have not survived.

Further on, Greetham defines “textual scholarship” as “the general term for all the activities associated with the discovery, description, transcription, editing, annotating, and commenting upon texts. Textual scholarship thus has wider reference than ‘textual criticism’ (that part of the discipline concerned with evaluation and emendation of the reading of the texts), may involve any of the technical fields listed in the opening sentence.” The fields that he has been referring to in his opening sentence are: bibliography (i.e. enumerative, systematic, descriptive, analytical, historical, and textual), textual analysis, textual criticism, textual editing, documentary editing, social textual criticism, epigraphy, paleography, codicology, diplomatics, philology, historical criticism, and higher and lower criticism.

Presupposing the definition of “textual scholarship” we have just seen, “Buddhist textual scholarship” may be defined here

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<sup>4</sup> GREETHAM 1994: ix.

<sup>5</sup> GREETHAM 1994: ix–x.

as an academic discipline within the domain of the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*), (a) whose ultimate goal is the investigation and explanation of the intellectual history (*Geistesgeschichte*) and intellectual culture (*Geisteskultur*) of a society impregnated with Buddhist religion and philosophy, (b) whose main research material consists of written texts (or written sources) transmitted through the medium of manuscripts, xylographs, epigraphs, modern books, and so on, and (c) whose methodology is defined by the employment of historical-philological tools and techniques, which presupposes a profound knowledge of the languages and cultures in which the pertinent texts have originated and through which they have been transmitted and disseminated.

## **2. Why Buddhist Textual Scholarship?**

Let us now turn to the second question: Why pursue Buddhist textual scholarship? Posing such a question is almost tantamount to asking three philosophical questions related to ontology (i.e. theory or study of being), epistemology (i.e. theory or study of knowledge), and axiology (i.e. theory or study of values): First, is there anything at all what one might call realities, such as (both artifactual and conceptual) entities, activities, and events? Second, even if we assume the existence of realities of the past, are they knowable? In other words, can one reconstruct and know these entities and events from the past, and if yes how? Third, even if we are somehow able to recreate and know the past entities and events, is there any value in such a knowledge, and if so what kind of value?

The very existence of modern education systems and academic disciplines seems to be indicative of the fact that we do not and cannot deny that entities, activities, and events do exist in a certain space and time and that we cannot only know them but that there is some value in knowing them. Most (if not all) ancient Indian philosophers, including Buddhist philosophers, also seem to have taken for granted the existence of various layers or dimensions of reality, the knowability (or cognizability) of reality, and the utility of gaining cognitive access to reality. In fact, for Indian philosophers only what is ontically possible is also epistemically cognizable, and only what is epistemically cognizable is ontically existent. A direct ontic–epistemic correspondence

seems to have been taken for granted.<sup>6</sup> Most important of all, while Buddhist philosophers may or may not ascribe an intrinsic value to knowledge or valid cognition, most of them would not deny its instrumental value inasmuch as it is assumed to contribute to or cause the attainment of mundane and supramundane goals harbored by human beings, and ultimately to the soterical breakthrough or release from the bondage of existence.<sup>7</sup>

The first fundamental assumption of Buddhist textual scholarship is that texts from various Buddhist cultures transmitted to us do contain certain Buddhist ideas—be they religious, philosophical, or otherwise—and that their authors did intend to convey these specific ideas.<sup>8</sup> Analogously to our own selves, we who intend to convey something by means of our oral and written text, it is quite reasonable to assume that an author of some text we investigate—be it written, translated, or transmitted in whatever language—also wished to convey very specific ideas. It is also to be assumed that like persons, texts and ideas are not static entities but that they too possess a history of their own, that is, a whole series of events related to their inception, progression, transmission, dissemination, and reception. I now present an English translation of a passage by Lambert Schmithausen which seems to encapsulate some of the guiding principles of textual scholarship, and which in turn primarily deals with textual history (*Textgeschichte*) and intellectual history (*Ideengeschichte*):<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This is a point I already made in WANGCHUK 2009: 227.

<sup>7</sup> That the actual spiritual breakthrough in Buddhism is an intellectual event, inasmuch as a direct cognitive insight is called for, and not a physiological or emotional one, is a matter of general consent, and a point I have made on another occasion. See WANGCHUK 2007: 43–45, 199.

<sup>8</sup> See STEINKELLNER 2008: 1.

<sup>9</sup> SCHMITHAUSEN 2000: 41: “Wir dürfen doch wohl in Analogie zu uns selbst voraussetzen, daß die Verfasser der Texte etwas Bestimmtes sagen wollen. Sie haben einen Anspruch darauf, daß wir uns zunächst einmal geduldig bemühen, eben dieses Gemeinte in seinem eigenen kulturellen Kontext nachvollziehbar zu verstehen, soweit das Überlieferungslage und Forschungsstand zulassen. Eine andere Frage ist, ob das, was sie sagen wollten, für den heutigen Leser akzeptabel ist, und ob sie selbst heute noch das Gleiche in den gleichen Worten sagen würden. Nicht daß ich diese Fragen für illegitim hielte, aber man sollte vermeiden, das, was man aus heutiger Sicht für akzeptabel hält, als das, was die Verfasser der Texte selbst in *ihrer* Vorstellungswelt gedacht haben, auszugeben.”

We may indeed presuppose that the authors of the texts, analogously to ourselves, wanted to say something definite. They first deserve a patient effort on our part to understand what they meant in their own terms, to the extent that the [textual] transmission and the [present] state of research permit. Another question is whether what they intended to say is acceptable to today's readers, and whether they would still say the same thing in the same words today. It is not that I hold these questions to be illegitimate, but one should avoid presenting what one holds acceptable from today's perspective as what the authors of the texts themselves envisioned in *their* own world of ideas.

On another occasion, he has stated:<sup>10</sup>

As a scholar, I consider it important to distinguish between the historical facts (to be extracted from transmitted sources) and ... inevitably, to a certain extent, creative—adaptations [of them]. The *historian* is bound to try his best to come as close as possible to an understanding of what the sources themselves wanted to express (and surely they normally had some definitive message to convey), even if the result does not coincide with his personal likings or convictions. The Buddhist *thinker* or philosopher, on the other hand, is, of course, free to open up new solutions in order to cope with the present situation, though as a *Buddhist* thinker, he should (and surely will) do so in harmony with at least *some* elements of the Buddhist tradition. But this does not exclude innovation, even radical re-orientation. Indeed, in the case of the question of meat-eating it would not be for the first time that a radical re-orientation takes place. An additional problem in our time is, however, that the persuasive power of such innovations may not be strengthened but more likely weakened if their opponents camouflage their creative innovativeness by rejecting or distorting historical facts (or at least probabilities). In most if not all cases, it would seem more fruitful to try to understand the disturbing issues in their historical setting, and, in case they turn out to be irreconcilable with present day requirements, to frankly admit this.

The second assumption is the possibility of reconstructing or explaining the history of texts and ideas in a plausible or conceivable manner. As in any scientific method of investigation, it is possible for textual scholars to propose “scientific hypotheses”

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<sup>10</sup> SCHMITHAUSEN 2005: 187.

based on a critical evaluation of textual evidence, which is subject to verification or falsification. The knowability, or rather the reconstructibility, of the history of texts and ideas is, in my view, based on the efficacy of language as a means of communication. Language, for several reasons, is not an absolute means of communication, but it is certainly one of the most effective communication tools (and often the only practical one). And the degree of success in determining and explaining the history of texts and ideas will depend on a number of factors, not the least on our own language proficiency and the efficiency of the tools and techniques that we employ.

The third assumption regarding why we ought to practice Buddhist textual scholarship is based on the recognition that a full evaluation and appreciation of a civilization is possible only through a nuanced understanding of its history, particularly its intellectual history. Without a cumulative and collective knowledge or memory of the history of its intellectual culture, it would be as though humanity were suffering from Alzheimer's disease.<sup>11</sup> According to the maxim "the past is all-pervasive,"<sup>12</sup> we can hardly talk about Buddhist religion or philosophy without considering its history. We may choose to ignore or deny history, but a denial of history is a denial of responsibility.<sup>13</sup> As students of textual scholarship, it is our privilege and duty to make an honest attempt to understand what the texts are trying to tell us and to explain how the thought contained and transmitted in them came into being and developed. This in turn is based on the tacit assumption that the depth of our understanding of Buddhist ideas transmitted in the form of written texts is dependent on the quality of Buddhist textual scholarship.

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<sup>11</sup> I have borrowed this idea from my esteemed colleague Professor Harunaga Isaacson, who once employed this simile during a public talk.

<sup>12</sup> BARZUN & GRAF 1992: 8–12.

<sup>13</sup> A textual scholar and a student of the history of ideas cannot help but agree with what Tshering Shakya in his *History of Modern Tibet* calls "denial of history", a process which necessarily entails negation of responsibility" (SHAKYA 1999: xxii).

### **3. How Should One Practice Buddhist Textual Scholarship?**

Let us now turn to the third question, namely, how is one supposed to practice Buddhist textual scholarship. During my studies in Hamburg, my teachers pointed out that one cannot learn philology with the help of manuals. Just as an apprentice learns a trade from his or her master, so does one learn philology from one's master by way of guided practice. Although the best textual scholarship is a practicing of textual scholarship, this does not mean that there is no need to constantly reflect on the methodology involved. It would be beyond the scope of this paper to even try to discuss the tools, techniques, and methods of textual scholarship. What I thus merely seek to address is a few points regarding some general methodological presuppositions and policies and a few remarks on the issues of critical editing and translating.

First, as a general methodological principle or policy in the field of Buddhist Studies (or, in fact, in any area of Cultural Studies), I believe that it is no longer illuminative or constructive to pursue methodology-related academic discourses in terms of Orientalism–Occidentalism, Eastern–Western, and We–They (or Our–Their) dichotomies. Extreme forms of Orientalism marked, for instance, by an attitude or assumption that a Buddhist or someone from the Buddhist tradition or culture can never be an objective Buddhologist, just as a bird can never be an ornithologist,<sup>14</sup> is as problematic as extreme forms of Occidentalism marked, for instance, by an attitude or assumption that someone who is not a practicing Buddhist or someone from outside the Buddhist tradition or culture can never really know or understand the Buddhist teachings and hence can never be an authority in the field of Buddhist Studies. At least in principle, both Eastern and Western, or ancient and modern, traditions of enquiry

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<sup>14</sup> An analogy used in an anecdote by Prof. *em.* Dr. Werner Ende (University of Freiburg) during his lecture “Orientalismus, Orientalistik und Gegenwartsbezogene Orientwissenschaft: Die Asien-Afrika-Studien in Hamburg”), which was held on the occasion of commemorating the centenary of the Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg (“100 Jahre Asien-Afrika-Wissenschaften in Hamburg: Vom Hamburger Kolonialinstitut zum Asien-Afrika-Institut der Universität Hamburg,” December 2, 2008).

seem to propose (or presuppose) that the very objective of enquiry is to illuminate the state of affairs as it is and to gain correct and as complete insight as possible into it. It is thus to be assumed that anyone endowed with an intellectual curiosity and a benevolent will to gain insight into the state of affairs—regardless of whether that insight turns out to confirm one’s positive or negative prejudices—will be able to contribute to increasing and enhancing the cumulative and collective knowledge of human civilization, provided the enquirer or investigator has access to the necessary resources, tools, techniques, and training. In the particular case of Buddhist textual scholarship, although the proficiency in the pertinent research languages is the most important tool or means, and skillful employment of historical-philological methods the main research technique, a textual scholar should be open to any discipline or methodology that brings one a step closer to one’s goal.

#### **4. Critical Editing**

Undoubtedly critical editing—preparing a critical edition—of a text is the most important activity and duty of a textual scholar. Over centuries, seasoned scholars from the fields of mainly (if not exclusively) Classical Studies—i.e. the branch of the humanities comprising the language, literature, philosophy, history, art, archaeology, and other culture of the ancient Mediterranean world (Bronze Age, ca. BC 3000–Late Antiquity ca. AD 300–600); especially Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome, during Classical Antiquity (ca. BC 600–AD 600)—and Biblical Studies have already deliberated on the theories and practices of critical editing within the context of textual criticism. Practicing textual scholars from the fields of Classical Indian (i.e. Sanskrit) Studies and Buddhist Studies have also reflected and written on issues related to theories and practices of critical editing. My personal wish is that what are known as “lower criticism” (i.e. textual criticism), the ultimate aim of which is the preparation of a “critical edition” containing a text most closely approximating the original, and “higher criticism,” which attempts to establish the authorship, date, and place of composition or compilation of the text, become a commonplace within the area of Tibetan Studies, particularly those working with Buddhist texts. In this, as in many regards, there is much to learn from the knowledge and experience of

scholars from the fields of Classical Studies, Biblical Studies, and Classical Indian Studies, but there is a long way to go.

Attempting to elaborate the questions of *what*, *how*, and *why* related to critical editing would take me far beyond my competence and the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, I assume, it is expected that I say a few words about this. First, what is a critical edition? Having acknowledged the existence of various other types of editions, such as “diplomatic editions,” I would venture to define “critical edition” (as I understand it) as “a scientifically hypothetical reconstruction of a text that represents the closest approximation of the author’s final intentions or a scientifically hypothetical reconstruction of the final recension or translation of a text at any given point in time or phase of its evolution or transmission.” Such an edition can be called “critical” because during the preparation of it no other principle or policy or approach can mechanically substitute for the employment of the editor’s critical sense of judgment. Given the problems and challenges of intentional or unintentional alterations or corruptions, interpolations or additions, and omissions or deletions in the texts that have occurred in the course of the processes of their production, translation, transmission, dissemination, and reception, the first and the last resort of a judicious reader or editor who aspires to understand the history of the texts including their contents and contexts is his or her critical sense of judgment. Even the most carefully prepared critical editions can be at best mere scientific hypotheses, and there is no such a thing as a “definitive critical edition.” All textual evidence provided by an editor in his or her (preferably positive) *apparatus criticus* (or critical apparatus) are subject to re-examination and thus open to verification or falsification.

In this connection, I would like to quote my distinguished colleague, Harunaga Isaacson, whose reflection on critical editing seems to be beneficial to all of us who engage in Buddhist textual scholarship. He states:<sup>15</sup>

I agree wholeheartedly that good critical editions by editors with learning and sound judgment are sorely needed, and that the production of such editions is one of the most important ways to advance the field. It should always be remembered, however, that

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<sup>15</sup> ISAACSON 2009: 14.

a critical edition is, properly considered, a hypothesis (about some particular state of a text, not necessarily, as is often assumed, its original form, though that is no doubt the most usual case). This does not mean that it is “not scientific” or “ahistorical;” on the contrary, the forming and the refining of hypotheses is arguably the most important task of science and scholarship, be it in the natural sciences or in the humanities, including history and philology. But a “definitive critical edition,” popular though that phrase seems to be, is almost a contradiction in terms; and the production of even an excellent critical edition, by the most learned and discriminating of scholars, cannot mean that other scholars and students of a text will cease to consider the primary evidence of the manuscripts themselves, to test, critically, the editor’s hypothesis, and to form their own conclusions and hypotheses.

It is, of course, a fundamental task of the editor to provide information concerning the evidence on which that hypothesis is based, or at least to report (in the critical apparatus) the principal documentary evidence that does not directly support it, i.e. variant manuscript readings. But this alone will not be (or should not be) quite sufficient for all. Just as, in other fields, a scholar or scientist will not rest content merely with a colleague’s reporting of the evidence (data or observations) on which a proposed hypothesis rests, but will wish, sooner rather than later, to examine the evidence (or make the relevant observations and perhaps experiments) for himself or herself, so other scholars engaged in studying the same work will wish to examine for themselves the documentary (i.e. manuscript) evidence on which the hypothesis that the critical edition is based.

With regard to the second question on possible ways of or approaches to editing, it may suffice to mention here that there are several approaches to textual criticism, namely, (a) eclecticism (or “eclectic method/approach”), (b) stemmatics (also called stemmology, stemmatology, “Lachmannian method,” or, “genealogical method”), (c) “best-text approach/editing” associated with Joseph Bédier (1864–1938), and (d) “Greg–Bowers or Greg–Bowers–Tanselle method” of copy-text (critical) editing. Although there are several approaches to textual criticism, the two methods that together constitute the basis of textual criticism are said to be recension (*recensio*) and emendation (*emendatio*), and while the latter has been practiced since antiquity, the former has traditionally been regarded as “the great innovation of nineteenth-century

textual criticism,” of Lachmann in particular, although he did not himself invent it. A discussion of the definitions, strengths and weaknesses, and pros and cons of each of these methods or approaches will have to be dispensed with here.

The suggestion by some Indologists, such as Michael Witzel, that a critical edition should be one “with a stemma” has been found objectionable by other Sanskritists, such as Harunaga Isaacson, who states:<sup>16</sup>

Whether or not a stemma (which is itself, after all, only a representation of a hypothesis about the relationship of the manuscripts, and sometimes other sources) can be plausibly constructed does not determine whether an edition can with justice be deemed critical. Furthermore, the so-called “stemmatic method” or “Lachmannian method” is far more problematic (both in theory and in application), and less unanimously agreed on, than is often realized.

Other scholars of Buddhist Studies such as Jeffrey Schoening, have implied that a critical edition is ‘not scientific’ or ‘ahistorical,’ and have vehemently rejected critical editions in favor of diplomatic editions. With regard to this, too, we cannot agree more with Isaacson who states:<sup>17</sup>

Schoening’s surprisingly vehement rejection of critical editions in favour of diplomatic editions reflects a kind of lack of confidence (emendation being regarded with suspicion, although in fact it is often necessary, just as much in reading ancient texts as it is in reading contemporary texts from our own culture, in which everyone routinely emends on the basis of familiarity with language and subject-matter), rather limited familiarity with textual criticism and with the extensive literature on its theory and methods, and a narrow conception of science/scholarship, in which no place seems to be left for hypotheses.

While not denying the usefulness of either stemmata as such or diplomatic editions, neither of the two would render critical editions redundant. Which editorial principle should one then follow? I personally find the fundamental editorial principle or guideline formulated by Ayya Srinivasan (and reported by

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<sup>16</sup> ISAACSON 2009: 14, n. 1.

<sup>17</sup> ISAACSON 2009: 14, n. 2.

Dominic Goodall) very beneficial. That is, the most important point of departure for a critical edition is that an editor is invariably confronted with a text that has been contaminated, intentionally or unintentionally. In either case, according to Srinivasan, “the reading which is regarded as primary is that from which the others might genetically derive,” or, in other words, the editor should attempt “to find a reading which best explains how the other readings may have arisen.”<sup>18</sup>

With this we come to the third question, why one should produce a critical edition of a text. Without intending to elaborate, it may simply be stated that a critical edition of a text would be dispensable if we are not interested in its language and content, and, for example, are solely interested in the physical features of its medium. If, however, we wish to make sense of its language and content and attempt to read it carefully and critically, we will inevitably come to realize that we have no alternative to critically editing it.

## **5. Translation**

During the above-mentioned symposium, it became abundantly clear to me how complex the issues related to theories and practices of translation can be. The phenomenon of translation and the issues related to it seem to be particularly relevant in the field of Buddhist textual scholarship. The dissemination of products of Indian (particularly Buddhist) civilization, from South Asia to the rest of the Asian continent and beyond would have perhaps not occurred, or occurred only to a lesser degree, if Buddhist texts conveying Indian intellectual culture had not been translated into other languages and transmitted across other cultures, such as Tibetan, Chinese, Khotanese, Old Turkish, Mongolian, Sogdian, or Tocharian. Undoubtedly the phenomenon of translation—which often took place in the form of enormous translation projects, financed and regulated in one way or another by the state and its rulers—was instrumental in the transmission of the rich and manifold Buddhist culture, including its intellectual, literary, and textual aspects. Apart from practical reasons, the massive translation projects of Buddhist texts that took place in Central and East Asia were possibly also inspired by the

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<sup>18</sup> GOODALL 2001: 102.

idea that the historical Buddha himself had taught and authorized teaching in the vernacular languages of the people. (This is in contrast to the dissemination of Buddhism in South-East Asia, where the Buddhist canon has been mostly transmitted in the Middle Indic language Pāli, that is, similar to the dissemination of Islam in which the new converts have usually been expected to learn the Koran in its original Arabic.)

Those of us from the field of humanities striving to gain a well-founded and nuanced knowledge of the Asian intellectual cultures of the past and present that are steeped in Buddhist religion and philosophy invariably end up (a) investigating Buddhist texts transmitted in classical Asian ‘source’ languages (i.e. either the original or translations of it), and (b) rendering them into modern (mostly Western) ‘target’ languages. A researcher from the fields of Buddhology, Tibetology, Sinology, and Classical Indology thus also ends up not only being, so to speak, an *Aufklärer* of a past (and to many a foreign) intellectual culture but also a mediator between past and present, and Eastern and Western, cultures. A marked difference between a scientific and non-scientific attempt at understanding the cross-cultural transmission of Buddhist texts and other products of its civilization, however, an academic would like to think, lies in the research tools and techniques, methodological standard or rigor, and ultimately the reliability of knowledge thus gained. A greater part of the task of modern scholars involved in the study of Buddhist intellectual history and culture thus consists in pursuing text-critical analyses of Buddhist texts in their source language(s)—involving either their Indic original or extant traditional translations, or both—and often also preparing modern translations of them into Western languages, such as English, German, and French, or into modern Asian languages, such as Japanese.

Some points may be made here with regard to translation and its relation to editing. First, just like the type, quality, and reliability of an edition of a text, the type, quality, and reliability of translation differs depending on the scope, conventions, intended target, genre, subject matter, number of textual problems, and not least on the competence of the translators. Second, the translating of texts, like the editing of texts, constitutes an integral part of the processes and activities of textual scholarship, and both the critical editing and “critical translating” of a text are inevitable and

indispensable in one's endeavor to understand it and its content. Ideally speaking, therefore, those who are able to produce an excellent translation ought to be able to produce an excellent critical edition as well, and vice versa. Third, a good and reliable translation can best be made from a critically edited text, or a critical edition and a critically annotated translation of a text can best be made in parallel, since often many editorial decisions and judgments come to be revised in the process of trying to understand the content of the text, which must necessarily precede the act of translation. This is the main reason why it is impossible to critically edit a text without actually understanding the textual content, or critically translate without taking the textual evidence into consideration.

### **Ø. Epilogue**

In sum, what I have attempted in this paper is to present a rationale for Buddhist textual scholarship by trying to answer *what* it is, and *why* and *how* one ought to practice it. I have also attempted to briefly discuss certain issues related to critical editing and critical translating in general. Although time has not permitted me to delve deeper into theoretical reflections on the pertinent issues raised here, it is hoped that this preliminary attempt to present a rationale for Buddhist textual scholarship will cause particularly the younger generation of scholars to recognize that for someone profoundly interested in Buddhist philosophy and intellectual history and culture there is no alternative to Buddhist textual scholarship.

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**How Did Tibetans Learn a New  
Text from the Text’s Translators and Comment  
on It? The Case of Zhang Thang sag pa  
(Twelfth Century)\***

Chizuko YOSHIMIZU (Tsukuba)

In the period of the later diffusion (*phyi dar*), a number of Buddhist texts were newly introduced to Tibet from India. Those who played a central role during the first stage of this transmission of texts were Indian *paṇḍitas* and Tibetan *lo tsā bas*. They interpreted the new texts they translated and educated their Tibetan students about these texts. In this way, the Tibetans developed their own scholastic and educational system in their monasteries. This first generation of scholars who contributed to the transmission of Candrakīrti’s (7th c.) Madhyamaka works include Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (1055?–1145?)<sup>1</sup> and his Indian collaborators.<sup>2</sup> A Kashmiri

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\* I am indebted to Prof. Hiroshi Nemoto of Hiroshima University, my collaborator in the editorial work of the *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*, for his valuable suggestions concerning the reading of the text.

<sup>1</sup> The birth year 1055 is taken from Sum pa mkhan po’s (1704–1788) chronological tables in the *dPag bsam ljon bzang*, part III: 9, 2. Van der Kuijp (1985: 4) has cast doubt on this due to its coinciding with the year of Atiśa’s possible reincarnation (i.e., Atiśa died in 1054) and proposes instead *circa* 1070. Before Sum pa mkhan po, ’Jam dbyangs bzhad pa Ngag dbang brtson ’grus (1648–1721) had given 1055 for the date of Pa tshab’s birth in his *bsTan rtsis re mig tu bkod pa* 2a, which was composed in 1716. Lang (1990: 134) has inferred that Pa tshab returned to Tibet by 1101 from Kashmir, for the colophons to several of translations on which Pa tshab worked indicate that they were done during the reign of the Kashmiri king Harṣa (1089–1101), whereas there are no colophon references to the texts translated during the reign of his successor. Since the *rNying ma’i chos ’byung* (512a3f., Tafel 343.1), the *Bu ston chos ’byung*

Madhyamaka master, Jayānanda, who composed a commentary on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (i.e., *Madhyamakāvatāratīkā*, D3870, P5271) in Tangut, also worked with Pa tshab's disciple Khu mDo sde 'bar (11–12th c.) in Central Tibet prior to leaving for Tangut.<sup>3</sup>

Following in their masters' footsteps, the second generation carefully examined Candrakīrti's works as well as their teachers' interpretation and commented on the works themselves, as an attempt to present a more elaborate explanation of Candrakīrti's thought. Most scholars from this second generation learned from Pa tshab, and from among them, gTsang pa Sar spos, rMa bya Byang chub ye shes, Ngar Yon tan grags, and Zhang Thang sag pa Ye shes 'byung gnas were enumerated as his four main students by 'Gos lo tsā ba gZhon nu dpal (1392–1481) in his *Deb ther sngon po* (*cha* 8a2, BA 343). Zhang Thang sag pa Ye shes 'byung gnas *alias* 'Byung gnas ye shes (12th c.) composed a complete commentary on the *Prasannapadā* entitled *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*, which is available in a unique manuscript comprising 99 folios.<sup>4</sup> We know

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(138b3) as well as the *Deb ther sngon po* (*cha* 7b4, BA342) say that he studied in Kashmir for 23 years, he must have left Tibet for Kashmir in 1077/1078. In this regard, van der Kuijp's proposal for Pa tshab's birth date as *ca.* 1070 seems too late, as Vose (2009: 190 n. 20) has indicated. It might be possible to postulate it between 1060 and 1065 instead.

<sup>2</sup> According to the colophons of the current bsTan 'gyur, Pa tshab translated Candrakīrti's *Catuhśatakatīkā* (D3865, P5266) with Sūkṣmajana in Kashmir, *Madhyamakāvatāra* (D3861, P5262) and its *bhāṣya* (D3862, P5263) with Tilakakalaśa in Kashmir and revised them with Kanakavarman in Central Tibet, and *Prasannapadā* (D3860, P5260) with Mahāsumati/Hasumati in Kashmir and revised it with Kanakavarman in Central Tibet (see n. 14 below). Sūkṣmajana is said to have been a (spiritual) son of the brahmin Sajjana and the (spiritual) great-grandson of the brahmin Ratnavajra (D239a6, P273b4, cf. Lang 1990: 133, 140 n. 20). Mahāsumati is also reported to have belonged to the lineage of these Kashmiri *paṇḍitas* descended from Ratnavajra and his disciple Parahita (see *Deb ther sngon po*, *cha* 8a7–8b3, BA 343f.).

<sup>3</sup> Jayānanda and Khu mdo sde 'bar together translated Nāgārjuna's *Vīgrahavyāvartanī* and *Vaidalyaparakarāṇa*, as well as Jayānanda's own writing *Tarkamudgara*. As for the activities of Jayānanda and his relationship with Pa tshab and Pa tshab's students, see van der Kuijp 1993 and Vose 2009: 53f.

<sup>4</sup> The first part of this manuscript from 1a to 26a3 is edited and published in Yoshimizu and Nemoto 2013. For details of the manuscript, the text, dates of Zhang Thang sag pa's lifespan, and his thought, see Yoshimizu 2005, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2013: Introduction.

only a little about the other three students. In addition to the four students, 'Gos lo tsā ba also acknowledges the great contribution of another rMa bya, rMa bya Byang chub brtson 'grus (d. 1185?).<sup>5</sup> This rMa bya learned not only from Pa tshab, but also from Jayānanda and Khu mDo sde 'bar (ibid., 8a4). It is well-known that this rMa bya Byang brtson departed from his teacher Phya pa Chos kyī seng ge (1109–1169) in order to study Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka under Pa tshab.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, g'Tsang nag pa br'Tson 'grus seng ge (d. after 1195)<sup>7</sup> and mTshur ston g'Zhon nu seng ge (ca. 1150–1210) are said to have preferred Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka system to that of the so-called Svātantrika descended from the masters from the East, i.e., Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, which Phya pa followed.<sup>8</sup> Given the history of Tibetan Buddhism, it was high time the Tibetans began to establish the superiority of Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka tradition over that of the Svātantrika. Moreover, it was the beginning of a competition for the best interpretation of Candrakīrti's philosophy.

On reading between the lines of Zhang Thang sag pa's *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*, I have discovered his education, knowledge, ability, and independent and competitive spirit. In the present paper, I would like to focus on the historical, social, and personal influences that resulted in the transmission of the *Prasannapadā* to Zhang from his teachers and in his composition of the *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*. I surmise that he studied the *Prasannapadā* and composed this commentary under the following circumstances:

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<sup>5</sup> 'Gos wrote: "Thanks to these [four], the Madhyamaka teaching spread throughout dBus and g'Tsang. In particular, rMa bya Byang brtson, who was [one of the] 'great lions' of the master Phya pa, heard from Pa tshab both Madhyamaka and Guhyasamāja systems, ..." (ibid., cha 8a3: *de mams la brten nas dbus gtsang du dbu ma'i bshad pa dar | bye brag tu slob dpon phywa pa'i seng chen rma bya byang brtson kyis spa tshab la dbu ma dang 'dus pa gnyis ka gsan te* |). After this account of rMa bya byang brtson, 'Gos describes Zhang Thang sag pa's deeds, although he does not mention the other two students, g'Tsang pa sar spos and Dar yon tan grags. As Paul Williams (1985) has discussed in detail, the views of the two rMa byas, Byang chub brtson 'grus and Byang chub ye shes, were confused by later Tibetans.

<sup>6</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, cha 4a5–4b1 (BA334).

<sup>7</sup> For the year of his death, see Hugon 2004: vii n. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, cha 4a5f. (BA334). Cf. also Hugon 2004: viii.

1. He learned the text mainly from its translator Pa tshab and an Indian *paṇḍita*.
2. He further studied and interpreted the text himself, occasionally emending his teachers' interpretation.
3. He composed the commentary in order to provide a more elaborate interpretation of the *Prasannapadā* than other contemporary rivals who also studied and interpreted the same treatise.

### 1. How did Zhang Thang sag pa learn the *Prasannapadā*?

In his *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*, Zhang cites the opinions of a *lo tsā ba* and a *paṇḍita* several times, which suggests that Zhang learned the text of the *Prasannapadā* from these two masters. It seems safe to identify this *lo tsā ba* as his teacher Pa tshab Nyi ma grags. Consider the following account of a debate held in Kashmir, which Zhang reproduces from the *lo tsā ba*'s words:<sup>9</sup>

The [story goes] as follows: It was not long after the translator arrived in Kashmir. Harṣa(deva) was the king. Because the [king] knew [Sanskrit] grammar well and was also good at logic, many scholars gathered and had minor debates. The way was [as follows]: Ministers and the like became patrons. One dug the ground, put a turtle into the hole, lit fire on it and performed a homa rite. A jar (? *go la*)<sup>10</sup> etc. and drinks were served to the scholars. At that time Somabhadra was also the judge. A rich brahmin became this Somabhadra's patron and learned Buddhist teachings [from him]. Then the four great [scholars] including Hasu arrived. Many minor [debates] occurred. The two, i.e., the [spiritual] son of the brahmin and Hasu, debated with each other, with Somabhadra as a judge. This [judge] declared unbiasedly that Hasu won.

<sup>9</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 24a1ff.: 'di ltar lo tsas kha cher phyin ma thag na har sha de ba yod dang de ni sgra mkhas pa tshad ma yang bzang por yod pa zhiḡ yin pas | pan pi ta mang (24a2) po tshogs shing rtsod pa nyi tshes byed pa'o || byed lugs ni blon po la sogs pas yon bdag byas nas sa rkos te ru sbal (read: rus sbal) gcig dong du bcug nas de'i steng du me sbar nas sbyin bsreg byed | pan di ta mams la go la la sogs pa dang btung pa 'dren no || de'i tshes dpang po yang so ma bha tra'o || bram ze 'byor pa can zhiḡ gis <insertion: so ma bha tra> de'i yon bdag byas su de la chos bslabs | de dus su ha su la sogs pa (24a3) che ba bzhi thon | 'phran (read: phran) mang du byung | bram ze de'i bu dang ha su gnyis so ma 'ba' tra dpang por byas nas brtsod pas des ngor dga' ma byas par ha su rgyal bar smras so ||.

<sup>10</sup> Possibly this refers to *gola* in Sanskrit, that is, a globular water jar or dish for drinks.

Zhang introduces this account in order to illustrate an actual debate that was decided by the words of a judge. He is commenting on Candrakīrti's argument that an inferential proof, the logical reason of which is acknowledged by one party alone (i.e., a non-Mādhyamika opponent), is able to refute this party's thesis, for it is the case in legal disputes that victory or defeat is determined by the words of either a witness or the defendant, independent of what the plaintiff says.<sup>11</sup> Now, it is natural to guess that this *lo tsā ba*, who was present at the debate in Kashmir under the reign of Harṣadeva (1089–1101)<sup>12</sup> and narrated this story to Zhang, was Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, if we are to assume that there were a certain number of Tibetan scholars in Kashmir at that time.<sup>13</sup> Another interesting figure here is the master called *ha su*, who might be Mahāsumati, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's collaborator in Kashmir when he first translated the *Prasannapadā*,<sup>14</sup> although the strange appellation *ha su* as well as the shortened name "Hasumati" for Mahāsumati, which appears in some Tibetan sources, can hardly be explained.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Pr LVP 35, 1ff. (MacDonald 2015: I 188f.): *lokata eva dṛṣṭavāt | kadācid dhi loke 'rthīpratyarthibhyāṃ pramāṇīkṛtasya sāksīṇo vacanena jayo bhavati parājayo vā kadācit svavacanena* (MacDonald reads *svavacanenaiva*; Tib. *rang gi tshig kho nas*) *paravacanena tu na jayo nāpi parājayaḥ* |. Cf. further MacDonald 2015: II 134f.

<sup>12</sup> RT 7. 828–829 (enthronement 1089) and 7. 1717 (death 1101). Cf. also Naudou 1980: 267.

<sup>13</sup> As seen above in n. 1, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags is thought to have resided in Kashmir for 23 years, presumably from 1077 to 1100. rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109?) resided in Kashmir for 17 years from 1076/77 to 1093 (cf. *Deb ther sngon po*, ca 37b4, BA 325, Naudou 1980: 211f., Kramer 2007: 38–42). Other Tibetan scholars who were active in Kashmir are, according to Naudou (1980: 211), Grags 'byor shes rab, 'Phags pa shes rab, gZhon nu mchog, and Tshul khrims 'byung gnas.

<sup>14</sup> According to the colophon of the Tibetan version of the *Prasannapadā* in D200a5ff. and P225b4ff., Pa tshab first translated the *Prasannapadā* together with Kashmiri Paṇḍita Mahāsumati at Ratnaguptavihara in Kashmir and revised it with Kanakavarman at Ra mo che temple in lHa sa by comparing their earlier translation with another manuscript from the eastern borderland (cited in, e.g., Lang 1990:134, Seyfort Ruegg 2000: 45, and Yoshimizu 2005: 132 n. 19).

<sup>15</sup> *Deb ther sngon po*, cha 8b4 (BA 344). In some *gSan yig* literatures, the name "Hasumati" appears in the lineage of the Madhyamaka tradition (e.g., *gSan yigs* of Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa and mKhas grub dGe legs dpal bzang po [see van der Kuijp 1985: appendix]). Cf. also Seyfort Ruegg 2000: 9, n. 10. The

A second story about a debate in Kashmir describes the case where victory or defeat is determined by a scriptural authority that is established for one party alone; also the figure called Jñānaśrī<sup>16</sup> appears in this story:<sup>17</sup>

It comes to be appropriate that a scriptural authority is established on one's own [side] alone. For instance: In Kashmir there was a greatly blessed pool of nectar (\*Amṛtakuṇḍamahādhiṣṭhāna). When the master of gathering (Gaṇapati/Gaṇeśa) sat on the throne of this [place], [some Buddhists] were unhappy since it was the God of non-Buddhists. [They] gave the throne of Gaṇeśa to Śākyamuni instead. Then, Jñānaśrī gathered all the people and asked [them]: “Is there any scriptural authority which tells [us] to give his (i.e., Gaṇeśa's) throne to him (i.e., Śākyamuni)? Please bring [it here].” [But] there was no such scriptural authority. [They] asked [Jñānaśrī]: “Do you have a scriptural authority?” There was [a scriptural authority which] tells that one should cherish tradition and enshrine [a deity]. Hence [those who replaced Gaṇeśa by Śākyamuni] are said to have lost.

Presumably, Zhang Thang sag pa heard these stories directly from Pa tshab.

If the *lo tsā ba* whom Zhang often mentions is identified as Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, it may be possible to further assume that the Indian scholar whom Zhang refers to as *paṇḍita* is Kanakavarman, Pa tshab's collaborator on the revisions of the earlier translation of the *Prasannapadā* in Tibet, although I have no clear evidence to

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colophon of the *dBu ma rtsa ba shes rab kyi ti ka* ascribed to Pa tshab Nyi ma grags indicates that this is the note of Paṇḍita Hasumati's explanation (52b22 [p. 132]: *pan di ta ha su mati'i bshad lugs bris pa*). For this work, cf. Dreyfus and Tsering 2010: 390f.

<sup>16</sup> This name naturally brings to mind Jñānaśrībhadra, the author of the *Pramānaviniścayaṭīkā*, who was active in Kashmir and was invited to Tibet by King rTse lde of Gu ge in the latter half of the eleventh century. See Naudou 1980: 221.

<sup>17</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 24a6f.: *lung rang gcig pu la grub pas 'thad par 'gro ba ni 'di lta bu ste | kha che na bdud rtsi 'khyil ba byin brlabs che ba zhig (24a7) yod | de'i bdan* (read throughout: *gdan*) *du* <insertion: *tshogs bdag*> *glang sna yod pa na de mu stegs pa'i lha yin pas ma dga' ste | dod por glang sna'i bdan shag thub la byas so || de'i tshen mnya' na shris mi yo bsogs nas de'i bdan de la byed pa'i lung gang na yod khyer la shog byas pas lung ma byung ngo || khyed la lung yod dam zer ba na rgyud pa bso* (read: *gso*) *nas gdan bya bar gsungs pa byung pas pham skad do ||*.

confirm this assumption.<sup>18</sup> One certainty is that Zhang Thang sag pa learned about the text that Pa tshab was just reworking or had finished reworking from his teacher Pa tshab and the latter's Indian colleague, for Zhang used the full Tibetan version of the *Prasannapadā*, which corresponds to the current bsTan 'gyur text completed by Pa tshab and Kanakavarman.<sup>19</sup> Zhang supposedly wrote down the remarks that the *lo tsā ba* and the *paṇḍita* made about the text and used them when he composed his own commentary.

## 2. Independent Reading of the Text

Zhang Thang sag pa was, however, an independent scholar. Referring to his teachers' interpretation, he occasionally decided whether it is correct or not. In his commentary on the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā*, Zhang Thang sag pa once notes only the *lo tsā ba*'s opinion (23a4f.)<sup>20</sup> and twice refers to the opinions of both the *lo tsā ba* and the *paṇḍita*, which differ from each other (5b8f., 18a4ff.), without commenting on them.<sup>21</sup> At one time, Zhang Thang sag pa

<sup>18</sup> Pa tshab's other collaborators, the Kashmiri Tilakakalaśa, Muditaśrī, as well as the Kashmiri Madhyamaka master, Jayānanda, are also supposed to have lived in Central Tibet in this period. Tilakakalaśa collaborated with Pa tshab and rNgog blo ldan shes rab, as has been seen in n. 2 above (cf. Naudou 1980: 231f.).

<sup>19</sup> The verses that Zhang Thang sag pa cites from the *Madhyamakāvātāra* (in his *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 3b8, 11a8 and 11b4) also coincide with the current bsTan 'gyur version, which Pa tshab and Kanakavarman revised and edited at the Ra mo che in lHa sa. Kevin Vose (2009: 54) has remarked that Jayānanda did not make use of Pa tshab's new translations of both *Madhyamakāvātāra* and *Prasannapadā*, when translating his own commentary on the former into Tibetan, which he composed in Tangut. Although this fact does not necessarily imply that Jayānanda was not in a position to refer to Pa tshab's translations during his stay in Tibet between 1120 and 1140 (see Vose 2009:54), one may assume that these new translations of Candrakīrti's works were not yet completed before his departure for Tangut, or, if completed, Jayānanda did not bring them to Tangut. Zhang Thang sag pa, on the contrary, made full use of Pa tshab's new translations, presumably because of his close relationship to his teacher Pa tshab. It is unclear whether Zhang Thang sag pa had a contact with Jayānanda.

<sup>20</sup> Brief comments by the *lo tsā ba* are also cited in some marginal notes.

<sup>21</sup> See *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 5b8f.: *smras pa yul 'di lta bu la mon pas ma khyab pa ci'i phyir zhe na | 'thad pa bshad pa mig dang gzugs la brten nas zhes don gyi khyad par dngos su zhal gyis bzhes shing zhes pa smos to || don gyi khyad par ni pan pi ta na re zla grags rang gi lugs la brten nas ces pa de yin* (6a1) | zer || *lo tsa na re don gyi bye brag ste | mig dang*

introduces different interpretations of the *lo tsā ba* and the *paṇḍita*, and agrees with the reading of the *paṇḍita* while rejecting that of the *lo tsā ba*. This instance deals with the questioning of the formula of

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*gzugs la bya ste don gyi bye brag la mnon pa mi 'thad pa'i phyir ro* ||. “Why does such an object under discussion not necessarily have [the meaning of] addition\*? [Candrakīrti] commences an argument by saying: ‘A specific object is actually accepted.’ ‘A specific object’ refers, according to the *paṇḍita*, to that which depends on Candrakīrti’s specific view. According to the *lo tsā ba*, it refers to a specific object, i.e., an eye and a visual matter, because addition\* is inappropriate with regard to a specific object.” \*The word “addition” (*mnon pa*) seems to be used to imply “repetition” (*viṣvā*). The Tibetan word *mnon pa* should be understood as a variant for *snon pa*. The *paṇḍita*’s strange interpretation has supposedly been caused by or linked with the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit *anāṅikṛtārthaviśeṣe* by an honorific verb *zhal gyis bzhes*. Cf. Pr D3a2f., P3a7ff.: *phrad pa'i don ni phrad nas 'byung pa ni rten cing 'brel par 'byung pa'o zhes don gyi khyad par zhal gyis ma bzhes pa'i rten cing 'brel par 'byung pa'i sgra la yang yod pa yin la | don gyi khyad par zhal gyis bzhes pa la yang yod pa yin te | mig dang gzugs la brten nas mig dang gzugs phrad cing mig dang gzugs la ltos nas zhes bshad pa'i phyir ro* ||; Pr LVP 6, 5ff. (MacDonald 2015: I 123, tr. II 26): *prāpyarthas tv anāṅikṛtārthaviśeṣe 'pi pratīyaśabde sambhavati, prāpya sambhavaḥ pratīya samutpāda iti | anāṅikṛtārthaviśeṣe 'pi sambhavati, cakṣuḥ pratīya cakṣuḥ prāpya cakṣuḥ preksyati* (MacDonald reads *apeksyati*) *vyākhyānāt* |. “In contrast [to the interpretation of the word *pratīya* as repetition (*viṣvā*)] the meaning of [the word *pratīya*] as reaching is possible in the case that the word *pratīya* does not have any specific object, for it is explained that origination in dependence is an emergence after reaching. And [the same] is also possible in the case that it has a specific object, for it is explained that ‘depending on an eye’ is ‘reaching an eye’ and ‘relying on an eye.’”

See also *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 18a4ff.: *nye bar sbyar bas gsal par byas pa'i byas pa he du* (read throughout: *tu*) *yin pa de bzhin du zhes pa ni pan ti ta na re nyer sbyar gyis he du sgrub bya la mi 'khrul* (18a5) *bar byas pas nyer sbyar gyis he du gsal bar byas pa'o* || *de'i don ni dam bca'i rjes nyid la he du yod pas he du'i gong du khyab pa ma bstan la | khyab pa ma brjod pa'i he dus sgrub bya la nges pa myi skyed do* || *nyer sbyar gyi gong du khyab pa brjod pas nyer sbyar khyab pa can yin la | des he du sgrub bya la nges par byas zer ro* || *lo tsa na re he du gzhung na dngos su med pa de nyer sbyar* (18a6) *brjod nas go bar byas pas nyer sbyar gyis he du gsal bar byas zer ro* ||. “The [property of] being produced (*kṛtakatva*) [in the inference that sound is impermanent because it is produced], which is explicated by application (*upanaya*), is the logical reason. [The expression] ‘in the same manner’ (*evam*) is, according to the *paṇḍita*, [the manner] that the logical reason is explicated by application, because the application makes it clear that the logical reason does not deviate from [the property] to be proven. According to the *lo tsā ba*, [the expression ‘in the same manner’] is [the manner] that the logical reason is explicated by application, because the logical reason, which does not actually appear in the text [of *Buddhapālita*], is understood through the statement of application.” Cf. Pr LVP 20, 8f. (MacDonald 2015: I 155, tr. II 78): *tasmāt kṛtakatvād anitya iti kṛtakatvam atropanayābhivyakto hetuḥ | evam ihāpi*.

a reverse proposition (*viparyaya*) that Bhāviveka renders from Buddhapālita's *prasaṅga* statement that things do not arise from self (*na svata utpadyante bhāvās*) because their arising would be purposeless (*tadutpādavaiyarthiyāt*) and because there would be a fault of absurdity (*atiprasaṅgāt*) due to infinite regress (12b5 *infra*),<sup>22</sup> as I have discussed in detail in my previous studies (2006: 91ff., 2008: 88 n. 21).<sup>23</sup>

In another case, Zhang refers to the opinion of the *paṇḍita* and criticizes it (16a2 *infra*). This is on the question of how to interpret a locative case in the following passage from the *Prasannapadā*, which I type in bold font:

Pr LVP 16, 11f. (MacDonald 2015: I 147): *yadā caivam svatantrānumānānabhīdhāyitvaṃ mādhyamikasya tadā kuto nādhyātmikāny āyatanāni svata utpannānīti svatantrā pratijñā **yasyām** sām̐khyāḥ pratyavasthāsyante, ...* |.<sup>24</sup>

Pr D6a4f., P6b6f.: *gang gi tshe de ltar dbu ma pas rang gi rgyud kyi rjes su dpag pa mi brjod pa nyid yin pa de'i tshe* | (D inserts: **gang la** grangs can dag gis | |) ... || *zhes bya bar **gang la** grangs can pa dag gis phyir bzlog* (D *zlog*) *par byed par 'gyur ba* (D *'gyur la*) | *nang gi skye mched rnam bdag* (D *dag*) *las skye ba med de zhes bya ba'i rang gi rgyud kyi dam bca' ba lta ga la yod* |.

And when the Mādhyamika does not state an independent inference in this way, how [could there possibly be] an independent thesis [such as Bhāviveka's thesis, viz.,] “the inner

<sup>22</sup> Pr LVP 14, 1–3 (MacDonald 2015: I 140, BP D161b3ff., Prajp D49a5, P58b7f.).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 25a4f., where Zhang Thang sag pa makes the same remark with regard to the origination from another: *pan di ta na re* (25a5) *legs kyi thal ba bzlog lugs 'di yin te gzhan las skye ba med pa bzlog pas bdag gam gnyis ka 'am rgyu med las skye ba'o* | |.

<sup>24</sup> For the possible objections of the Sām̐khyas, which are cited from the *Prajñāpradīpa*, see further Pr LVP 17, 1–18, 1 (MacDonald 2003: 160, 2015: I 148, tr. II 65): *ko 'yaṃ pratijñārthaḥ kiṃ kāryātmakaḥ\* svata uta kāraṇātmaka\* iti | kiṃ cātaḥ kāryātmakas\* cet siddhasādhanam kāraṇātmakas\* ced viruddhārthatā kāraṇātmanā vidyamānasyaiva sarvasyotpattimata utpādād iti* | |. \*According to MacDonald (2003:161–167), the four nominative forms are attested by the manuscripts, and LVP has emended them to the ablative forms in correspondence of the Tibetan version of the Pr, the relevant part of which was presumably adopted from the Tibetan translation of the Prajp (D49a3ff., P58b3ff.).

bases have not arisen from self,” **in regard to which** the Sāṃkhyas could object [as follows].

Zhang discusses the interpretation of the relative pronoun in the feminine singular locative form *yasyām* (Tib. *gang la*). In Sanskrit, it is apparent that this pronoun refers to *svatantrā pratijñā*, as Zhang himself ascertains it.<sup>25</sup> According to the *pañḍita*, however, this can be interpreted in two ways:<sup>26</sup>

As for *gang la* (*yasyām*), the *pañḍita* says as follows: *gang la* [refers to] a single thing (i.e., grammatically it is singular). There are two [possibilities of interpretation]: a single thing that is an object (*yul gyi cig pa*) and a single thing that means [the state of] being present (*yod pa'i don gyi cig pa*). When it is connected with [the word] thesis (*dam bca'*), it is the seventh [i.e., locative] case [in the sense of] object (i.e., *viśayasaptamī*). [Hence] *gang la* is explained as “in regard to the thesis” [the Sāṃkhya could object]. When [the Sāṃkhya] indicates a contradiction that is a fault in a logical reason, it is a single thing that means [the state of] being present [i.e., *satsaptamī* or the locative absolute in the sense of *svatantrāyām pratijñāyām sati*]. [Hence] *gang la* [means], “[if] something would exist” (*gang yod*) [i.e., if an independent thesis would exist], then it is said that the Sāṃkhyas could object [to the logical reason for this thesis].

Here, the *pañḍita* proposes the following:<sup>27</sup> when the Sāṃkhya directly censures a fault in a thesis, the thesis is expressed as a

<sup>25</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 15b7: *gang la ces pa ni khyab byed dam bca'o* || *phyir bzlog ni khyab bya ste* |; cf. also 16a3: *gang ni dam bca'o* ||; and 16a4: *de yan chad kyis khyab byed mi dmyigs pa'i ldog khyab bstan to* ||.

<sup>26</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 16a2f.: *gang la ces pa ni pañḍita ta 'di skad gsung ste* | *gang la cig pa* (Ms. *1pa*) *yin de la gnyis yod de* | *yul gyi cig pa dang yod pa'i don gyi cig pa'o* || *dam bca' la sbyor ba na yul gyi bdun pa ste* | *yul gang la dam bca' gang la ces bshad do* || *he du'i skyon gal ba ston pa na yod pa'i [don gyi] cig pa* (Ms. *1 pa*) *ste* | (16a3) *gang la ces pa ste gang yod dang grangs can pa dag gis phyir bzlog par byed par gyur ces pa bya'o* ||.

<sup>27</sup> The *pañḍita* interprets the locative case *yasyām* twofold, presumably because the Sāṃkhyas could indicate two faults: (1) the fault in the thesis (*pakṣadoṣa*), “the inner bases have not arisen from self,” in which the thesis proves what is already established (*siddhasādhana*); and (2) the fault in the logical reason (*hetuṣa*), “because [the inner bases are already] existing (*vidyamānatvāt*),” where the logical reason has a contradictory meaning (*viruddhārthatā*), as Candrakīrti explicitly states elsewhere (Pr LVP 21, 11f., MacDonald 2015: I 158, tr. II 81): *kutaḥ siddhasādhanapakṣadoṣāsāñkā kuto vā hetor viruddhārthatāsāñketi* |). However, in the subsequent passage to that which is cited in the body of the present paper, Candrakīrti states that the Sāṃkhya would find the fault of *siddhasādhana* or that

single object (*yul*, *viṣaya*) in the locative case; however, when the Sāṃkhya points out a contradictory reason (*viruddhahetu*), it is implied by the locative absolute, since a logical reason must exist if an independent thesis exists.

Zhang Thang sag pa expresses his disagreement with the *paṇḍita* by saying:<sup>28</sup>

It is not so. If interpreted as a single object, it is irrelevant. [In] the saying “in regard to which [the Sāṃkhyas] could object” (*gang la phyir bzlog byed*), *gang* [refers to] “thesis” [and] *phyir bzlog* [means] the indication of a contradiction. If so, it would follow that [the Sāṃkhya] could indicate a contradiction in a thesis, but the contradiction is not in the thesis but in the logical reason. Therefore it must be interpreted [in the sense] that if it would be present [i.e., if an independent thesis would be present], then [the Sāṃkhyas could] object. This means that if a thesis and a logical reason would exist, there could be a contradiction.

Here Zhang Thang sag pa is dismissing the *paṇḍita*'s first interpretation. Zhang understands the verbal expression *phyir bzlog byed* or *pratyavasthāsyante* to be synonymous with *'gal ba brjod pa*. Since only one verb is given in the *Prasannapadā*, in Zhang's view, the Sāṃkhya must thereby aim to completely overturn the Mādhyamika's logical reason. Therefore, insofar as the word *gang la* (*yasyām*) refers to *pratijñā*, this locative case must have one sense, namely, the locative absolute.

From this discussion, one may properly surmise that Zhang had some knowledge of Sanskrit grammar.<sup>29</sup> Elsewhere, he also

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of *viruddhārthatā* in the Mādhyamika's logical reason, “because [the inner bases are already] existing” (*vidyamānatvāt*) (Pr LVP 18, 14, MacDonald 2015: I 148f., tr. II 66: *kuto 'smākaṃ vidyamānatvād iti hetuḥ, yasya siddhasādhanaṃ viruddhārthatā vā syāt, yasya siddhasādhanaṃ yasyāś ca viruddhārthatāyāḥ parihārthaṃ yatnaṃ karisyāmaḥ | tasmāt paroktadoṣāprasaṅgād eva tatparihāra ācāryabuddhapālītena na vamaṇīyaḥ |*).

<sup>28</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 16a3f.: *de lta ma yin te yul cig* (Ms. I) *du byas na ma 'brel te | gang la phyir bzlog byed ces pa ni gang ni dam bca'o | | phyir bzlog gi* (read: *ni*) *'gal ba brjod pa'o | | de lta na dam bca' la 'gal ba brjod ces bya bar 'gro la de 'gal ba ni dam bca' la med kyi he du la yod pa'o | |* (16a4) *de'i phyir gang yod dang phyir bzlog byed ces bya dgos te | | de'i don ni dam bca' dang gtan tshigs yod na 'gal ba'o | |*.

<sup>29</sup> For the etymological explanation of the word *pratītyasamutpāda*, Zhang cites as authority an Indian treatise of Sanskrit grammar called *pa ni*, which seems to be Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, and other treatises called *sgra ska kon ta*, *bka' bca'd*, and *sgra'i bstan bcos* (*dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 4b5–6, 5a1).

examines a translation of the Sanskrit locative form *asmin sati*, which is translated as *'di yod pas* in a passage cited from the *Prajñāpradīpa*:<sup>30</sup>

[The clause] “because it exists” is [in] the seventh (i.e., locative) case. This is the seventh case [in the sense of] cause (i.e., *nimittasaptamī*) and [means] that [another thing Y] arises from it (i.e., X). Therefore it is said [in the seventh case], “if it exists” (*'di yod na, asmin sati*).

The translator(s)<sup>31</sup> render(s) the locative absolute *asmin sati* as *'di yod pas*, not *'di yod na*. Zhang explains that it is because this locative case implies a cause. Although Zhang does not thereby intend to condemn the translation, he seems to explain the reason for the translation as *'di yod pas* for *'di yod na*.

There is, however, one place he emends Pa tshab's translation,<sup>32</sup> where he comments:<sup>33</sup>

[The translation of the Sanskrit *yāvat tāvat as*] “as long as” (*ji srid du de srid du*) is not good, [for] *ji srid* is to indicate time. In this case, [however], it does not indicate time but it indicates number [with

<sup>30</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka 7b3: 'di yod pas ces pa bdun pa yin te | de rgyu bdun pa dang de las skye ba'o || des na 'di yod (Ms. yad) na ces bya'o ||*. Cf. Pr LVP 9, 7f. (MacDonald 2015: I 129, tr. II 36f.): *kiṃ tarhi, asmin satīdaṃ bhavati, asyotpādād* (MacDonald reads *bhavaty asyotpādād*) *idam utpadyata itīdampratyaayatārthaḥ pratīyasamutpādārthaḥ iti* |; Pr D3b7f., P4a7f.: *'o na gang yin zhe na | 'di yod pas 'di 'byung la |* (Prajp DP omits |) *'di skyes pa'i phyir 'di skye ba ste zhes bya ba rkyen 'di dang ldan pa nyid kyi don ni* (Prajp DP inserts |) *rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i don to* (Prajp DP inserts |) ... | = Prajp D46b4, P55a1f.

<sup>31</sup> If Pa tshab cites this passage directly from the Tibetan version of the *Prajñāpradīpa*, it is the translation by Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal mtshan. Cf. MacDonald 2003: 163.

<sup>32</sup> This appears in Pr LVP 27, 1 (MacDonald 2015: I 170, tr. II 98): *satyadvayāvīparītadarśanaparibhāṣṭā* (MacDonald reads *-paribhāṣṭā*) *eva hi tīrthikā yāvad ubhayathāpi niśidhyante tāvad guṇa eva saṃbhāvyata iti* |; Pr D8b7f., P9b6f.: *bden pa gnyis (P gyis gyi) phyin ci ma log par mthong ba las nyams pa'i mu stegs pa dag ji srid du gnyi ga'i sgo nas 'gog pa de srid du yon tan nyid yin par rtogs so ||*. “Namely, non-Buddhists are indeed devoid of the correct view of the two truths. [Therefore] inasmuch as they are refuted in two ways (i.e., they are refuted in regard to both ultimate and conventional levels), it can be to [their] benefit. [In other words, it cannot be to their benefit if they are refuted only ultimately.]”

<sup>33</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka 20b2: ji srid du de srid du ces pa ni ma legs te ji srid ni dus ston par byed pa yin la | da lta ni dus mi ston gyi grangs ston pa'o || des na sgra spyi [read: ji] tsam ces pa'am ji snyed ces pa mdzes so ||*.

regard to the two truths]. Hence it is elegant [to put] only the word *ji* or “as much as” (*ji snyed*).

Here, Zhang proposes the wording *ji de* or *ji snyed du de snyed du* instead of *ji srid du de srid du*.<sup>34</sup> Although this emendation does not seem to be of great importance, it is interesting to see that Zhang Thang sag pa examined his teachers’ translation himself. Moreover, the fact that even the translators occasionally offer different interpretations suggests that both Indian and Tibetan interpreters read the text independently, unhampered by any rigid tradition. This free and independent attitude seems to have flourished in the course of transmitting Candrakīrti’s Madhyamaka.

### 3. Composition in Rivalry with Contemporaries

Zhang Thang sag pa must have composed the *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* in the period when Candrakīrti’s works were beginning to be extensively studied by the students of Pa tshab, Jayānanda, and Khu mDo sde ’bar. Although no other commentaries than this Zhang’s *ti ka* and the *Tshig gsal ba’i dka’ ba bshad pa*, which is attributed to Pa tshab, are available today, this younger generation must have been more eager to prove their knowledge of and competence in the newly introduced Madhyamaka philosophy as well as in Sanskrit. Poetry, too, constituted an important part of their education. Following Indian writers, Zhang inserts his own verses in his work, each of which comprises four lines with seven, nine, or eleven syllables in each line; an exception is the twentieth verse, which has ten lines (19b3). In some verses, Zhang gives utterance to his feelings toward others. From the following initial verse of the *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka*, one can infer a strong sense of rivalry against Zhang Thang sag pa:<sup>35</sup>

Although today fortunate [ones in Tibet<sup>36</sup>] mostly trust inferior [views], thanks to good tradition whatever meaning gained from

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<sup>34</sup> It follows that he would propose the following twofold translation: *ji gnyi ga’i sgo nas ’gog pa de yon tan nyid yin par rtogs so* or *ji snyed du gnyi ga’i sgo nas ’gog pa de snyed du yon tan nyid yin par rtogs so*.

<sup>35</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 1b1: *skal ldan deng sang phal cher dman pa la mos kyang || lugs bzang la brten gzhung las ’dod don snyed gyur pa || da ltar kho bor bas te ’dir yang gzhung ’dis byed || grogs kyis rig par bya phyir ’dir ’di bkod pa bya ||*.

<sup>36</sup> A marginal note adds *bod pa*.

[the] treatise now comes to be my own; then, on the present occasion too, [I will] give [a teaching] by this treatise [i.e., the *Prasannapadā*]. This [commentary] is to be presented here for friends to see.

Interestingly, a similar utterance is given in the colophon, too:<sup>37</sup>

In period of degeneration, people believe inferior [views]. Although a fortunate one who makes an effort [to understand] the great treatise is rare like an udumbara tree, I wrote [this commentary] so that some may see.

In these two verses, Zhang Thang sag pa is revealing that he has composed this work for some friends, regretting that inferior views gained general trust at that time. His words would suggest that, in his view, his contemporary Tibetans did not correctly understand the *Prasannapadā*. As I have discussed (2013: xiii–xiv), one may well speculate that Zhang Thang sag pa assigned these “inferior views” to his own classmates including rMa bya Byang chub brtson ’grus, who is also credited with a commentary on the *Prasannapadā* (i.e., *Tshig gsal stong thun gyi ti ka*),<sup>38</sup> and gTsang nag pa, who, according to the *Deb ther sngon po*, composed many Madhyamaka works.<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, in his seventeenth verse, Zhang Thang sag pa strongly appeals for the correctness of his interpretation with regard to Buddhapālita’s *prasaṅga* statement:<sup>40</sup>

I am sure that Buddhapālita’s intention is exactly that which I have explained [here]. The way in which Bhāviveka reverses the *prasaṅga* is also exactly as I have explained.

Underlying this utterance is the fact that Zhang gave a very unique and challenging interpretation of Buddhapālita’s *prasaṅga* reasoning, which I have extensively discussed previously.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 98b9 (the fifth verse in the colophon):  *snyigs dus mi mams dman la mos || skal ldan gzhung chen la gzhol ba || u du’ bar ba ltar ’gyur mod || la la’i blia byar bkod pa bgyis || ||*.

<sup>38</sup> *Deb ther sngon po, cha* 4a6f. (BA 343).

<sup>39</sup> *Deb ther sngon po, cha* 4a5f. (BA 334).

<sup>40</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka* 13a4f. (cited and translated in Yoshimizu 2008: 96; Yoshimizu and Nemoto 2013: xiv):  *bdag gis bshad pa ’di nyid ni || skyangs kyi dgongs pa yin par nges || legs ldan thal ba bzlog lugs kyang || bdag gis bshad pa ji bzhin no ||*.

<sup>41</sup> See Yoshimizu 2006: 90–94 and especially 2008.

Accepting the *pandita*'s opinion that Bhāviveka transforms Buddhapālita's statement<sup>42</sup> into a reverse proposition (*viparyaya*) by way of simple reversal and not by contraposition, Zhang Thang sag pa construes the implicit logic in Buddhapālita's statement as a *prasaṅga* containing the proof of its pervasion (*vyāpti*).<sup>43</sup> In my previous study (2008: 95), I have conjectured that he offered this innovative interpretation for the purpose of establishing *prasaṅga* reasoning invulnerable to any criticism from contemporary logicians and the Madhyamaka advocates of independent inference. This conjecture may prove correct, but I would also like to indicate Zhang's more direct intent to demonstrate an interpretation that is original—different from that given by other interpreters of the same text—but, nevertheless, correct. If, in the future, we will be able to see other interpretations of Buddhapālita's statement, his intention will become clearer.

Let us now look at another verse of Zhang's, where he also alludes to his advanced proficiency in the Sanskrit language and etymology:<sup>44</sup>

I have analyzed and explained the etymology of the word [*pratītyasamutpāda*], which is known to be difficult. By this merit, like sun and moon, one may obtain the source of wisdom (*ye shes 'byung gnas*).

“Source of wisdom” (*ye shes 'byung gnas*) is Zhang's own name, so that it sounds like he is the “source of wisdom” for his great ability to explain the difficult etymology of the Sanskrit term

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<sup>42</sup> See above in the body of the present paper and n. 22.

<sup>43</sup> In short, Zhang Thang sag pa reconstructs Buddhapālita's statement as follows (for detail, see Yoshimizu 2008: 89–94): [main *prasaṅga*] (*khyab pa, vyāpti*): Whatever exists does not arise from self. (*sgrub bya, sādhyā* or *thal ba, prasaṅga*.) It follows that things do not arise from self. (*hetu*.) Because they exist. [Establishment of pervasion] (*khyab pa, vyāpti*): Whatever arises from self arises purposelessly and never stops arising. (*bsgrub bya, sādhyā* or *thal ba, prasaṅga*.) It follows that things would arise purposelessly and would never stop arising. (*hetu*.) Because things arise from self. Since that which arises purposelessly and never stops does not exist in reality, it leads to the conclusion (i.e., the pervasion of the main *prasaṅga*) that whatever exists does not arise from self.

<sup>44</sup> *dBu ma tshig gsal gyi ti ka 7b7* (the fourteenth verse): *sgra bshad dka' par grags pa can* | | *bdag gis mam par phye nas bshad* | | *bsod nams zla nyi lta bu des* | | *ye shes 'byung gnas thob par shog* | |.

*pratītyasamutpāda*. Indeed, he closely analyzes this important term by himself, referring to some texts of Pāṇinian grammar.<sup>45</sup>

Such a competitive spirit was presumably the spirit of the time when Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's students were vying for the honor of best interpreter of Candrakīrti.<sup>46</sup> Undoubtedly, this led to the later triumph of Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka in Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism. However, compared with later Tibetan Buddhist tradition, where the interpretation of the founder of a school is highly esteemed, early Tibetan masters seem to have singly aimed to be "original" thinkers.

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<sup>45</sup> See above n. 29.

<sup>46</sup> See also gTsang nag pa's verse quoted in *Deb ther sngon po, cha* 4a5f. (BA 334), which shows his strong self-confidence (cited and translated in Yoshimizu and Nemoto 2013: xv): *dpal ldan zla ba grags pa'i gzhuṅ lugs la || sbyang pa'i stobs kyis gzhuṅ don nges gyur pa || nga 'dra'i sṅye bo slan chad 'byung ma 'gyur ||*. "A man like me, who has ascertained the meaning of the treatise [of Candrakīrti] by virtue of a mastery of Śrī-Candrakīrti's teachings, will never appear henceforth."

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