

PACIFIC WORLD

Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies

Third Series Number 9
Fall 2007

SPECIAL ISSUE:

Essays Celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of the
Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies at the University of Calgary

GUEST EDITORS:

Leslie Kawamura and Sarah Haynes



FRONT COVER

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Prolegomenon

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FROM MAY 13 TO 17, 2004, A SYMPOSIUM to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Chair of Buddhist Studies in the Department of Religious Studies was held at the University of Calgary. Through the kind assistance of Dr. Akira Yuyama, the first Visiting Numata Scholar to the University of Calgary, an original donation of \$300,000 Canadian was received in 1987 from Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK Tokyo, Japan). To this was added a donation of \$35,000 Canadian from the Honpa Buddhist Churches of Alberta. Both donations were matched two to one by the Government of Alberta to establish the Numata Chair of Buddhist Studies Endowment of \$1,000,000 Canadian at the University of Calgary.

During the intervening years, the Numata Endowment sponsored international scholars who resided at the University of Calgary for one term (a four-month period) or for longer periods of up to one year to teach, to conduct research, and to give public lectures. The public lectures have been published (except for a few at the beginning, from the early stages of the Endowment, when there were insufficient funds for publication) and can be obtained free of charge from the Department of Religious Studies.

The symposium brought together scholars who were recipients of the Numata fellowships at the University of Calgary. Other scholars

from the University of Lethbridge, where Numata Visiting Scholars lectured in its classes or gave public lectures, also participated in the symposium. Invitations for the symposium were sent to BDK Canada, BDK US, BDK Japan, and to scholars who were Numata Chair Coordinators in North America. As part of the symposium, the group took a trip to the Canadian Rockies.

It is with great pleasure that the papers presented at the symposium are made available to the scholarly world and to the adherents of Buddhism. These papers are published as a tribute in memory of Mr. Yehan Numata and the members of the Honpa Buddhist Churches of Alberta who have kindly contributed towards the establishment of the Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies Endowment. Mr. Numata's vision to propagate the *buddhadharma* throughout the entire world by means of both popular and academic projects has enabled the Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Calgary to continue the Buddhist Studies Program. We look forward to a brighter future for Buddhist studies because of that vision.

I would like to thank Dr. Sarah Haynes, Assistant Professor at Western Illinois University, for her untiring assistance in organizing the papers found in this volume. Thanks must be extended to Dr. Richard Payne, who kindly offered the *Pacific World* as the venue through which these papers could appear in print, and to Natalie Quli, Assistant Editor of the *Pacific World* who provided a majority of the editorial work required to bring this volume to completion. It goes without saying that this volume could not have been possible without the contribution by the scholars who took the time and effort to attend and present papers at the Symposium. Thank you all.

May these papers bring happiness and joy to all.

The Unanswered Questions: Why Were They Unanswered? A Re-examination of the Textual Data

Yakupitiyage Karunadasa

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EVER SINCE THE ACADEMIC study of Buddhism began in the early nineteenth century, one question that has intrigued scholars is why the Buddha deemed it unnecessary to answer certain questions. Although the Buddha gave his own reasons for leaving these questions unanswered, modern scholars wanted to know what other reasons lay behind the Buddha's "silence." So we find attempts being made to understand this situation in the light of such ideological stances as skepticism, agnosticism, pragmatism, logical positivism, and so on. Among the many writings on the subject of undetermined questions, the latest and most exhaustive is the one made by K. N. Jayatilleke in his monumental work, *The Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*.¹ After critically examining all previous interpretations on the subject and basing himself on almost all textual data, Jayatilleke sums up his study in such a manner that it seems to exclude the need for any further contribution to our knowledge of the subject. However, it is my contention that Jayatilleke's own interpretation as well other previous interpretations are basically wrong.

If the earlier interpretations, as I maintain, are basically wrong, this situation is due to the following reasons: first, the failure to notice that the Pāli suttas present not one but two separate lists of unanswered questions, one containing ten and the other containing four; second, the failure to take into consideration the commentarial gloss of the term *tathāgata* as it occurs in the list of unanswered questions; third, the failure to give due consideration to the Buddhist teachings relating to the psychological genesis of ideologies, which has resulted in a number of totally unacceptable interpretations as to why the Buddha left some questions unanswered; and fourth, the attempt to understand

the undetermined questions in the light of such ideological stances as skepticism, agnosticism, pragmatism, and logical positivism, when it is clearly stated in the teachings of the Buddha that all speculative views and ideological stances are due to the insertion of the egocentric perspective into the domain of perceptual experience.

The purpose of this essay is not only to draw attention to where earlier studies went wrong, but also to make a detailed study of the undetermined questions. Therefore, in order to make this study as comprehensive as possible, most of the textual data already dealt with by other scholars is again reviewed in relation to my own interpretations.

The category of undetermined questions, as is well known, is closely connected with the Buddhist teaching relating to four kinds of questions: a question that ought to be explained categorically (*ekamsa-vyākaraṇīya*), a question that ought to be explained analytically (*vibhajja-vyākaraṇīya*), a question that ought to be explained with a counter-question (*paṭipucchā-vyākaraṇīya*), and a question that ought to be set aside (*thapaṇīya*).

In the Pāli suttas themselves we do not find specific examples of these categories of questions and must, therefore, turn to the Pāli commentaries and Sanskrit Buddhist literature to find a variety of examples given for this purpose. Two examples given for the first kind of question are: “Is matter impermanent?” (*rūpaṃ aniccan ti*)² and “Does everyone die?” (*sarve marisyanti*).³ From the Buddhist point of view, these are two questions that ought to be answered categorically in the affirmative. However, a question to which a negative categorical answer may be given can also be subsumed under this heading.

A good example for the second kind of question can in fact be selected from the Pāli suttas themselves. When the Buddha was asked the question, “Is it the monk or the layman who can succeed in attaining what is right, just, and good?” the Buddha says that in this particular context (*ettha*), it is necessary to give not a categorical but an analytical answer. For what determines the answer is not whether the person is a monk or a layman but the practice of good conduct (*sammā paṭipanna*).⁴

An example for the third kind of question that is given by the Mahāsaṃghikas can be traced to the suttas themselves. When the Buddha was asked the question, “Is consciousness a person’s soul or is consciousness one thing and the soul another?” he replies with the question, “What do you take to be the soul?”⁵ The counter-question is

necessary because the notion of soul is interpreted in different ways among various religions.

As to the fourth kind of question, the one that should be set aside (Pāli *ṭhapanīya*; Skt. *sthāpanīya*), both Pāli and Sanskrit sources agree in listing the unanswered (*avyākata*) questions as examples of this category. In illustrating this kind of question, the Sanskrit Buddhist sources give the following example: is the living being (*sattva*), in the sense of a separate self-entity, identical with or different from the aggregates (*skandha*) into which the empiric individuality is analyzed? This question, it is said, is to be set aside because there is no objective entity corresponding to the word “living being” (*sattva*) and therefore to predicate something of something that really does not exist is meaningless. It is as meaningless as asking the question, “Is the complexion of the barren woman’s son dark or white?” for it is logically impossible for a barren woman to have a son.⁶

Now these four kinds of questions are introduced in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* as “there are these four kinds of explanations of questions” (*cat-tar’ imāni . . . pañhāveyyākāraṇāni*).⁷ The question that arises here is how the questions to which no answers are given could also be considered “explanations.” In point of fact, the *Abhidharmakośa* raises this very same question, and its answer is this: the very explanation that it is not a question to be explained is itself an explanation. An alternative explanation is also given: when it is said that a particular question is not determined, it is not a non-explanation but an explanation. For a question that should be set aside is in fact answered by setting it aside. How can one say that this is not an answer?⁸ This seems to be the reason why in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* this kind of question is introduced as *sthāpanīya-vyākaraṇa*, that is, a question to be explained by setting it aside.⁹

These four kinds of questions, as Padmanabh Jaini has pointed out, have their counterpart in the three kinds of questions mentioned in the *Yogabhāṣya*: there are questions that are answerable categorically, that is, those that admit to a clear and definitive answer (*ekānta-vacanīya*); there are questions that are answerable by analysis (*vibhajya-vacanīya*); and there are questions that are not answerable (*avacanīya*).¹⁰ Apparently the third kind of question mentioned here seems to correspond to what Buddhism calls *ṭhapanīya*. However, this is not so. *Ṭhapanīya* means that which should be set aside. To say that the

question is to be set aside means to leave the question undetermined. Whether the question is answerable or not, we do not know.

On the other hand, *avacanīya* refers to a question that is not answerable, and Buddhism does not have a category of unanswerable questions. What Buddhism has is the category of unanswered questions. However, the three kinds of questions mentioned in the *Yogabhāṣya* show that its author was influenced by the Buddhist philosophical teachings and their methodology.

For our present purpose what we need to remember here is that it is to the fourth kind of question, a question that should be set aside, that the undetermined questions belong. We would like to begin our study of this subject by first clarifying the number of unanswered questions mentioned in the Pāli suttas. As we have noted above, there are altogether fourteen such questions, made into two lists, the longer list containing ten and the shorter list four. Let us take the longer list first. This list occurs in a number of early Buddhist discourses, the *locus classicus* being the *Cūḷa-Mālunkya-putta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. The ten questions listed are as follows:

1. Is the world eternal (*sassato loko ti*)?
2. Is the world not eternal (*asassato loko ti*)?
3. Is the world finite (*antavā loko ti*)?
4. Is the world infinite (*anantavā loko ti*)?
5. Is the soul the same as the body (*taṃ jīvaṃ taṃ sarīraṃ ti*)?
6. Is the soul different from the body (*aññaṃ jīvaṃ aññaṃ sarīraṃ ti*)?
7. Does the *tathāgata* exist after death (*hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
8. Does the *tathāgata* not exist after death (*na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
9. Does the *tathāgata* both exist and non-exist after death (*hoti ca na hoti ca tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
10. Does the *tathāgata* neither exist nor non-exist after death (*neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?

I have left the term *tathāgata*, as it occurs in the last four questions, untranslated. The reason for this is that it lends itself to two different interpretations. Most modern scholars take the word to mean the

liberated saint, the one who has realized *nibbāna*. This, of course, is the meaning it assumes in a large number of contexts. However, according to the Pāli commentaries the term *tathāgata* in this particular context means the living being in the sense of an independent self-entity (*satto tathāgato ti adhippeto*) or the soul (*tathāgato ti attā*).¹¹ Most of the modern scholars who wrote on this subject do not seem to have noticed this commentarial gloss of the term. On the other hand, Jayatilleke refers to the commentarial interpretation but refuses to accept it. He says that “the contemporary evidence of the Nikayas themselves shows beyond doubt that the word ‘tathāgata’ was used to denote the ‘perfect person’ or the saint as understood in each religion.”¹²

Thus according to Jayatilleke, the term *tathāgata* means “the perfect person” or “the saint” as understood not only in Buddhism but also in other contemporary religions as well. In support of his interpretation Jayatilleke cites a passage from the *Samyutta-nikāya*. According to this passage, during the time of the Buddha other religious teachers such as Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta used to “declare about the state of survival of their best and highest disciples, who had attained to the highest attainment after they were dead and gone” (*yo pissa sāvako uttamapuriso paramapuriso paramappattipatto tam pi sāvakam abbhatītaṃ kālaṅkatam upapattisu vyākaroti*).¹³ The three Pāli words used here to describe such a perfect person are *uttamapuriso* (noblest person), *paramapuriso* (highest person), and *paramappattipatto* (the one who has attained the highest attainment). What is important to remember here is that the word *tathāgata* does not occur among the words quoted above. And in order to show that the three words quoted above are “used as a synonym” of *tathāgata* Jayatilleke refers to another passage in the same *Nikāya*. According to this passage, a number of followers belonging to other religious sects one day approached Anurādha, a disciple of the Buddha, and asked him how the Buddha explained the post-mortem condition of the liberated saint. The exact words used by them to refer to the perfect saint are *tathāgato uttamapuriso paramapuriso paramappattipatto*.¹⁴ As Jayatilleke has said, in this quotation the three terms *uttamapuriso*, *paramapuriso*, and *paramappattipatto* are used as three descriptive adjectives of the term *tathāgata*. And on this basis Jayatilleke concludes that the term *tathāgata* was used to denote the perfect saint as understood by other religions as well.

We cannot agree with this conclusion because of the following reasons: It will be noticed that in the first passage, which refers to the

perfect saint as understood by other religions, the word *tathāgata* is conspicuously missing. However, in the second passage, which refers to the perfect saint as understood in Buddhism, the term *tathāgata* occurs in addition to the other three terms, namely *uttamapuriso*, *paramapuriso*, and *paramappattipatto*. This situation is perfectly understandable, for the term *tathāgata* is often used in Buddhism to denote the perfect saint, the one who has realized *nibbāna*. And it is in conformity to this tradition that, as mentioned in the second passage quoted above, the followers of other religions too used the same term, when they questioned Anurādha about the post-mortem condition of the liberated saint as understood in Buddhism.

The second passage that we have cited above could go against what we seek to establish here, namely that the term *tathāgata* as it occurs in the list of undetermined questions means not the liberated saint as understood in Buddhism but the living being in the sense of a separate self-entity. However, as we shall see below, this passage deals not with the list of ten, but with the list of four undetermined questions, to which we have already referred.

Thus on the basis of the two passages cited by Jayatilleke it is not possible to conclude that the term *tathāgata* occurring in the list of ten undetermined questions means the perfect saint as understood by all religions during the time of the Buddha. What is more, in none of the Pāli suttas is there any evidence to suggest such a usage of the term on the part of other religions of the day. Then the other possibility that we need to consider here is whether or not the term *tathāgata* in this particular context means the perfect saint, as understood in Buddhism, the one who has realized *nibbāna*. It is in this sense that most modern scholars interpret the term. However, as we have mentioned above, according to the Pāli commentaries it means not the perfect saint as understood in Buddhism either, but the living being (*satta*) as a self-entity or as soul (*attā*).

There is enough evidence to show that the commentarial interpretation is correct. What we need to note here at the very outset is that the list of ten questions to which Buddhism refers was there before the rise of Buddhism. As mentioned in the Pāli suttas, these ten questions had been the subject of much controversy among the many religious and philosophical circles at the time of the rise of Buddhism. According to the *Udāna*, for instance, the ten theses contained in the ten unexplained questions were vigorously debated by many and various

heretical teachers, recluses, brahmins, and *paribbājakas*. Each of these controversial propositions is said to have been held by a school of recluses and brahmins who were at loggerheads with each other in maintaining the truth of their own propositions.¹⁵ The Pāli commentators as well as modern scholars have attempted to identify the various religious and philosophical schools that subscribed to each of these theses. Such an attempt could give the impression that these ten theses were made into a schedule after a survey of the philosophical positions held by different schools of thought. However, the actual situation seems to be otherwise. That is to say, the ten questions were earlier than the answers in the sense that these ten questions constituted a questionnaire on some perennial metaphysical problems to which each and every religious and philosophical system was expected to provide its answers.

It will be noticed that the first four questions in the list concern the nature of the universe that we inhabit. They relate to the problem of whether the universe is finite or infinite in terms of time (*sassato*, *asassato*) and space (*antavā*, *anantavā*). The next two deal with the question of whether the soul and the physical body are identical or different. What they purport to ask is whether we should accept the identity principle, which sees a unity between them, or the duality principle, which sees a difference between them. Then the last four questions, as the Pāli commentaries observe, relate to the post-mortem status of the living being or the soul. What they purport to ask is whether the living being, understood as a self-existent entity, exists after death, does not exist, both exists and does not exist, or neither exists nor non-exists. Considering the nature of the six previous questions, the last four, so to say, logically follow from them. For the post-mortem status of the empiric individuality is much more relevant and important than the post-mortem status of the liberated saint. What is more, the idea of the perfect saint was not recognized by the schools of materialism, and, therefore, what happened to the saint after death was not a question that concerned the materialists. In contrast, the question relating to the post-mortem status of the empiric individuality was a question to which all schools, whether they were religious, materialistic, or skeptical, had to respond. This should explain why, as the Pāli suttas tell us, they became the subject of many controversies among the many religious and philosophical systems, and that they generated a bewildering mass of arguments and counter-arguments. This should also explain

why the ten questions were put to the Buddha as well by the followers of other religions and sometimes by the Buddha's own disciples.

What we have observed so far should support the commentarial gloss on the term *tathāgata* as it occurs in the list of ten unexplained questions. As we shall see, this conclusion gets further confirmed from what we will be observing on the shorter list containing four unexplained questions. The four questions of the shorter list are as follows:

1. Does the *tathāgata* exist after death (*hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
2. Does the *tathāgata* not exist after death (*na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
3. Does the *tathāgata* both exist and non-exist after death (*hoti ca na hoti ca tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?
4. Does the *tathāgata* neither exist nor non-exist after death (*neva hoti na na hoti tathāgato param maraṇā ti*)?¹⁶

It will be readily noticed that the four questions in this shorter list are identical in wording with the last four questions in the longer list. This is perhaps the main reason that prevented modern scholars from noticing that there are two lists of unanswered questions mentioned in the Pāli suttas. As we shall see in detail the term *tathāgata* as it occurs in the shorter list means not the living being or soul, but the liberated saint as understood in Buddhism. We propose to adduce the following reasons to justify this claim.

In the first place, the Pāli suttas never make a confusion of these two lists. They are always presented as two different lists: in the longer list the term *tathāgata* always means, as the Pāli commentaries say, the living being or the empiric individuality understood as a separate self-entity; in the shorter list the term in question always means the one who has realized the final goal of *nibbāna*. However, as the Pāli commentaries observe, even in the shorter list the term *tathāgata* occurs in the sense of a living being as a separate self-entity. This is because those who raise the four questions regarding the post-mortem status of the *tathāgata* do so with the wrong notion that there is a separate self-entity corresponding to the term *tathāgata*.¹⁷ However, this is no reason why we cannot maintain the distinction between the two lists. For this distinction between the two lists can also be clearly seen in how Buddhism responds to the two sets of questions in the two lists.

The clearest evidence that goes to prove the recognition of two lists of unanswered questions is the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. For here we find both lists occurring separately. As recorded here, Vacchagotta, the wanderer, visits the Buddha and in the course of the ensuing conversation raises the ten questions of the longer list in order to know the Buddha's response to them. Then the Buddha gives his own reasons as to why he leaves these questions unanswered. The fact that Vacchagotta did not raise further questions shows that he was satisfied with the answers given by the Buddha. Thereafter Vacchagotta raises another four questions. These relate to the post-mortem status of "the monk whose mind is free" (*vimuttacitta bhikkhu*):¹⁸ whether he exists after death, or does not exist, or both exists and non-exists, or neither exists nor non-exists. The words used here, "the monk whose mind is free," obviously mean the *tathāgata* in the sense of the liberated saint. If the term *tathāgata* in the longer list means the liberated saint, then surely Vacchagotta would not raise the latter four questions. For it does certainly amount to a repetition. And what is more, as we shall see later in detail, the Buddha's response to these four questions is quite different from his response to the ten questions raised by Vacchagotta earlier.

Equally important in this connection is the *Avyākata-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*. Here too we see the two lists separately mentioned. In this *saṃyutta* we find fourteen suttas dealing with the unanswered questions. Among them, ten deal with the questions in the shorter list, and only two with the questions in the longer list. It is clear therefore that the main purpose of the *Avyākata-saṃyutta* is to discuss the Buddhist response to the questions not of the longer list but of the shorter list. This is understandable, for from the Buddhist perspective the questions in the shorter list, which pertain to the post-mortem status of the liberated saint, are more important than those in the longer list. When the shorter list occurs in the *Avyākata-saṃyutta*, the term *tathāgata* is often preceded by the three words: the noblest person (*uttamapuriso*), the highest person (*paramapuriso*), and the one who has attained the highest goal (*paramappattipatto*).¹⁹ The use of these three descriptive terms shows that here the term *tathāgata* means none other than the liberated saint. It may be noted here that these three descriptive terms are never used in respect to the term *tathāgata* when it occurs in the longer list. It may also be noted here that sometimes the shorter list is presented without the above-mentioned three descriptive terms.

However, this does not create any problems for our understanding the intended meaning of the term *tathāgata*, because the meaning of the term is clearly suggested by the Buddhist response to the four questions concerned.

It must be clearly emphasized here that the Buddha's response to the questions in the longer list is completely different from the response to the questions in the shorter list. As we shall see in detail, none of the many reasons given as to why the Buddha left the questions in the longer list unanswered are mentioned in the response to the questions in the shorter list. This is another important factor that enables us to distinguish between the two lists. It may also be noted here that that the Buddhist response to the four questions in the shorter list is, in a way, clearly more positive, although they are left unanswered. On the other hand, the Buddhist response to the questions in the longer list is clearly more negative and often dismissive. The reason for this situation is clear: the questions in the longer list, as we have mentioned, were the contents of a pre-Buddhist questionnaire on some metaphysical problems to which each school of thought was expected to provide answers. They represent a religio-philosophical atmosphere that Buddhism has transcended and, therefore, from the Buddhist perspective they have no legitimacy. However, the four questions in the shorter list are very much legitimate in that they naturally arise from the Buddhist teachings relating to the perfect saint, the one who has realized the final goal.

We may now examine why Buddhism deems it unnecessary to answer the questions contained in the two lists. In this connection there are three things that we should take into consideration. The first is obvious but often ignored: the fourteen questions in the two lists are never presented in the Buddhist texts as unanswerable (*avyākaraṇīya*, *vyākaraṇīya*) questions. On the contrary, they are questions that have been left unanswered (*avyākātā*). To call them unanswerable is, from the Buddhist perspective, to miss the point. It amounts to saying that they are perfectly legitimate questions, but that any answer to them transcends the limits of knowledge. The second is that if these questions have been declared unanswered or undetermined, this does not mean that they have been rejected as false. To reject them as false is certainly to answer them and not to leave them unanswered. The correct position is brought into focus by the use of the words "undetermined" (*avyākātā*), set aside (*ṭhapita*), and rejected (*paṭikkhitta*).²⁰ In this

connection the commentary to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* says that “unanswered” means that which has not been answered categorically, analytically, or by raising a counter-question.²¹

The third factor that we need to remember here is that if these questions have been declared undetermined, the ten theses involved in them should not be understood as “indeterminate” in the sense of being neither true nor false, in other words, as neutral. This in fact is the meaning of the term *avyākatā* when it is used to denote what is neutral in moral contexts, that is, referring to those acts that are karmically indeterminate—neither *kusala* nor *akusala*.²² The term *avyākatā* is thus used in two different contexts. In a moral sense, it means karmically neutral or indeterminate. When the term is used in respect to the ten (unanswered) questions, it does not mean “indeterminate,” but rather “undetermined,” that is, as to whether they are true, false, or neither true nor false. Another danger to which Buddhist texts draw our attention is the possibility of interpreting the ten theses in question as indeterminate in a moral sense, because of the use of the term *avyākatā*. In this connection, the *Abhidharmadīpa*, a work belonging to the Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma*, raises the question: “As for the undetermined questions mentioned in the sutras, are we to understand them in an ethical sense?” The question is raised only to answer it in the negative. It is said that the term *avyākṛta*, as used here, should be understood only “in the sense of being set aside” (*sthāpanīyatvāt*), and not in an ethical sense to mean morally indeterminate.²³

Some may think that this is too obvious a thing to be mentioned. That this is not so is shown by a controversy recorded in the *Kathāvatthu* of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*.²⁴ It concerns the position taken up by a non-Theravāda school, that speculative views (*diṭṭhigata*) are ethically neutral. The argument is based on the observation that since the ten questions are undetermined, the theses involved in them should not be described either as right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) or as wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), and therefore they are neutral from an ethical point of view. The counter-argument of the Theravādins is that the ten theses in question are a species of speculative views (*diṭṭhigata*), that their acceptance leads to unwholesome consequences, and that therefore they cannot be qualified as ethically neutral. The view rejected by the Theravādins is based on the wrong assumption that what is left undetermined as true or false is necessarily indeterminate, that is, neither true nor false. What we need to remember here is this: when a question

is left “undetermined,” this means not only that it is not determined as true or false, but also that it is not determined as either true nor false—because we cannot predicate anything on what is undetermined.

Another thing that we must remember here is that it is incorrect to say that the Buddha was silent on these questions. To say so implies that these questions belong to the realm of mysticism and that therefore the Buddha adopted the attitude of a mystic in relation to them. The fact of the matter is that the Buddha very much responded to them. Although he did not give a categorical answer to any of the ten questions, he categorically stated the reasons for his not determining them as true or false. In passing, it may be noted here that the Buddha never resorted to silence as a way of communicating his teachings. Silence is just the opposite of communicating the doctrine, as clearly indicated by the words, “Either engage in dhamma-talk or observe the noble silence” (*dhammī vā kathā ariyo vā tuṇhībhāvo*).²⁵

If we are to understand the full significance of the reasons given by the Buddha as to why the ten questions are left unanswered, we must constantly remember the Buddha’s own statement as to what his doctrine is and what it is not. The reference is to the well-known statement where the Buddha says that as a religious teacher he teaches only two things, namely suffering and its cessation.²⁶ The same idea is conveyed in another equally well-known statement, namely, just as the great ocean has but one taste, the taste of salt, even so this doctrine and discipline has but one taste, the taste of deliverance.²⁷ The doctrine of dependent origination, which the Buddha wants us to understand as his central doctrine, is in fact an explanation, in terms of causality, of the origination and cessation of suffering. Again it is precisely these two themes that we find presented in the four noble truths as four interconnected propositions. Hence all Buddhist teachings, whether related to the nature of actuality or to the nature of knowledge, theory, and practice of the moral life, are all related to the problem of suffering and its cessation. It is in relation to them that all Buddhist doctrines assume their significance.

If the Buddha says that he is concerned only with suffering and its cessation, this could also be understood in terms of the causes of suffering. Since suffering (first noble truth) is due to man’s self-centered desire (second noble truth), it can also be said that Buddhism is concerned only with the problem of our being conditioned by our self-centered desires and the need to eliminate it. Thus, in the final analysis

concern with suffering means concern with human imperfection and the need to become perfect. These, then, are the two parameters within which all Buddhist teachings assume their significance. To go beyond them is to go beyond the legitimate bounds of the dhamma.

It is against this background that we need to understand why Buddhism has set aside certain questions as undetermined. Nothing illustrates this situation better than the parable of the poisoned arrow (*sallūpama*). When the monk Mālun̄kyaputta wanted to know from the Buddha the answers to these ten questions, the Buddha tells him that these questions are “undetermined, set aside, and rejected” by the Blessed One. The answers to these questions are not relevant to understanding the fact of suffering and its elimination. It is as irrelevant as the need to know the name of the person who shot the arrow in order to remove it.²⁸

Thus if the Buddha set aside answers to these ten questions, this position is in full consonance with his well-known pronouncement that his teaching has only the objective of explaining suffering and its elimination. What matters here is not if the questions are solvable, but whether or not they have any relevance to our understanding of our existentialist problem and the way out of it.

Then in the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, we find the Buddha telling Vaccha that he does not uphold any of these views, and declares that the opposite view is false. When Vaccha asks for the reasons for this attitude, the Buddha says that they are “a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a vacillation of views, a fetter of views. It is beset by suffering, by vexation, by despair, and by fever, and it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. Seeing this danger, I do not take up any of these speculative views.”²⁹

Why the Buddha did not resolve the undetermined questions is a subject that has been discussed in the *Milindapañha* too.³⁰ Here King Milinda tells Venerable Nāgasena Thera that the Buddha’s refusal to reply to the questions put forth by Mālun̄kyaputta is not consonant with the statement made by the Buddha that in respect of the truths the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back: “This problem, Nāgasena, will be one of two ends, on one of which it must rest, for he must have refrained from answering either out of ignorance, or out of wish to conceal something. If the first statement be true, it must have been out of ignorance.

But if he knew, and still did not reply, then the first statement must be false.”³¹ Venerable Nāgasena reminds the king that there are four ways of responding to a problem and that the fourth way is to leave the problem undetermined. “And why ought such a question to be put aside? Because there is no reason or object for answering it. . . . For the Blessed Buddhas lift not up their voice without a reason and without an object.”³² This reply conforms to the view expressed in the Pāli suttas that a solution to these questions is not conducive to the realization of any of the objectives set forth in Buddhism.

We have referred above to the main reasons given in the Pāli suttas as to why the ten questions are left unanswered. As mentioned above they are in perfect harmony with the parameters within which Buddhism operates as a religion, namely, suffering and the need to eliminate it. To understand suffering and its causes, its cessation and the path leading to it, it is absolutely not necessary to know the answers to these questions, just as much as it is not necessary to know the name of the person who shot the arrow in order to remove it. Therefore any attempt on our part to inquire into any other reasons why the questions were left unanswered is, strictly speaking, not legitimate—doing so we are going beyond the parameters within which Buddhist teachings assume their significance.

However, it is well known that many Buddhist scholars have speculated as to the other reasons why the questions were left unanswered. One of the earliest among them is Jacobi. He says that the Buddhist attitude to these questions was influenced by the attitude of the skeptic.³³ This view is not different from what Keith has to say on this matter: “It is quite legitimate to hold that the Buddha was a genuine agnostic, that he had studied the various systems of ideas prevalent in his day without deriving any greater satisfaction from them than any of us today do from the study of modern systems, and that he had no reasoned or other conviction on this matter.”³⁴ He notes, “This leads clearly to the conclusion that agnosticism in these matters is not based on any reasoned conviction of the limits of knowledge; it rests on the two-fold ground that the Buddha has not himself a clear conclusion on the truth of these issues, but is convinced that disputation on them will not lead to the frame of mind which is essential for the attainment of Nirvāṇa.”³⁵ Thus according to both Jacobi and Keith if the Buddha did not answer the (unanswered) questions it was because he did not know the answers to them.

Another possibility to which some scholars have hinted is based on pragmatism. According to this view the Buddha “knew the answers [to these questions] but they were irrelevant for gaining spiritual knowledge or salvation.”³⁶ As Jayatilleke observes, the parable of the poisoned arrow and the parable of the *Siṃsapā* leaves appear to support this conclusion. “The parable of the arrow seems to imply indirectly that questions regarding who shot the arrow, etc. can in principle be answered though they are irrelevant for the purpose of a cure. The parable of the *Simsapa* leaves states that what the Buddha knew but did not preach was comparable to the leaves on the trees of the *Simsapa* forest, while what he taught was as little as the leaves on his hand.”³⁷ However, as Jayatilleke rightly observes, “one cannot read too much into the parable of the arrow; and the parable of the *Simsapa* leaves does not necessarily imply that the ten questions were meaningful.”³⁸

Another explanation offered by scholars is based on rational agnosticism: if the questions are not answered they are beyond the grasp of the intellect; they transcend the limits of knowledge. This solution was first suggested by Beckh, but it came to be articulated further by Murti. In this connection Murti says,

The similarity of the *avyākṛta* to the celebrated antinomies of Kant . . . cannot fail to strike us. . . . The formulation of the problems in the thesis-antithesis form is itself evidence of the awareness of the conflict in Reason. That the conflict is not on the empirical level and so not capable of being settled by appeal to facts is realized by [the] Buddha when he declares them insoluble. Reason involves itself in deep and interminable conflict when it tries to go beyond phenomena to seek their ultimate ground.³⁹

The solution offered by Jayatilleke partly coincides with that offered by Murti. He says that “Murti’s rational agnostic solution remains a possibility with regard to the problem of the origin, duration, and extent of the universe,” and that the other six questions appear to have been discarded on the grounds that they were (logically) meaningless.⁴⁰ Thus, according to this explanation, while the first four questions—whether the world is eternal or non-eternal, finite or infinite—are not answered because they go beyond the limits of knowledge, the last six are left undetermined because they are logically meaningless.

Thus we have here four different answers by modern scholars as to why the Buddha left certain questions unanswered. According to the first, the Buddha did not know the answers to them (skepticism, naïve

agnosticism). According to the second, the Buddha knew the answers to them but left them unanswered because they were not relevant to Buddhism as a religion (pragmatism). According to the third, the questions go beyond the limits of knowledge (rational agnosticism). According to the fourth answer, only the first four questions go beyond limits of knowledge (rational agnosticism) whereas the other six are logically meaningless (logical positivism).

According to my own interpretation, which I present in the following pages, the first three explanations are totally unacceptable. As to the fourth, the one proposed by Jayatilleke, where I cannot agree with him is when he says that only the last six questions are logically meaningless. For we have reasons to believe that not only the last six but all the ten are meaningless, because they are all based on a wrong approach to the nature of reality. In the context of Buddhist teachings none of the ten questions arise as valid questions. When we say “meaningless” this must be understood entirely from the Buddhist perspective, not from the perspective of any other religion or philosophy, modern or ancient, Eastern or Western.

In maintaining my thesis that the questions do not arise in the context of Buddhist teachings, I intend to base it on another kind of textual evidence relating to the unanswered questions. This refers to the Buddhist teachings on what may be called the psychology of ideologies, that is, the Buddhist analysis of the psychological mainsprings of all views and ideological stances. In unfolding their implications we can discover another set of reasons as to why the ten questions were left unanswered.

Thus in the *Avyākata-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* we find another set of reasons for not answering the unanswered questions. As recorded here, Vacchagotta the wanderer asks Venerable Moggallāna why, when the other religious teachers provide specific answers to these questions, the Buddha has left them unanswered. The reply given is that unlike other religious teachers, the Buddha does not consider the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind as “this is mine,” “this am I,” and “this is my self.”⁴¹ This, in other words, means that the Buddha is free from what is called *sakkāya-dīṭṭhi*, the personality view. We find this same idea repeated in a different way in yet another answer given by Venerable Moggallāna to Vacchagotta the wanderer. The reply is that unlike other religious teachers the Buddha does not consider material form as self, or self as having material form,

or material form in self, or self in material form. This statement, with appropriate changes, is repeated in respect of the other four aggregates as well. What we find here is another way of referring to what may be rendered into English as the “personality view.”⁴²

What is the “personality view,” and why is it cited here as the reason for raising and answering the unanswered questions? Another expression for this view is *attavāda*, the belief in a self, and according to the twelve-factored formula of dependent origination it is one of the four attachments (*attavāda-upādāna*) conditioned by craving (*taṇhā-paccayā upādānam*). The emergence of the personality-view and its impact on our perceptual experience is a subject closely associated with the Buddhist teaching relating to sense-perception. This is a subject on which we have two illuminating disquisitions: one by Venerable Ñāṇananda in his *Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*,⁴³ and the other by Venerable Bodhi in his introduction to the translation of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.⁴⁴

An instance of cognition, according to early Buddhism, consists of a series of mental phenomena, beginning from sensory contact and culminating in a complex stage called *papañca*, a stage representing conceptual proliferation. Among the many stages of the process it is at the stage of feeling that arises immediately after sensory contact that “the latent illusion of the ego awakens and thereafter the duality between the ego and non-ego is maintained until it is fully crystallized and justified” at the conceptual level of *papañca*. Thus the dependently arising components of the perceptual experience present themselves to the ordinary worldling in a different form: as a duality between a separate subject on the one hand and the perceptual experience on the other. This gives rise to the false notion that “a subject distinct from the cognitive act itself is the persisting experiencer of each fleeting occasion of cognition.”⁴⁵ Once the ego-consciousness has emerged, it cannot exist in a vacuum. It must have some content for itself, some kind of “form and shape in the domain of concrete fact.” This the worldling achieves by identifying what Venerable Bodhi calls “the spectral ego with some component of the worldling’s psychophysical existence,” that is, the five components into which the empiric individuality is analyzed.⁴⁶ This identification manifests itself in three different ways: “this is mine” (*etaṃ mama*), “this I am” (*eso’ ham asmi*), and “this is my self” (*eso me attā*). The first is due to craving (*taṇhā*), manifesting in the notions of my and mine; for it is the function of craving to appropriate

things as one's own property. The second is due to conceit (*māna*), which is a self-measurement in relation to what is not-I, a basis for all judgments of comparison. And the third is due to wrong view (*diṭṭhi*), "a dogmatic adherence to the concept of an ego as a theoretical formulation." It is through this threefold identification that "the uninstructed worldling" (*assutavā puthujjano*) establishes his or her identity as a separate selfhood or individualized existence.⁴⁷

Thus what is called the personality view is one of the three ways in which the ego-consciousness manifests itself. It is the affirmation of the presence of an abiding self in the five aggregates of the empiric individuality. The personality view, it hardly needs mentioning, is not the result of any deliberate reflection. It arises at the pre-reflective level due to the latent tendencies (*anusaya*) leading to "I-making," "mine-making," and conceit (*ahaṃkāra-mamaṃkāra-mānānusaya*), and is due "to the fundamental need to establish and maintain, within the empirical personality, some permanent basis of selfhood or individualized existence."⁴⁸ Although it arises at a pre-reflective level, it could lead later to many speculative views concerning the nature of the self and the world. Hence the Buddha says: "Now, householder, as to those diverse views that arise in the world . . . and as to these sixty-two views set forth in the Brahmajāla[-sutta], it is owing to the personality view that they arise and if the personality view exists not, they do not exist."⁴⁹

Thus, from the Buddhist perspective, all views, including those involved in the ten unanswered questions, are due to the personality view. The personality view, as noted above, is one of the three ways in which the ego-consciousness manifests itself; therefore, as long as this view persists as our ideational framework there is the ingression of the egocentric perspective into our perceptual experience. And it is the ingression of the egocentric perspective into the sphere of the perceptual experience that results in what Buddhism calls *maññanā*, or "distortional thinking," the thinking that distorts the nature of actuality. This consists of our attributing properties to the objects of cognition that do not belong to them, and also "in the constructive activity of the subjective imagination." It is to this situation that the first discourse of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*, draws our attention. The first part of this discourse shows how the uninstructed worldling (*assutavā puthujjano*) responds to some twenty-four kinds of objects. The objects are listed in such a way as to represent all that comes within the range

of experience. They range from the four primary elements of matter to such abstract categories as diversity and unity, the idea of totality and *nibbāna* as the supreme goal. And in explaining the cognitive pattern of the uninstructed worldling in relation to these objects, the sutta uses two verbs, *saṃjānāti* (perceives) and *maññati* (conceives). The first, as the commentary explains, refers to some kind of perverted perception (*saññā-vipallāsa*). The reason for this kind of response to the object is unwise attention (*ayoniso manasikāra*) to it, which, in turn, is due to the impact of the latent defilements, namely lust, aversion, and delusion, which come to the surface of higher levels of awareness. The second refers to distortional thinking (*maññanā*) due to the insertion of the egocentric perspective into the objects of cognition.⁵⁰

Thus as long as what is referred to as the personality view persists, so long will our pronouncements on the nature of reality be conditioned by the egocentric perspective. It is to this situation that the Venerable Moggallāna draws Saccaka's attention when he says that if the Buddha does not answer the ten undetermined questions, it is because the Buddha is free from the personality view. What this clearly implies is that once the ego-notion is eliminated, the very validity of raising such questions gets eliminated. In other words, in the context of the Buddhist teaching relating to the nature of reality, they become meaningless questions.

Another aspect relating to the undetermined questions that we need to examine here is why they are described as *pacceka-saccas*, literally, "individual truths." This description seems to make the undetermined questions, so to say, somewhat determined. The notion of *pacceka-sacca* appears in Buddhist texts in reference to the various theories and speculative views put forward by controversialist debaters. They are said to dogmatically cling to their own theories (*pacceka-saccesu puthū nivittā*), asserting them to be absolutely true. The term *pacceka-sacca* is also used to denote the undetermined theses, because, as we have seen, those who advocated them rejected all other views as totally wrong, thus generating a host of arguments and counterarguments among the various religious and philosophical circles.⁵¹

Jayatileke, who has produced a critical study of the subject, says that the term *pacceka-sacca* could be translated as "partial truths" because the theories in question seem to contain an element of truth. As he says, this is strongly suggested by the parable of the blind men and the elephant. "A number of men born blind are assembled by the king

who instructs that they be made to touch an elephant. They touch various parts of the elephant such as the forehead, ears, tusks, etc. They are then asked to describe the elephant and each reports mistaking the part for the whole that the elephant was like that portion of the elephant which was felt by them.” The blind men make ten conflicting accounts corresponding to the ten parts of the elephant they touched, and these are compared to the ten undetermined theses put forward by the various recluses and brahmins. Thus, as Jayatilleke says, “these theses mistakenly describe the part for the whole and in so far as they constitute descriptions of their partial experience they have an element of truth but are deluded in ascribing to the whole of reality what is true only of the part or in other words what is partially true.”⁵²

However, according to Jayatilleke the more probable explanation is that the term *pacceka-sacca* was used in a sarcastic sense to refer to the individual (alleged) truths of the heretical sects.⁵³ This observation is based on the fact that in that section of the *Sutta-nipāta* where the term *pacceka-sacca* occurs, it is claimed “truth indeed is one” (*ekam hi saccam*) and not two (*dutiya*) or many (*nānā*). In point of fact, in this connection the *Mahāniddeśa* says that when others proclaim many truths although truth is one, these many truths are the ten undetermined theses. Thus neither the *Sutta-nipāta* nor its canonical commentary allow us to interpret what are called *pacceka-saccas* as partial truths or truths in a relative sense. They are private truths, what each person regards as true although they are not true. What we maintain here gets confirmed by the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* where the ideal monk is described as one who has abandoned *pacceka-saccas* (*panunna-pacceka-sacca*).⁵⁴

The commentarial explanation of *pacceka-sacca*, too, does not justify them either as partial truths or as individual truths. The analogy of the elephant and the blind men, as the commentary says, illustrates how what is called *sakkāya*, i.e., the group of the five aggregates of grasping (*pañca upādānakkhandhā*), becomes a basis for many kinds of misinterpretations. Just as each blind man touches one part of the elephant and mistakenly believes that to be the shape of the elephant, even so each party mistakenly takes one of the five aggregates, such as material form or feelings, as the self and attributes to it such characteristics as eternity or non-eternity.⁵⁵

In this connection what we need to remember here is that according to Buddhism all assertions as to the absolute reality of the self as well as all denials as to the absolute non-reality of the self are traceable

to the five aggregates of grasping; they are all based on a misinterpretation of their true nature. Thus the commentarial explanation, it may be noted, conforms to the canonical statement that all theories relating to the self, in whichever way the notion of the self is conceived, have to be based on one or more of the five aggregates of grasping, and that all speculative views pertaining to the nature of the self and the world are traceable to the “descent” of the egocentric perspective into the field of perceptual experience. It is to this situation that Buddhism traces the origin of the ten undetermined theses.

THE LIST OF FOUR UNDETERMINED QUESTIONS

Now we are in a better position to examine the shorter list containing the four unexamined questions. These four questions, as noted earlier, refer to the post-mortem status of a *tathāgata* where the term means the liberated saint and not the soul or the self-entity as when it occurs in the longer list. What happens to the liberated saint after death is a question to which other religious teachers, too, had to provide answers, because each religious system had its own notion of the perfect saint, described as *uttamapuriso*, *paramapuriso*, and *paramappattipatto*. Thus we find it recorded in the *Kutūhalasālā-sutta* of the *Samyutta-nikāya* such religious teachers as Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, Saṅjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, and Pakudha Kaccāyana predicting that such and such person who had attained the highest goal was born in such and such a place.⁵⁶

One of the most important sources for our understanding the Buddhist response to this question is the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. As recorded here, Vaccha, the wandering ascetic, visits the Buddha and raises one by one the ten questions in the longer list. On being told why the Buddha does not explain them, he then raises the four questions relating to the post-mortem status of the liberated saint. The term used here is not *tathāgata* but “the monk whose mind is liberated” (*vimuttacitta-bhikkhu*), but it means the same as *tathāgata* in the sense of the liberated saint. The four questions relate to whether he is born after death, or is not born, or is both born and non-born, or is neither born nor non-born. Here “is born” is the same in intent as “exists.”

The Buddha’s response to the four alternative possibilities proposed by Vacchagotta is neither one of acceptance nor one of rejection,

but that none of the alternative possibilities “fits the case” (*na upeti*). The commentarial gloss of the term is “not proper,” or “does not apply” (*na yujjati*).⁵⁷ On hearing the Buddha’s reply Vaccha confesses that he has fallen into bewilderment and confusion, and that the measure of confidence he had gained through previous conversation with Master Gotama has now disappeared. Then the Buddha tells Vaccha:

It is enough to cause you bewilderment, Vaccha, enough to cause you confusion. For this Dhamma, Vaccha, is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. It is hard for you to understand it when you hold another view, accept another teaching, approve of another teaching, pursue a different training, and follow a different teacher.⁵⁸

Thus, as the latter part of this statement shows, one reason why Vaccha could not grasp the full significance of the Buddha’s reply was his being conditioned by a set of views and viewpoints totally at variance with the Buddha’s dhamma. Hence the Buddha wanted to clarify the whole situation with the analogy of a fire getting extinguished with the exhaustion of its fuel:

“What do you think, Vaccha? Suppose a fire was burning before you. Would you know: ‘This fire is burning before me?’”

“I would, Master Gotama.”

“If someone were to ask you, Vaccha, ‘What does this fire burning before you burn in dependence on?’—being asked thus what would you answer?”

“Being asked thus, Master Gotama, I would answer: ‘This fire burning before me burns on dependence on grass and sticks.’”

“If that fire before you were to be extinguished, would you know: ‘this fire before me has been extinguished?’”

“I would, Master Gotama.”

“If someone were to ask you, Vaccha: ‘When that fire before you was extinguished to which direction did it go: the east, the west, the north, or the south’—being asked thus what would you answer?”

“That does not apply, Master Gotama. The fire burned in dependence on its fuel of grass and sticks. When that is used up, if it does not get any more fuel, being without fuel it is reckoned as extinguished.”

“So too, Vaccha, the Tathāgata has abandoned that material form by which one describing the Tathāgata might describe him; he has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm-stump, done away with so that it is no longer subject to future arising. The Tathāgata is liberated from

reckoning in terms of material form, Vaccha, he is profound, immeasurable, hard to fathom like the ocean. The term 'reappears' does not apply, the term 'does not reappear' does not apply, the term 'both reappears and does not reappear' does not apply, the term neither 'reappears nor non-reappears' does not apply."⁵⁹

The above statement that none of the four alternatives fits the case has given rise to a widespread belief that the post-mortem status of a *tathāgata* is some kind of mystical absorption with an absolute that transcends the four alternative possibilities proposed by Vaccha. In other words, the liberated saint enters, after death, into a transcendental realm that transcends all descriptions in terms of existence, non-existence, both existence and non-existence, and neither existence nor non-existence. It has also been suggested that if the four questions were considered meaningless, this meaninglessness is partly due to the inadequacy of the concepts contained in them to refer to this state.

If the four questions are set aside it is not because the concepts contained in them are inadequate to refer to this state. The correct position is that the questions do not arise. What is focused on here is not the inadequacy of the concepts contained in the four questions, but their illegitimacy. It is just as the four questions as to where the fire went. Here too what is focused on is not their inadequacy but their illegitimacy in explaining a fire that gets extinguished with the exhaustion of its fuel. A fire can burn only so long as there is fuel. Once the fuel is gone the fire gets extinguished. Being extinguished does not mean that the fire gets released from its fuel and goes out to one of the four quarters. In the same manner it is not the case that an entity called *tathāgata* gets released from the five aggregates and finds its way to some other kind of existence. To try to locate a *tathāgata* in a post-mortem position is like trying to locate an extinguished fire. In both cases the questions are equally meaningless and equally unwarranted.

In point of fact, when it is said that the four questions on the post-mortem status of a *tathāgata* do not arise (*na upeti*), it explains more the present position of a *tathāgata* than his or her post-mortem status. The present position of a *tathāgata* is such that it does not admit any of the four questions relating to his or her after-death condition. For, although a *tathāgata* is not without the five aggregates, he or she does not identify him- or herself with any of them. Therefore he or she cannot be identified in terms of material form, feelings, perceptions, men-

tal formations, and consciousness. This is what makes a *tathāgata*, the liberated saint, incomprehensible in this very life itself.

The view held by some—namely, that if the Buddha did not confirm any of the four alternatives proposed by Vacchagotta, this should mean that the post-mortem status of a *tathāgata* is such that it cannot be described in terms of any of them—is, in fact, contradicted by direct textual evidence. Of particular importance in this connection is the *Anurādha-sutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*.⁶⁰ It begins with an encounter between Anurādha, a Buddhist monk, and a group of followers belonging to other religious sects. They tell Anurādha that the post-mortem existence of a *tathāgata*, “a superman, one of the best of men, a winner of the highest winning,” is proclaimed with reference to one of the four alternative positions described above.⁶¹ Then Anurādha tells them that the post-mortem position of a *tathāgata* is such that it can be described, not with reference to any of the four alternatives, nor with reference to a position besides them, but with a position that transcends them. Anurādha reported to the Buddha what transpired between him and the heretics and wanted to know whether what he said represented the correct position. The Buddha first reminded him of the nature of the five aggregates as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, and then asked Anurādha:

“Now what say you, Anuradha? Do you regard a Tathāgata’s material form as the Tathāgata?”

“Surely not, lord.”

“Do you regard him as (his) feeling, (his) perception, (his) activities or apart from them? As (his) consciousness or as apart from it?”

“Surely not, lord.”

“Now how say you, Anuradha? Do you regard him as having no material form, no feeling, no perception, no activities, no consciousness?”

“Surely not, lord.”

“Then, Anuradha, since in just this life a Tathāgata is not met with in truth, in reality, is it proper for you to pronounce this of him: ‘Friends, he who is a Tathāgata, a superman one of the best of beings, a winner of the highest gain, is proclaimed in other than these four ways: The Tathāgata exists after death, he does not exist, he both exists and does not exist, he neither exists nor non-exists.’”

“Surely not, lord.”

“Well said! Well said, Anuradha! Both formerly and now also, Anuradha, it is just suffering and the ceasing of suffering that I proclaim.”⁶²

Thus what the Buddha told Anurādha should show that it is equally inadmissible to describe the after-death status of a *tathāgata* in terms of a position besides the four propositions. Whether the fourfold predication “exhausts the universe of discourse,” and therefore whether a fifth position is not logically possible, is not a question that has any relevance here. What is relevant here is not the manner of the predication, but the object of the predication, that is, a *tathāgata* in the sense of a liberated saint. The Buddhist argument rests not on the inadequacy of the alternative predications, but on their illegitimacy, so the addition of any other method of predication, whether it is logically possible or not, makes no difference. In point of fact, when the Buddha rejects the alternative position proposed by Anurādha it is not on the grounds that a fifth position is logically impossible. Rather it is on the grounds that the appellation *tathāgata* can neither be identified with any of the five aggregates, nor can it be distinguished from them, and that in this very life itself a *tathāgata* is not comprehensible with or without reference to the five aggregates.

It will be noted that in summing up the correct position to Anurādha, the Buddha says that both formerly and now “it is just suffering and the cessation of suffering” that he proclaims. This statement could be considered as the final answer to the question why any predication on the post-mortem status of the liberated saint is not legitimate. From the Buddhist perspective, if anything arises it is suffering, and if anything ceases it is also suffering.⁶³ And it is just suffering and its cessation that the Buddha proclaims. Therefore what is extinguished when *nibbāna* is won is only suffering. It is not the annihilation of an independently existing self-entity. For Buddhism, individual existence is only a mass of suffering (*dukkhakhandha*). There is no individual self-entity. It is *sassatavādā* and *ucchedavādā* that recognize such a self-entity. While *sassatavādā* proclaims the eternal existence of the self-entity, *ucchedavādā* proclaims its complete annihilation at death. Buddhism does not recognize such an independently existing self-entity either to be annihilated or to be perpetuated into eternity. Therefore what is brought to an end when *nibbāna* is won is not a self-entity but the false notion of such an entity, i.e., the ego-illusion and all that it entails and implies. It is in this context that we should understand the following statement of the Buddha: “Some ascetics and brahmins accuse me wrongly, baselessly, falsely and groundlessly, saying that the recluse Gotama is a nihilist and preaches the annihilation, destruction, and

non-existence of an existent being. That is what I am not and do not affirm. Both previously and now I preach suffering and cessation of suffering.”⁶⁴

NOTES

1. K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1963).
2. V. Trenckner, ed., *The Milindapañho: Being Dialogues between King Milinda and the Buddhist Sage Nagasena* (London: Pali Text Society, 1962), 145.
3. De La Vallee Poussin, trans., *L'Abhidharmakosha de Vasubandhu*, 6 vols. (repr., Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1971), 5:44.
4. V. Trenckner, ed., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 3 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1888–1925), 2:197.
5. T. W. Rhys Davids and others, eds., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 3 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1890–1911), 1:185.
6. Prahlad Pradhan, ed., *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu* (Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967), 202.
7. R. Morris and E. Hardy, eds., *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, 5 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1885–1900), 2:121.
8. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 281.
9. I. P. Minaev, *Mahavyutpatti*, vol. 30 (Sankpeterburg: Viblothica Buddhica, 1911).
10. Padmanabha Jaini, ed., *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhashaprabhavarṭti* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959), 121.
11. Buddhaghosa, *Manorathī-pūraṇī (Aṅguttara-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā)*, 5 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1924–1956), 2:308, 2:309.
12. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 244.
13. L. Feer, ed., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 5 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1884–1898), 4:398.
14. Ibid., 4:380.
15. P. Steinthal, ed., *Udāna* (London: Pali Text Society, 1885), 69.
16. See, for example, the *Avyākata-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 5:374–403.
17. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 3:206.
18. *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1:487.
19. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 3:89.
20. *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1:426.
21. Buddhaghosa, *Manorathī-pūraṇī*, 2:121.
22. See for example, Edward Müller, ed., *The Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (London: Pali

- Text Society, 1885), 45ff.
23. Jaini, *Abhidharmadīpa*, 248.
24. A. C. Taylor, ed., *Kathāvatthu* (London: Pali Text Society), 251ff.
25. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, 4:359.
26. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 4:398.
27. H. Oldenberg, *Vinaya Piṭaka*, 5 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1879–1883), 2:239.
28. *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1:429.
29. Bhikkhu Bodhi and Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, trans., *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 591.
30. *Milindapañho*, 124.
31. T. W. Rhys Davids, trans., *The Questions King Milinda*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1890–1894), 1:204–206.
32. Ibid.
33. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 472–473.
34. Arthur Berriedale Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon* (repr., New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1996), 63.
35. Ibid., 45.
36. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 472–473.
37. Ibid., 474.
38. Ibid.
39. T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of the Mādhyamika System* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955), 36ff.
40. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*.
41. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 4:398.
42. Ibid., 4:402.
43. Ven. Bhikkhu Ñāṇānanda, *Concept and Reality* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1971).
44. Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Discourse on the Root of Existence: The Mūlapariyāyasutta and Its Commentaries* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993).
45. Ibid., 7.
46. Ibid., 8.

47. This account is based on the two works by Ven. Ñāṇānanda and Ven. Bodhi.
48. Bhikkhu Bodhi, trans., *The Discourse on the All-Embracing Net of Views: The Brahmajāla Sutta and Its Commentaries* (repr., Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1992), 6–7.
49. Based on the two works referred to in notes 43 and 44.
50. Ibid.
51. [Ed.: K. R. Norman, trans. *The Group of Discourses*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 2001), 161.]
52. See Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 355.
53. Ibid., 289, 354–356.
54. Rhys Davids and Carpenter, *Dīgha Nikāya*, 2:269–270.
55. [Ed.: Buddhaghosa, *Manorathī-pūraṇī (Aṅguttara-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā)*.]
56. *Samyutta Nikāya*, 4:398.
57. *Majjhima Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā*.
58. Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli, *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, 593.
59. This argument is similarly applied to the other four aggregates as well. See *ibid.*
60. *Samyutta Nikāya*, 4:398.
61. F. L. Woodward, Caroline A. F. Rhys Davids, and E. M. Hare, trans., *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Samyutta Nikāya)* (London: Pali Text Society, 1927), 269.
62. [Ed.: I. B. Horner, trans., *The Book of Middle Length Sayings*, 3 vols. (Bristol: Pali Text Society, 1954–1959).]
63. *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1:135.
64. I. B. Horner, *Book of Middle Length Sayings*, 1:140.

The Role of *Prātimokṣa* Expansion in the Rise of Indian Buddhist Sectarianism

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IN CURRENT BUDDHOLOGY, there are two primary but opposing hypotheses to explain the beginnings of Indian Buddhist sectarianism. The first, advocated by Andre Bareau, presumes the schism that separated the Mahāsāṃghikas and Sthaviras to have resulted from disciplinary laxity on the part of the future Mahāsāṃghikas, coupled with concerns over five theses predicated by the monk Mahādeva. The second hypothesis, more recently promulgated by Janice Nattier and myself, suggests that the initial schism resulted not from disciplinary laxity but solely from unwarranted expansion of the root *vinaya* text by the future Sthaviras.

One of the major features of the second thesis revolves around the degree to which it can be demonstrated that the Sthaviras may have expanded the root *vinaya* text. A comparison of two very early *vinayas*, the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin's (in Sanskrit) and the Theravādin's (in Pāli), amply shows that the two texts bear remarkable coincidence in all but one category: the *śaikṣa-dharmas* (simple faults or misdeeds, the least serious category of precepts). In that category, the Mahāsāṃghika text posits sixty-seven items, while the Theravāda text posits seventy-five. To date, no scholars have addressed this circumstance with specificity. Consequently, this paper examines the *śaikṣa-dharmas* of the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* of each *nikāya*, isolating the divergent rules and relating them to the significant, major concerns expressed at the second council of Vaiśālī, an arguably historical event that predated the actual sectarian split in early Indian Buddhism by no more than a few decades. The paper argues that the divergent rules in the two *nikāyas* demonstrate an attempt on the part of the future Sthaviras to circumvent a potential *saṃghabheda*, or schism within the order, by

making more explicit the general areas of disagreement that precipitated the second council. In so doing, they inadvertently provoked the split they were so diligently trying to avoid.

Prior to Marcel Hofinger's *Étude sur le concile de Vaiśālī* (published in 1946), it was rather ordinary to assign the beginnings of Buddhist sectarianism to the events surrounding the council of Vaiśālī and conclude that the initial schism that separated the Mahāsāṃghikas from the Sthaviras in early Indian Buddhism resulted from the dual problematic of disciplinary laxity on the part of the future Mahāsāṃghikas and the famous five theses of the monk Mahādeva focusing on the nature of the *arhant*. This council has received a substantial amount of consideration in the scholarly literature,¹ and the bulk of it does not need to be rehearsed here. Nor is it necessary to consider new information regarding the date of the historical Buddha that casts fresh light on the specific date of the Vaiśālī council.² What does need to be considered is a review of the most recent general conclusions regarding the Vaiśālī council.

With the possible exception of R. O. Franke and Paul Demiéville,³ virtually all scholars agree that the Vaiśālī council was an historical event. While Hofinger states it quite directly: "The council of Vaiśālī is not a fiction," Bareau is indirect: "We see, therefore, that the hypothesis of the historicity of the council of Vaiśālī appears as much more defensible than the contrary hypothesis."⁴ Several *vinayas* (namely, the Mahāsāṃghika, Sarvāstivādin, Theravādin, and Dharmaguptaka) even identify the site of the council as the Vālukārāma, although this may be a later addition. Further, all sources agree that the primary focus of the event was the now well-known issue of the ten illicit practices of the Vṛjiputraka *bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī. Nonetheless, there is serious disagreement on the interpretation of the council proceedings. While Hofinger has admirably traced the rejection of all ten points in the Pāli *pātimokkha*,⁵ Demiéville aggressively pursues the thesis of Mahāsāṃghika laxity on the basis of the mention of only one of the ten points (i.e., the possession of gold and silver) in their council record. He writes, "Consequently, even on the single point of discipline which the Mahāsāṃghikas mention in their recitation of the council of Vaiśālī, their Vinaya turns out to be infinitely more lax than the Pāli Vinaya."⁶ However, even a cursory study of the Mahāsāṃghika *vinaya* reveals that all ten points are included therein, and Bareau documents

this carefully using the Chinese version of the text (*Taishō* 1425). He concludes about the Mahāsāṃghikas:

If they do not speak of the 9 other customs, this is not because they approved of them, since they implicitly condemn them elsewhere. . . . The 9 customs of the monks of Vaiśālī, therefore, could not have been one of the causes of the schism which separated the Mahāsāṃghikas from the Sthaviras, as the Sinhalese chronicles affirm and, following them, certain historians of Buddhism. In fact, the two sects were in accord on this point, as M. Hofinger has well shown.⁷

A study of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin texts preserved in Sanskrit yields a similar result.⁸ Additionally, the Mahāsāṃghikas could not be considered as easterners (i.e., the Prācīnaka, or the same title as the Vṛjiputrakas), as Hofinger would like to maintain (by adjusting the geographical tension theory of Przyluski⁹ so as to categorize the Sthavira, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka, and Sarvāstivādin *nikāyas* as westerners). On this point, Bareau asserts, “It is without doubt imprudent to draw conclusions on the primitive geographical redress of the sects from indications as fragmentary as those furnished by our recitations.”¹⁰ Although Demiéville has serious doubts about the historicity of the Vaiśālī council, he does suggest:

For my part, I cannot refrain from seeing in the tradition relative to the council of Vaiśālī, above all, a reflection of this conflict between rigorism and laxism, between monasticism and laicism, between “sacred” and “profane,” which traverses all the history of Buddhism and which, after having provoked the schism between the Sthaviras and Mahāsāṃghikas, is expressed later by the opposition between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna.¹¹

Despite Demiéville’s aggressive claim to the contrary, there is nothing in any of the *vinaya* council accounts of the various *nikāyas* that attests to the separation of Sthaviras and Mahāsāṃghikas at this point. Bareau confirms the absence of sectarianism at this point in Indian Buddhist history quite assertively when he proclaims: “The primitive version is, as M. Hofinger has well shown, anterior to the first schism which separated the Mahāsāṃghikas from the Sthaviras.”¹²

Although the famous *daśa-vastūni* and the council of Vaiśālī seem effectively eliminated from the historical actuality of the initial schism in Indian Buddhist history, the notorious five theses of Mahādeva remained a primary causal factor in scholarly arguments. Convinced that the first *saṃghabheda* was historically removed from the Vaiśālī coun-

cil, Andre Bareau developed a new theory, one that turned on two notions: (1) laxity on the part of the future Mahāsāṃghikas developed after the Vaiśālī council (although it is not precisely clear just how this laxity develops) and (2) the five theses of Mahādeva. Moreover, it postulated a non-canonical council held at Pāṭaliputra 137 years after the Buddha's enlightenment, from which the schism emerged. Until fairly recently Bareau's theory was rather widely accepted as a brilliant and ingenious solution to a knotty Buddhological problem.¹³ In 1977, Janice J. Nattier and I criticized Bareau's theory, suggesting in its place that

Mahādeva has nothing to do with the primary schism between the Mahāsāṃghikas and Sthaviras, emerging in a historical period considerably later than previously supposed, and taking his place in the sectarian movement by instigating an internal schism within the already existing Mahāsāṃghika school. Second, that the sole cause of the initial schism in Buddhist history pertained to matters of Vinaya, but rather than representing a reaction of orthodox Buddhists to Mahāsāṃghika laxity, as maintained by both Demiéville and Bareau, represents a reaction on the part of the future Mahāsāṃghikas to unwarranted expansion of the root Vinaya text on the part of the future Sthaviras. . . .¹⁴

The argument concerning Mahādeva's five theses is complex,¹⁵ and until quite recently it has not received much additional attention. Lance Cousins, however, has published a fresh, new discussion of the five points, dividing their historical development into three phases¹⁶ and confirming the Prebish-Nattier hypothesis that the five points of Mahādeva were not involved in the first schism. Cousins' article additionally utilizes important material on the Pudgalavādins, published by Thich Thien Chau¹⁷ and Peter Skilling,¹⁸ not available to earlier researchers.

The Prebish-Nattier hypothesis for the rise of Buddhist sectarianism relies heavily on the *Śāriputrapariṣcchā-sūtra*, translated into Chinese between 317 and 420 CE, but which, according to Bareau,¹⁹ was likely to have been composed by around 300, thus representing the oldest of all the sectarian treatises. This text relates an episode in which an old monk rearranges and augments the traditional *vīnaya*, said to have been codified by Kāśyapa at the alleged first council of Rājagṛha, consequently causing dissension among the monks, which required the king's arbitration and eventually precipitated the first schism.²⁰ The relevant passage makes it clear that, from the Mahāsāṃghika perspective, the real issue culminating in the schism

was *vinaya* expansion. The Mahāsāṃghikas are designated in the passage as those who study the “ancient *vinaya*,” and this tallies extremely well with the conclusions of Andre Bareau, W. Pachow, Marcel Hofinger, Erich Frauwallner, and Gustav Roth that the Mahāsāṃghika (and Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin) *vinaya* represents the most ancient of all the *vinaya* traditions. Further, each of the above cited scholars reaches his conclusion by applying a separate critical technique (Bareau utilizing text length of the *śaikṣa* section of the *Prātimokṣa-sūtra*, Pachow utilizing comparative *prātimokṣa* study, Hofinger utilizing all second council materials in the various *vinayas*, Frauwallner utilizing an analysis of the *skandhikas* of the various *vinayas*, and Roth utilizing an examination of the language and grammar of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin texts preserved in Sanskrit). It also tallies well with the conclusion of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien, who regarded the Mahāsāṃghika *vinaya* as the original.²¹ Cousins agrees with the above conclusion heartily and comments on the *Śāriputrapariṣcchā-sūtra*: “Rather it sees the Mahāsāṃghikas as the conservative party which has preserved the original Vinaya unchanged against the reformist efforts to create a reorganized and stricter version.” He goes on: “Clearly the Mahāsāṃghikas are in fact a school claiming to follow the Vinaya of the original, undivided sangha, i.e. the mahāsāṃgha.”²² As to why the future Sthaviras would choose to enlarge the *vinaya*, Nattier and I conclude:

It is not unlikely that the council of Vaiśālī, in representing the first real threat of division in the quasi-unified Buddhist saṃgha, made all Buddhists aware of the problem of concord now that the Buddha was long dead. In seeking to insure the continued unity that all Buddhists must have desired, they simply began to expand the disciplinary code in the seemingly appropriate direction. Just as the respect for orthodoxy inhibited the participants at the alleged first council of Rājagṛha from excluding the “lesser and minor points” which the Buddha had noted to be expendable, the same respect for orthodoxy inhibited the future Mahāsāṃghikas from tolerating this new endeavor, however well intentioned it was.²³

This latter conclusion also gains support from Cousins:

What is important is that the picture which now emerges is one in which the earliest division of the saṃgha was primarily a matter of monastic discipline. The Mahāsāṃghikas were essentially a conservative party resisting a reformist attempt to tighten discipline. The likelihood is that they were initially the larger body, representing

the mass of the community, the *mahāsāṅgha*. Subsequently, doctrinal disputes arose among the reformists as they grew in numbers and gathered support. Eventually these led to divisions on the basis of doctrine. For a very long time, however, there must have been many fraternities (*nikāyas*) based only on minor *vinaya* differences.²⁴

If we acknowledge, in light of the above materials, that the Prebish-Nattier hypothesis offers the most fruitful potential for identifying the causal basis of the first sectarian division in Buddhism, it becomes necessary to further explore the earliest *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* texts extant in hopes of isolating precisely which rules appear to be those appended to the root *vinaya* text by the future Sthaviras. It has been argued elsewhere²⁵ that comparative *prātimokṣa* study involves considerably more investigation than simply creating concordance tables of correlation between the texts of the various schools preserved in Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan. I maintain that “A more sensible approach would be the developmental, concentrating more on the contents of the various rules than their numbers.”²⁶ In examining the *śaikṣa-dharma* section of the Sanskrit Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin text and the Theravādin text in Pāli, numbering respectively sixty-seven and seventy-five rules, one finds this approach quite instructive, despite the fact, now acknowledged by most scholars, that the Theravādins can in no way be historically identified as the Sthaviras of the first schism.

While many scholars downplay the significance of the *śaikṣa-dharmas* in the overall scheme of the *prātimokṣa*, John Holt takes the opposite approach in concluding, “These rules are much more than mere social etiquette. . . . The motive which generated their inclusion into the disciplinary code was simply this: perfect control of inward demeanor leads to perfect control and awareness of outward expression, even the most minute public expressions.”²⁷ As such, they are critical to an understanding of early Buddhist sectarian history. I. B. Horner, in her classic translation of the Pāli *Vinaya-piṭaka*, arranges these rules into three sections: (1) rules 1–56, focusing on etiquette and behavior on the daily alms-tour; (2) rules 57–72, focusing on teaching the dharma with propriety; and (3) rules 73–75, focusing on inappropriate ways of urinating and spitting.²⁸ Seeking more specific definition, I suggested another classification, addressing the functionality of the entire section: (1) the robe section, (2) the section on village visiting, (3) the section on dharma instruction, and (4) the section on eating.²⁹ Irrespective of which classification is preferred, a comparison of the

two texts in question involves considerably more than a facile location of eight rules, primarily because the rules do not correspond directly by number.

After careful comparative cross-referencing between the two texts, four rules in the Sanskrit Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin text are found to have no counterpart in the Pāli text—numbers 20, 23, 27, and 56.³⁰

Rule 20 reads:

na osaktikāya³¹ antaragrhe niṣīdiṣyāmīti sikṣākaraṇīyā |
 “I will not sit down amongst the houses in the *utsaktikā* posture,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 23 reads:

na antaragrhe niṣaṇṇo hastṇ kokaṭṭyam vā pādakaukṛtyamvā kariṣyāmīti
sikṣākaraṇīyā |
 “Having sat down amongst the houses, I will not do evil with the feet or do evil with the hands,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 27 reads:

nāvakīrṇṇakārakaṃ piṇḍapātram paribhuṃjiṣyāmīti sikṣākaraṇīyā |
 “I will not eat alms food [while] making confused [speech],” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 56 reads:

na osaktikāya³² niṣaṇṇsyāgilānasya dharmandeśayīṣyamīti sikṣākaraṇīyā |
 “In the *utsaktikā* posture, I will not teach dharma to one seated who is not ill,” is a precept that should be observed.

It is extremely significant that two of the four Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin rules (nos. 23 and 27) cited above have no counterpart in the various texts of the other schools. The remaining two (nos. 20 and 56) seem to involve a posture cited in no other text with the Mūlasarvāstivādin version possibly being excepted (and then, only if the term *osaktikā* is a direct correspondent to *utsaktikā* as found in the latter text). Further, the grammatical variants of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin were once considered to be extremely corrupt Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit forms. Franklin Edgerton, commenting on Senart’s edition of the Sanskrit text of the Mahāvastu, said: “Perhaps the most difficult and corrupt, as also probably the oldest and most important, of all BHS works is the Mahāvastu. . . . It was edited by Émile Senart

in three stout volumes, 1882–1897. Senart’s extensive notes often let the reader perceive the despair which constantly threatened to overwhelm him.”³³ More recent scholarship has presented an entirely different picture of the language of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin texts, one that is clearly consistent with the original hypothesis of this paper. Gustav Roth’s extensive work with the texts of this *nikāya* leads him to conclude (in 1966):

I would call this language the Prakrit-cum-quasi-Sanskrit of the Ārya Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins. . . . The regular recurrence of Prakrit forms shows that they cannot be taken for grammatical mistakes. They belong to the stock of the language. . . . This coexistence of Prakrit and Sanskrit forms side by side has to be acknowledged as the new type of a language through and through composite in its nature.³⁴

By 1970, when Roth’s edition of the *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya* of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins appeared, his position on the language and grammar of this *nikāya* remained fundamentally consistent with his earlier conclusions.³⁵ My own grammatical notes in *Buddhist Monastic Discipline* tend to confirm Roth’s judgment.³⁶ That the language of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin text appears to be distinct unto itself, coupled with a number of *śaikṣa-dharmas* that appear in no other *prātimokṣa* texts of the various *nikāyas*, lends credence to the supposition, noted above, that this text was extremely ancient. In light of the other materials presented, it is not unreasonable to assume that this may well have been the root *vinaya* text expanded upon by the future Sthaviras. Since the Mahāsāṃghika trunk schools developed in a separate lineage than that of the Sthavira *nikāyas*, it is imperative to see how, if at all, the Sthavira *nikāyas* may have expanded the root *vinaya* text. While the Theravādins are certainly less ancient historically than the Mahāsāṃghikas, their complete *vinaya* is no doubt the earliest of all the preserved versions of the Sthavira schools. As such, its additional *sekhiya-dhammas* (Skt. *śaikṣa-dharmas*) are exceedingly important.

No less than twelve rules in the Pāli *pātimokkha* have no counterpart in the Sanskrit Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin text. These include numbers 3, 4, 16, 18, 20, 30, 31, 33, 40, 42, 54, and 68.³⁷

Rule 3 reads:

supaṭicchanno antaraghare gamissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall go well covered amongst the houses,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 4 reads:

supaṭicchanno antaraghare nisīdissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall sit down well covered amongst the houses,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 16 reads:

na kayappacālakam antaraghare nisīdissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I will not sit down amongst the houses shaking the body,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 18 reads:

na bāhuppacālakam antaraghare nisīdissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I will not sit down amongst the houses shaking the arms,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 20 reads:

na sīsappacālakam antaraghare nisīdissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I will not sit down amongst the houses shaking the head,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 30 reads:

samatittikam piṇḍapātam paṭiggahessāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā

“I shall accept alms food up to the brim [of the bowl],” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 31 reads:

sakkaccam piṇḍapātam bhuñjissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall eat alms food respectfully,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 33 reads:

sapadānam piṇḍapātam bhuñjissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall eat alms food uninterruptedly,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 40 reads:

parimaṇḍalam ālopan karissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall separate the morsels into [little] balls,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 42 reads:

na bhuñjamāno sabbam hattham mukhe pakkipissāmīti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall not put the whole hand in the mouth when eating,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 54 reads:

na oṭṭhanillehakaṃ bhuñjissāmiti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall not lick the lips when eating,” is a precept that should be observed.

Rule 68 reads:

na chamāyaṃ nisīditvā āsane nisinnassa agilānassa dhammaṃ desissāmiti sikkhā karaṇīyā |

“I shall not teach dharma while sitting on the ground to one sitting on a seat who is not ill,” is a precept that should be observed.

A summary of the twelve Pāli rules reveals that, according to Horner’s classification, eleven fall into her category of etiquette and behavior on the daily alms-tour, while the twelfth falls into her category described as teaching the dharma with propriety. Utilizing my categorization, six rules are concerned with eating, three with village visiting, two with robes, and one with dharma instruction. Nevertheless, a composite of the two approaches demonstrates that all twelve rules focus on two general areas of conduct: behavior in the village and various aspects of eating. And precisely because respect for the individual monks and nuns was a necessary requisite for successful maintenance of the entire monastic saṃgha by the laity, this emphasis is not at all surprising. Holt proclaims this rather dramatically:

We must also point out that one’s outward appearance was symbolic in at least two ways. In the first case, bhikkhus were considered to be “sons of the Buddha” and objects of veneration for the laity. To appear in public in a dishevelled fashion was insulting not only to the Buddha, but to the laity who considered bhikkhus as examples of high Buddhist spirituality and worthy receptors of meritorious acts of lay piety. In the second case, bhikkhus were bearers of the Dhamma and the chief source of learning for the laity. Casual attention to one’s public habits would reflect a similar casual regard for the teaching of the Dhamma.³⁸

Nor is it surprising to evaluate these apparently expanded rules with respect to the fact that five of the ten *daśa-vastūni* of the Vaiśālī council concerned matters of food and drink. Equally, the other five points of the council, in the most general sense, address matters of individual and communal respect. In other words, if the Buddhist community was plagued by the genuine threat of *saṃghabheda* in the aftermath of the

council of Vaiśālī, and specifically with regard to matters of personal and institutional integrity and ethical conduct, it might well be both logical and reasonable to tighten the monastic code by the addition of a number of rules designed to make the required conduct more explicit. Of course, *vinaya* expansion is precisely what the *Śāriputrapariṣcchā-sūtra* records as the cause of Buddhism's initial schism, commenting as well that it was respect for the orthodoxy of the "ancient *vinaya*" that prohibited the future Mahāsāṃghikas from accepting the addition, irrespective of motive.

Andre Bareau, in *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, comes to almost the same conclusion as presented above when he says, "One may justly think that the cause of the quarrel resided in the composition of the code of the monks and, more specifically, in the list of the *śikṣākaraṇīyā*,"³⁹ but he dismisses the conclusion immediately: "It is improbable that such a serious conflict could have been provoked by dissension on such a trivial subject."⁴⁰ Yet Bareau also concedes that the majority of points for which the Vṛjiputraka *bhikṣus* were reprovved were no more important than the ones cited here. We think that it is here that Bareau and others have missed an enormously valuable opportunity for understanding the growth of early Indian Buddhist sectarianism. We may never know with absolute certainty whether the rules cited above were precisely the rules to which the *Śāriputrapariṣcchā-sūtra* alludes. Nonetheless, a comparison of the Pāli precepts in question with the extant *vinaya* texts of other early Buddhist *nikāyas* suggests a high degree of correlation.⁴¹ This is especially significant since these non-Mahāsāṃghika *nikāyas* all emerged from a common basis in the original Sthavira trunk group. It also correlates almost identically with the Chinese version of the *Upālipariṣcchā-sūtra*.⁴² Further, as the Sthavira trunk subdivided internally over the next several centuries into many other *nikāyas*, each sect sought to underscore its own position with regard to personal and institutional conduct (and especially with regard to the geographic, communal circumstance in which it found itself) by appending additional rules in the *śaikṣa-dharma* section of its *Prātimokṣa-sūtra*. As a result, we find ninety-six rules in the Chinese version of the Kāśyapīya text, one hundred rules in the Chinese version of the Mahīśāsaka text, one hundred rules in the Chinese Dharmaguptaka text, one hundred eight rules in the Sanskrit and Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivādin texts, and one hundred thirteen rules in the Sanskrit and Chinese Sarvāstivādin texts. In so doing the *nikāyas* became distinct not only by the doctrines

they espoused, but by their rules for communal dwelling and behavior. In some cases, these differences are of monumental importance. The Dharmaguptaka text, for example, advances twenty-six rules in this section to delegate appropriate conduct at a *stūpa*. Apart from what this tells us, historically, about the Dharmaguptaka school, it offers significant insight into the ritual applications of Dharmaguptaka doctrinal affinities. In the light of the work by Hirakawa, Schopen, and Williams on the role of *stūpa* worship in the rise of Mahayana, this *vinaya* material is critically important.⁴³ Moreover, it has long been acknowledged that the Dharmaguptaka *vinaya* was the most widely accepted *vinaya* in China.⁴⁴ Consequently, one must ponder whether its incorporation of these twenty-six rules for *stūpa* worship, more extensively delineated than in any other *vinaya*, was the primary basis for the high status of its *vinaya* in the development of Chinese Buddhism. No doubt, other, similar, insights might well emerge from a renewed interest in this category of *vinaya* rules, long overlooked, but still overwhelmingly fertile. At the very least, the specifics of the first great *saṃghabheda* in Buddhism are less mysterious.

NOTES

1. See especially Marcel Hofinger, *Étude sur le concile de Vaiśālī* (Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1946); Andre Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955); Paul Demiéville, “À propos du concile de Vaiśālī,” *T’oung Pao* 40 (1951): 239–296; and Charles S. Prebish, “A Review of Scholarship on the Buddhist Councils,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 33, no. 2 (February 1974): 239–254.
2. A summary of the basic argument regarding the new approach to Buddha’s historical dating is best revealed by Richard Gombrich’s article “Dating the Buddha: A Red Herring Revealed,” in Heinz Bechert, ed., *Die Datierung des historischen Buddha*, vol. 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 239–259, in which Gombrich dates the death of the Buddha to around 405 BCE (actually between 411 and 399). A concise statement of the position on the Vaiśālī council, dating the council to 70–80 years after Buddha’s death, is Lance S. Cousins’s “The ‘Five Points’ and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools,” in *The Buddhist Forum*, ed. Tadeusz Skorupski, vol. 2 (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1992), 27–31 and 54–60.
3. Refer to R. O. Franke, “The Buddhist Councils at Rājagaha and Vesālī as Alleged in Cullavagga XI, XII,” *Journal of the Pālī Text Society* (1908): 70; and Paul Demiéville, “À propos du concile de Vaiśālī,” 258.
4. See Hofinger, *Étude sur le concile de Vaiśālī*, 249; and Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, 87.
5. Hofinger, *Étude sur le concile de Vaiśālī*, 216 (and nn. 1–3) and 217 (and nn. 1–7).
6. Demiéville, “À propos du concile de Vaiśālī,” 275.
7. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, 78.
8. See Charles S. Prebish, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline: The Sanskrit Prātimokṣa Sūtras of the Mahāsāṃghikas and Mūlasarvāstivādin* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), 70, 80, 88, and 90.
9. See Jean Przyluski, *Le concile de Rājagṛha* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1926–1928), 309–314.
10. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, 82–83.
11. Demiéville, “À propos du concile de Vaiśālī,” 259–260.
12. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, 86.
13. See *ibid.*, 88–111.
14. Charles S. Prebish and Janice J. Nattier, “Mahāsāṃghika Origins: The Beginnings of Buddhist Sectarianism,” *History of Religions* 16, no. 3 (February

1977): 238–239.

15. See *ibid.*, 250–265 for a full exegesis of the argument.

16. Cousins, “The ‘Five Points’ and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools,” 27–60.

17. Thich Thien Chau, “The Literature of the Pudgalavādins,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 7, no. 1 (1984): 7–16; and “Les réponses des Pudgalavādin aux critiques des écoles Bouddhiques,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 10, no. 1 (1987): 33–53.

18. Peter Skilling, “The Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛta-Viniścaya of Daśabalaśrīmitra,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (1987): 3–23.

19. Andre Bareau, *Les sectes Bouddhiques du petit véhicule* (Saigon: École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1955), 17, 21.

20. The relevant passage of the text (*Taishō* 1465, p. 900b) is translated on p. 189 of Étienne Lamotte’s *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien* (Université de Louvain, 1958).

21. James Legge, trans., *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms: Being an Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-hsien of His Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 399–414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline* (repr.; New York: Paragon, Dover, 1965), 98. One may also refer to Fa-hien’s Chinese translation of the *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* (*Taishō* 1425, 1426, 1427), carried out with the assistance of Buddhahadra between 416–418 CE, where he offers the same conclusion.

22. Cousins, “The ‘Five Points’ and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools,” 33–34.

23. Prebish and Nattier, “Mahāsāṃghika Origins,” 270.

24. Cousins, “The ‘Five Points’ and the Origins of the Buddhist Schools,” 48.

25. See Charles S. Prebish, “The Prātimokṣa Puzzle: Fact Versus Fantasy,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94, no. 2 (April–June 1974): 168–176; and Charles S. Prebish, “Vinaya and Prātimokṣa: The Foundation of Buddhist Ethics,” in *Studies in the History of Buddhism*, ed. A. K. Narain (Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corp., 1980), 223–264.

26. Prebish, “The Prātimokṣa Puzzle,” 174.

27. John Holt, *Discipline: The Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapiṭaka* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1981), 102–103.

28. I. B. Horner, trans., *The Book of the Discipline*, Part 3 (repr.; London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1957), xxviii.

29. Prebish, “Vinaya and Prātimokṣa,” 251.

30. The Sanskrit text for each of the rules is taken from W. Pachow and

Ramakanta Mishra, eds., “The Prātimokṣa Sūtra of the Mahāsāṃghikas,” *Journal of the Gaṅgānāth Jhā Research Institute* X, nos. 1–4 (1952–1953): appendix 1–48. For another edition of the text, see Nathmal Tatia, ed., *Prātimokṣasūtram of the Lokottaravādi-Mahāsāṃghika School*, vol. 16 of the Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1976). The English translations are taken from Prebish, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline*.

31. There is no Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit or Pāli equivalent for *osaktikā*. The nuns’ text records the same form, but Gustav Roth offers no explanation in his edition of the text, other than to indicate that it could not be traced in any dictionary. See Gustav Roth, ed., *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya: Including the Bhikṣu-Prakīrṇaka and a Summary of the Bhikṣu-Prakīrṇaka Ārya-Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin*, vol. 12 of the Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1970), 297 and 349. The closest parallel is *utsaktikā*, listed in both the *Mahāvvyutpatti* (no. 8542) and Franklin Edgerton’s *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary* (although the latter cites the former as its source). Its only possible correspondent in the various *Prātimokṣa-sūtras* is in that of the Mūlasarvāstivādin *nikāya* (*śaikṣa-dharma* no. 18).

32. Again, the term *osaktikā* is found in the nuns’ text of this *nikāya*, and is listed in the *Mahāvvyutpatti* (no. 8608), corresponding to its counterpart in the Mūlasarvāstivādin text (*śaikṣa-dharma* no. 86).

33. Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 1:10 (¶1.73).

34. Gustav Roth, “Bhikṣuṇīvinaya and Bhikṣu-Prakīrṇaka and Notes on the Language,” *Journal of the Bihar Research Society* 52, nos. 1–4 (January–December 1966), 38–39.

35. Roth, *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya*, lv–lxi.

36. Charles Prebish, *Buddhist Monastic Discipline*.

37. The Pāli text is adapted from Venerable Ñāṇamoli Thera, ed. and trans., *The Pātimokkha: 227 Fundamental Rules of a Bhikkhu* (Bangkok: The Social Science Association of Thailand, 1966). The translations are mine.

38. Holt, *Discipline: The Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapīṭaka*, 102–103.

39. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles Bouddhiques*, 94.

40. Ibid.

41. Here one should refer to the Sanskrit and Chinese texts of the Sarvāstivādin *nikāya*; the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the Mūlasarvāstivādin text; the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Kāśyapīya texts preserved in Chinese; as well as the Chinese version of the *Upāliparipṛcchā-sūtra* (Taishō 1466), and the *Mahāvvyutpatti*.

42. Taishō 1466 (*Yu-po-li wen-fu-ching*). This text appears in Valentina Stache-

Rosen, trans., *Upālipariprcchāsūtra: Ein Text zur buddhistischen Ordendisziplin*, no. 140 of *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984).

43. See Akira Hirakawa, "The Rise of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Its Relationship to the Worship of Stūpas," *Memoirs of the Toyō Bunkyo Research Department* 22 (1963): 57–106; Gregory Schopen, "The Phrase 'sa prthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet' in the Vajracchedikā: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17 (1975): 147–181; Gregory Schopen, "Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21 (1979): 1–19; Gregory Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985): 9–47; and Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (London: Routledge, 1989), 20–33.

44. For a full description of the Dharmaguptaka *vinaya*, see Charles S. Prebish, *A Survey of Vinaya Literature* (London: Routledge Curzon, 1994).

Transitivity, Intransitivity, and *tha dad pa* Verbs in Traditional Tibetan Grammar

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TIBETAN GRAMMAR, one of the Buddhist “sciences” (Tib. *rig gnas*; Skt. *vidyāsthāna*), has a considerable heritage from Indic *vyākaraṇa* literature, some of which is to be found in translation in the *sgra rig pa* section of the Tibetan canon. A good deal of writing on Tibetan grammar, however, is paracanonical, frequently in the form of indigenous Tibetan commentaries on the two treatises attributed to Thon mi Saṃbhoṭa, the *Sum cu pa* and *rTags kyi ’jug pa*.¹ Besides the historical interest of a tradition of Tibetan scholars’ reflections on their own language, there are also potentially significant insights to be gained from such informed investigations into the structure of Tibetan. Questions of voice and transitivity in Tibetan should be among some of the most relevant to contemporary linguists working on Himalayan languages as well as to philologists and specialists in Buddhist studies seeking to understand better the structure of a language that was so important in the transmission of Buddhist scriptures. While it is not infrequently argued that voice and transitivity are *completely absent* in Tibetan, it seems that an examination of indigenous Tibetan grammatical literature, in particular the *rTags kyi ’jug pa* commentaries, does not actually bear that view out and instead provides arguments for a nuanced acceptance of some features of voice and transitivity. In my “On *bdag*, *gzhan* and the Supposed Active-Passive Neutrality of Tibetan Verbs,” I have dealt with the possible connections between active-passive diathesis and the grammarians’ concepts of verbs that show “self” (*bdag*) and “other” (*gzhan*).² I now turn to the grammarians’ distinction between “differentiating” (*tha dad pa*) and “non-differentiating” (*tha mi dad pa*) verbs, arguing that these notions exhibit significant connections with

transitivity, especially if transitivity is taken as a feature admitting of gradation.

SETTING THE STAGE: A DENSE PASSAGE FROM SI TU PAṆ CHEN

In his lucid and savage critique of many of his predecessors' writings on Tibetan traditional grammar, the great eighteenth-century grammarian, Si tu Paṇ chen Chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699–1774), lamented that his confused countrymen erred in understanding the basics of *bdag/gzhan* (self/other) because of their inadequate appreciation of distinctions between types of verbs. He wrote:

yang 'grel byed snga ma thams cad kyis 'di skabs las kyi tshig la byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su 'brel ma 'brel gyi rnam dbye ma mdzad pa ni shin tu mi legs te | de ma shes na byed po dang bya ba tha dad pa dang tha mi dad pa'i las kyi tshig so sor ngos mi zin cing | de ma zin pas 'dir bstan bdag gzhan gyi tha snyad gang la 'jug pa tshul bzhin ma rtogs par long ba'i 'khar ba bzhin gar 'dzugs med pa'i cal col mang po byung bar snang ngo || Moreover, all the previous commentators in this context failed to make the distinction between verbs (*las kyi tshig*) that were directly related with distinct agents (*byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su 'brel ba*) and those that were not related. This was extremely pernicious, for when they did not know that, then they did not recognize verbs as being [of] heterogeneous [types] when the agent (*byed po*) and [focus of] the action (*bya ba*) were different (*tha dad pa*) and when they were not different (*tha mi dad pa*). And because that went unrecognized, they did not know how to apply properly the terms “self” and “other” which were being taught there [in Thon mi's *śloka*], and like those who depend upon blind men, [so too] much completely unfounded nonsense seems to have ensued.³

Indeed it became a cardinal tenet of Si tu's interpretation that *bdag* and *gzhan* can only apply to verbs “directly related with distinct agents” (*byed pa po gzhan dang 'brel ba*) and cannot apply to verbs such as “to go” (*'gro ba*)⁴ or “to become/change into” (*'gyur ba*). In these cases a distinct agent does not directly appear (*byed pa po gzhan dngos su mi snang ba*)⁵, the usual traditional explanation being that when one says, “I go,” there is supposedly no real distinction between an agent, i.e., the goer, and the object/patient, i.e., what receives the action of going. Si tu's commentator, dNgul chu Dharmabhadra (1772–1851), expressed the basic idea in following way in his *Si tu'i zhal lung*:

de yang byed pa po gzhan mi snang zhes pas | dper na | bdag 'gro'o lta bu'i tshe | 'gro ba de bya tshig yin kyang | 'gro bya 'gro byed gnyis ka bdag yin pas | 'gro bya las gzhan pa'i 'gro byed med pas na 'di la bdag gzhan gyi dbye ba'ang mi byed pa yin no || Now, when [Si tu] says “A distinct agent does not appear,” [he means that] in cases such as “I am going,” although “to go” is a word for an action, that which undergoes [the action of] going (*'gro bya*) and the goer (*'gro byed*) are both I, and thus there is no goer distinct from that which undergoes [the action of] going. Therefore, in such a case, the division in terms of self and other (*bdag gzhan gyi dbye ba*) is not made either.⁶

Let's try to demystify the central ideas, as they can make interesting and important sense when seen in the context of transitivity and intransitivity.

UNPACKING *THA DAD PA-THA MI DAD PA* AND OTHER SYNONYMOUS TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS OF VERBS

As the passages cited above show, the principal elements of traditional Tibetan grammar's analysis of verbs—*bdag* and *gzhan*, or agents and objects/patients, as well as their corresponding actions—are, from the time of Si tu Paṇ chen on, considered to be applicable only to actions that have a genuine, full-fledged agent. Following Si tu, the key element in an agent being genuine is that it must be a distinct entity from that which receives the action, the patient. And thus Si tu speaks about “distinct agents” (*byed pa po gzhan*) and about verbs where agent and patient are distinct (*tha dad pa*). *Bdag*, *gzhan*, and so on do not apply when such a distinct agent is simply lacking or where the existence of a distinct person instigating the action is not explicit in the sentence and is at most only situationally implied. A merely situationally implied agent is ruled out by the specification that the action must be “directly (*dngos su*) related” to the agent. This specification serves to exclude verbs like “to become” or “to turn into” (*'gyur*), where some or another human agent may have been remotely responsible in making something become something new, but he is unmentioned in the sentence and indeed not referred to at all—thus, e.g., *lcags gser du 'gyur ba*, “The iron turns into gold.” Here the existence of an alchemist is at most situationally implied, providing one has also subscribed to alchemy as the likely way in which such a transformation happens. Of course, for un-

believers in alchemy the sentence can be understood perfectly well as asserting that some sort of natural process occurs without any agency at all.

So much for the intra-systemic explanation. Is it possible to find a more universalizable theoretical schema in which to place these two types of verbs that Si tu speaks about and that others apparently failed to appreciate? Is there a way of unpacking the traditional grammarian's notion in more recognizable terms, like transitivity? I've always held that there is. But unpacking Tibetan grammar is certainly not without problems, and indeed recently various such issues have been raised by Heather Stoddard and Nicolas Tournadre. It is thus worth revisiting the question as to whether the division between verbs that do or do not have distinct agents, that is, *byed 'brel las tshig* and *byed med las tshig*, or *bya byed tha dad pa / tha mi dad pa*, is legitimately explicable as indigenous Tibetan grammar's analogue of a transitive/intransitive distinction.

Stoddard and Tournadre, in a number of publications (both jointly and separately) on Tibetan grammar and linguistics, have preferred not to adopt this rapprochement and maintained a translation of the terms that mirrors the Tibetan—thus *tha dad pa* becomes *différentiatif* and *tha mi dad pa* becomes *indifférentiatif*—on the grounds that the traditional distinction is essentially semantic, while the transitivity-intransitive distinction is fundamentally syntactic. Other separate arguments are also used by these authors against imputing transitivity, so that it behooves us to cite the whole passage from their book written in collaboration with sKal bzang gyur med, *Le clair miroir*.⁷ There they distance themselves somewhat from the position of traditional Tibetan grammar, and sKal bzang gyur med,⁸ on the matter of *tha dad pa / tha mi dad pa* in order to argue that *tha dad pa / tha mi dad pa* is not the same as, or even significantly similar to, transitivity/intransitivity. In fact, their arguments seem to arrive at two separable conclusions, the first a weak thesis about the grammarians' *tha dad pa* verbs not being transitive verbs (or not being enough like what we mean by "transitivity" for the rapprochement to be meaningful) and the second a considerably stronger thesis to the effect that Western notions of transitivity *do not apply at all* to Tibetan. Of course, if Western transitivity-intransitivity distinctions do not apply to the Tibetan verb at all, then we wouldn't find such verbs by examining those that grammarian dub *tha dad pa*.⁹ Can we show that what grammarians are talking about is a bona fide

feature of Tibetan and does in fact correspond nicely to a Western distinction between transitive and intransitive, so that we can henceforth rest easy in using the schemata of transitivity and intransitivity in talking about Tibetan? Things aren't quite that neat, however. To state my conclusion at the outset: *tha dad pa*, etc., is indeed *not* identical to transitivity, but does capture important elements in the notion of transitivity, a notion that, duly expanded, is applicable to Tibetan.

Let us, however, begin with Stoddard and Tournadre's own arguments, quoting a representative passage from *Le clair miroir* (I won't translate the French, but will paraphrase the points raised):

Nous avons préféré utiliser le terme de différentiatif traduisant littéralement le tibétain *tha dad pa* plutôt que celui de transitif car ce dernier réfère davantage à un caractère syntaxique (le verbe admet un objet). La notion de verbe différentiatif (*bya tshig tha dad pa*) est par contre essentiellement sémantique. Ainsi, en français, dans la phrase suivante: Il a rejoint Lhassa, le verbe "rejoindre" est transitif, tandis qu'en tibétain quel que soit le verbe employé (*byon / slebs*), Lhassa étant un circonstant de lieu (du point de vue sémantico-référentiel), il sera forcément marqué à l'oblique et le verbe sera donc considéré comme indifférentiatif. Par ailleurs, il semble difficile d'appliquer sans adaptation le concept de transitivité dans une langue ergative ne possédant ni sujet, ni opposition actif / passif. . . . Les seuls critères formels donnés par les auteurs tibétains pour déterminer le caractère différentiatif ou indifférentiatif d'un verbe sont liés aux marques actanciels. Ainsi, l'agent d'un verbe différentiatif est marqué à l'ergatif (*byed sgra*) tandis que le patient est à l'absolutif (*ngo bo tsam*). En revanche lorsque l'agent est à l'ergatif et l'autre participant à l'oblique, le verbe n'est pas considéré comme différentiatif.¹⁰

I don't think these arguments prove the inapplicability of transitivity to Tibetan, but they do bring out relevant features of the Tibetan language and merit a step by step analysis.

First, Stoddard and Tournadre complain that *tha dad pa / tha mi dad pa* is essentially a semantic distinction, while transitivity/intransitivity is syntactic. Let us try to unpack the traditional grammarians' distinction and take it beyond its semantic formulations of agents/does or patients/objects being somehow the same things or different. The clear syntactic implication of an action being "directly related with a distinct agent" (*byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su 'brel ba'i las*), or in other terms having a "patient and agent that are different" (*bya byed tha dad pa*), is that the verb has at least two genuine actants. And equally "not

having an agent distinct from a patient” implies that the verb, like intransitive verbs generally, has only one actant, or in other words has a valence of one. There seems to be sufficient connection with the idea of valence that one could reasonably venture that such semantic formulations—be they in Tibetan or, for example, in Sanskrit, where instead of having/not having a distinct agent one speaks of having or not having an object/patient (*sakarmaka/akarmaka*)—do express in admittedly heavy semantic garb the syntactic considerations of verb valence that are taken as indicators of transitivity/intransitivity. There is nothing utterly essential about the semantic garb that we have to conserve *coûte que coûte*: traditional Tibetan grammarians had a predilection for a semantic formulation of things because that is very often what traditional grammars do; we may, for our reasons, find it justifiable on occasion to read their works with somewhat different eyes.

Another qualm Stoddard and Tournadre have about making the leap to transitivity is that the latter concept has little or no bearing if there is no active and passive opposition in Tibetan. This argument for the strong thesis turns on showing that there is no diathesis *at all* in Tibetan—it is thus one to which I have tried to reply in detail elsewhere.¹¹ In short, grammarians’ explanations on *bdag* and *gzhan* seem to go significantly beyond purely semantic matters of highlighting agents and patients and tend towards an alternation of specifically correlated verb flexions.

Let’s go to the end of the quote from *Le clair miroir*. I am somewhat puzzled by Stoddard and Tournadre’s claim that the label *tha dad pa* (*différentiatif*) would only be applied when the patient is in the absolutive (i.e., \emptyset), and not when it ends in an oblique case-marker, like *la*.¹² Their argument is, I take it, for the weaker thesis of *tha dad pa* not being, or not being much like, transitivity: verbs with a patient ending in \emptyset or in *la* could both be taken as biactantial and thus would be transitive in the usual sense of having two actants; but for indigenous grammarians the latter sort, i.e., verbs taking a patient ending in the particle *la*, these verbs would supposedly not (or never?) be *tha dad pa*. Alas, I am not at all sure that traditional grammar would maintain that the *simple* presence of the *la* must change the verb from *tha dad pa* to *tha mi dad pa*. Indeed if we take, for example, the explanations of A lag sha Ngag dbang bstan dar (1759–1840) on *bdag*, *gzhan*, and *bya byed las gsum*, in his *Sum rtags* commentary, *sKal ldan yid kyi pad ma ’byed pa’i snang ba’i mdzod*, he manifestly treats the usual “woodcutting example”

(where the patient, wood = *shing*, does not usually have the *la* particle) in just the same way as he treats “Form is to be looked at with the eyes” (*mig gis gzugs la blta bar bya*), where the patient, form = *gzugs*, does take *la*. Both example sentences have verbs to which an analysis in terms of *bdag/gzhan* applies, implying that the verbs are *byed pa po dang ’brel ba / tha dad pa*. Indeed all the usual classifications of agents, objects, actions, etc., are given in an absolutely parallel fashion in the two example sentences even though in the case of “form being looked at” one marks the patient, form, with the *la*. The mere presence of *la*, in short, is not a sufficient reason for Ngag dbang bstan dar to classify the sentence *gzugs la blta bar bya* as having a type of *tha mi dad pa* verb, one to which self/other (*bdag/gzhan*) wouldn’t apply.¹³ Indeed, a patient can on occasion be marked by *la*—in Ngag dbang bstan dar’s example, the marker *la* does not indicate a circumstance, but marks a genuine actant. As far as I can see, the *tha dad pa*-*tha mi dad pa* (*différentiatif*-*indifférentiatif*) opposition in traditional grammar does not depend on the patient being marked with or without *la*.¹⁴

Finally, Stoddard and Tournadre cite the specific case of the verbs *byon pa* (“go,” “reach”) and *slebs pa* (“come,” “arrive”) as showing that biactantial (and thus normally transitive) verbs are nonetheless classified as *tha mi dad pa* because of the use of *la*. The peculiarities of these verbs *byon pa*, *’gro ba*, *slebs pa*, etc., especially “going to X,” “going to Lhasa” (*lha sa la ’gro ba*), and so on, have given special difficulties to traditional grammarians, especially because of the connections with grammatical arguments used in Indian Madhyamaka Buddhist analyses of the Sanskrit verb √GAM. I have taken up some of those issues in “A Note on *bdag don phal ba* in Tibetan Grammar”;¹⁵ suffice it to say here that it does not seem to me that the fact that “going to Lhasa” is classified as *tha mi dad pa* militates against the general applicability of any notions of transitivity-intransitivity to *tha dad pa*-*tha mi dad pa*. These are specific anomalies and have to be seen as such.¹⁶

To sum up, the traditional grammarians’ talk about verbs like “cut” and so on, being *tha dad pa* (the agent and patient being different) and *byed pa po gzhan dang ’brel ba* (having a distinct agent), can be seen as describing two features on the morphosyntactic level:

- These verbs have a valence of two or more.¹⁷
- These verbs invariably have the agent marked with the ergative marking.

This suggests that we are dealing with a recognizable phenomenon when Tibetan grammar speaks of *tha dad pa*, *byed pa po gzhan dang 'brel ba*, etc., and that “transitivity” is not a complete misnomer. The underlying question is what exactly we should henceforth mean by “transitivity.”

TRANSITIVITY À LA HOPPER AND THOMPSON

The intuitive notion of transitivity, as Paul J. Hopper and Sandra A. Thompson characterize it, is that an action is “carried over” or “transferred” from an agent to a patient. The agent is thus a genuine and fairly high-potent instigator of the transfer, and in ergative languages will be marked. Implicit in the carry-over of action due to an agent is the need for a patient/object that will receive such an action: we therefore should expect to find transitive verbs generally having two or more actants.

But in fact this is only part of transitivity for Hopper and Thompson, who see the notion as admitting of grades in function of the presence or absence of ten different factors—the intuitive type of transitivity is thus one that is very high on the continuum outlined in Hopper and Thompson.¹⁸ We’ll henceforth speak of “transitivity” as meaning transitivity as analyzed in Hopper and Thompson.¹⁹

Now, both in spoken Tibetan and written Tibetan, there are verbs with differing grades of transitivity, if one adopts the tenfold criterion. Thus the nonvolitional verb “to see” (*mthong ba*) in *ngas khyed mthong ngo*, “I see you,” is much less transitive than the verb “to kill” (*gsod pa*) in *ngas khyed gsod do*, “I am killing you,” in that the killing is volitional and the patient totally affected, criteria that “seeing” obviously does not satisfy. If we apply the *tha dad pa*-*tha mi dad pa* distinction as being a Tibetan attempt at distinguishing transitivity-intransitivity, then there is the following problem: both verbs would be on the same side of the fence, i.e., *tha dad pa*. It is thus important to note that for a certain class of nonvolitional verbs (e.g., to see, to know, hto hear, etc.) the Tibetan *tha dad pa* would not correspond to the intuitive notion of action “carried over from agent to patient,” in that no action is carried over from agent to patient in the case of seeing and knowing, etc., if by that we understand that the patient would have to be significantly or totally affected. (After all, my seeing some object usually does little, if anything, to that object.)

Also, *tha dad pa-tha mi dad pa*, or transitivity-intransitivity à la *grammaire tibétaine*, would differ from the transitivity continuum of Hopper and Thompson in that indigenous Tibetan grammar would fix a quite clear border separating verbs that are *tha dad* from those that are *tha mi dad*, instead of adopting a shaded continuum with high and low grades. That said, it looks to me that at least the middling to high levels of Hopper and Thompson's transitivity are captured by the traditional grammarian's categories of *tha dad pa*, or equivalently *byed pa po gzhan dang 'brel ba'i las tshig* (verbs where the agent and patient are different; verbs that have a distinct agent). And equally, the other side of the "border," i.e., *tha mi dad pa*, *byed pa po gzhan dang ma 'brel ba'i las tshig* (verbs where the agent and patient are not different, or equivalently, do not have a distinct agent) does capture much of what would be very low on the Hopper-Thompson scale. This is probably not a surprise at all, in that Hopper and Thompson themselves claim that their approach does account more or less for much of our "folk theories" and traditional notions about transitivity. A strong thesis to the effect that the notion of transitivity (or any meaningful one) is completely inapplicable to Tibetan would thus be wrong. A bit of Tournadre's weaker thesis would, however, remain. Although we do not subscribe to Stoddard and Tournadre's own arguments against linking *tha dad pa* and transitivity, there is at least one very important factor militating against such an outright identification. Simply put, *tha dad pa* / *tha mi dad pa* involves a rigid border while transitivity may well be best seen as a complex graded phenomenon.

APPENDIX: ON THE USE OF *THA (MI) DAD PA* IN THE TIBETAN-CHINESE DICTIONARY

There is a rather unfortunate confusion in the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo* (Zang Han da cidian) of Zhang Yisun et al., where verbs like *mthong ba* ("to see"), *shes pa* ("to know"), and others are designated as *tha mi dad pa*. This is the standard dictionary used by Tibetologists nowadays. Compare this to the *Dag yig gsar bsgrigs* of Blo mthun bsam gtan et al. in which *mthong ba* and *shes pa* are clearly (and rightly!) designated as *byed 'brel las tshig* (= *byed pa po gzhan dang dngos su 'brel ba'i las tshig* = *tha dad pa*). A similar critique of the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*'s treatment of verbs like *mthong ba* is found in Tournadre.²⁰ What seems to have happened is that the authors of the *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen*

mo assimilated nonvolitional—what sKal bzang 'gyur med designates as *bya tshig gzhan dbang can*—with *tha mi dad pa*.²¹ They are not the same thing. See Tillemans and Herforth²² and Stoddard and Tournadre²³ on the differences to be made between *tha dad pa-tha mi dad pa* and the opposition *rang dbang can / gzhan dbang can*, sometimes rendered as “autonomous/dependent,” but less literally, “controlled/uncontrolled” or “volitional/nonvolitional.”

NOTES

1. Synopses of canonical and paracanonical texts on grammar and an extensive explanation of key notions are to be found in P. C. Verhagen, *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet. Volume 1: Transmission of the Canonical Literature*, Handbuch der Orientalistik Abt. 2, Bd. 8 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994); and P. C. Verhagen, *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet. Volume 2: Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*, Handbuch der Orientalistik Abt. 2, Bd. 8 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001).
2. T. J. F. Tillemans, “On *bdag*, *gzhan* and the Supposed Active-Passive Neutrality of Tibetan Verbs,” in *Pramāṇakīrti, Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. B. Kellner and others, Part 2, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 70.2 (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007), 887–902.
3. Si tu Paṇ chen Chos kyi ’byung gnas (gTsug lag chos kyi snang ba), *Yul gang can pa’i brda yang dag par sbyar ba’i bstan bcos kyi bye brag sum cu pa dang rtags kyi ’jug pa’i gzhung gi rnam par bshad pa mkhas pa’i mgul rgyan mu tig phreng mdzes* (Dharamsala, India: Tibetan Cultural Printing Press, 1979), 205; T. J. F. Tillemans and D. D. Herforth, *Agents and Actions in Classical Tibetan: The Indigenous Grammarians on bdag and gzhan and bya byed las gsum*, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 21 (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 1989), 8–9.
4. Tibetan-Tibetan dictionaries classify ’gro ba as *byed med las tshig* (“a verb without a [distinct] agent”) or *tha mi dad pa* (“[agent and object] not being different”). See, e.g., Blo mthun bsam gtan and others, eds., *Dag yig gsar bsgrigs* (Xinbian Zangwen zidian; Xining: Qinghai minzu chubanshe, 1979); and Zhang Yisun, ed., *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 3 vols. (*Zang Han da cidian*; Beijing: Renmin chubanshe [= Mi rigs dpe skrun khang], 1985), s.v. “’gro (ba).” Note, however, that this classification in terms of *byed med las tshig* / *byed ’brel las tshig* is not to be confused with another important distinction between Tibetan verbs, i.e., those showing volitional or nonvolitional actions. See the appendix above.
5. See Tillemans and Herforth, *Agents and Actions in Classical Tibetan*, 69 §8.
6. dNgul chu Dharmabhadra, *Si tu’i zhal lung* (= *Yul gangs can gyi skad kyi brda sprod pa’i bstan bcos sum cu pa dang rtags kyi ’jug pa’i rnam bshad mkhas mchog si tu’i zhal lung*; included in *mKhas mchog dngul chu yab sras kyis mdzad pa’i bod brda sum rtags kyi skor dang | ’ju mi pham | bstan dar lhar ram gnyis kyi gsung sa mtha’i rnam dbye bcas phyogs bsdebs pad dkar chun po*; Dharamsala, India: Tibetan Cultural Printing Press, 197?), 50–51; Japanese translation in S. Inaba, *Chibettogo koten bunpōgaku, zōhohan* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1986), 369; text in Inaba, *Chibettogo*, 444.
7. sKal bzang gyur med, *Le clair miroir: Enseignement de la grammaire tibétaine*,

trans., adapted, and commented upon by Heather Stoddard and Nicolas Tournadre (Arvillard: Editions Prajñā, Collection Tibétaine, 1992).

8. sKal bzang 'gyur med, *Bod kyi brda sprod rig pa'i khrid rgyun rab gsal me long* (Zangwen wenfa jiaocheng; Chengdu: Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1981).

9. Cf. N. Tournadre, *L'Ergativité en tibétain. Approche morphosyntaxique de la langue parlée*, Bibliothèque de l'information grammaticale 33 (Louvain-Paris: Editions Peeters, 1996), 82, where he argues against the use of the notion of transitivity ("contre l'emploi de la notion de transitivité") and quotes with apparent approval the remarks of James Matisoff in *The Grammar of Lahu*, University of California Publications in Linguistics, No. 75 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973). Matisoff's remarks concern Lahu, but it is clear that they are taken by Tournadre to be relevant to other Tibeto-Birman languages too. The whole passage on p. 82 reads as follows: "La nécessité de remanier le concept de transitivité n'est pas une spécificité du seul tibétain. Citons James Matisoff à propos de lahu, une autre langue tibéto-birmane du groupe lolo: 'Such distinctions as transitive/intransitive and active/passive are basically alien to Lahu grammar (1973:195).'"

10. sKal bzang gyur med, Stoddard, and Tournadre, *Le clair miroir*, 246.

11. See Tillemans, "On *bdag*, *gzhan* and the Supposed Active-Passive Neutrality of Tibetan Verbs."

12. The terminology adopted for designating Tibetan cases is that of N. Tournadre, "Présentation de la grammaire traditionnelle et des cas du tibétain. Approche classique et analyse moderne," in *Tibet, civilisation et société. Colloque organisé par la Fondation Singer-Polignac à Paris, les 27, 28, 29 avril 1987* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1990).

13. See f. 185.2–4: *gnyis pa rgyas par bshad pa la | bdag gzhan gyi don dang | sngon 'jug gi 'jug tshul lo | dang po ni | spyir bya byed las gsum ni | sta res shing gcod pa lta bu la mtshon na sta re byed pa | shing las | gcod pa bya ba dang | de bzhin du mig gis gzugs la blta bar bya zhes pa la mig byed pa | gzugs las | blta ba bya ba dang | ... des na de lta bu byed pa la bdag dang las la gzhan gyi tha snyad byed pa yin pas de'i skabs kyi las la bya rgyu'i las dang byed bzhin pa'i las gnyis yod de ... |*

14. Interestingly enough, Tournadre ("Tibetan Ergativity and the Trajectory Model," in *New Horizons in Tibeto-Burman Morpho-syntax*, eds. Y. Nishi, J. Matisoff, and Y. Nagano, *Senri Ethnological Studies* 41 [Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 1995], 272) brings up this type of phenomenon in spoken Tibetan and compares it to the use of the ergative as giving emphasis. Thus the difference between *g.yag zhon pa red* and *g.yag la zhon pa red* is a pragmatic one like that between "He rode a yak" and "It is a yak that he rode." In literary Tibetan, however, the "emphatic" use of the ergative does not seem possible. It is thus a problem as to how to interpret sentences like *shing la gcod do*.

15. T. J. F. Tillemans, "A Note on *bdag don phal ba* in Tibetan Grammar," *Asiatische Studien / Études Asiatiques* 45, no. 2 (1991): 311–323.

16. The mere fact of certain verbs in English and French having usual morphosyntactic coding associated with transitivity while their counterparts were not classified as *tha dad pa* in Tibetan doesn't itself prove much once we have granted a graded phenomenon of transitivity. Gradation being accepted, the recurring phenomenon that a verb such as "to like" is handled differently in different languages is itself explicable by the fact that this is generally a verb with a relatively low degree of transitivity à la Hopper-Thompson: it is not telic, nor volitional, nor punctual and the object is little affected. In short, the fact that "I like beer" in, say, Tibetan or Spanish (i.e., *Me gusta la cerveza*), is handled with morphosyntactic coding more in keeping with the intransitive verbs of those languages, seems to be something that regularly happens with verbs of reduced transitivity.

The case of "going to Lhasa" (*lha sa la 'gro ba*), however, is potentially more of a problem, because more of the Hopper-Thompson features of higher transitivity are satisfied, such as "going" being volitional and "Lhasa" being well individuated. It might seem that Stoddard and Tournadre would be right in saying that the fact that grammarians say that this verb is *not* classifiable as *tha dad pa* is a problem for the relevance of *tha dad pa* to transitivity. It could be replied, however, that here again comparison with other languages is of some relevance in resolving the anomaly. When the patient is totally or very significantly affected the verb should approach high transitivity, as other strong indicators of transitivity will also be present. That much is straightforward. When, however, the would-be patient (e.g., Lhasa) is not affected at all or only very partially so, we do find uses of coding usual to intransitive verbs. As Hopper and Thompson point out ("Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse," *Language* 56 [1980]: 251–299), there seems to be a quite considerable leeway to use intransitive coding when the patient is not a "true patient" in the sense of receiving the action:

... [A]lthough the presence of a true patient participant is a crucial component of Transitivity, that of a second participant which is not much of a patient (i.e., which does not receive any action) is not. ... [S]uch clauses with less than ideal patients are coded in many other languages with various of the trappings found in intransitive clauses. (p. 254)

I would thus personally tend towards a double conclusion: Stoddard and Tournadre's argument about "going to X" shows an odd feature of the Tibetan treatment of these verbs, but does not seriously challenge the position that *tha dad pa* / *tha mi dad pa* capture certain core features of transitivity/intransitivity.

17. Of course, it could be argued (as does Tournadre elsewhere) that Tibetan has the feature of being able to omit actants—be they agents or patients—and

that this would create some problems for attributing valence to verbs and using the traditional definition. Tournadre, *L'Ergativité en tibétain*, 80: “Malheureusement la définition donnée ci-dessus [i.e., celle de *tha dad pa / tha mi dad pa*] présente un inconvénient dans le cas du tibétain; en effet, ainsi qu’on l’a déjà souligné, aucun complément n’est obligatoire en tibétain et cela contrairement à ce qui se passe en français (et dans de nombreuses langues indo-européennes) où un verbe transitif exige la présence d’un objet. . . .” Indeed one would have to account for such a phenomenon of “argument-omission.” An analysis of Tibetan zero-anaphora, as Derek Herforth proposed in *Agents and Actions in Classical Tibetan*, may well be what is needed to show how and when nouns for agents and patients that had figured overtly in a preceding discourse can be dropped, all the while preserving co-reference.

18. Hopper and Thompson, “Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse.” See the table in Hopper and Thompson, eds., *Studies in Transitivity*, Syntax and Semantics 15 (New York and London: Academic Press, 1982), 3:

	High transitivity	Low transitivity
A. Participants	2 participants or more (A and O)	1 participant
B. Kinesis	action	nonaction
C. Aspect	telic	atelic
D. Punctuality	punctual	nonpunctual
E. Volitionality	volitional	nonvolitional
F. Affirmation	affirmative	negative
G. Mode	realis	irrealis
H. Agency	A high in potency	A low in potency
I. Affectedness of O	O totally affected	O not affected
J. Individuation of O	O highly individuated	O nonindividuated

19. Hopper and Thompson, “Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse”; and Hopper and Thompson, *Studies in Transitivity*.

20. Tournadre, *L'Ergativité en tibétain*, 191 n. 20.

21. sKal bzang 'gyur med, *Bod kyi brda sprod rig pa'i khrid rgyun rab gsal me long*.

22. Tillemans and Herforth, *Agents and Actions in Classical Tibetan*, 27–28.

23. sKal bzang gyur med, Stoddard, and Tournadre, *Le clair miroir*, 250–252.

How Did the Buddhists Prove Something? The Nature of Buddhist Logic¹

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PREFACE

BACK IN THE EARLY 1970s when I was a graduate student at the University of Toronto, I was living in a small boys-only dormitory called Massey College on the campus. The master of the college at that time was Robertson Davies. Being a graduate of Balliol College in Oxford himself, he wanted to recreate a sort of British-style college in Canada. So he had a high table night every once in a while and invited some dignitaries as well as some Junior Fellows. I was at a high table one night when Marshall McLuhan (1911–1980) was invited. I was wearing a very flashy shirt with a design of colorful peacocks. Please remember that those were the days of hippies and that I was a student of Indian philosophy.

It happened that McLuhan was just sitting in front of me at the high table. He seemed to be a little astonished by the sight of a young man from the East wearing a very strange-looking shirt under the dark college gown. He asked me where I was from and, having discovered I was from Japan, asked me again: “Do your people wear such a shirt at home?” Half for fun I answered: “Yes, sir; sometimes we do.” Then he told me that he was once invited by NHK, Japan’s National Broadcasting Company, to come to Japan but he declined to go because he didn’t want to appear on TV shows. However, he added, if he had known that Japanese men could dress like that, he might have made it to Japan. I do not know to this date whether I impressed him enough to make him visit my country in the few remaining years of his life.

Whether or not the rapid growth of technologies in media and communications in recent years are transforming us into a sort of

“Children in the Global Village,” I do not know. My experience tells me that I should know people personally before I can communicate with them easily through electronic media. For our mutual understanding, I believe, it is important to investigate and to know how people of other cultural traditions feel, think, and reason. I am personally most interested in how people make a point and persuade others. So, this essay concerns how the Indian Buddhists tried to prove something and whether or not their methods are in any way substantially different from what I think the mainstream of thinking and reasoning is in the West.

I. THREE TRADITIONS OF PHILOSOPHIES

Perhaps we can all agree that there are at least three ancient civilizations that have produced at about the same time what we now call by the broad name “philosophy.” They are, needless to mention, the Chinese, Indian, and Greek civilizations. One Japanese historian of philosophies, Matao Noda, once distinguished those three traditions of philosophies in the following manner: when it comes down to the issue of how to argue and persuade others, Chinese philosophy may be characterized as “rhetorical,” Indian philosophy as “dialectical,” and Greek philosophy as “logical.”²

Apart from very sporadic information about the school of Kung Sun Lung and others, we know very little about the Chinese development of logic or formal methods of persuasion. A typical style of argument among ancient Chinese philosophers may be found in one of the very well-known dialogues between Chuang Tzu and his logician friend, Hui Tzu.³

Chuang Tzu and Hui Tzu were taking a leisurely walk along the dam of the Hao River. Chuang Tzu said, “The white fish are swimming at ease. This is the happiness of the fish.”

“You are not a fish,” said Hui Tzu. “How do you know its happiness?”

“You are not I,” said Chuang Tzu. “How do you know that I do not know the happiness of the fish?”

Hui Tzu said, “Of course I do not know, since I am not you. But you are not the fish, and it is perfectly clear that you do not know the happiness of the fish.”

“Let us get at the bottom of the matter,” said Chuang Tzu. “When you asked how I knew the happiness of the fish, you already knew that I knew the happiness of the fish but asked how I knew it along the river.”

I am not sure whether you are easily persuaded by such rhetoric. But that is one of the examples of what Noda called “rhetorical” persuasion/reasoning. I shall discuss the propriety of his characterization of the Indian way of argument as “dialectical” at the conclusion of my talk. However, it is to be noted at the outset that by the words “rhetorical” and “dialectical” Noda is referring to the two methods of argument in Plato’s *Protagoras*, namely, the one presented by Protagoras and the other pursued by Socrates.⁴

As all of you know very well, Socrates, being urged by young Hippocrates, comes to visit Protagoras in order to discover what benefit Hippocrates may gain from associating with Protagoras as a teacher. Protagoras’s answer suggests a man’s excellence (*areté*) in both private life and public affairs. Then Socrates asks him to show clearly that excellence can be taught. Protagoras answers by telling a story. His famous oration begins as follows:

Once upon a time there were just the gods; mortal being did not yet exist. And when the appointed time came for them to come into being too, the gods molded them within the earth, mixing together earth and fire and their compounds. And when they were about to bring them out into the light of day, they appointed Prometheus and Epimetheus to equip each kind with the powers it required.⁵

From the creation myth, Protagoras moves to the myth of the origins of human society with conscience/sense of shame (*aidos*) and justice (*diké*), and further argues that the very existence of punishment by laws and correction by elders indicates the possibility of excellence being taught. It is such a lengthy speech by Protagoras that is called by Noda a “rhetorical” argument.

Being amazed by Protagoras’s skill as a speaker, Socrates suggests that he change the style of argument. Socrates says, “Protagoras can not only give splendid long speeches, as he has shown here, but he can also answer questions briefly, and when he asks one himself he waits and listens to the answer, which is a gift that few possess.”⁶

With these words Socrates invites Protagoras into a “dialectical” argument, which begins with the following dialogue. Socrates says:

“... many times in your discourse you spoke of justice and soundness of mind and holiness and all the rest as all summed up as the one thing, excellence. Will you then explain precisely whether excellence is one thing, and justice and soundness of mind and holiness parts of it, or whether all of these that I’ve just mentioned are different names of one and the same thing? This is what I still want to know.”

“That’s an easy question to answer, Socrates,” [Protagoras] said. “Excellence is a single thing, and the things you ask about are parts of it.”

“Do you mean in the way that the parts of a face, mouth, nose, eyes, and ears, are parts of the whole,” I asked, “or like parts of gold, none of which differs from any of the others or from the whole, except in size?”

“The former, I take it, Socrates; the way the parts of the face are related to the whole face.”

“So do some men possess one of these parts of excellence and some another,” I asked, “or if someone has one, must he have them all?”

“Not at all,” he said. “There are many courageous men who are unjust, or just men who are not wise.”

“So are wisdom and courage parts of excellence as well?” I said.

“Most certainly,” he replied. “Wisdom is the most important part.”

This is followed by a lengthy yes-and-no type of dialogue, in which the oration of Protagoras is examined and analyzed into simple theses to reveal the true positions of Protagoras. The above dialogue is not precisely what Aristotle might call “dialectic”; yet I believe that Noda is correct in suggesting a leap from Protagoras to Socrates, i.e., from a rhetorical argument to a kind of dialectical argument, here in Plato’s *Protagoras*.

By “logical argument” Noda is referring to Aristotle’s system of logic, which may be characterized as “axiomatic and deductive logic,” the mainstream of the Western logic. The great Polish historian of logic I. M. Bochenski summarizes the logical doctrines of Aristotle as follows:

1. Aristotle created formal logic. For the first time in history we find in him: (a) a clear idea of universally valid logic law, ... (b) the use of variables, (c) sentential forms which besides variables contain only logical constants.

2. Aristotle constructed the first system of formal logic that we know. This consists exclusively of logical laws, and was developed axiomatically, even in more than one way.
3. Aristotle's masterpiece in formal logic is his syllogistic. This is a system of term-logic consisting of laws, not rules. In spite of certain weaknesses it constitutes a faultlessly constructed system.⁸

Bochenski says that Aristotle "exercised a decisive influence on the history of logic for more than two thousand years." I would like to say that his discovery and application of axiomatic thinking determined the main direction of philosophies and sciences in the West and now in the East, too. Well, one of the most beautiful applications of Aristotle's axiomatization is found in Euclid's *Elements*,⁹ with its definitions (such as those of "point," "line," and so on), postulates, and common notions (or axioms), from which propositions (or, theorems) like Pythagoras's can be deduced through the laws of inference (or deduction).

By now, I hope, it is clear that what Noda meant by those three adjectives—"rhetorical," "dialectical," and "logical"—is the development of the ways of argument in Greek philosophy itself, namely, from Protagoras to Socrates, and from Socrates and Plato to Aristotle. Whether or not those three phases really correspond to the distinct natures of Chinese, Indian, and Greek philosophies is to be examined by specialists in Chinese and Indian philosophies. I would like to pay my debt to my philosophy teacher Noda by examining the three foremost eminent philosophers of Indian Buddhism, namely, Nāgārjuna (ca. 150 CE), Dignāga (ca. 480–530 CE), and Dharmakīrti (ca. 600–660 CE).

II-1. NĀGĀRJUNA AND ARGUMENT BY *REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM*

Nāgārjuna appeared in India about five hundred years after the *parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha. Between the time of the *parinirvāṇa* and that of Nāgārjuna about twenty schools of Buddhism appeared in various parts of India and tried to interpret the teachings of the Buddha in a systematic way—the results of their efforts on the whole may be called by the general term "*abhidharma* philosophy." From those early schools there seem to have split various dissenting groups of Buddhists who started to promulgate a vast number of Buddhist scriptures that had been unknown to the Buddhist community, claiming that they were the true teachings of the Buddha. Those minority dissenting groups

later got the grandiose name of Mahayana Buddhism, meaning “Great Vehicle.”

Nāgārjuna was perhaps the first to articulate the Mahayana Buddhist movement in philosophical terms. He was very critical of *abhidharma* interpretations of Buddha’s teachings, especially the realistic one given by the Sarvāstivādin school. He was also very well aware of the potential danger of the non-Buddhist school of logic called Nyāya and attacked them severely by a method which was not acceptable to contemporary Indian logic. As a result, some of Nāgārjuna’s typical arguments against Nyāya were classified under what the Nyāya called “sophistic refutations/futile rejoinders” (*jāti*); furthermore, Nāgārjuna was often called by non-Buddhists “a great master of destructive criticism” (*mahāvitaṇḍāvādin*).

Nāgārjuna’s strategy is rather simple. First he enumerates all theoretically as well as logically possible propositions; then he examines them one after another and finds some absurdity or error in every case, so that he can deny all of them; thus, he can conclude that reality is beyond our conceptual construction. In his own words, “Everything is empty,” that is, empty of and free from our verbal and conceptual fixations. In short, Nāgārjuna enumerates all the possible propositions exhaustively and denies all of them by means of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga*).¹⁰

Now let us see how Nāgārjuna actually argues. The very first verse of his main work, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, reads as follows: “There is nothing whatsoever anywhere which has arisen from itself, from others, from both, or from no cause.”¹¹ This can be put into the following four negative propositions:

1. It is not the case that there is something somewhere that has arisen from itself.
2. It is not the case that there is something somewhere that has arisen from others, either.
3. It is not the case that there is something somewhere that has arisen from both itself and others.
4. It is not the case that there is something somewhere that has arisen from no cause, either.

Furthermore, these are the negations of the following four propositions:

5. Something has arisen from itself [but not from others].
6. Something has arisen from others [but not from itself].
7. Something has arisen from both itself and others.
8. Something has arisen from no cause [i.e., neither from itself nor from others].

If we change the subject of the above four propositions from “something” to “everything,” proposition (5) corresponds to the Sāṃkhya view of causation that every result inheres in its cause (*satkāryavāda*)—ultimately, everything originates in the primordial material (*pradhāna*); proposition (6) corresponds to the Vaiśeṣika view that a completely new result emerges out of its causes (*asatkāryavāda/ārambhavāda*); proposition (7) corresponds to the traditional *abhidharma* view that everything arises out of its cause and conditions (*hetu-pratyaya-sāmagrī*), or it may represent the Syādvāda of the Jains who claim that a result occurs from itself in one sense and from others in another sense; and proposition (8) refers to the view of those who deny causation altogether, such as that of the Lokāyata, according to whom everything occurs naturally through its own-nature (*svabhāva*) and without any particular cause. Those four positions seem to have been the representative views of causation at the time of Nāgārjuna.

If we symbolize “having arisen from itself” by “A” and “having arisen from others” by “B,” the predicates of propositions (5), (6), (7), and (8) will be represented by $A \& \sim B$, $\sim A \& B$, $A \& B$, and $\sim A \& \sim B$, respectively, which together occupy the four compartments of a Venn diagram. Thus, logically speaking, they exhaust all the possible modes of arising; consequently, it is safe to say that Nāgārjuna succeeds in enumerating all possible theories of causation in *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* I.1.

Such a method of enumeration is called a “tetralemma” (*catuṣkoṭi*), which Nāgārjuna inherited from the Buddhist *abhidharma* tradition. When the concept of $\sim A \& \sim B$ has no referent, the tetralemma will be reduced to a trilemma, and when the concepts A and B are complementary to each other, the tetralemma will be reduced to a dilemma by abandoning both the third and fourth lemmas.

In the following portion of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, chapter I, Nāgārjuna does not give the *reductio ad absurdum* type of argument against the above four positions as he usually does in other chapters. So let us reconstruct the probable *reductio ad absurdum* with the help of commentators.

9. If something were to arise from itself, it would follow that there was no merit in arising. It is in fact incorrect that what has already arisen arises again.¹²
10. If something were to arise from others, it would follow that anything would arise from anything else as darkness from a lamp, which is absurd.¹³
11. If something were to arise from both itself and others, it would follow that there resulted both defects mentioned with reference to the above two propositions.¹⁴
12. If something were to arise from no cause, it would follow that everything would arise from everything all the time, which is impossible.¹⁵

In this way Nāgārjuna and his followers demonstrate that nothing is predicated by any possible mode of arising. Thus, they conclude that there is no arising¹⁶ or that nothing arises in the ultimate sense (*paramārthata*).

Proof by *reductio ad absurdum*, though despised or disregarded by most of the Indian logicians, continued to be utilized by both Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers in their actual doctrinal debates as the most effective means of refuting opponents. Nāgārjuna was at heart against the logical system of his time in India, but, I believe, he himself contributed significantly to the development of logic in India by succeeding in formulating the formal proof of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga*) probably for the first time in India.

II-2. DIGNĀGA AND REASONING FROM ANVAYA AND VYATIREKA (INDUCTIVE REASONING)

About three hundred years after the time of Nāgārjuna, there appeared a Buddhist logician called Dignāga who is regarded as the founder of the “new system of logic” in India. By the time of Dignāga it had become customary among Indian philosophers of any school to argue against each other and to present their doctrines and theories on the basis of logic. Despite the warning of Nāgārjuna against logic, Buddhists, too, adopted the logical methodology, and they were very successful in that. As a matter of fact, the basic system of Buddhist logic together with several innovative theories were established by the

great Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu (ca. 400–480) even before the time of Dignāga.

The reason why Dignāga is called the founder of a “new logic” is that he was the first Indian logician to combine and systematize the two different traditions of logic in India, namely, the tradition of debate (*vāda*) through the five-membered proof (*pañcāvayava*) and that of epistemology, which was focused upon the valid means/sources of knowledge (*pramāṇa*). Unlike his successor Dharmakīrti, Dignāga does not seem to have been much interested in doctrinal debates. Rather, he appears to have tried to establish a new system of logic that can be utilized by philosophers of any school and with any doctrinal belief or metaphysical conviction, whether they are Buddhists or non-Buddhists.

Dignāga’s most important contribution to the development of Indian logic consists of two new theories, namely, the theory of “pervasion” (*vyāpti*) of *probans* (that which is to be proven) by *probandum* (that which proves), which guarantees the successful proof or inference, and the semantic theory of “exclusion” (*apoha*), according to which a word expresses its referent indirectly by excluding the complementary set of the referent. I haven’t the space here to explain those theories in detail. Instead, I would like to introduce a set of proof formulae that Dignāga considers to be valid.

13. Thesis: Sound is impermanent.

Reason: Because it is produced.

Example: Whatever is produced is seen to be impermanent like a pot, and whatever is permanent is seen to be not produced like ether.

Those formulae clearly show the reminiscence of a possible debate procedure in India. First, a proponent presents a thesis that he or she wants to prove, then he or she gives a reason as well as an example to support his or her argument, further he or she applies his or her reason to the topic of his or her thesis and repeats the original thesis as a conclusion. The same procedure will be taken by the opponent as well. We should not take Indian proof formulae to be a kind of syllogism, as a great Russian scholar of Buddhist logic, Stcherbatsky, and others have misunderstood. Of course, we can write a syllogism that resembles the above proof (13) in the following way:

14. Major premise: Whatever is produced is impermanent.
 Minor premise: Sound is produced. Conclusion: Therefore,
 sound is impermanent.

Syllogism (14) represents a typical case of deductive reasoning, which I regard as the mainstream of Western logic begun by Aristotle. I would like to suggest that the proof formulae (13) are fundamentally the results of an inductive reasoning, which I consider to be the essential nature of not only Buddhist logic but also Indian logic in general.

The presence of the formula called “example” in (13) is the most characteristic feature of the Indian proof. At first glance the example formula may resemble the major premise of (14). However, the fact that it contains an expression ‘is seen to be’ suggests that it is a statement of a general rule derived from observation/experience of particular examples, both positive as well as negative.

Following the lead of Richard Hayes, let us call the world of our experience the “inductive domain.” The inductive domain may be divided into two complementary sets, such as the set of impermanent objects and that of permanent objects. We observe that among impermanent objects there are produced items, such as a pot. We also observe that among permanent objects there is an unproduced item, such as ether/space. If we symbolize the property of “being impermanent” by P and that of “being produced” by Q, then we may be able to put the matter in a simpler manner. For example,

15. Where there is P, there is Q, and
 16. Where there is $\sim P$, there is $\sim Q$.

Those two formulae are respectively called *anvaya* and *vyatireka* in India, which are variously translated into modern languages as “positive concomitance” and “negative concomitance,” and “continued presence” and “continued absence.” George Cardona once called those formulae the Indian principle of inductive reasoning and understood them as the means to discover a certain relationship between two items.

Indian thinkers have used a mode of reasoning that involves the related presence (*anvaya*, “continued presence”) and absence (*vyatireka*) of entities as follows:

- (1) a. When X occurs, Y occurs.
 b. When X is absent, Y is absent.

- (2) a. When X occurs, Y is absent.
 b. When X is absent, Y occurs.

If (1 a, b) hold in all instances for X and Y, so that these are shown consistently to occur together, one is entitled to say that a particular relation obtains between the two. Either (1a) or (1b) alone will not justify this, and a claim made on the basis of either can be falsified by showing that (2a) or (2b) holds. One relation that can be established by (1) is that X is a cause of Y.

A special instance of the cause-effect relation involves the use of given speech units and the understanding by a hearer of given meanings. If (1 a, b) hold, the speech unit in question is considered the cause of one's comprehending a meaning, which is attributed to that speech element.¹⁷

Let us take an example from our linguistic experience. When we learn a foreign language, we may be able to find the meaning of a particular expression by inductive reasoning. For example, here are four strings of utterance in Japanese:

17. "otoko no ko,"
 18. "onna no ko,"
 19. "otoko no hito," and
 20. "onna no hito."

They may be taught to correspond to the following four phrases in English, respectively:

- 17.' "a male child,"
 18.' "a female child,"
 19.' "a male adult,"
 20.' "a female adult."

We can observe that the Japanese expression *otoko* is present in both (17) and (19), while absent from (18) and (20), and that the English phrase "male" is present in both (17') and (19'), while absent from (18') and (20'). In short, when the Japanese word *otoko* is uttered, we understand its referent to be a male, and when it is not uttered, we do not understand so. Therefore, we can conclude by reasoning from *anvaya* and *vyatireka* that the Japanese expression *otoko* corresponds to "male" in English.

A similar procedure will reveal that *onna* corresponds to “female,” that *ko* corresponds to “child,” and that *hito* corresponds to “adult.” One remaining problem might be whether or not the Japanese expression *no* corresponds to the indefinite article “a” in English. Both appear in all the cases. The answer is, No, it does not. Japanese *no* is not an article of any sort but a postposition with the function of putting the two phrases in apposition. Thus it is impossible to match the word and its correspondence on the basis of the positive concomitance only. We need the negative concomitance, too, in order to establish the one-to-one relationship between a word and its correspondence.

We can apply the reasoning from *anvaya* and *vyatireka* to other cases. As mentioned by Cardona, we can discover the causal relation between two items. For example, when there is a fire, there is smoke, and when there is no fire, there is no smoke. Thus there are both positive and negative concomitances between a fire and smoke. Therefore, we can conclude that a fire is a cause of smoke. In this connection, K. N. Jayatilleke¹⁸ and others are right in pointing out a certain similarity between the reasoning from *anvaya* and *vyatireka* and J. S. Mill’s methods of agreement and difference. Mill says:

The simplest and most obvious modes of singling out from among the circumstances which precede or follow a phenomenon, those with which it is really connected by an invariable law, are two in number. One is, by comparing together different instances in which the phenomenon occurs.

The other is by comparing instances in which the phenomenon does occur, with instances in other respects similar in which it does not. These two methods may be respectively denominated, the Method of Agreement, and the Method of Difference.¹⁹

Logicians in India, even before Dignāga’s time and as early as in the fourth century CE, started to apply inductive reasoning in order to discover the proper relationship between *probans* and *probandum* or between reason and what is to be proven by the reason. Let us symbolize two properties by H and S. If the following two conditions, namely,

15. Where there is S, there is H, and
16. Where there is ~S, there is ~H

hold between S and H, then H is regarded as the proper *probans*/reason that can prove the *probandum* S.

Dignāga modifies the above two formulae by adding the restrictive particle *eva*, meaning “only,” in the following manner:

21. Only where there is S, there is H, and
22. Where there is \sim S, there is \sim H only.

Statement (21) indicates that the domain of H is restricted to and included in the domain of S; in other words, the domain of H is completely pervaded by the domain of S. Dignāga calls such a relation between H and S “pervasion” (*vyāpti*), that is, the pervasion of H by S, and he regards it as the most essential prerequisite for a valid proof or inference. This is the gist of Dignāga’s theory of “pervasion.”

Statement (22) indicates that the domain of \sim S is restricted to and included in the domain of \sim H. Since the pervasion of \sim S by \sim H is logically equivalent to the pervasion of H by S, both statements (21) and (22) are also logically equivalent. The two statements can be rephrased into the following universal propositions:

23. Whatever is H is S, and
24. Whatever is \sim S is \sim H.

In this way reasoning by *anvaya* and *vyatireka* or inductive reasoning leads to the statement of a general law that can be applied to a particular case under dispute.

If we go back to Dignāga’s proof formulae (13) again, we can reconstruct the following process of reasoning: First, we look around and find some produced objects among impermanent objects but no produced objects whatsoever among permanent objects; from such an experience, we reach a general law that whatever is produced is impermanent within our inductive domain. Then we apply that law to a particular object “sound” with regard to which a dispute whether or not it is permanent is undertaken. Considering the fact that sound is produced, we conclude that sound is impermanent. That is the essence of reasoning or proof adopted by Indian Buddhist as well as non-Buddhist logicians and philosophers.

Now, I would like to remind you of the so-called “problem of induction,” that is, the question whether inductive reasoning can be justified, and if justified, under what conditions. Let me quote from one of the most severe modern critics of inductive methods, Karl Popper. In

one of the appendices of *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, he points out the problem, by referring to Hume's criticism of induction:

Hume argues, "even after the observation of the frequent constant conjunction of objects, we have no reason to draw any inference concerning any object beyond those of which we have had experience." If anybody should suggest that our experience entitles us to draw inferences from observed to unobserved objects, then, Hume says, "I would renew my question, why from this experience we form any conclusion beyond those past instances, of which we have had experience." In other words, Hume points out that we get involved in an infinite regress if we appeal to experience in order to justify any conclusion concerning unobserved instances.²⁰

Was Dignāga aware of the problem of induction? When he discusses how a word expresses its meaning, he acknowledges the positive and negative concomitances between them. Namely, where there is a quadruped animal with two horns, dewlap, and so on, a word "cow" is used, and where there is no such animal, the word "cow" is not used. In this connection, he recognizes that it is impossible to enumerate all the positive instances of application of a certain word, for they can be infinite in number; however, as long as that word is not observed in negative/dissimilar instances (*adarśanamātreṇa*), he thinks, it is perfectly justified to apply it in a conventional way.²¹ In short, a certain linguistic expression can be applied to a group of similar objects, as long as it is not observed to apply to dissimilar groups. A mere non-observation of violation of a linguistic convention seems to be considered by Dignāga to justify the latter. The word "cow" continues to be applied to cows as long as it is not applied to something else.

Since Dignāga regards the process of linguistic communication as a kind of inference, the above argument may also apply to his theory of inference and proof in general. If that is the case, we may be able to characterize general statements in Dignāga's proof formulae, such as "Whatever is produced is impermanent," as hypothetical propositions derived from our past observations of the inductive domain. The proposition is true as long as we do not encounter an object which is produced but permanent. But one single observation of a counter-example or an exceptional case will falsify the proposition. If our interpretation is right, we can further characterize Dignāga's logic as hypothetical reasoning based on induction.

II-3. DHARMAKĪRTI AND REASONING BY ANALOGY

Dignāga's impact upon Indian logic was so great that his system of logic became a kind of model for succeeding logicians and philosophers in India. The theory of pervasion as the foundation of inference and proof was adopted by almost all Indian logicians and became the central doctrine of Indian logic. Nonetheless, Dignāga's overwhelming influence upon Indian logicians did not last for long due to the appearance of another great Buddhist logician called Dharmakīrti.

Although Dharmakīrti was the true successor of the Dignāgian tradition of Buddhist logic, his approach towards logic was quite different from Dignāga's. As I mentioned earlier, Dignāga seems to have tried to establish a kind of logic open to any philosophical belief, whether Buddhist or non-Buddhist. Therefore, we have no record of his debates with non-Buddhist philosophers. Dharmakīrti, on the other hand, seems to have been eager to defend Buddhist doctrines of momentariness, mind-only, omniscience of the Buddha, existence of other world, and so on. In order to do so, he had to modify the logical system of Dignāga.

Although Dignāga advocated the theory of pervasion, he never really discussed on any metaphysical ground how to justify the relation of pervasion between two items within his inductive domain. He seems to have assumed that the inductive domain consists of a kind of hierarchy or a tree of universals/concepts which was more or less commonly accepted by Indian philosophers of his time. The highest universal is "being" or "existence" (*sattā*), which is followed by the three categories of "substance" (*dravya*), "quality" (*guṇa*), and "action" (*karman*); "substance" is further subdivided into those that are made of the earth elements, the water elements, the fire elements, and the wind elements, and so on and so forth. It resembles the system of categories held by the Vaiśeṣika school and the hierarchy of terms assumed by the Indian grammarians, such as Bhartṛhari. Perhaps Dignāga's final resort in determining the relation of pervasion is the way people use a language, in other words, the verbal convention among people. We say, "Whatever is produced is impermanent," because people call produced things "impermanent."

As I discussed above, Dignāga's logic may be characterized as hypothetical reasoning based upon induction—his reasoning is valid as long as there is no counter-example observed. Now, Dharmakīrti was not

very happy with Dignāga's hypothetical argument and criticized the latter tacitly but precisely on the point that mere non-observation of a counterexample could justify the reasoning. Dharmakīrti newly introduced the concept of "essential connection" (*svabhāvapratibandha*) between two items in order to guarantee the relation of pervasion between them. Thus without resorting to commonsense philosophy or people's usage of a language, Dharmakīrti relies upon what he calls an "essential connection," which consists of "causality" and "identity." According to him two items are essentially connected if one is a result of another, or if one is a subset of another. In this way Dharmakīrti sought to remove the hypothetical characteristic of Dignāga's reasoning. As long as either causality or identity is established between two items, we are guaranteed to make a correct inference from one to another, which will not be falsified by our future experience.

Unlike Dignāga, Dharmakīrti was a strong defender of Buddhist doctrines. Doctrinal debates between different schools of philosophy are usually not concerned with our daily experience but with some doctrinal entity, such as the primordial matter of the Sāṃkhya school, which is beyond our experience. Thus, Dharmakīrti recognizes two kinds of inference, namely, inference derived from reality (*vastubalapravṛttānumāna*) and inference based upon scripture (*āgamāśritānumāna*). He often takes recourse to the latter when he is engaged in doctrinal debate. When he tries to prove the existence of something beyond our ordinary experience, he uses what we may call an argument from analogy. For example, he tries to prove the existence of another world, which, for him, is nothing but the continuation of a stream of consciousness after one's death, by arguing that there must be another life after death just as there is consciousness after consciousness every moment during this life time.

Let us look at another argument from analogy in Dharmakīrti. In one of his small treatises called *Establishment of Other Streams of Consciousness* (*Santānāntarasiddhi*), Dharmakīrti tries to defend the existence of other minds even in the idealistic philosophy of the Yogācāra school. There he first presents an argument from the point of view of the realistic school of the Sautrāntikas in the following manner: "Having observed that one's physical or verbal activity is preceded within one's own stream of consciousness by the awareness or intention to move or to speak, one will know the awareness in others because one sees a similar activity of moving or speaking in the others."²² As you

can easily see, this is a typical case of argument from analogy, and in the rest of the treatise Dharmakīrti demonstrates that the same argument can safely be adopted by the idealistic school too, without abandoning their doctrine of mind-only. He refers to one interesting case: Suppose I am pushing from behind a boy on a swing; my intention of giving him a push will result in a certain movement of his body on the swing. Similarly, suppose I am sitting on a swing; my body may move/swing without my intention of moving/swinging it; consequently, we can conclude that not my own but someone else's awareness or intention has resulted in the movement of my body on a swing.

Perhaps it may be interesting to quote in passing again from J. S. Mill a rather lengthy passage which Norman Malcolm once referred to as still the typical argument of knowing other minds from analogy.

By what evidence do I know, or by what considerations am I led to believe, that there exist other sentient creatures; that the walking and speaking figures which I see and hear have sensations and thoughts, or in other words, possess Minds? . . . I conclude that other human beings have feelings like me, because, first, they have bodies like me, which I know, in my own case, to be the antecedent condition of feelings; and because, secondly, they exhibit the acts, and other outward signs, which in my own case I know by experience to be caused by feelings. I am conscious in myself of a series of facts connected by a uniform sequence, of which the beginning is modifications of my body, the middle is feelings, the end is outward demeanour. In the case of other human beings I have the evidence of my senses for the first and last links of the series, but not for the intermediate link. I find, however, that the sequence between the first and last is as regular and constant in those other cases as it is in mine. In my own case I know that the first link produces the last through the intermediate link, and could not produce it without. Experience, therefore, obliges me to conclude that there must be an intermediate link; which must either be the same in others as in myself, or a different one: I must either believe them to be alive, or to be automaton: and by believing them to be alive, that is, by supposing the link to be of the same nature as in the case of which I have experience, and which is in all other respects similar, I bring other human beings, as phenomena, under the same generalizations which I know by experience to be the true theory of my own experience.²³

I find it very interesting to see the parallelism between the nineteenth-century British scholar J. S. Mill (1806–1873), and Indian Buddhist logicians, such as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, here with reference to the

proof of existence of other minds by means of argument from analogy and above with reference to the methods of inductive reasoning.

I do not have enough time to elaborate on the rather complicated system of logic proposed by Dharmakīrti. I just want to add one final remark on his method of argument. Perhaps the most famous proof given by Dharmakīrti is his proof of momentariness (*kṣaṇabhāṅgasiddhi*)—the defense of one of the fundamental doctrines of Buddhism, namely, that everything is impermanent. He seemed to be much concerned with the proof of that thesis, and went back to the problem again and again, finally developing the four sets of proof formulae in order to prove momentariness. His first proof reads as follows:

25. Whatever is existent is momentary just as a pot and others;
 Sound is existent;
 [Therefore, sound is momentary].

Here the first statement, being a universal proposition, does not necessarily sound true at first. It needs to be demonstrated by further proofs. Well, a universal proposition like the above cannot be proven directly because it is by no means possible for a single individual or even for a group of individuals to experience all existent things in the world. Therefore, inductive reasoning cannot help us to establish the first statement above. It can be proven only indirectly. In this connection, Dharmakīrti introduced the good old method of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga*), which, as we have seen, was initiated by Nāgārjuna, and which was rejected or disregarded by most Indian logicians, including Dignāga. Thus, with respect to how to treat *reductio ad absurdum* type of argument, the two great masters of Buddhist logic take different paths again.

III. CONCLUSION: WHO STARTED INDUCTIVE REASONING IN INDIA?

So far I have tried to show you how the Indian Buddhists argued and proved something, by taking examples from the three eminent Buddhist philosophers: Nāgārjuna (second century CE), Dignāga (fifth to sixth century CE), and Dharmakīrti (seventh century CE). Nāgārjuna's argument is characterized by his frequent use of *reductio ad absurdum*. Dignāga tried to establish a system of logic that could be accepted by logicians and philosophers of any school. His method of argument

and that of Indian logic in general is essentially a form of inductive reasoning comparable to, for example, J. S. Mill's system of induction. Dharmakīrti succeeds Dignāga's logic but with some essential modifications. When Dharmakīrti argues for the defense of Buddhist doctrines, he often resorts to argument from analogy, which is again comparable to the usage of J. S. Mill. Dharmakīrti further re-introduces the argument by *reductio ad absurdum* in order to defend the Buddhist doctrine of impermanence.

In short, I would like to characterize Buddhist logic as well as Indian logic in general as inductive reasoning, and to conclude that the most fundamental difference between Indian and Western logic lies in the fact that the former is inductive while the latter is deductive in nature. So, this is my answer to my former philosophy teacher, Noda-sensei, who suggested that Indian logic may be characterized as "dialectic." He was absolutely right to point out that Indian logicians had not developed deductive logic as established by Aristotle, but he did not seem to be aware of the fact that Indian logic was essentially inductive and that it was developed in the seventh century CE to a point comparable to that of a nineteenth-century British scholar.

Now, the last question may be: who was the one who first developed inductive reasoning in India? My quick answer will be: it was either a group of medical doctors who, instead of the magico-ritualistic treatment, started a kind of scientific treatment of patients around the time of the Buddha, or perhaps the Buddha himself. The possible close connection between the rise of a scientific, I mean Ayurvedic, medicine in India and the early Buddhist community has been recently demonstrated by Kenneth Zysk with abundant pieces of evidence.²⁴

Let me finish by quoting one passage from the *Book of the Kindred Sayings* (*Samyutta-nikāya*) of the Buddha, which clearly shows reasoning from *anvaya* and *vyatireka* in the context of the well-known doctrine of the twelve chains of dependent origination.²⁵

At Sāvattthī the Exalted One addressed the brethren, and said: "The well taught Ariyan disciple, brethren, does not [wonder]: How now? What being, what comes to be? From the arising of what, what arises? There being what, does name-and-shape come to be? There being what, does sense come to be? There being what, does contact come to be? . . . or feeling? or craving? or grasping? or becoming? or birth? or decay-and-death?

"Nay, brethren, the well taught Ariyan disciple has come to know, without depending upon another, that here: this being, that comes to

be; from the arising of this, that arises. There being consciousness, name-and-shape comes to be. There being name-and-shape, sense comes to be. There being sense, contact comes to be. Thus too comes feeling to be, and craving, grasping, becoming, birth, decay-and-death. Thus it is he knows that of such is the arising of the world.

“Nor does the Ariyan disciple, brethren, [wonder]: How now? There not being what, what does not come to be? From the ceasing of what does what cease? There not being what, does name-and-shape not come to be? There not being what, does sense not come to be? There not being what, does contact not come to be? . . . or feeling? or craving? or grasping? or becoming? or birth? or decay-and-death? Nay, brethren, the well taught Ariyan disciple has come to know, without depending upon another, that here: this not being, that does not come to be. From the ceasing of this, that ceases. That there not being consciousness, name-and-shape does not come to be. That there not being name-and-shape, sense does not come to be. That there not being sense, contact does not come to be. That thus too feeling does not come to be, nor craving, nor grasping, nor becoming, nor birth, nor decay-and-death. Thus it is he knows that thus this world ceases.

“When, brethren, the Ariyan disciple thus knows as it really is the coming to pass and the passing away of the world, he is what we call Ariyan disciple who has won the view, won vision, has arrived at this Norm, sees this Norm, his is the knowledge of the trained man, the lore of the trained man, has won to the stream of the Doctrine; he is Ariyan with insight of revulsion, he stands knocking at the door of the Deathless.”²⁶

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Profs. Jonathan Silk, Richard Hayes, and Tom Tillmans for checking my English as well as giving many invaluable suggestions. I shall discuss in a future paper the nature of Indian logic, following their suggestion to compare it with Toulmin's ideas in *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge University Press, 1958).
2. M. Noda, "The Three Traditions of Philosophers" (in Japanese), *Tetsugaku no Mittsuno Dento* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1974), 56–73.
3. Wing-Tsit Chan, trans. and ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 4th printing (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 209–210.
4. C. C. W. Taylor, trans., *Plato Protagoras* (Oxford: Clarendon Plato Series, 1976); B. A. F. Hubbard and E. S. Karnofsky, *Plato's Protagoras, A Socratic Commentary* (London: Duckworth, 1982).
5. Taylor, *Plato Protagoras*, 13.
6. *Ibid.*, 21.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Ivo Thomas, trans. and ed., *A History of Formal Logic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961), 98.
9. Sir Thomas L. Heath, trans., *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements* (New York: Dover Publications, 1956).
10. A similar method of argument was utilized by non-Buddhist schools of Indian philosophy. They called it "method of elimination" (*pariśeṣa*).
11. *na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāḥ nāpy ahetuta. | utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvā. kva cana ke cana ||*
12. *Prasannapadā*, 13.7–8. L. de la Vallée Poussin, ed., *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās de Nāgārjuna avec la Prasannapadā Commentaire de Candrakīrti*, Bibliotheca Buddhica IV (Osanabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970).
13. *Ibid.*, 36.6ff.
14. *Ibid.*, 38.1.
15. *Ibid.*, 38.10–11.
16. *Ibid.*, 39.6: *nāsty utpāda*.
17. George Cardona, "On Reasoning from Anvaya and Vyatireka in Early Advaita," in *Studies in Indian Philosophy, A Memorial Volume in Honour of Pundit Sukhalji Sanghvi*, eds. D. Malvania and N. J. Shah (Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1980), 79.

18. K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963), 146–147.
19. John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive: Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence and the Methods of Scientific Investigation*, 2 vols. (London: John W. Parker, West Strand, 1843), 1:450.
20. Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1959), 369. Cf. David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), 91, 139.
21. Richard Hayes, *Dignāga on the Interpretation of Signs*, Studies of Classical India 9 (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1987), 297–298:

Association (*anvaya*) and dissociation (*vyatireka*) are the two ways that a verbal symbol expresses its object. They consist respectively in applying to what is similar and in not applying to what is dissimilar.

It is not necessary to say that a verbal symbol applies to every instance of what is similar, because in some cases it is not possible to express an extension that is unlimited. But it is possible to say that it does not occur in the dissimilar—although it too is unlimited—simply on the basis of its not being observed to apply to any dissimilar instance. For this reason, because a term is not observed to apply to anything other than that to which it is related, its expression of its own object is said to be a negative inference. . . .
22. See Hidenori Kitagawa, “A Refutation of Solipsism (Annotated Translation of the *Santānāntarasiddhi*),” in *Indo Koten Ronrigaku no Kenkyu – Jinna no Taikei – (A Study of Classical Indian Logic—A System of Dignāga)* (Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan, 1965), 405–579.
23. Norman Malcolm, “Knowledge of Other Minds,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 55, no. 23 (1958): 969; J. S. Mill, *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton’s Philosophy and of the Principal Philosophical Questions Discussed in His Writings*, 3rd ed. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1867), 237–238.
24. Kenneth Zysk, *Asceticism and Healing in Ancient India, Medicine in the Buddhist Monastery* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
25. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, trans., *The Nidāna Book*, vol. 2 (London: Pali Text Society, 1952), 54–55.
26. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, trans., *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Saṃyutta Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, vol. 2 (London: Pali Text Society, 1922), 54–55.

An Instance of Dependent Origination: Are Krishnamurti's Teachings *Buddhadharma*?

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THE CLOSE CONJUNCTION between Krishnamurti's thought and the teachings of Buddhism raises some provocative questions. My hope is to initiate discussion on the implications of these similarities, which appear to blur the lines between what is conventionally called Buddhism, and studied as such, and what may more broadly be regarded as *buddhadharma*, or *buddhavadana*.¹

Jiddu Krishnamurti was born into a brahmin family in 1895 in South India.² His father worked for the Theosophical Society, and so the young Krishnamurti was often seen in or around the beautiful 260-acre estate of the society's headquarters at Adyar, near Chennai (Madras). Theosophy ("divine wisdom"), which the Theosophical Society promoted and still promotes, is based on a tolerant, non-sectarian approach to religious truth.³ Among their esoteric teachings is the notion that humanity is evolving towards a state of "Universal Brotherhood," marked by a sequential evolution of seven Root-Races. This evolution is furthered along by the efforts of great Masters who periodically appear on earth to promulgate teachings and imbue humankind with spiritual energy. Through a series of graded initiations, members of the esoteric section of the Theosophical Society became part of the Great White Brotherhood, a harbinger of the Universal Brotherhood to come. Periodically, at the beginning of a large spiritual evolutionary cycle, a great master, known as the World Teacher or *jagadguru*, was believed to appear. In the late 1800s, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a co-founder of the Theosophical Society, predicted that the beginning of such a cycle, namely the Sixth Root-Race, was close at hand, and would emerge in southern California.

During Krishnamurti's boyhood, Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, a former priest of the Church of England, headed the Theosophical Society. It was Leadbeater who spotted the fourteen-year-old Krishnamurti on the beach, outside the headquarter's compound, and psychically discerned that his aura was "without a stitch of selfishness." The boy was soon adopted by the society and systematically groomed to be the physical vehicle for the next *jagadguru*, or World Teacher. This training included yoga and other forms of psycho-physical exercise, but also astral travel to meet with disembodied Masters of Theosophy, such as Master Kuthumi. Krishnamurti was subsequently taken to England, studied briefly at the Sorbonne, and eventually settled in the Ojai Valley in southern California. A remarkable event occurred in 1929, twenty years after his discovery, when he disbanded the Order of the Star, a subset organization of the Theosophical Society, and then left the society in order to offer his own teachings. Krishnamurti traveled extensively, speaking an average of 175 times a year to crowds ranging from as few as fifty to several thousand people at a time, until his death in 1986 at the age of ninety-one.⁴

Some scholars find close resonance between Krishnamurti's teachings and other philosophical systems, such as Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta.⁵ However, in both Krishnamurti's life and his teachings, the greatest similarities are with Buddhism. This parallel is not incidental, but intentional, and although there are important differences between Krishnamurti's teachings and Buddhism, the conjunctions are certainly compelling. Some of the more salient of these similarities are discussed below.

Both of the founders of the Theosophical Society were strongly aligned with and well disposed towards Buddhism. The Russian-born psychic Madame Blavatsky claimed to have traveled to Tibet between 1868 and 1870, during which time she received esoteric teachings from various Masters. There are numerous strands of Buddhist doctrines in her writings. Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, the other founder of the Theosophical Society, is well known for his efforts in the Buddhist revival in Sri Lanka. He wrote a Buddhist catechism, still in use in Sri Lanka today, and is remembered for founding dozens of Buddhists schools in the country. The strong Buddhist flavor in Theosophy carried from Blavatsky and Olcott to Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, the society's subsequent leaders. In fact, the *jagadguru*, whose presence was eagerly awaited by the Theosophists, and whose arrival they hoped to

inaugurate through the person of Krishnamurti, was none other than the Lord Maitreya, the next teaching Buddha, as foretold by Buddha Śākyamuni. It is he who would introduce the teachings that would usher the spiritual evolutionary development of the Sixth Root-Race.

Just as the *jātakas* recount tales of the Buddha's previous lives, Charles Leadbeater, through his psychic journeys, began to investigate the past lives of Krishnamurti, and to publish these in Theosophical journals. Over a period of years, forty-eight past lives were uncovered spanning a period from 70,000 BCE to 694 CE. The past lives were remarkably consistent, demonstrating the career of a bodhisattva with unflinching commitment.⁶ The Theosophical Society, by this time, was not a fringe religious organization in a geographical backwater. Annie Besant's report in 1907 counted 677 Lodges worldwide, and the membership subsequently swelled to some 45,000 with the promise offered by the young Krishnamurti.⁷ Membership included some of the most powerful and wealthy members of both Eastern and Western societies, and so during his tutelage with the Theosophical Society, Krishnamurti enjoyed such company as that of the immensely rich American heiress, Miss Mary Dodge, and the Countess De La Warr. He was virtually adopted by Lady Emily Lutyens, daughter of the First Earl of Lytton, a former viceroy of India. Lady Emily was the husband of Sir Edwin Lutyens, the architect of New Delhi.⁸ So Krishnamurti's life was very much that of a young British aristocrat. He exercised at Sandow's gymnasium, visited art galleries, the ballet, the races, and the opera, played golf, and drove fast cars. Baron Philip van Pallandt donated the Castle Eerde in Switzerland, along with its five thousand surrounding acres, to Krishnamurti for his use. In his bondage to a materialistic royal lifestyle, we note a parallel between the life of Krishnamurti and that of the young Siddhārtha Gautama.

Krishnamurti commented in his letters to Lady Emily that he was moved by the tales of the Buddha's life as recounted in such writings as Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* and in Paul Carus's *The Gospel of the Buddha*. Krishnamurti moved to California in 1922 with his brother Nitya, who was suffering from tuberculosis, where it was hoped that the dry climate would help Nitya's condition. There Krishnamurti began to feel the weight of his responsibilities as the World Teacher and plunged into his meditations with intensity. He underwent a series of powerful and sometimes painful experiences, which he called "the process," which culminated in a profound transforming insight while

he sat in meditation under a large pepper tree. His brother Nitya later wrote that Krishnamurti's experience reminded him of the "Tathāgata under the Bo tree."⁹ Of this experience, Krishnamurti wrote, "I was supremely happy, for I have seen. Nothing could ever be the same. . . . I have touched compassion which heals all sorrow and suffering; it is not for myself but for the world."¹⁰

Krishnamurti initially took on the role that had been created for him. He began to speak as if the presence of the Buddha Maitreya had entered into him, and among the large crowds that he attracted were many who regarded him as nothing less than divine. However, in 1925, when his brother Nitya died, a major change grew apparent in Krishnamurti's words and actions. He began to distance himself progressively from Theosophy and the Theosophical agenda. In a speech given in 1927 he said:

When I was a small boy, I used to see Sri Krishna, with the flute, as he is pictured by the Hindus, because my mother was a devotee of Krishna. When I grew older and met with Bishop Leadbeater and the T. S. [Theosophical Society], I began to see the Master K. H. [Kuthumi], again in the form put before me, the reality from their point of view. . . . Later on, as I grew, I began to see the Lord Maitreya. That was two years ago, and I saw him constantly in the form put before me. Now lately, it has been the Buddha whom I have been seeing, and it is my glory to be with Him. I have been asked what I mean by "the Beloved." I will give a meaning, an explanation which you will interpret as you please. To me it is all—it is Sri Krishna, it is the Master K. H., it is the Lord Maitreya, it is the Buddha, and yet it is beyond all these forms. . . . What you are troubling about is whether there is such a person as the World Teacher who has manifested Himself in the body of a certain person, Krishnamurti. . . . My purpose is not to create discussions on authority, on the manifestations of the personality of Krishnamurti, but to give you the waters that shall wash away your sorrows, your petty tyrannies, your limitations, so that you will be free, so that you will eventually join that ocean where there is no limitation.¹¹

. . . I hold that there is an eternal Life, which is the Source and the Goal, the beginning and the end, and yet it is without end or beginning. In that Life alone is there fulfilment. And anyone who fulfils that Life has the key to Truth without limitation. That Life is for all. Into that Life, the Buddha, the Christ have entered. From my point of view, I have attained, I have entered into that Life. That Life has no form, no limitation. And to that Life everyone must return.¹²

This speech is quoted in some detail because these are some of the few instances in which Krishnamurti discusses “himself.” In most of his later discourses, and it is through these that most people know of his teachings, he would rarely refer to himself, his past, or his realizations, focusing almost completely on his message. So the vast majority of people who have read Krishnamurti are quite unaware of his early life with the Theosophists. Krishnamurti’s process of distancing himself from Theosophy culminated in his famous address to the Order of the Star in 1929, in Switzerland at Castle Eerde, which he subsequently returned to Baron van Pallandt. He said:

I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect. That is my point of view and I adhere to it absolutely and unconditionally. Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organized; nor should any organization be formed to lead or coerce people along any particular path. . . . [Y]ou will probably form other Orders; you will continue to belong to other organizations searching for Truth. . . . If an organization be created for this purpose, it becomes a crutch, a weakness, a bondage, and must cripple the individual, and prevent him from growing, from establishing his uniqueness, which lies in the discovery for himself of that absolute, unconditioned Truth. . . . Because I am free, unconditioned, whole, not the part, not the relative, but the whole Truth that is eternal, I desire those, who seek to understand me, to be free, not to follow me, not to make out of me a cage which will become a religion, a sect. . . . I have now decided to disband the Order, as I happen to be its Head. You can form other organizations and expect someone else. With that I am not concerned, nor with creating new cages, new decorations for those cages. My only concern is to set men absolutely, unconditionally free.

This speech highlights both a parallel with the historical Buddha’s life, and a dramatic difference from it. Krishnamurti’s actions during this period reflect a renunciation that some have compared with Siddhārtha Gautama’s renunciation when he left Kapilavastu and his princely inheritance. Krishnamurti, who had gone from relative poverty and obscurity, to fame, wealth, and social prestige, was at that time also being virtually worshipped by many as an embodiment of the Buddha Maitreya. His renunciation of all that wealth and adulation was certainly noteworthy. In contrast to the Buddha, however, Krishnamurti did not form a *saṃgha*, but disbanded one instead. He

already had a worldwide organization at his disposal, manned in every region by very influential persons who were eager to carry out his instructions. It was certainly equivalent to two sections of the four-fold assembly, namely the *upāsaka* and *upāsikā saṃgha*. If Krishnamurti was ambitious to form a religious organization committed to him and his teachings, he certainly could not have hoped for a better foundation. Yet, he renounced it. Quite tellingly, however, Krishnamurti did not renounce his material, social, and spiritual status to escape into a simple, secular life, but to live more honestly a life that was consistent with his “realization” of Truth. Like the Buddha, he spent the rest of his life giving discourses, meeting visitors, and answering questions. He wrote a few books, but most of his publications are transcripts of his oral discourses.¹³ In the course of his life he eventually reconciled with the Theosophical Society, which has never quite recovered from the blow delivered by his departure. He had significant influences on such notables as Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India (as well as Indira and Rajiv Gandhi), and the theoretical physicist, David Bohm.¹⁴

Thus Krishnamurti’s life does not incidentally parallel that of the historical Buddha, but was actually shaped and manipulated to resemble it in some ways. One might suggest that by renouncing his power and privilege he paralleled the life of Siddhārtha Gautama even more than his Theosophical Society mentors had imagined, but by disbanding the Order that they had begun to develop for him and denouncing the value of any religious organization he diverged from the historical Buddha, also in a way unimagined by his mentors.

The essence of Krishnamurti’s teachings on insight shows remarkable parallels with the crux of Buddhist teachings. Krishnamurti talked about many things in his long career, and his work has ramifications in such fields as psychology, education, and philosophy. However, almost all of his teachings converge on the urgent necessity for the individual to undergo a profound psychological transformation that frees consciousness from a conditioned state into one that is liberated or unconditioned. Furthermore, this pivotal transformation, or insight, cannot be brought about through any purposeful action undertaken by the self, such as contrived meditative practices of any kind, since all such actions reinforce the self. Practice intrinsically accepts the illusion of time and of progress, and thus offers the conditioned self (i.e., the ego) a sustained existence as it seeks to improve spiritually, to develop

greater clarity, to grow in goodness, and so on. All these images of development and progress fundamentally divide what Krishnamurti calls “what-is” from an imaginary “what will be,” and this division or dualism generates the matrix for psychological conflict and suffering. Insight, however, frees the conditioned mind from its propensities to escape from “what-is,” liberating it into the unconditioned, inconceivable movement of “what-is.”

This is, of course, a terse summary of Krishnamurti’s teachings, which were never delivered as a simple intellectual scheme to be learned and followed. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of Krishnamurti’s teachings does appear to render clear the importance of pivotal or total insight in the transformation of consciousness. This is particularly evident in published conversations that Krishnamurti had with David Bohm in the last years of both of their lives.¹⁵ Bohm was a renowned theoretical physicist whose conception of the “implicate order,” influenced by his readings and conversations with Krishnamurti, has been gaining some notoriety in the last few decades. Bohm’s lines of questioning were systematic and provide the reader with a clearer sense of the continuities and consistency in Krishnamurti’s teachings. In those conversations with David Bohm, Krishnamurti used concepts such as Mind, “with a big M,” to speak of the unconditioned state, although all such terms are only concepts and thus fundamentally part of the conditioned or relative truth concerning reality.

As difficult as it is to make a case for having extracted the kernel of Krishnamurti’s thought, it is far more difficult to do so for Buddhism, particularly since we do not have the full unadulterated corpus of the teachings of one man, but a 2,500-year history of Buddhisms. To simplify matters, rather than compare the teachings of one man with a global religious tradition with a long history of sophisticated philosophical notions, widely diverse social configurations, and so on, I use a simple seminal text to serve as a basis for comparison.

Krishnamurti’s use of terms such as “Mind” and “Insight” led me via Vijñānavāda and Yogācāra to *tathāgatagarbha* writings within the Cittamātra school, and ultimately to *The Awakening of Faith*, the Chinese work attributed to Aśvaghōṣa.¹⁶ *The Awakening of Faith* is a classic and succinct exposition of central ideas in Mahayana, and thus serves as an ideal text for comparison. The parallels are remarkable. For instance, *The Awakening of Faith* states that those

Who have fulfilled the expedient mean will experience the oneness in an instant; they will become aware of how the inceptions of mind arise, and will be free from the rise of any thought. Since they are far way from even subtle thoughts, they are able to have an insight into the original nature of Mind.¹⁷

There are many other similarities between Krishnamurti's teachings (when analyzed and systematized) and the kind of succinct presentation of Mahayana doctrine as found in *The Awakening of Faith*.¹⁸ The thrust of this paper, however, is not to present an argument about these similarities, but to inquire into some of their implications.

When we consider the close parallels between Krishnamurti's life and the Buddha's, and if we concede that despite certain important differences, such as the value of a path or a religious community, there are also equally dramatic similarities in their teachings; one may certainly ask what the relationship is between the two. A simple answer might be: There is no real relationship between the two, because Krishnamurti is not a Buddhist and therefore is not teaching Buddhism. While this would be a convenient fence for a scholar to erect around his or her field of study, the matter is not resolved that easily. For instance, Krishnamurti's teachings have attracted Buddhists and have on occasions influenced their thought.¹⁹ Of course, the similarities between Buddhism and Krishnamurti have sometimes provoked strong negative reactions. For instance, P. M. Rao, in an article in *MahaBodhi*, criticized some statements made by the Venerable Shanti Bhadra Thera, who in a previous paper published in *MahaBodhi* had said:

To control the mind according to a certain pattern or mould is simply to imprison it; there is no freedom in such devices. It is by passive and alert observation of the ways of the mind without condemnation or justification that the mind could experience a stillness and freedom not bound by time.²⁰

These, according to Rao, were not the Buddha's teachings, but a terminological syncretism that smacked of Krishnamurti's language. While some, such as Rao, are concerned that Krishnamurti's teachings are creeping into Buddhism and distorting the understanding of the Buddha's teachings, others have suggested that certain forms of Buddhism may enable one to better understand Krishnamurti's thought.²¹

Another significant exemplar of the effect of Krishnamurti on some Buddhist teachers is Samdong Rimpoche, former director of the

Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, in Sarnath. As young man, he and a friend would regularly visit Rajghat (one of the Krishnamurti Centres in India, located near Sarnath) to hear Krishnamurti talk. They thought of Krishnamurti as a sort of Nāgārjuna in the flesh. Krishnamurti's teachings in vernacular English were somehow more accessible than the language of the Buddhist texts that he was studying. Krishnamurti's teachings enabled them to understand Nāgārjuna better.²² Samdong Rimpoche is and has for sometime been a trustee of the Krishnamurti Foundation of India. He also confided to me that he was philosophically against the tradition of recurrent recognized incarnations of lamas that exists in many branches of Tibetan Buddhism. He himself is the fifth or sixth incarnation of the Samdong Rimpoches. Although there are political rationales for his perspective on reincarnating lamas, one wonders to what extent these ideas have been influenced by Krishnamurti, whose renunciation of his role as a vehicle for Lord Maitreya was somewhat akin to a recognized incarnate lama doing the same thing.

The second notable example is that of Toni Packer, who began studying Zen with Roshi Philip Kapleau at the Rochester Zen Centre. Viewed by many as Kapleau's clear successor, Toni Packer, who was even co-leader of the Rochester Center with Kapleau, left the center after encountering Krishnamurti's teachings. She now teaches at the Springwater Center in New York, where she no longer calls herself a teacher and makes no special claims to authority. I offer these examples only to point to the entanglement between Buddhism and Krishnamurti at certain margins of the tradition. Perhaps entanglement is a poor choice of words, and interpenetration might be more appropriate. In keeping with Buddhist terminology, one might suggest that Krishnamurti's life and teachings are an intriguing instance of *pratītya-samutpāda* (dependent origination). And perhaps the margins are not quite so marginal. Samdong Rimpoche currently is Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister) of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Second to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Samdong Rimpoche is arguably the most recognized Tibetan lama, among Tibetans. And since Philip Kapleau is one of the major contributors to the Zen tradition in North America, his heir-apparent Toni Packer's departure from Zen Buddhism indicates a noteworthy influence by Krishnamurti at the heart of the North American Zen tradition. Thus, if the teachings of Krishnamurti and some forms of Mahayana Buddhism resonate closely enough to

harmonize (or at least interact) with each other, one is led to address other derivative questions.

To what extent might Krishnamurti's teachings be regarded as *buddhadharma* or *buddhavadana*? Again, the easy answer is to dismiss the question on the grounds that only the Buddha's teachings may be regarded as dharma, and only his words may be regarded as *buddhavadana*. There is certainly evidence in Buddhist scriptures to identify Śākyamuni Buddha alone with the promulgation of dharma. However, there are also instances of persons other than the Buddha speaking dharma (and by extension sutra). By using the terms *buddhadharma* or *buddhavadana*, I am trying to distinguish between those who actually present new teachings on the dharma versus those who are merely purveyors of the historical Buddha's teachings. MacQueen identifies three types of certification granted to non-Buddha dharma speakers in the early literature: approval after the event, approval before the event, and authorization of persons. In the first type, the hearer of a discourse repeats it verbatim to the Buddha, who gives his approval, saying that he would have said the same thing under those circumstances. In the second type, the Buddha invites someone to give a discourse on his behalf, a kind of "*buddhavadana* by permission." And in the third type, although no authorization is given, the Buddha has previously spoken about this great disciple's wisdom so that their words carry a pre-certified sense of authority.²³ Resonating with these acceptable categories, the *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* states:

By 'dharma' is meant that which the Buddha has spoken and that which the Buddha has certified. By 'that which the Buddha has spoken' is meant that which the Buddha has personally and with his own mouth spoken; by 'that which the Buddha has certified' is meant that which the Buddha's disciples or others have spoken and which has been certified by the Buddha.²⁴

Of course, the first two types of certification were only possible while the Buddha was alive, and the third type would end after the passing of the Great Disciples, effectively placing a seal on sutra production. There are, however, examples found in the *Sūtra-piṭaka* of a weakening of this closure through the concepts of "inspired speech" (*pratibhāna*). In *pratibhāna*, a disciple may be inspired to speak dharma based on high states of consciousness, or on their innate creative faculties. There is also, of course, the dramatic and fairly well known statement found in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, which opens the door to what may be considered

as *buddhavaṇṇa*. There, in a conversation with Upāli, the Buddha says,

“The Doctrines of which you may know: These doctrines lead one to complete weariness, ending, calm, knowledge, the awakening, the cool [i.e., *nibbāna*],’—regard them unreservedly as Dhamma, the discipline, the word of the Teacher.”²⁵

As MacQueen points out, this opens the door to “a purely functional understanding of *buddhavaṇṇa*.”²⁶

Certainly Mahayana Buddhism draws upon such statements to legitimize its own corpus of sutras. In the eighth century CE, the Buddhist monk Śāntideva quotes a sutra that expands the concept of *pratibhāna* (“inspired utterance”) to actually be “the word of the Buddhas” if they comply with four factors: “(i) [the utterance] is connected with truth, not untruth; (ii) it is connected with the Dharma, not that which is not the Dharma; (iii) it brings about the renunciation of moral taints [*kleśa*] not their increase; and (iv) it shows the laudable qualities of *nirvāṇa*, not those of the cycle of rebirth [*saṃsāra*].”²⁷ Paul Williams notes the thrust of such Mahayana attitudes succinctly by saying, “The Mahāyāna took the Buddha’s assertion that the Dharma should guide his followers after his death, and stressed that the Lord has described the Dharma as whatever leads to enlightenment, that is, whatever is spiritually helpful. What is spiritually helpful will vary considerably, depending on person, time, and place.”²⁸ This line of argument would very likely qualify Krishnamurti’s teachings as dharma.

In another avenue for the origins of dharma discourse delivered by someone other than the Buddha, Paul Williams draws our attention to the *Pratyutpanna-sūtra*. That sutra enjoins the meditator to recollect a buddha (in this sutra’s case it is the Buddha Amitāyus), visualizing him in his pure land surrounded by bodhisattvas and preaching the doctrine. The practitioner concentrates day and night for some seven days.²⁹ Charles Willemsen has noted that this is a meditative visualization wing of early nenbutsu practice, whose other wing, which focuses on the invocation of the name of the Buddha, later becomes central in such sects as Jōdo Shinshū.³⁰

But returning to our sutra, after this intense seven-day meditation, meditators may see the Buddha Amitāyus in a vision or dream and actually hear the dharma. They are even able to question the Buddha while in this absorption, and are capable of receiving undeclared words of the dharma. After emerging from that *samādhi* (contemplative absorption),

they are able to expound “widely to others those Dharmas as [they have] heard, retained, and mastered.”³¹ Remember Krishnamurti’s statements made in those early years after his awakening: “Later on, as I grew, I began to see the Lord Maitreya. That was two years ago, and I saw him constantly in the form put before me. Now lately, it has been the Buddha who I have been seeing, and it is my glory to be with Him.”³² Thus, from the *Pratyutpanna-sūtra*’s perspective as well, Krishnamurti indirectly evoked identification between his words and the dharma.

My excursus into these areas has drawn attention to some of the many levels upon which Krishnamurti’s teachings may be regarded as *buddhavadana* or *buddhadharma*. Krishnamurti, as the Theosophical Society originally configured him, was molded on a conception of the Buddha Maitreya, as envisioned by his Theosophical mentors. Even in the posture he assumed when delivering his discourses (outside of India), seated on a simple straight-backed chair, he evoked the traditional representations of Maitreya. However, Krishnamurti offers yet another unusual, if not unique, twist in the efforts to categorize him. Of course, this problem of categorization is a scholarly one, and one that Krishnamurti himself dismissed. After his break with the Theosophical Society, Krishnamurti no longer used or legitimated the vocabulary of Theosophy or even Buddhism. Although he mentioned the Buddha on occasion in conversation, he did not refer to himself as Maitreya, or his teachings as dharma. In other words, he did not portray himself (and it is his post-Theosophical persona that is best known to the world) as in any way related to the Theosophical agenda of being the vehicle for the Buddha Maitreya. In fact, he dismissed any attempts to compare his teachings with those of the Buddha and Buddhism, stating that such comparisons were not particularly conducive to the realization of Truth. Poignant encounters on these issues are evident in his conversations with Buddhists and Buddhist scholars, such as Walpola Rahula, who frequently pointed out these similarities as they arose. What is clear from those discussions, however, is Krishnamurti’s insistence that even a deep intellectual understanding of a Buddhist teaching on Truth is not the same as “insight” into the essence of Truth.³³

Recapping some of the previous material, it would seem that Krishnamurti’s teachings do have enough resonance with the Buddha’s teachings to be regarded as dharma. Scholarly analysis of the essence of his teachings certainly uncovers unequivocal parallels between the two teachings. Furthermore, his teachings have influenced influential

practitioners and purveyors of Buddhism. His teachings are close enough to Buddhism to help some people understand the teachings of Buddhism through Krishnamurti, or vice versa; and they are even close enough to be accused of being the same thing. Furthermore, Krishnamurti's early life was directly shaped by the Theosophists to conform to a Buddhistically inspired vision of the next teacher of the Way, the Buddha Maitreya.

What makes Krishnamurti distinct from other would-be Maitreyas, of which there has been no shortage in the history of Buddhism, is that he did not continue to teach Buddhism, but instead taught what might arguably be called dharma, writ large.³⁴ However, Krishnamurti felt that certain essential elements in the Tathāgata's message were distorted, misinterpreted, or misappropriated over time. This is consistent with a Buddhist notion that the dharma will degenerate over time. The well known Maitreya candidates, who arose in the centuries after Śākyamuni's departure, were often great monks or bodhisattva-kings who attempted to revive the dharma, but from well within the Buddhist mold. In other words, they promoted Buddhism, lineages, the order, scriptures, and a fairly full corpus of the tradition of Buddhism. In Krishnamurti, however, we see a figure who attempted to revive dharma, but not Buddhism. One wonders if there were other such figures through the history of Buddhism, whose life and teachings were on the margins, and thus marginalized by the Buddhist tradition (because they were not Buddhists), or are even currently on the margins and marginalized by scholars of religion studying Buddhism.

Or is Krishnamurti unique, both in his realization and his teaching and its effects on Buddhism? Although there are innate problems in trying to ascertain the validity and nature of someone's realization, there is a downside to considering Krishnamurti's realization unique, because he can also thus be effectively marginalized. For instance, some notable voices, such as P. D. Ouspensky (the disciple of the Russian mystic George Gurdjieff) and Father Bede Griffiths (the Christian monk who was drawn to Advaita Vedānta), held that Krishnamurti's realization was a unique and singular event. In other words, they imply that Krishnamurti had something unique happen to him and thus his urgent call for people to undergo such a profound (but virtually impossible) transformation, without offering them any method or institutional support for its attainment, is unreasonable and self-serving.³⁵ However, Krishnamurti's teachings do not appear to be self-

promotional. Nor do they highlight his personal realization as something unique. His message is pointedly about the active exploration of the very real possibility of one's own transformation through insight, apart from the constraints of following any previously trammelled religious path. Krishnamurti equated this insight with that attained by the Buddha, and which thus is the ultimate goal of all Buddhists.

If one tries to apply some traditional Buddhist categories to Krishnamurti, his message is definitely not a call to follow the *śravakayāna*, the "way of the listeners." Nor is it a call to the *bodhisattvayāna*, because his teachings dismiss all notions of the progressive development or levels of attainment that we often associate with that approach. It is a call to all persons to awaken, through insight, to a state akin to supreme buddhahood without following the Buddha, Buddhism, or even Krishnamurti. In some ways it resembles a call to the *pratyekabuddhayāna*, the "way of the solitary buddha."

For religious studies scholars engaged in anthropological studies of "seekers" of the "enlightenment" experience, Krishnamurti's teachings offer an interesting case. There are many persons worldwide who have been influenced by his teachings. These persons are keenly interested in the "nirvanic" transformation to which he points, but do not claim allegiance to any teacher or organization, not even to Krishnamurti. Are they closet Buddhists? Probably not, because technically one must take refuge in the Buddha, the dharma, and the *saṃgha* to be a Buddhist, none of which they would agree to constitute part of their approach. And yet, in fundamental ways they are seekers of a similar goal, nirvana. And they have definitely been shaping, although indirectly, the nature of Buddhist discourse along the way. One wonders if there were other such movements of "shadow Buddhists" in the course of Buddhist history.

This essay thus concludes with a series of questions. Have there been, in the history of Buddhism, figures who presented teachings with uncanny similarities to Buddhism, but whose teachings have not been classified as Buddhist?³⁶ Various Zen Buddhist masters come to mind, because their teachings are centered on the enlightenment experience. However, their affiliations to particular transmissions, lineages, techniques, and so on, grant them a clear place within the Buddhist tradition. But have there been peripheral Buddhisms, shadow Buddhisms, shadow dharmas, parallel dharmas, and so on, in the course of its history, and what do we know about these "liminal dharmas"? We know

that philosophical differences, or issues of discipline, did lead to breaks within the *saṃgha*, but did differences ever lead certain groups completely out of the Buddhist fold? What do we know about such groups and their ideas?³⁷

The modern situation offers some intriguing examples of teachers who might fit this bill, although their messages and orientations need to be examined closely and are fraught with controversy. Bracketing assertions about the validity of the actual attainments of any of these teachers, or even the validity of their teachings, it is nevertheless worthwhile to speculate on the *buddhavacana* propensities within their teachings. We have noted the case of Toni Packer, whose teachings are virtually completely aligned with Zen Buddhism, but with the Krishnamurti-like abrogation of authority and system.³⁸ Another such teacher is Charlotte Joko Beck, although she is arguably more conventionally within the Zen Buddhist tradition. Some, however, would disagree, considering her teachings to be Zen divorced from Buddhism, which the critics hold is “nothing.” Another candidate is Vimala Thakar, an Indian teacher originally influenced by Krishnamurti. However, her current status is clearly as an authoritative “guru” who prescribes traditional yogic *sādhana*. And there seem to be similar resonances in the teachings of U. G. Krishnamurti (no relationship to J. Krishnamurti). If the modern period has been producing so many parallel purveyors of potential *buddhavacana*, might there not have been many others through the course of Buddhist history? Or is this a uniquely modern phenomenon? But if not, how well studied are these pseudo or liminal Buddhisms through the course of the last two and a half millennia? What might they tell us about processes of dissent within a religious tradition, of disengagement from a tradition, of possible reappropriations by a tradition, and other attendant processes? Ruminating on these questions is, of course, simply inquiring into the story of Mahayana Buddhism, but particularly at its configurations at the margins. This paper is also a form of wondering aloud, through the agency of Krishnamurti, about where we as scholars should cast the perimeter around our subject matter, about what is properly Buddhism, and what constitutes dharma, and what should or should not be regarded as *buddhavacana*.³⁹

NOTES

1. This paper derives from more than a passing interest in the teachings of Jiddu Krishnamurti, the Indian-born religious teacher. I have published work based on a close analysis of his ideas on religion, religious mind, and insight. And I am also engaged in an anthropologically oriented study of seekers of the sort of pivotal psychological transformation promoted by him and other religious teachers. See, for example, Hillary Rodrigues, *Insight and Religious Mind* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1990) and "Movement in Emptiness: Assessing Jiddu Krishnamurti's Life and His Teachings on Religion," in *Religious Studies and Theology* 15, nos. 2–3 (1996): 45–60.
2. Biographical material may be found in Mary Lutyens, *Krishnamurti: The Years of Awakening* (London: John Murray, 1975); and Pupul Jayakar, *Krishnamurti: A Biography* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986). A comprehensive timeline of his life with Web links is found at <http://www.robotwisdom.com/jorn/krishnamurti.html>.
3. On Theosophy, see Bruce F. Campbell, *Ancient Wisdom Revived: A History of the Theosophical Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
4. Information supplied by the Krishnamurti Foundation of America (KFA), Ojai, California.
5. See Renée Weber, *Dialogues with Sages and Scientists: The Search for Unity* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).
6. See Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *The Lives of Alcyone*, 2 vols. (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1924).
7. Lutyens, *Krishnamurti*, 254–271.
8. Lady Emily's account of her relationship with Krishnamurti is found in her book *Candles in the Sun* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957).
9. Lutyens, *Krishnamurti*, 156.
10. *Ibid.*, 159–160.
11. *Ibid.*, 250.
12. *Ibid.*, 261.
13. According to a letter (dated Dec. 20, 1993) soliciting funds for the KFA Archives, its holdings include "5000 pages of letters and handwritten manuscripts, an estimated 120,000 pages of typed manuscripts, roughly 7000 photographs, 2500 audio programs, 550 video tapes and 20 films."
14. Krishnamurti's influence on Nehru has been mostly undocumented. See Francis Watson, *The Trial of Mr. Gandhi* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1969), 190.

15. See J. Krishnamurti and David Bohm, *The Ending of Time* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985); and *The Future of Humanity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986).
16. Reconstructed Skt. title, *Śraddhotpada-sāstra*, Jpn. *Daijokishinron*.
17. See Yoshito S. Hakeda, trans., *The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Aśvaghoṣa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967). Properly titled the *Ta-ch'eng ch'i-hsin lun*, it is part of the *Taishō* edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka.
18. An intriguing speculation is that Krishnamurti was himself familiar with this book and its teaching. Aldous Huxley, a close friend of Krishnamurti, wrote the foreword to Timothy Richard's 1910 translation of *The Awakening of Faith* (*The Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana Doctrine: The New Buddhism* [Shanghai: Christian Literature Society / Methodist Publishing House]).
19. BuddhaNet, an influential Web site on Buddhism, includes an article in its online magazine discussing connections between Krishnamurti and Buddhism. See "The Krishnamurti Connection and Buddhism," <http://www.buddhanet.net/khrisna.htm>.
20. P. M. Rao, "Escapism and Escape," *MahaBodhi Journal* (June 1963): 117–122.
21. For example, Roch Bouchard, "Krishnamurti Zen," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 54 (October–December 1984): 91–100; and Robert Powell, "Zen and Liberation according to Krishnamurti," in *The Mind of J. Krishnamurti*, ed. Luis S. R. Vas (Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1971).
22. Based on personal conversations held in 1999.
23. See Graeme MacQueen, "Inspired Speech in early Mahāyāna Buddhism I," *Religion* 11, no. 4 (1981): 303–319.
24. *Taishō* 1415, vol. 22, 336, a21–23. MacQueen's translation, "Inspired Speech," 309.
25. *Aṅguttara-nikāya* IV, 143; translated by Edward M. Hare, *The Book of Gradual Sayings*, vol. 4 (London: Luzac, 1935), 96–97.
26. MacQueen, "Inspired Speech," 315.
27. Śāntideva, *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, ed. P. L. Vaidya (Dharbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1961), 12.
28. Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 32.
29. See Williams, *Mahāyāna*, 30.
30. Charles Willemen, "Early Forms of Nembutsu" (lecture, Honpa Buddhist Church of Lethbridge, March 27, 2004).
31. P. M. Harrison, "Buddhānusmṛti in the Pratyutpanna-buddha-saṃmukhāvasthita-samādhi-sūtra," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 9 (1978): 35–57; 49.

32. Lutyens, *Krishnamurti*, 250.
33. See J. Krishnamurti and Dr. Walpola Rahula, *Discussion on Truth* (England, audiotape discussion, 1979), and *Discussion on Death* (England, audiotape discussion, 1979). An excerpt from another discussion is found on <http://www.jiddukrishnamurti.info/kandbuddha.htm>.
34. Zürcher mentions nine messianic movements between the fifth and early sixth century in China alone inspired by the notion of Maitreya, in which the movements' leaders sometimes claimed to be incarnations of Maitreya. See E. Zürcher, "Beyond the Jade Gate': Buddhism in China, Vietnam and Korea," in *The World of Buddhism*, ed. H. Bechert and R. Gombrich (London: Thames & Hudson, 1984), 202.
35. See Weber, *Dialogues with Sages*, 167; and Lutyens, *Krishnamurti*, 153.
36. Śaṅkara's Vedānta jumps to mind, of course, because his notion of Nirguṇa Brahman has resonance with some Vijñānavāda ideas. Like the Buddha, he is credited with the formation of a monastic organization for Hindu renouncers. But Śaṅkara was an āstika philosopher, reading and interpreting the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmā-sūtras*, and the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So Śaṅkara is not an example of this type because he may easily be categorized as "non-Buddhist."
37. An interesting series of essays on transformations and developments in contemporary Buddhism at the margins (but within the accepted boundaries of what is conventionally called Buddhism) is found in Steven Heine and Charles S. Prebish, eds., *Buddhism in the Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
38. See <http://www.worldtrans.org/CyberSangha/zenw95.htm> for a vitriolic attack on her by Zenshin Roshi of the Zen Institute of San Diego.
39. A simple Web search through Google produced a number of intriguing articles connecting Krishnamurti and Buddhism. See, for instance, <http://www.buddhanet.net/khrisna.htm>, http://www.buddhanet.net/bvk_study/bvk001a.htm, <http://www.gnosis-usa.com/Lectures/krishnamurti.html>, http://www.uni-giessen.de/~gk1415/preface_to_the_buddha_krsihnamurti_study.pdf, <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/enc/stories/s746134.htm>, <http://www.teosofia.com/book8.html>, and <http://www.teosofia.com/book9.html>.

Christina “the Astonishing” Meets the Tibetans Returning from the Beyond: A Case of Mutual Recognition?

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THE CASE OF CHRISTINA “MIRABILIS”—Christina “the Astonishing”—is, I am told, comparatively well known among students of Christian hagiography. If we can follow her Latin *Vita*, written around 1232 by the Dominican Thomas de Cantimpré in the medieval Low Countries, Christina of Saint-Trond (1150–1224) experienced what we would nowadays call a “near-death experience.” She revived just before burial. Christina described her experiences in the after-death state, and spent the rest of her life behaving bizarrely as a result. Her bizarre behavior, it is said, reflected a spiritual mission she had been given, one primarily of vicarious suffering. As I have said, Christina’s case is relatively well known among medievalists. What is not well known, on the other hand, are the parallels to her story in Tibet. And while Tibetologists know of her sisters, the *’das log*, I rather doubt that they have heard of poor, isolated, and lonely Christina. Let us therefore introduce them to each other.

THE STRANGE CASE OF CHRISTINA “MIRABILIS”

Christina, the youngest of three orphans, liked to spend her time (we are told) in religious contemplation while ostensibly looking after the herds. Like many in the Middle Ages—and in Tibet—Christina died still young. The difference from most, however, was that she returned to life. During her requiem mass, the day after her death, while lying in her coffin in the church, she began to move. Then, to the astonishment and doubtless fear of all present she is said to have risen up “like a bird” to the rafters of the church, remaining there until the end of the now re-

dundant requiem mass. Kept there by the force of the Holy Sacrament, and induced to descend by the power of the priest, Christina is taken home and revived with food. Thomas de Cantimpré makes a great deal of her “aerial,” almost spiritual, still quasi-“disincarnate” nature after having returned from death, the Beyond. Not only does she rise up to high places, but he notes that some at the time suggested that perhaps this was connected with the fact that the “sensitivity [*subtilitas*] of her spirit was revolted by the smell of human bodies” (*horrebat enim, ut quidam autumant, subtilitas ejus spiritus, odorem corporum humanorum*).¹

There is a precedent well known in the Middle Ages for someone dying and then coming back to life. This was Lazarus, brought back to life by Christ in one of His more impressive miracles (see John 11). The New Testament does not consider it an issue of interest what Lazarus actually experienced during the time he was dead, if anything at all. But later medieval literature did, and there exist works like the *Visio Lazari* describing, for example, the tortures Lazarus saw meted out to sinners in hell—soaking in icy water as a punishment for the sin of envy, for example.² Perhaps because of the didactic value of such descriptions narrative accounts of people dying, returning, and describing what they had seen were quite common in the Middle Ages.³ They were useful as popular teaching devices. But what is rare is to find the case of an actual historical person, an ordinary person, a relatively poor young woman well known in the community, dying and coming back to life. That it occurred is presented by Thomas de Cantimpré as established fact. We thus need to distinguish between the use of the motif of dying and return for the purposes of religious teaching and the phenomenon of some historical figure actually (as it were) dying and returning, a historical figure who adopts eventually a teaching position within the local and sometimes the wider spiritual community. That, in medieval Europe, is most unusual. It happened to Christina “the Astonishing,” and it happens much more commonly—as we shall see—in Tibet.

When she could tell her story, what did Christina recall having seen during the time she was in “the Beyond”?⁴ Angels—ministers of light, *ministri lucis*—took her soul to a “dark and terrible spot” (*locum quemdam tenebrosum et horridum*) where human souls were being horribly tortured. She saw there people she had known when they were still alive. But the place where they were being tortured was not hell. It was simply purgatory. The tortures purify the saved. The sinners (Christina is told) atone in that place for their sins, in order that even-

tually they can enter into the Beatific Vision of heaven.⁵ Christina saw also hell, and again people she had known were there too. Then she was taken to *paradisum ad thronum divinae majestatis* (the throne of the Divine Majesty, in paradise). There the Lord (*dominum*) showed clearly that He was pleased with her. But, and here is the crux of the story, in the particular case of Christina He offered her a choice: She could remain there with Him forever, or return to her body and there undergo the sufferings of a soul in purgatory while still in her physical body, without her body being dramatically or disablingly harmed. In doing this, she would deliver through her vicarious sufferings the souls she had seen suffering in purgatory. She would also serve as an example to others, through her sufferings and her way of life, that might lead to their conversion. After this time on earth, returning to His presence at her eventual death, Christina would merit great rewards in heaven. This option Christina unhesitatingly accepts, and was led accordingly by the angels back into her body.

The account of her "going beyond" is by far the shortest part of the *Christina Vita*. Most of it is taken up with the astonishing things that happened afterwards, things that Thomas de Cantimpré accepts might well be doubted by many (and have been doubted by modern scholars). But Thomas is at pains to establish their historical credentials. Christina is considered by her contemporaries to be possessed by demons—that is, we might say she was considered mad.⁶ She is chained and escapes, she lives in trees "after the manner of birds" (*avium more*), she starves herself, she climbs into ovens while they are alight and baking bread, and not surprisingly she cries out in great agony at the pain. Christina immerses herself in boiling water, jumps into freezing water, torments herself with gibbets and wheels used for torture and execution. In doing this (as Margot King points out in the notes to her translation), Christina is inflicting on herself precisely those tortures that the medieval world had come to believe happen in purgatory. And yet Christina also shows miraculous abilities of survival and of recovery. She was attacked by dogs and forced through thickets of thorns. Yet after washing her body there were no signs of injury. Her shinbone was broken, yet miraculously healed. And, particularly interestingly, while all this was going on "[h]er body was so sensitive and light that she walked on dizzy heights and, like a sparrow, hung suspended from the topmost branches of the loftiest trees."⁷

Christina is considered by her fellows to be completely crazy. But eventually she convinces them that she is not crazy but rather saintly, touched by Christ. How she does this involves strange physiological occurrences that impressed medievals but would not impress us now. They need not detain us.⁸ But having gained the status of a figure of religious significance and power in her local community, Christina devotes the rest of her public life to helping the dying—she described what the world Beyond Death is like, exhorting the dying to repentance—demonstrating a number of cases of prophecy and foretelling the future. She also acted as a spiritual advisor, exhorter, and goad to ordinary people, but also to figures like Count Louis of Looz, sharing also with Count Louis half of his purgatorial punishments after the latter had died.

Thus we are left with a woman, a medieval woman, gaining an important status in the local religious world as a result of her amazing and apparently saintly manifestations and activities. These experiences came to her through a deal she had made with “the Lord” at a time she had died and been resuscitated. I do not know of another case in the medieval world quite like this. But I do in Tibet.

THE 'DAS LOG

The Tibetan expression *'das log* (pronounced *day lok*, and sometimes written in Western sources as *delog* or *delok*) is formed from *log*, to reverse or return, and *'das*, to go beyond or transcend. Thus a *'das log*—properly a *'das log pa* (male) or a *'das log ma* (female)—is one who has returned from the Beyond, where “the Beyond” is death or the realm of death (the realm of the god or lord of death, the Indian god Yama). *'Das* is a term also used in Tibetan for the past time. Thus a *'das log* is one who, when their time has come (to die), has unnaturally reversed the process of time, returned from the past.⁹

The *'das log* is thereby a living miracle, one who has reversed the normal course of events, “touched by the gods” as it were and thereby set aside as special. In Tibetan Buddhism this is expressed in terms of the services they can render for the rest of humanity through bearing witness to the Buddhist conception of the postmortem punishments for wickedness and the results of virtue, but also through using their god-touched state in order, for example, to carry out divination and to counsel those in distress. Thus within the Tibetan world the *'das log*

is similar in some ways to another type of "holy person," the *sprul sku* (pronounced *trulku*), in this case a spiritually advanced practitioner who is thought capable of controlling his or her reincarnations and returning (it is hoped) for the benefit of his or her sorrowing flock (the Dalai Lama, for example). By far the overwhelming number of *sprul skus* are male, and they are often part of the prestigious and powerful Buddhist monastic hierarchy.¹⁰

On the other hand, by far the overwhelming number of 'das log cases are of females, and these females frequently become village holy women. They have died, and prior to the disposal of the corpse (in the Tibetan world commonly through cremation or dismemberment) they have revived. These are thus women who have returned from the realm of death while remaining the person they were, or are, and not through the normal Buddhist method of reincarnation. In reincarnation—which happens to (nearly) all of us—it is thought that while the consciousness *continuum* is the same as the one who died (albeit a later stage of the continuum), reincarnation necessitates a *different person* from the one who died.¹¹

The 'das log has travelled to a realm usually inaccessible to the living, and they have returned. In returning a 'das log brings beneficial messages for the living from friends and relatives who have preceded them into the realm of Yama. The messages are beneficial because they inform the living of the punishment for wickedness and the rewards for virtue. The 'das log thus illustrates and bears witness to the Buddhist moral world in a form directly accessible to ordinary villagers. Yet while illustrating, indeed almost enforcing, the Buddhist vision, the 'das log also expresses another phenomenon of the Central Asian world, that of the shaman. A shaman properly speaking is precisely a (usually village) specialist who seeks to benefit the community by going on a spiritual journey (normally in trance) and returning with helpful advice from the realm of gods or spirits. This is not the same phenomenon as that of possession (where the one possessed loses consciousness and is taken over by a god or spirit). Nevertheless in many cultures, including, for example, Buddhist cultures of Southeast Asia, China, and Japan, possession also occurs again often as a specialty of women. In Tibet, on the other hand, possession too has been institutionalized (for example, in the State Oracle of Nechung, *gNas chung*) and frequently taken over by male monastics, monks.

The village shamanic element of the *'das log ma* has been highlighted by Françoise Pommaret, who has found in the case of some *'das log ma-s* in contemporary Bhutan that after achieving their *'das log* status they not only become village wise women but also repeat their *'das log* experiences at regular intervals, as might a shaman, bringing the villagers advice and help from the realm of the dead. Thus through becoming a *'das log* we find a model by which women can teach basic Buddhism to ordinary laypeople in a religiously noncontroversial manner, and also gain an established and respected status in the village and even in the wider Tibetan world as spiritual advisors. This is a status otherwise available to them only with considerable difficulty in Tibetan Buddhism; since the nun's ordination lineage has been lost, women are unable to become fully ordained Buddhist nuns. Women are thus unable to adopt what in institutional terms would be the most prestigious religious roles. Even if they could become fully ordained nuns, the formal religious status of a Buddhist nun would always be inferior to that of any monk.

The fact that it might be in the interest of a woman to return as a *'das log ma* from a "death" experience seems to be recognized by a *'das log* account summarized by Pommaret:

In that same year, she fell sick and thought she was dying. Her parents told her that if she wanted to come back from the netherworld, she could, as they would keep her body for fifteen days. After that, if she had not come back, they would cremate her.¹²

That she might also not be believed is recognized as well:

[T]he Lord of the Dead [Yama] . . . gave her a lengthy message for human beings, exhorting them to avoid bad actions and do virtuous deeds. He also forewarned her of the slanders she might encounter once she started telling her story but encouraged her not to pay any attention to them.¹³

The earliest cases found so far of the phenomenon of *'das log* in Tibet date from the twelfth century, interestingly the same century as Christina "Mirabilis." Pommaret points out that stories of ordinary people (as opposed to specific cases of eminent Buddhist monks) returning from the realm of death, in actual fact, invariably from hell, are not found in Indian Buddhism. They are common, however, in Chinese folk sources. Thus it is possible that these themes reach their Tibetan form through Chinese folk as well as Central Asian shamanic elements.¹⁴ There could also nevertheless be influences from the

precedents in Indian Buddhism of didactic stories involving eminent Buddhist spiritual figures (such as Maudgalyāyana) entering the hells in order to save others. The existence of the *phenomenon* of even an ordinary person apparently dying, visiting the realms beyond death, and coming back to life with a mission to teach what has been seen for a moral purpose is moreover recognized in one of the great Mahayana scriptures, the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra*, the sutra of the Medicine Buddha. This sutra describes how through the power of the sutra someone can be brought back from the realms of death. They will describe what they saw in the Beyond, describe the judgments of Yama, and be morally reformed (and no doubt reform others) for the rest of their natural lives.¹⁵ The existence of the phenomenon of near-death experiences, and their didactic significance, is here clearly realized and may well have been an important factor in the development of the *’das log* phenomenon in Tibet. But perhaps the most important of stories of visiting the dead from a Tibetan point of view is the Indian scripture the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*. In this work the incarnation of compassion, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, enters the hells on a salvific mission. Avalokiteśvara is enormously important in Tibet, and Pommaret comments on how the *’das log* stories are associated with his cult and the recitation of his salvific mantra *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* itself seems to be the source for this famous mantra.¹⁶ The *’das logs* are popularly seen as Avalokiteśvara’s “incarnation”¹⁷ (more accurately, probably, his emanation), thus again associating the female *’das log mas* with a very high religious status (the Dalai Lamas are also popularly seen as the emanations of Avalokiteśvara).

The structure of a Tibetan *’das log* account is as follows:¹⁸

Prayer

1. Presentation of the delok [*’das log*]: name, parents’ names, place of birth
2. Preamble to the journey to the netherworld
Forewarning dream (optional; episode found only in some narratives)
Sickness that leads to a quick and unexpected death
3. The delok becomes aware of his/her death
Visualisation of an animal corpse (optional)

- Indifference of the family members (optional)
- Departure of the conscious principle from the body
- 4. First contact with the netherworld
 - Entry of the conscious principle into the bardo [the intermediate state between death and rebirth]
 - First encounter with the attendants of the Lord of the Dead
 - Appearance of a mentor or guide (optional)
 - Crossing of a large bridge (optional)
- 5. Description of the netherworld
 - First encounter with the Lord of the Dead (optional)
 - Journey through the eighteen hells and the realm of the hungry ghosts, meeting with the damned, who explain the reasons why they are enduring such torments and who give messages for their families.
 - Meeting a family member (optional)
 - Scenes where the damned are freed by a *maṇi pa* [a “professional” reciter of the mantra *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*] or a lama (optional)
 - Journey into other realms of reincarnation (optional)
- 6. Meeting with the Lord of the Dead
 - Arrival before the Lord of the Dead
 - The witnessing of several judgments
 - Judgment of the delok and message of the Lord of the Dead for the living
- 7. Return to earth
 - Reentry of the conscious principle into the body
 - Delivery of messages from the dead for their families, delivery of the message of the Lord of the Dead, and exhortation to practice religion.
 - Colophon (optional)

Compare this with Thomas de Cantimpré’s hagiography of Christina “Mirabilis” (numbers correspond to the above structure of a *’das log* account).

1. There is no preceding prayer, although there is a prologue by the author justifying the hagiography. This reflects different cultural styles. On names and family, Christina’s account parallels the *’das log*

apart from the omission of interest in her parent's names (although they were respectable [*honestis parentibus oriunda fuit*]).

2. For Christina there was no preceding dream. Pommaret notes however that at this point in the narrative the 'das log's previous religiosity is often mentioned, and this is exactly paralleled in the Christina hagiography, with some suggestion that it was her religious striving that led to her "death" experience.¹⁹ There is no direct assertion that in Christina's case her sickness led to "a quick and unexpected death," but it is rather suggested.

3. All the 'das log account §3 ("The delok becomes aware of his/her death," etc.) is missing from the Christina. §3 directly reflects Tibetan ideas concerning what happens at death (taken probably from the *Bar do thos grol* literature, the so-called *Tibetan Book of the Dead*). On the other hand the Christina *Vita* does give an astonishing account of the revival of her "corpse," including her flying up to the rafters of the church (reflecting perhaps notions of the aerial nature of a soul that finds itself once more among coarse humanity). A Tibetan account includes a parallel astonishment of those who witness the revival, but lacks the element of (further) unnatural occurrence.²⁰ On the other hand, as in the case of Christina the importance of feeding the 'das log is noted after her experiences in a world where presumably food is not needed. Christina is in many ways incapable of adjusting to being back in a coarse body. This has no parallels in Tibetan accounts, perhaps due to the Tibetan lack of a clear doctrinal differentiation between existing as a spiritual soul and the embodied state (a differentiation that would be well known in the medieval Christian context from the Platonic tradition). But the Tibetan account also stresses the jealousy and doubt of some people and fervent faith of others:

Many women, full of faith, looked at me and cried. Some people were jealous and became angry. People who had good karma prostrated themselves in front of me and were circumambulating me. As for the sinners, they did not believe a word of what I was saying, and these demons said that I was not telling the truth. But all the people assembled around me begged me to relate to them what happens in the bardo.²¹

Actually, many Tibetans would claim to know already what happens in the *bar do*—the intermediate state between death and rebirth—from an extensive Tibetan literature and frequent teaching on the subject. To know what happens after death is thought to be important for

moral reasons, but also in the case of more advanced meditators in order to be able to manipulate the death process in the interests of spiritual development. But here is one who has actually *seen*, and lived to tell the tale. As I have suggested above, this is unnatural, and vests the 'das log ma with a "god-touched," or an empowered, status. The woman immediately becomes a teacher, a teacher not obviously threatening to religious hierarchy because she confirms orthodoxy.

4. In 'das log accounts the intermediate state between lives is depicted as a country. From there one goes to, for example, the hells, which are impermanent and considered in Buddhism not part of the intermediate state but realms of rebirth. Christina speaks just of purgatory, "a dark and terrible spot" (*locum quemdam tenebrosum et horridum*), hell, and paradise (*paradisum*). Neither of the latter is described. On the other hand, while the 'das log then meets with what are depicted as the frightening attendants of the god of death, Yama, Christina meets with angels of God (*angeli Dei*). The latter are described simply as "ministers of light" (*ministri lucis*) and are presumably not terrifying (or at least are not terrifying in the same way as Yama's attendants). This is important, because it shows that although there is a structural similarity here between the two accounts, the visions nevertheless are significantly different just as religious expectations are different. The angels act as Christina's guides (*ductores*). In the 'das log account, where a (singular) guide appears, it is described as a *yi dam* (the 'das log's tutelary deity) or a *dākinī* (a sort of female demigoddess familiar in tantric yoga). There is no mention in the Christina hagiography of crossing a large bridge, marking the border with the realm of death.

5. Pommaret notes that in 'das log accounts from the fifth stage onwards the sequence is not always the same and can vary depending on the narrative.²² 'Das log accounts give detailed descriptions of the hells and their gruesome tortures, based on an elaborate Buddhist literature on the subject familiar in some degree to most Tibetans. Indeed, the descriptions of the hells might be thought to be the main narrative purpose of the 'das log accounts, and these accounts dwell in descriptive detail on the 'das log's travels around the "after-death world(s)." Descriptively, as a Tibetan Buddhist, the 'das log is quite at home there. Christina is much more coy: "The torments which I saw in that place [purgatory] were so many and so cruel that no tongue is adequate to tell of them."²³ Her immediate purpose in all of this appears *not* primarily to frighten people into good behavior, a point made clear by

the extensive subsequent descriptions of her altruistic self-tortures after her return to life, which appear to be the main interest of her hagiographer and absolutely lack parallel in 'das log accounts (see below). However, we should note that if those who saw her self-tortures realized that she was undergoing the punishments of purgatory while still in this life, Christina would *de facto* have given a particularly vivid impression of what it must be like to be there in purgatory—let alone to undergo the much worse tortures of hell. To that extent Christina would serve as a *living sermon*, embodying in her own flesh the need for repentance and the avoidance of sins. Moreover Christina (as in Dante's literary version) does indeed see in purgatory and hell people she had known when living. On the other hand she does not speak to them, and she is given no message by them for the living. In this, an absolutely central dimension of the 'das log accounts, fully described by them, is missing. The 'das log accounts involve those suffering in the hells exhorting the 'das log to ask their family members to engage in various acts in order to ameliorate the hell-sufferer's tortures. There is, however, a structural parallel in the Christina hagiography. There *Christina herself* is given not by those being tortured but by "the Lord" (to whom she does speak) the option of returning to life in order to undergo vicarious penances. In both case an acceptable religious reason is thus given for the astonishing return from death.

6. Christina does not, of course, meet Yama, the god of death. But she does meet "the Lord" (*Dominum*) at the "throne of Divine Majesty" (*ad thronum divinae majestatis*) in paradise, who seems to play something like the same structural role as Yama. Christina does not witness any judgments, although it can be taken that they do occur. This reflects the comparatively lesser interest of the Christina account with recompense for good and bad deeds—the so-called "law of *karman*"—which is the main teaching given by Buddhists to ordinary layfolk and is by far the most important dimension of the 'das log accounts. It is this that renders the 'das log religiously orthodox in Buddhist terms. Yama will often also tell the 'das log the reasons for her extraordinary forthcoming experience of return, both in terms of her own spiritual background in this and previous lives and also the purpose of the return.²⁴ Yama may also tell the 'das log's future. Here is an important shamanic element in the account. Contact with the gods in Tibetan and Central Asian religion is often a matter of finding out the future, and the best way to behave in the light of that. This provides a justification for the

subsequent regular repeated shamanic return of the *'das log ma* to the world of Yama in a sort of séance. Christina, on the other hand, is given a choice—to remain or to return in order to benefit others through penances on their behalf and also to serve as an example for the living.²⁵ The Lord does not, in Christina's account, give any message for the living. Perhaps there is no message to give. The living already have the Church and its teachings and need nothing more (see, for example, the story well known in the Middle Ages of Dives and Lazarus, Luke 16: 19–31). On the other hand we should note that once Christina's religious role becomes accepted in the community *she* sometimes tells the future. That is, she takes on a recognized role within Judeo-Christian theology, that of a prophet or prophetess.

7. This section of the *'das log* account, the return to earth, has been treated above. Both *'das log* accounts and the *Christina Vita* mention how quick the return to the body is, and the understandable shock of those who see the revival.

Like the *'das log*, Christina returns to the body “for the improvement of men” (that is, humanity: *ad correctionem hominum*). But apart from specifics relating to the differences between Christianity and Tibetan Buddhism, the following elements of the *'das log* accounts are lacking in the Christina hagiography:

A. The *'das log* returns with specific messages for the living, often involving ritual acts they can undertake in order to help the family dead. Christina, on the other hand, has messages for the living—her own story and her own example—but for the dead it is *her own actions of penance on their behalf*, rather than actions by their relatives, that is of central importance. Relatives can repent, but it is Christina who acts directly for the dead.

B. The *'das log* messages and descriptions concentrate a great deal on what happens after death in terms of karmic recompense for good and more often bad deeds. We can take it that Christina's medieval hearers would have been quite familiar with literature, sermons, and paintings depicting the horrors of hell, the tribulations of purgatory, and the happiness of paradise. Christina does not need to elaborate.

C. The *'das log* bears witness to the truth of the teachings, and to their own contact with the Beyond, the Other. She thus gains a status in the community as a wise woman, an advisor in contact with the gods and brought into action sometimes through *repeated* shamanic visits to the Beyond. Like the oracle priest who is regularly possessed, the *'das*

log repeats the performance of contact with the Beyond. Christina too gains the status of a wise woman, but as a result of what has already happened to her and the power that she now exudes. She prays, she undertakes remarkable penances, but she does not need to repeat her trip to the beyond.²⁶

Christina’s purposes and intentions are very different from those of the ‘*das log*. She seeks to undergo penances on behalf of the dead, and to convert others through her example. What is the theological basis for the former? Presumably Christ Himself, or the idea of the scapegoat. Either way, this serves to explain Christina’s astonishing and self-torturing behavior after her revival. The ‘*das log* does not engage in this sort of ascetic penance, since apart from anything else that is not the behavior expected of a village wise woman. In A–C above the ‘*das log* fully performs her function. Asceticism and bizarre behavior are well-known in Tibetan Buddhism among yogins, and bizarre behavior is found particularly among the holy “madmen” (*smyon pa*). These, in their bizarre activity, show that they are enlightened—beyond all duality—and while always compassionate they are thought to operate in ways that cannot be classified within ordinary unenlightened codes of behavior. Like Christina, it is thought they are still working for the benefit of others, but that is the only similarity between the two cases.

Thus I want to suggest that the Christina account marries two phenomena kept quite separate in the Tibetan world. The first of these two phenomena is the ‘*das log*, who returns from “death” in order to help others. This person is very often a female, and the phenomenon of the ‘*das log* provides such women with a potential spiritual status otherwise lacking in Tibetan Buddhism. The pattern is that of the shaman going on a shamanic journey, and this ‘*das log* pattern is seen quite remarkably mirrored in the *Vita* of Christina “the Astonishing.” And inasmuch as we know of many cases of this phenomenon in Tibetan and Bhutanese religious history—including modern cases²⁷—with Thomas de Cantimpré we can take the actual historicity of Christina “*Mirabilis*,” and her status within the local community of Saint-Trond and beyond, at face value.

And secondly, we have the case of the “holy madman” (*smyon pa*; pronounced *nyön pa* or *myön pa*), the “fool for God’s sake,” who represents quite a different phenomenon in Tibet religion.²⁸ As far as I know the holy madman is invariably male, and the pattern is that of

the enlightened Indian tantric yogins. Within Tibetan Buddhism this is a fully Buddhist doctrinally “orthodox” model (although as such probably originating in India among Śaivite “Hindu” yogins).

And the reasons why Christina is engaging in this bizarre behavior—reasons of vicarious suffering for the souls tormented in purgatory, and reasons of standing before others for their conversion as an exemplar—are very different from those of the Tibetan *smyon pa*.²⁹ In marrying these different phenomena, the *’das log* account of Christina becomes a very different sort of account from those of the Tibetans. But there is no doubt that a Tibetan faced with Thomas de Cantimpré’s *Vita* of Christina “Mirabilis” would have little difficulty in recognizing in at least the earlier part of it a version of a familiar *’das log* account. What our Tibetans would make of Christina’s activity as a *smyon ma*, a holy madwoman, is anyone’s guess.

A LAST POINT

I want to end with one last point for students reading this paper. I do not mean necessarily postgraduate students. This applies to undergraduates too. It has often been observed that the traditional and the pre-modern Tibetan world had a lot in common—in flavor as well as in detail—with the world of medieval Europe. Medieval studies in modern universities has been one of the great growth points of the last fifty years. What has not yet really been taken on board is the enormous significance this has for Tibetan and indeed Buddhist studies. In so many areas of what we study when we undertake Tibetan studies—I think here, for example, of the study of saint’s hagiographies, or of the study of the relationships between the monastery and the secular power, or perhaps doctrinal studies of the use of reason in relationship to revelation—an enormous amount of methodological work and its application to specific cases has been done in medieval studies. Unfortunately those working in medieval studies and those working in Tibetan or in Buddhist studies do not often talk to each other. I am fortunate in being at a university where there is both a major interdisciplinary Centre for Medieval Studies and also our own much smaller-scale Centre for Buddhist Studies.

The medievalists are well ahead of us, but we can learn from their experience. I particularly want to draw your attention to the opportunity this provides for interesting comparative research topics, wheth-

er for doctoral work or even for undergraduate dissertations. There is plenty of opportunity to say something interesting and original. The field is wide open for bringing together the study of the medieval religious world and the world of Tibet or the wider Buddhist world. No one, or almost no one, is currently doing it.

NOTES

1. Unless otherwise noted, translations from the *Christina Vita* are from *The Life of Christina the Astonishing* by Thomas de Cantimpré, trans. Margot H. King assisted by David Wiljer (Toronto: Peregrine Publications, 2000). This book also contains the Latin text.
2. See the excerpts cited by Margot King in the notes to her translation of the *Christina Vita*.
3. See Bernard McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism—1200–1350*, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Mysticism*, vol. 3 (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1998), 161. Perhaps there is some connection between this sort of didactic literature in the Middle Ages and the use of the dream most well known from *Piers Plowman*. We also see the same medieval didactic use of “going beyond” into the realm of death reaching its apogee in Dante, particularly in the *Inferno*.
4. King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 27ff.
5. The doctrine of purgatory was in the process of developing at this time and would be reinforced by the *Christina Vita* (no doubt one reason why the Dominican Thomas de Cantimpré was interested in the story). On the evolution—the “discovery”—of purgatory in the Middle Ages see Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1990).
6. Note, however, that medieval medicine was quite capable of distinguishing between being psychologically disturbed—that is, being mad—and being possessed by demons. The same is true of traditional Tibetan medicine. In recent scholarship Barbara Newman has given a new and sophisticated version of the “mad Christina” reading. See her “Possessed by the Spirit: Devout Women, Demoniacs and the Apostolic Life in the Thirteenth Century,” *Speculum* 73 (1998): 733–770. Putting to one side the details of her interesting paper, which would seem to play on the conflation, at least outside medical authority, of demoniacs and madness, I still remain to be fully convinced by the suggestion that the case of Christina was simply one of madness. As we shall see, the Tibetan *’das log* cases show that near-death experiences can indeed lead to cases where women become religious teachers in their local communities. They are not thought by anyone to be mad, nor do they usually engage in unduly bizarre behavior. What makes Christina different from the *’das log* is Christina’s subsequent behavior. But once it is granted that Christina did indeed have some sort of near-death experience, and that her description of it (or her interpretation of it in tranquility) was made in all good faith—and the Tibetan cases provide justification for this reading—then Christina’s activities of vicarious suffering, that is, her bizarre behavior, can be explained on the

basis of perfectly rational conclusions derived from her understanding of the significance of her experience in "the Beyond." Such conclusions, based on her understanding of their theological context, may strike us as extreme but I would hesitate to call them "mad." Christina acted on her conclusions, but religious fervor again is not in itself a sign of madness nor of possession. That her contemporaries initially thought she was mad is irrelevant. They had not had Christina's experience, nor had they subjected it to her interpretation.

7. King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 38–39: *Corpus ejus tantae subtilitatis, et levitatis erat, ut in arduis et sublimibus ambularet, et instar passeris in subtilissimus arborum ramusculis dependeret*. McGinn, *The Flowering of Mysticism*, 161 and 400 n. 34 argues that in all this Christina's body shows that it is not an ordinary body but a *resurrected* body. I am unconvinced. It seems to me that to any medieval listener or reader of the tale, Christina's body would be thought to be akin to that of Lazarus rather than that of Christ after His resurrection. Lazarus's body was a *resuscitated* body, not a *resurrected* body. The Church has never seen the theological status of Lazarus, or his body, after his resuscitation as the same as that of Christ after the resurrection. And according to St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15), at the resurrection of the body we shall all have resurrected bodies, like that of Christ. They will not be resuscitated bodies like that of Lazarus. Thus it seems to me there is only confusion in assimilating Christina's body to a resurrected body, and thence to the sort of body that we shall all have (it is alleged) after the resurrection of the body at the Second Coming. Christina's own attitude to her resuscitated body is ambivalent. On the one hand she appears to loathe it, rather on the model of a Christian tradition of dualism that can be traced back at least as far as Plato. But on the other hand she recognizes, in accordance with an Aristotelian understanding that eventually reaches its fullness in St. Thomas Aquinas, that the body is essential to the soul as the soul is to the body. Both will be forever united at the resurrection of the body. See King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 75–77. Perhaps we see here Thomas de Cantimpré, the early Dominican, concerned acutely at that time with the campaign against the Cathars who were characterized by their extreme dislike of the physical body. "They assert," said the Dominican Inquisitor Bernard Gui, writing in the early fourteenth century, "that the creation of everything visible and corporeal was wrought, not by God the Heavenly Father, whom they term the beneficent God, but by the devil, or Satan, the wicked God. . . . Also they deny the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ through Mary, ever virgin, declaring that He did not have a true human body or true human flesh such as other men have because of their human substance. . . . Also, they deny that there will be a resurrection of human bodies, imagining in its stead certain spiritual bodies and a sort of inner man" (Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, trans., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* [New York and Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1991], 379–380). The need to counter Cathar world-negation, that as we can see in its extreme form

portrays the world itself as the creation of Satan not of God, no doubt also reinforced Aquinas's enthusiasm for Aristotle (in spite of the many Platonic elements that Aquinas also was happy to adopt). See also note 18 below.

8. Christina exudes strange healing oil from her body (King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 42–43). This sign of sanctity was well known in the Middle Ages, and goes back at least as far as the eighth century (Walburga, d. 779). There is even given a name associated with it—these “saints” are *myroblytes*. Earlier, Christina had managed to feed herself when starving from her own “virginal breasts” (ibid., 30–31). On all of this see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1987).

9. To date very little scholarly work has been done on the *'das log* phenomenon in the Tibetan world (which includes, for example, Bhutan). By far the most academically respectable studies are those by Françoise Pommaret: *Les 'Revenants de l'au-delà' dans le monde Tibétain* (Paris: Presses du CNRS, 1989); “Les Revenants de l'au-delà (*'das log*) dans le monde Tibétain: sources littéraires et tradition vivante,” in *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Fifth Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Narita 1989* (Narita: Narita Shinshoji, 1992), 673–686; and “Returning from Hell,” in *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 499–510. See also Lawrence Epstein, “On the History and Psychology of the *'Das log*,” *Tibetan Journal* 7, no. 4 (1982): 20–85. On the more popular level, an account of a modern *'das log* is contained in Dawa Drolma Delog, *Delog: Journey to Realms beyond Death* (Junction Hill, CA: Padma Publishing, 1995).

10. On the *sprul skus* in general, and the Dalai Lama in particular, see Paul Williams, *Songs of Love, Poems of Sadness: The Erotic Verse of the Sixth Dalai Lama* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 2–23.

11. On the relationship of the dying person to the reincarnated person in Buddhism see, for example, Paul Williams, *Altruism and Reality: Studies in the Philosophy of the Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1998), chaps. 2 and 5.

12. Pommaret, “Returning from Hell,” 508.

13. Ibid., 509–510.

14. Christina “Mirabilis” lived during the years 1150–1224. It would be nice to be able to suggest a possible Central Asian influence on the hagiography of Christina through perhaps the Mongols via Mongol contact with Islam. But alas the chronology makes this unlikely in the extreme. Kiev fell to the Mongols in the winter of 1240, to be followed by Hungary and Poland. Baghdad fell in 1258. I am unfamiliar with the Chinese cases. I would be surprised if the distinction I have made above between didactic stories and actual documented historical cases could not be applied there too.

15. See the translation of this sutra in R. Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha* (London, Melbourne, Sidney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Rider, 1979), 165. See also the discussion in Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 247–251. The sutra is significantly earlier than the earliest recording of a Tibetan ‘das log, or Christina. If this phenomenon is common in China, the existence of it so prominently in the *Bhaiṣajyaguru-sūtra* may support the hypothesis of the Central Asian or Chinese origins of this sutra. The close structural similarities of visiting the realms of the Dead and then returning with the shamanic journey might also support a Central Asian element in origins of the sutra.

16. On this sutra, and the Indian history of the mantra, see H. Alex Studholme, *On the Early History of the Om Manipadme Hūm Mantra: A Study of the Kārandavyūha Sūtra* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), originally written as a University of Bristol Ph.D. thesis.

17. Pommaret, “Returning from Hell,” 500, 502.

18. Taken verbatim from *ibid.*, 502.

19. *Ibid.*, 503; King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 24–27.

20. Pommaret, “Returning from Hell,” 507–508.

21. *Ibid.*, 508.

22. *Ibid.*, 504.

23. King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 26–27: *Tormenta, quae in ipso loco videbam, tanta et tam crudelia errant, ut nulla lingua haec loqui sufficerat.*

24. See Pommaret, “Returning from Hell,” 506–507.

25. Perhaps the idea of choosing to return may owe something here to the treatment of reincarnation in the myth of Er at the end of Plato’s *Republic*?

26. Note that at the very end of the *Vita* (King, *The Life of Christina the Astonishing*, 80–83), on her deathbed, Christina does indeed to all intents and purposes die, and then returns briefly to give a final blessing to all assembled around her before finally heading for the paradise she had so arduously earned. The point here, however, is to emphasize Christina’s quite remarkable sanctity rather than to reinforce her claim to continue to minister to the needs of the local community through repeating her near-death experience.

27. For photographs of Bhutanese cases see Pommaret, *Revenants*.

28. On Christina as a “holy fool” see Margot H. King, “The Sacramental Witness of Christina Mirabilis: The Mystic Growth of a Fool for Christ’s Sake,” in *Peace Weavers*, ed. Sister Lillian Thomas Shank and John Nichols (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 145–164. There remains a question as to whether Christina herself can be accurately portrayed in such a way, particular-

ly with her assimilation into the confusing category of a “mystic.” But for Tibetans if she were not to be seen as simply mad—and as a *’das log ma* she could not be—it seems to me that in terms of the phenomenology of Tibetan religions it is to a “holy madwoman,” a *smyon ma*, that Christina’s bizarre behavior would be assimilated.

29. Indeed one might see the way in which Christina underlines so dramatically Catholic orthodoxy in regard to morality, life after death, and the sheer physicality of it all—the use of the body in order to teach and benefit others—an expression of Thomas’s Dominican concern to counter the definitely unorthodox and body-despising teachings of the Cathars. Perhaps this is what really explains the apparently incidental similarity of the Christina story with the shamanic *’das log*. Christina has gone beyond to a state associated with bodilessness. But she unhesitatingly returns to the embodied state, where through her very bodily tortures she can benefit others, including those who are disembodied in purgatory. The structure is one of body to disembodied, and then the return—the necessary and beneficial return, approved by the Lord (who is no body-hating Cathar *perfect!*)—to embodiment. There can be no doubt that the combating of Cathars was far and away the overriding interest of the Dominicans in their first hundred years or so, and it provided the context and reason for the origins of the Dominican order. On the Cathars see M. D. Lambert, *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998); and M. Barber, *The Cathars: Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages* (Harlow: Longman, 2000). On the history of the Dominicans see William A. Hinnebusch, *The Dominicans: A Short History* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1985); and for particular details on Dominic see Vladimir Koudelka, *Dominic*, trans. and ed. Simon Tugwell (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1997). That this structure is paralleled in the case of the *’das log* is not due in the latter case to any overriding need to make a point about the importance of embodiment. Rather the *’das log* is a shaman in the proper shamanic model. The *’das log* goes on a journey, and where better to go if one wishes to gain useful information for the spiritual as well as the material (divinatory) welfare of the local community than to the realm of the dead? Traveling to the realm of the dead was of course sanctioned by Buddhist doctrinal orthodoxy both in well-known Buddhist stories and also in the sutras.

Striving for Perfection: On the Various Ways of Translating Sanskrit into Tibetan

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IN 1976 OR 1977 I HAPPENED to meet the Swiss Indologist Heinz Zimmermann in his home in Basel, Switzerland. In 1975 he had published his doctoral thesis bearing the ornate title *Die Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā (dem Āryaśūra zugeschrieben). Ein Vergleich zur Darlegung der Irrtumsrisiken bei der Auswertung tibetischer Übersetzungen* (“The Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā [attributed to Āryaśūra]: A Comparison in Order to Illustrate the Risk of Error while Utilizing Tibetan Translations”)¹ on which I had written a lengthy review.² His thesis consists of a meticulous text-critical study of the above-mentioned work in comparison with its Tibetan translation. The work consists of 191 stanzas composed in twenty-two different meters and written in an ambitious ornate style. The title of the work means “Sermon in the form of a basket filled with jewels consisting of well-formulated stanzas,” and for the sake of brevity I refer to it as the *Subhāṣitaratna*.

The *The Subhāṣitaratna* is divided into twenty-seven short sections and basically consists of a flowery appeal to Buddhist laypeople to donate various items to the members of the Buddhist order. Both the items and the reward for donating them are specified. At the time when Zimmermann began to work on his thesis the *Subhāṣitaratna* was little known, for its *editio princeps* had appeared only in 1959 as an appendix to the Indian edition of Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā*,³ and no translation or analysis of the work existed. The work itself seemed to have some literary weight since it was attributed to the Buddhist poet Āryaśūra, who lived before the fifth century and to whom we owe an early masterpiece of Sanskrit literature, the *Jātakamālā* (“Garland of Birth-Stories”). In fact it is a late compilation of poor literary quality

except for the borrowings from older literary works as I have shown in my short monograph on the *Subhāṣitaratna*.⁴

The Indian editor of the *Subhāṣitaratna*, Anukul Chandra Banerjee, mentions that he consulted its Tibetan translation; however, he came to the conclusion that it must have been made from a different text since the deviations between the two texts were too great.⁵ Banerjee's statement carries some weight since he himself had published the first bilingual edition of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyādarśa* outside Tibet. It was particularly this passage that had aroused the curiosity of Zimmermann, as he told me at our first encounter. When by chance he had come across the Sanskrit text of the *Subhāṣitaratna* he decided to study it in detail and to compare it with its Tibetan translation about whose excellence and reliability he had heard and read. His disappointment could not have been greater with any other text. Due to really bad luck he had selected the poorest Tibetan translation of an Indian work that I have seen in more than forty years of reading Tibetan canonical texts. At a certain time Zimmermann must have doubted the mental health of scholars praising the Tibetan translations in an exaggerated manner.

Because of my review and my later re-edition of the Sanskrit text of the *Subhāṣitaratna* I had the not-so-pleasant opportunity to read the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna* in great detail. I would like to give two illustrations of its quality and style. Stanza 161 runs as follows:

- [a] *saṃmānāyanti guruvaḍ guṇavantaṃ āryaṃ*
 [b] *tejasvino 'pi dhanino 'pi manasvino 'pi |*
 [c] *tasmān naro naraṇāpater āpi yaḥ sakāśāt*
 [d] *saṃmānaṃ icchati sa rakṣatu śīlaṃ eva || 161 ||*

The mighty, the rich, the intelligent, all of them honor
 a noble person full of virtues as if he were a guru.
 Therefore a man who wishes to be respected
 even by a king has to protect [his own] morality.

The Tibetan rendering runs as follows:⁶

- [a --] *yang dag drang bya bla ma bzhiṅ ||*
 [--- a/b --] *yon tan ldan 'phags gzi brjid ldan ||*
 [--- bb] *nor ni dang ni mkhyen ldan ni ||*
 [cc --] *de phyir rgyal po rnams kyi ni ||*
 [--- c/d --] *drung du nye bar mchod 'dod pas ||*
 [-- d] *tshul khrims 'dis ni bsrung bar gyis ||*
 To be led/guided/conducted (?) like a teacher [is]
 the virtuous noble person, [by] the mighty,

[by] those who are wealthy [or] intelligent;
 therefore because by him who wishes to be respected even by a king,
 by this one [his own] morality is to be protected.

This stanza illustrates two characteristic features of the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna*. First, it does not preserve the metrical structure of the original that has four lines of fourteen syllables each, being composed in the frequently used Vasantatilaka meter. Usually this meter would have been rendered by a stanza of four lines of eleven or thirteen syllables each. Instead Rudra and Śā kya 'od, the Indian and Tibetan translators of the *Subhāṣitaratna*, decided to use only the most common type of Tibetan verse in which the line consists of seven syllables. Thus they could not use a fixed number of lines to render a Sanskrit stanza. Shorter stanzas consisting of shorter lines in Sanskrit require fewer lines in Tibetan; those consisting of longer lines, like Śārdūlavikrīḍita (nineteen syllables per line) and Sragdharā (twenty-one syllables per line), require more lines in Tibetan. Actually the number of lines in the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna* varies between four and twelve. This decision of the translators is not objectionable at all since stanzas consisting of shorter lines are undoubtedly easier to follow and to understand. Second, the translators obviously tried to strictly maintain the order of words of the original. This was, of course, a fatal decision since an inflectional language like Sanskrit permits a comparatively free word order whereas an agglutinating language like classical Tibetan has a relatively strict word order. There are, however, exceptions that can be tolerated, but certainly not to the extent displayed in this stanza.

The translation of the second half of the stanza is not completely wrong, and it is by and large intelligible. There are, however, some things to be mentioned. First, the relative construction was not maintained. Both the relative pronoun *yaḥ* and the noun it refers to, *naraḥ*, remained untranslated. This is again not objectionable and can be regarded as a transformation of the Indian structure into a Tibetan one. Both words would then be included in the agent '*dod pas* ("he who wishes"). If this was the intention of the translators then it was not a fortunate decision to render the correlative pronoun *sa* by '*dis*. This repetition of the case particle is not permitted in Tibetan, and hence it will puzzle the Tibetan reader who now has to make up his or her mind which of the two, '*dod pas* and '*dis*, is the agent and which is the instrumental. And moreover, the use of the demonstrative pronoun '*dis* has

become meaningless after the omission of the relative expression *naro ... yah* to which it originally referred. My English translation is a kind of concession and based on the assumption that the reader correctly grasps what was meant by the original Sanskrit, which is actually not very likely.

The Tibetan translation of the first half of the stanza is, I dare say, largely unintelligible and therefore wrong, not as far as the individual words are concerned, but because of its unclear syntax. Unfortunately the predicate of the Sanskrit sentence assumes the first position in line (a), as in the original. There it is not only permissible but also serves a specific function: it marks and stresses the compound verb *saṃmānāyanti* that will be repeated in its nominal form *saṃmānam* at the beginning of line (d). The Tibetan rendering *yang dag drang bya bla* (“to be led/guided/conducted”) completely obscures the meaning of the first part of the stanza, both lexically and syntactically. When read as a Tibetan text one would rather regard the expression as an attribute of the following word *bla ma* (“teacher”), certainly not as predicate of the sentence. What follows after *bla ma bzhin* (“like a teacher”) is a series of nominal expressions that verbally correspond to their Sanskrit counterparts; however, the relationship between them is completely unclear. My English rendering of the first half of the stanza is again based on the assumption that the translators might have understood it that way and that it actually presupposes *mkhyen ldan pas* instead of *mkhyen ldan ni*; however, I am sure that not even an educated Tibetan will analyze it in this manner. In particular, the isolation particle *ni* at the end of line (c) can hardly be understood as a kind of final or semifinal particle. Despite all its shortcomings the Tibetan translation points to an interesting variant reading that is worth consideration and which, for the sake of convenience, I have adopted in my presentation of the Sanskrit text above. It concerns the word *guruvad* in line (a), which is actually Zimmermann’s emendation on the basis of *bla ma bzhin* in the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna*. The Nepalese tradition of the text, be it primary and secondary, unequivocally reads *guravo* instead of *guruvad*. In the unaltered version of the Sanskrit text the first half of the stanza would have to be translated as:

The respectable, the mighty, the rich, the intelligent,
all of them honor a noble person full of virtues.

This is, of course, also meaningful, but the text as reflected by the Tibetan translation sounds more pithy to me.

Next, I would like to present a “correct” version of the Tibetan text, a purely fictitious text, of course, composed in the lines of the language of the great translator of Indian *kāvya* texts, Shong-ston rdo-rje rgyal-mtshan, with whose works I am particular familiar:

*saṃmānāyanti guruvad guṇavantam āryaṃ
tejasvino 'pi dhanino 'pi manasvino 'pi |
tasmān naro narapater api yaḥ sakāśāt
saṃmānam icchatī sa rakṣatu śīlam eva || 161 ||*

**gzi brjid ldan dang nor dang ldan dang mkhyen ldan rnams kyis kyang ||
yon tan ldan pa'i 'phags pa bla ma bzhin du yang dag bsnyen ||
de phyir gang zhig rgyal po'i drung nas yang dag bsnyen pa dag ||
'dod pa'i mi des tshul khrims kho na bsrung bar bgyi ba'o ||**

This illustration of a translation as it should or could have run is not entirely hypothetical. As my former student Siglinde Dietz has shown in her monumental thesis on the Buddhist epistolary literature,⁷ two stanzas of the *Subhāṣitaratna* became included in one of the letters, the *Cittaratnaviśodhanakramalekha*, in a section called *Maṇḍalavidhi*, which also exists as an independent Tibetan translation in the Tibetan Tanjur. As Dietz notes, this separate translation is by far superior in quality to that of the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna*.⁸

This usage of imperspicuous syntactical Sanskritisms and grave lexical mistakes can be found in practically every stanza, and it is an unsolved riddle to me how the translators could assume that their work would be intelligible to an ordinary Tibetan reader. I would like to present one more stanza, not discussing every detail, but focusing only on one of the grossest mistakes in the Tibetan version of the *Subhāṣitaratna*, a mistake quite typical of a very beginner, not of a professional team of translators. Stanza 36 runs as follows:

*kauśeyakāśīkadukūlavicitravastrā
muktāvalikanakaratnavibhūṣitāṅgāḥ |
yat ke cid eva puruṣāḥ śriyam udvahanti
puṇyasya pūrvacaritasya kṛtajñatā sā || 36 ||*

That just some people are able to display the splendor of wealth by wearing various garments made of thin silk from Benares, their bodies being adorned by necklaces of pearls, gold, and jewels—that is the gratitude of merit acquired in a previous life.

*dar dang kā shi du kū la ||
sna tshogs gos dang mu tig phreng ||
gser dang nor bus yan lag brgyan ||*

gang dag lha 'dra'i skyes bu dpal ||
bsod nams bzhon pa la zhon pas ||
des byas yin par shes par gyis ||

I refrain from translating the Tibetan stanza and I am leaving aside the mysterious rendering *bzhon pa la* (“in a vehicle”) for *pūrvacaritasya* (“in a previous life”) (!), the mechanical rendering *bzhon pas* (“by riding”) for *udvahanti* (“[they] carry,” i.e., [they] display”), and the really non-sensical rendering *des byas yin par shes par gyis* (“one should know that it is made thereby”) for *kṛtajñatā sā* (“that [is] the gratitude”)—where in an atomized form *kṛta*^o is represented by *byas*, ^o*jñā*^o by *shes par gyis*, ^o*tā* by *yin par*, and *sā* by *des*—and would like to draw your attention only to the expression *gang dag lha 'dra'i skyes bu* (“which god-like people”). I am sure you will admit only very reluctantly that “god-like” reflects the two syllables ^o*d eva* in *ke cid eva*. This is the type of mistake we expect only from a first-year student of Sanskrit in Europe but never from a mature scholar grown up and educated in India. By coincidence the same silly mistake can be found in what John Brough has styled “the Chinese pseudo-translation of Ārya-Śūra’s Jātaka-Mālā.”⁹

After this illustration of what a Tibetan translation of an Indian should not be, I would like to present a few general considerations before continuing with my illustrations of various types of Tibetan translations that are less frustrating than the Tibetan *Subhāṣitaratna*. Basically I would like to deal with two questions: (1) Do we always know what form of text we are talking about when speaking about the types and quality of Tibetan translations of Indian works? (2) What did the Tibetans themselves aim at when they rendered Indian texts into Tibetan? As for the first question I have dealt with one of its aspects in my paper “On Some Old Corruptions in the Transmission of the Tibetan Tanjur.”¹⁰ There I tried to show the possible interferences, at various stages, between the original message of a text or author, its translation into another language, and the interpretation of that translation.

Let us assume, for the sake of simplicity, that there can be only four kinds of interferences:

- (1) The transmission of the original text
- (2) The translation of the original text into Tibetan
- (3) The transmission of the Tibetan translation
- (4) The translation of the Tibetan text into modern languages.

If we apply the binary system “correct” (C) and “incorrect” (I) to these interferences then there are already $2^4 = 16$ possible ways of

transmission of the basic information. These possibilities are shown in figure 1.

For an ordinary reader of a book or paper it is quite often only the last stage at the bottom of the diagram that she or he is confronted with, since this is the usual case when a modern scholar (or amateur) presents her or his interpretation of a passage from an Indian Buddhist work of which only its Tibetan translation is extant. We all know that hardly any text in any cultural tradition is transmitted in an unadulterated form over a long span of time. There are only a very few exceptions where a very strict and lasting oral tradition could be established. In the Indian context I would like to mention the *Ṛgveda* or Pāṇini's grammar. The same exposure to corruptions holds true for the transmission of the Tibetan translations, and while working on these texts I have come across again and again instances where an originally correct translation has corrupted. Usually this can be noticed and explained only if and when the original Sanskrit is still available. Particularly tricky are those cases in which the altered text is again meaningful, and this is quite often the case since the alterations in a text are basically of two types: unintended alterations, e.g., scribal mistakes, mechanical loss of text, mistakes caused by the change of scripts, etc.; and deliberate alterations, e.g., the emendation of an intelligent scribe who wrongly suspects a corruption. Quite recently I came across such a case in which the altered text sounded so sensible that for along time I was convinced that the Tibetan was based on a Sanskrit text other than the one known to me. Only after I had seen what was the cause of the corruption did I become able to restore what I believe the translator originally wrote. The example is so simple and obvious that I would like to present it here. Stanza 47 of the *Prajñādaṇḍa* runs as follows:¹¹

bogs med tshong dang 'khor ldan dag la 'tshe ||

slong zhing 'gying la nor med 'dod la dga' ||

bud med gzhon la tshig rtsub smra ba ste ||

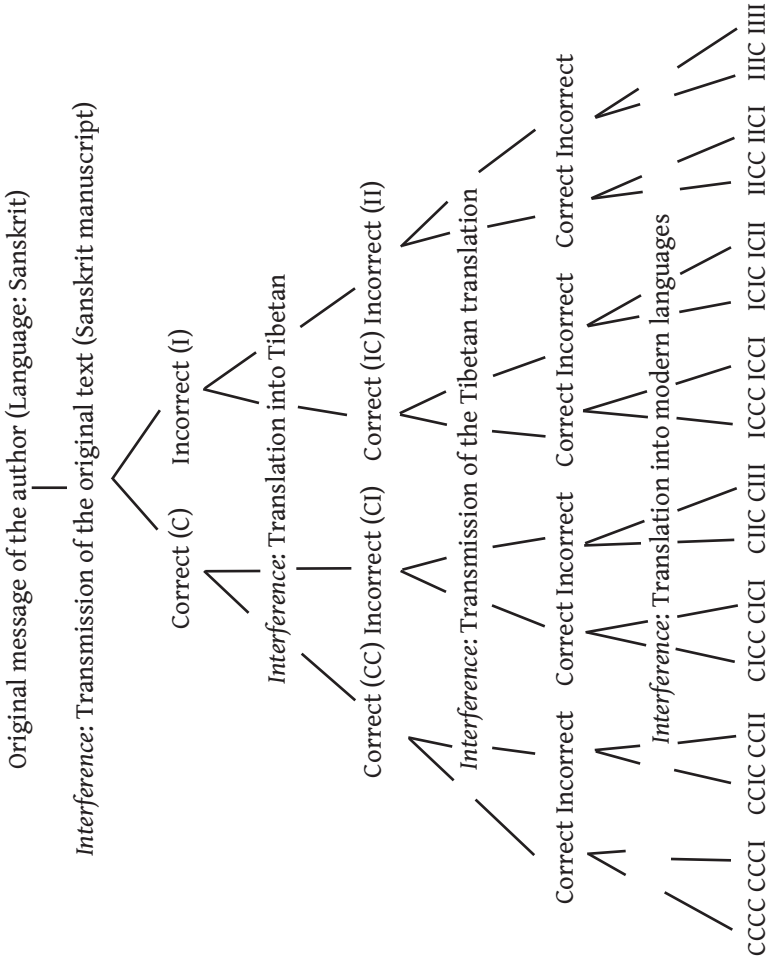
skyes bu log par spyod pa de lnga'o ||

(47a) **bogs** (pogs C) **med tshong dang 'khor ldan dag la 'tshe** CDNQ, *bogs med tshong dang stobs ldan dag la 'tshe* GŚT 65; (47b) 'gyid (?) CN; (47c) na

chung sdug la tshig rtsub smra byed pa GŚT 65; (47d) 'di lnga log par byed pa'i skye bu'o GŚT 65

[He who] trade[s] without profit,
who does harm to those having friends ["entourage"],

Figure 1. Interference and the Transmission of Texts



he who begs and is proud,
 he who has no money and rejoices in sexual pleasures,
 he who speaks harsh words to young women—
 these are the five [types of] men who behave wrongly.

The meaning of the stanza seems to be quite reasonable; however, there are one major and two minor discrepancies if one compares the Tibetan text with the Sanskrit stanza, which was most presumably the original of the Tibetan verse. It can be found in *Cāṇakya-Nīti* 897, which goes back to *Cāṇakyanītiśāstra* 8.14 (as edited in *Cāṇakya-Nīti*), and it is also *Garuḍapurāṇa* 1.115.16 and *Gāthāśataka* 65.¹² It runs as follows:¹

vaṇik pramādī bhṛtakaś ca mānī bhikṣur vilāsī vidhanaś ca kāmī |
veśyāṅganā cāpriyavādinī^b ca^c prajāpater duṣcaritāni pañca ||

(a) *varāṅganā* [*Garuḍapurāṇa*] 1.115.16; (b) *vāpriyavādinī* [*Cāṇakyanītiśāstra*] (var.); (c) read *cāpriyavādinī yā?*

A careless tradesman and an arrogant servant,
 a monk longing for distractions and a lover without money,
 a courtesan speaking unfriendly words [to her suitor]—
 these are the five misdeeds of the creator.

The major discrepancy concerns the first line. Here only the word *vaṇik* seems to have an equivalent in Tibetan: the word *tshong* (“trade,” or—if we take it as a metrical shortening of *tshong pa*—“trader”). However, with a few alterations, all of which are palaeographically close to the canonical text, the Tibetan text can be brought into perfect agreement with the Sanskrit. (1) Instead of *bogs med* we have to read *bag med*, which is the standard equivalent of *pramāda* or *pramādin*, if taken as a metrical abbreviation of *bag med pa*. (2) Instead of *'khor ldan* we have to read *khur ldan* where *khur* renders *bhṛta* and *ldan* the suffix *-ka*. (3) Instead of *dag la* we have to read *nga rgyal*. This seems to be a bold emendation; however, given the similarity between *nga* and *da* and disregarding the position of the *tsheg* all we have to assume is that **rgya* has lost both its superscript and subscript. (4) Instead of *'tshe* we have to read *che*. The term *nga rgyal che* occurs again in stanza 53b of the *Prajñādaṇḍa* where it renders *mānī*! To one who may have some qualms about these four emendations, my question is: how likely is it that a presumably correct text can so easily be altered that it represents exactly the wording of the Sanskrit? The text of *Gāthāśataka* 65 represents the corrupt Tibetan text (and its meaning) with one more redactional change: *'khor ldan* (“having an entourage”) was replaced by *stobs ldan*

(“possessing strength, strong”), which made the text more intelligible for the Tibetan reader.

The first minor discrepancy concerns line c. Here *bud med* is a very unspecific rendering of *veśyāṅganā* “courtesan,” and *gzhon la* (“to a young”) has no Sanskrit equivalent at all. Perhaps the Sanskrit text had the variant reading *varāṅganā*, “an excellent woman,” given above, which was freely rendered as *bud med gzhon *pa* “a young woman.” This assumption is at least partly supported by *Gāthāśataka* 65 where we read *na chung sdug pa*, “a beautiful young woman.” *sdug pa* could be a free but suitable rendering of *vara-* “excellent.” Another possibility, however less likely, would be to alter *gzhon la* to **gzhan la* (“speaking harsh words to others”) and regard this as an addition of the translator.¹⁴

Finally there is *skyes bu* (“man”) taking the place of *prajāpater* (“of the creator”). This could either be an intentional simplification, perhaps caused by metrical considerations since **skyes bu'i bdag po*, the standard equivalent of *prajāpati*, would have required too many syllables, or we simply have to alter the text to *skyes bdag*.

Thus, the first step before making an assessment of the quality of a Tibetan translation is to make sure that one has the “correct”—or at least the best possible—text lying before one, although this is easier said than done. Then is another even more basic point that is quite often not explicitly mentioned or dealt with when a modern scholar reads, translates, or analyzes the Tibetan translation of an Indian text. One has to decide what one is going to establish, to translate, or to analyze:

- (a) The text in its actual form, i.e., in the edited form it received in the eighteenth century when most of the block prints used nowadays were carved.
- (b) The archetype of the modern editions as it can be reconstructed by using the methods and principles of classical textual criticism.
- (c) The text as it was understood by the translators themselves and as it probably left their hands.
- (d) The text as it was to be understood by the Indian author himself.

This might appear to be an artificial classification, which by any means it is not. If one looks at modern editions, translations, and studies one will find all the four types represented.

The first type will be found when the student has as his or her primary source only a modern printed book or the reproduction of a single block print edition and uncritically takes this at its face value. This happens more often than one is inclined to think. Actually this is not different from the usual attitude of an educated Westerner when he or she studies a Western classic. When reading Shakespeare or Vergilius, as a rule one does not use a scholarly edition with full critical apparatus but only an edition that is or ultimately should be based on a work of that kind.

The second type is becoming more and more popular among scholars with the growing number of critical editions being produced. However, one should not be mistaken. The archetype that is being reconstructed is by no means identical with the works of the translators. In the case of the canonical texts it is, in most cases, the text as established at the beginning of the fourteenth century when the first hand-written copy of Kanjur and Tanjur was produced.¹⁵ Many texts, however, were translated already at the beginning of the ninth century, i.e., half a millennium earlier, which left ample room for corruptions as I have shown in the preceding example. Of course, in many cases the conscious editor knows that the wording of the archetype is not correct and his critical apparatus will run as follows in the case of the *Prajñādaṇḍa* stanzas:

bogs med tshong dang 'khor ldan dag la 'tshe α | (obviously corrupted from *bag med tshong dang 'khur ldan nga rgyal che*)

where α stands for the archetype. The modern critical editions quite often represent a compromise between the second and third type.

The third type of text is usually aimed at instances in which the Sanskrit original is still available and permits us to detect a corruption of the aforementioned type. Of course, it is not the task of the editor to correct a faulty translation as I did, for the sake of illustration only, with the Tibetan translation of *Subhāṣitaratna* 36. Only when there can be little doubt about the nature of the corruption and one has a sound and valid knowledge of the style and ability of the translator is one entitled to restore what the translator originally wrote.

The fourth type may sound strange. How is it possible to see the correct Sanskrit text behind a faulty translation when the Sanskrit original is lost? There are in fact quite a few texts where exactly this is the main task of the modern editor. One very famous example is an old and important Buddhist epistemological work, Dignāga's

Pramāṇasamuccaya. Until recently its Sanskrit original was regarded as irretrievably lost, and all we had was a certain number of quotations in other philosophical works—two extremely poor and faulty Tibetan translation and a much better Tibetan translation of a commentary. To restore the original thought of Dignāga thus became a very challenging intellectual puzzle. One good example is Hattori's book *Dignāga, On Perception*,¹⁶ in which the first chapter is edited, translated, and partly restored from its Tibetan translation. One should also read Ernst Steinkellner's review of Hattori's book in which he discusses some possible methodological pitfalls.¹⁷ I would like to give two simple and—as I hope—convincing examples of how it is possible to restore the correct Sanskrit text behind a faulty Tibetan translation.

First, in the Tibetan translation of Haribhaṭṭa's *Udayajātaka* the name of the city in which the Bodhisattva lived when he was born as the rich merchant Udaya is given in Tibetan translation as 'jog po'i brag or "Carpenter's Rock." This is the literal translation of Skt. Takṣaśilā, which is the name of a city in northwest India. It is better known under its Greek form Taxila. At the end of the story the name of the city occurs again, this time as *ljon shing gi brag* or "Tree's Rock." The author Haribhaṭṭa certainly did not vary the name of the city. We can safely assume that in this passage the Sanskrit manuscript was faulty or perhaps only indistinctly written so that the translator read *Vṛkṣaśilā instead of Takṣaśilā. So at least in our translation of the legend we are entitled to use the correct name even if there can be no doubt that the translator himself had translated a different name.

The second illustration is taken from the Tibetan translation of Candragomin's Buddhist play *Lokānanda* ("Joy for the World"). Its fifth act contains a brief scene in which an Indian proper name seems to be given in Tibetan transliteration. In that particular scene two tribal people try to abduct Padmāvatī, the heroine of the play, from the hermitage where she temporarily lives. The following is the Tibetan text and its English translation of the scene. While reading it one has to bear in mind that the utterances of actors in the Tibetan *Lokānanda* are always introduced by the particle *nas*:¹⁸

de nas padma can sha ba ri gnyis dang rjes su 'gro zhing rab tu zhugs so |
 | sha ba ri dag nas |
 song mi khyod song
 zhes skad chen pos smra zhing
 khyod mi 'gro 'am zhes
 mad mā da ka zhes pa nas

bud med rnyed pa 'dis nga'i bu chung de'i nu ma bsnun pa'i ma
 ma byed do
 zhes zer | gnyis pa nas |
 ha kye ṇa ḍe kal lo la kā 'di ni 'u cag gnyis kyis thob bo || ji ltar
 'gro ba de ltar 'gror chug
 zer |

Padmāvatī appears, followed by two wild forest dwellers of the Śābara tribe.

THE TWO ŚĀBARAS:

Get going, move along! (*With a loud voice*) You mean you don't want to go?

THE (ŚĀBARA) CALLED MADAMĀDĀKA:

This woman who has been captured shall become the wet-nurse of my young son!

THE OTHER ŚĀBARA:

Ha, ha, Ṇaḍe, we've both caught this *kallolakā*, and first we have to get her to walk. Get going there!

For many years I was puzzled by the fact that one of the two tribal people is given a name in the stage direction. For a number of reasons this passage makes no sense at all. First, the name itself—"one who intoxicates intoxication"—is meaningless and attested nowhere else. Second, there is absolutely no need for a minor character in a play—especially one who appears only in a single brief scene—to bear a name. And third, how could the spectators of the play know the name if it is mentioned only in the stage direction? All these reasons convinced me that *madamādaka* is neither a name nor part of the stage direction but a part of the speech of the second Śābara. After thinking the matter over and over again I realized that *madamādaka*, if spoken by the first Śābara, has to be Middle-Indic (Prakrit), not Sanskrit. As a Prakrit word, *madamādaka* can have the meaning "somebody whose mother has died," Skt. **mṛtamātrka*. What the first Śābara actually says is, "His mother has died, therefore this woman who has been captured shall become the wet-nurse of my young son!" In hindsight it becomes clear that the two words **madamādaka tti* "His mother has died, therefore ..." are absolutely necessary because they indicate the reason why the first Śābara needs Padmāvatī for his little son.

The two translators of the play misunderstood the two Prakrit words as designation of a name and translated accordingly. In the next sentence they were again puzzled by the Prakrit word *kalhoḍakā* ("little cow")—this is what I suspect behind the transliteration *kal lo la kā*—and took it for a name or an epithet that the Śābaras gave to Padmāvatī

after they had caught her. Again it is not difficult to reconstruct the text which the *lotsāwas* partly transcribed, partly translated: **hā hā ṇa de (e)sā kalhoḍakā* (“Ho! Ho! This little cow does not [belong] to you [alone]!”) By this interpretation of the two transliterated Prakrit passages the whole scene becomes logical and coherent and we see that sometimes it is possible to give a correct translation of a faulty Tibetan text.²⁰

The second general consideration to be made is: What did the Tibetans themselves aim at when they rendered Indian texts into Tibetan? Fortunately, this can easily be answered since at the beginning of the ninth century CE the principles of how to translate Indian text were laid down in a short work entitled *Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa* (“[The Principles of] Literary Composition [Laid Down in] Two Fascicules”). It consists of a short preface in which some particulars are given about the time, place, participants, and reason of the conference at which the work was written, followed by a set of some twenty basic rules for the translator. The second part consists of a lengthy section in which the translation of four hundred important Indian terms is given and explained, obviously meant as a model for coining new expressions that are not contained in the huge terminological dictionary *Mahāvvyutpatti* that was compiled simultaneously with the *Principles of Literary Composition*. I would like to quote three of these principles for the purpose of illustration:

(11) *bsnor na bde zhing go ba bskyed pa cig yod na | tshigs bcad la ni rtsa ba bzhi pa 'am | drug pa 'ang rung ste | tshigs su bcad pa gcig gi nang na gang bde ba bsnor zhing sgyur cig |*

If only by deviating [from the word order of the Indian original] »good language« and a correct understanding [of the meaning] can be achieved (*bsnor na bde zhing go ba bskyed pa cig yod na*), then one should translate in such a manner, that the deviation [produces] »good language« (*gang bde ba bsnor zhing*) within one stanza (*tshigs su bcad pa gcig gi nang na*); and as far as the stanzas are concerned (*tshigs bcad la ni*), they may have »four roots« or »six roots« (*rtsa ba bzhi pa 'am | drug pa 'ang rung ste*).²¹

(12) *rkyang pa la ni don gang snyegs pa yan chad kyi tshig dang don gnyis ka la gar bde bar bsnor zhing sgyur cig |*

In prose texts (*rkyang pa*) the [correct] meaning is the most important thing to be achieved (*don gang snyegs pa yan chad kyi*), however one should translate in such a manner, that the deviation [from the word

order of the Indian original produces] »good language« with regard to both: style and meaning (*tshig dang don gnyis ka la gar bde bar bsnor zhing sgyur cig*).²²

(20) *pa ri dang | sam dang | u pa lta bu sogs te | tshig gi phrad dang rgyan lta bur 'byung ba rnams bsgyur na don dan mthun zhiñ 'byor ba'i thabs ni | yongs su zhe 'am | yang dag pa zhe 'am | nye ba zhes sgra bzhin du sgyur cig | don lhag par snyegs pa med pa rnams ni tshig gi lhad kyis bsnan mi dogs kyis don bzhin du thogs shig |*

While translating words like *pari*, *sam*, *upa* etc., i.e., such [words], that are particle (*tshig gi phrad*) or have a kind of (*lta bu*) ornamental [function] (*rgyan*), the method (*thabs*) to achieve correspondence with the meaning (*don dang mthun zhing 'byor ba*) [is as follows]:

One should translate literally (*sgra bzhin du*) using [adverbial expressions like] *yongs su* [= completely], *yang dag pa* [= in the right manner] or *nye ba* [= near to].

However, in the case of such [particles whose usage] does not add (*snyegs pa*), to the meaning (*don lhag pa*) [of the simple word] it is not necessary to enlarge [the translation] by additional words, but one should translate (*thogs shig*) according to the meaning (*don bzhin du*).²³

It can be observed that during the period of the so-called “first spread” (*snga dar*) of the Buddhist dharma in Tibet these and other principles were mostly followed, and the result is a great number of excellent Tibetan translations of important works from that time. I would like to mention the whole of the *Vinaya*, which, because of its practical role, had to be translated as faithfully and intelligibly as possible. The same standard is shown in the Tibetan translation of two early and voluminous collections of Buddhist legends, the *Avadānaśataka* and the *Karmaśataka*. Also some of the finest works of Buddhist poetry were rendered masterfully at this early period, such as the two famous hymns by Mātṛceṭa, the one in 150 stanzas entitled *The Rise of Insight through Faith* (*Prasādapratibhodbhava*) and the one in approximately 400 stanzas entitled *Praise of the Praiseworthy* (*Varṇārhaṇa*); the three oldest epistles by Nāgārjuna (“Letter to a Friend,” *Suḥṛllekha*), Mātṛceṭa (“Letter to the Great King Kaniṣka,” *Mahārājakaniṣka-lekha*), and Candragomin (“Letter to a Disciple,” *Śiṣyalekha*); four works on worldly wisdom attributed to Nāgārjuna and Ravigupta; and finally, two works attributed to Āryaśura (“Garland of Birth-Stories,” *Jātakamālā*; and “Compendium of the Moral Perfections,” *Pāramitāsamāsa*). The fact that we have early translations of Indian poetical works is sometimes overlooked by

Western scholars. I was very surprised when I once read in a paper by David Jackson on the Tibetan translation of Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* that he places the beginning of Tibetan translations of ornate poetry in the twelfth century CE, i.e., four centuries later than the actual beginning.²⁴

Now I would like to single out two works, the two works by, or attributed to, Āryaśūra. The style of their Tibetan renderings is so different that they represent two opposite alternatives. The Tibetan version of the *Garland of Birth-Stories* is simply the *Principles of Literary Composition* put into practice. A few years ago one of my students, Albrecht Hanisch, prepared a new edition of the Sanskrit text of the first fifteen legends, in the framework of which he also studied its Tibetan translation quite carefully.²⁵ He says that within these fifteen legends he could not find a single mistake, but many places where the Tibetan translation presented a better text than the two oldest Nepalese manuscripts dating from the eleventh and twelfth century or a better understanding than that presented in the modern translations of the work. One particularly noteworthy feature is the scarce use of Tibetan adverbs in order to translate Sanskrit verbal prefixes. In accordance with rule 20 quoted above they are generally avoided in all those cases when a simple verb in Tibetan is sufficient to convey the meaning of a verb compound in Sanskrit. Above I mentioned the compound *saṃ-mānaya*ti, "to honor, to pay respect to," and its nominal derivations. The equivalents in the Tibetan *Jātakamālā* are: *bkur sti*, *bkur sti cher byed pa*, *bkur sti bgyi ba* (or *byed pa*), *mgu bar byed pa* ("to please"), *mgron (s)byar* ("hospitality"), *mchod cing bkur ba*, *sbyin pa* ("to give; charity"). When one studies the respective passages one will see that the translators always render the very specific nuance that the word has in that particular context, and only in one place do we find a separate rendering—not a mechanical one—of the prefix *saṃ-* by *cher* ("greatly") when the king is "greatly honored" by the people.

Rule 18 of the *Principles of Literary Composition* says that when translating the names of countries, beings, flowers, trees, etc. whose Tibetan renderings might become unclear or ambiguous the Sanskrit term should be kept together with a prefixed generic term like "the country," "the flower," and so on, so that the reader immediately knows what is meant. Thus we find the following expressions in the Tibetan *Jātakamālā*:

shing tog a mra'i 'bras bu (“mango fruit, a fruit growing on a tree”) for *āmraphala* (Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā* 6.27+)

yul shi bi pa nams (“the inhabitants of the country called Śibi”) for *śibayah* (Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā* 9.0, 9.16+, 9.21+)

rin po che spur len (“the jewel called *spur len*”) for *puṣparāga* (“topaz”) (Āryaśūra’s *Jātakamālā* 14.17+).

In later translations like that of Haribhaṭṭa’s *Jātakamālā* we find expressions like *lhan cig byed pa* (“helper, assistant, co-worker”) where actually “mango tree” is meant. One of its names is *sahakāra*, which was translated literally without using a generic term.

Occasionally we find places where the two modern English translations missed the point while the Tibetan rendering is correct. In stanza 2.12ab we read:

śakrasya śakrapratimānuśiṣṭyā
tvāṃ yācitum cakṣur ihāgato 'smi |

Speyer translates this as: “It is Śakra. His statue, instructing me to ask thee for thy eye, has caused me to come here.”²⁶ Quite similarly Khoroché translates: “Śakra. It is at the bidding of an image of Śakra that I have come here to ask you for your eye.”²⁷ Both interpret *śakrasya* as reply to *kasya* in 2.11d, thereby accepting that *śakrasya* in 2.12a would then be an isolated word, which is stylistically not so fortunate. The Tibetan understands the sentence quite differently:

brgya byin 'dra ba brgya byin gyis bstan nas |
khyod la spyen sloṅ slad du 'dir mchis so |

At the command of Śakra, oh you spitting image of Śakra
I came here to request your eye.

The Sanskrit commentary confirms this interpretation: *śakrapratimety āmantraṇam | śakrasyānuśiṣṭyā śakropadeśena |*. “Oh you spitting image of Śakra—that is a vocative. ‘At the command of Śakra’ [means]: at the instruction of Śakra.”²⁸

The Tibetan translation of Āryaśūra’s *Compendium of the Moral Perfections* is a very unique text in that only 40 percent of its 355 stanzas²⁹ is translated more or less verbally.³⁰ In the other 60 percent we find translations that are sometimes as free as some of the Chinese translations of Indian works. It abounds in unusually free renderings of individual words, e.g., *chos rgyal* for *muni*; *stobs*, *mthu*, and *mthun pa* for *guṇa*; *thob byed* for *māyā*; *mya ngan* for *aśubhasvapna*; etc. Quite often the *hendiadys* principle³² is used, that is, using two Tibetan words

for one Sanskrit word, such as *blangs shing khyer byed* (“[they] take and carry away”) for *apaharanti* (“they take away”), *phan zhing mkho gyur* (“became useful and helpful”) for *upayujyamāna* (“being used”), *blang zhing gzung* (“are to be taken and kept”) for *grāhyataram eti* (“[his words] become acceptable”), etc. Other specific features are the words belonging to the old language (*rnying skad*), and it is one of the very few canonical texts—if I am not mistaken—that still uses the archaic construction of a case particle followed by a plural particle like *chos kyi rnams* for *dharmāḥ*, *tshig gi rnams* for *akṣarāḥ*, or *mang tshogs kyi rnams* for *anekāni*. We also observe quite peculiar renderings of Sanskrit prefixes: e.g., *rgyun du* and *kun tu* for *pra-* or *mang du* and *gtan du* for *sam-*. Since we find a great number of very correctly translated stanzas it is not very likely that these unusual equivalents were chosen out of lack of competence.

I would like to illustrate the great range of freedom—from extremely literal to extremely free—by three examples taken from the thesis of Naoki Saito.

(a) A very literal translation can be found in the following case:

vikalpaśāntiṃ paramārthatas tu
kṣāntiṃ kṣamātattvavido vadanti |
tasmād vikalpopaśame yateta
svapnopamaṃ lokam avekṣamāṇaḥ || 3.20 ||
rnam rtog zhi ba don dam bzod pa zhes ||
bzod pa'i yang dag nyid mkhyen de dag gsungs ||
*de bas 'jig rten *rmi 'dra rtogs bya zhing ||*
rnam rtog nye bar zhi la nan tan gyis || 3.19 ||

The disappearance (“calming”) of conceptual constructions, however—that is true forbearance according to those who know about real forbearance.

Therefore, realizing that the world is like a dream, one should strive for the disappearance of conceptual constructions.

rmi 'dra, “like a dream,” in line (c) is a restored reading on the basis of Sanskrit *svapnopamaṃ*. All the five Tanjur editions (CDNQ) read *mi 'dra* (“not resembling”), which spoils the meaning of the stanza completely. There can be little doubt that this is a later corruption. Unfortunately this stanza does not belong to those quoted by Tsongkhapa in his *Lam rim chen mo*, which, as a rule, represent an older and more authentic text. There is only one minor discrepancy: *de dag* (“those”) qualifying *bzod pa'i yang dag nyid mkhyen* (Skt. *kṣamātattvavido*) has no equivalent

in the Sanskrit original. Either *de dag* was added for metrical reasons or Vairocanarakṣita's Sanskrit manuscript read *te* instead of *tu*.

(b) In the following stanza we find a divergent interpretation of the Sanskrit stanza in combination with a freer treatment of the syntax:

*dvandvapravṛtter vinivṛttabuddhiḥ
prāg eva dārapraṇayāt parasya |
kurvīta lokasya hitārthakartrīḥ
kāyena ceṣṭāḥ sujanasya ceṣṭāḥ || 2.3 ||*

Having reverted one's thoughts from the activity of copulation,
not to speak of the attachment to the wife of someone else,
one should perform bodily deeds that accomplish the welfare of others
and are appreciated by the good.

*kha *gtad spyod pa'i blo las phyir log pas ||
thog mar gzhan gyi bud med bslu ba'i blo ||
yongs su gtang bya 'jig rten phan byed *pa'i ||
lus kyi spyod pa skyes bu mchog ltar bsgrub || 2.3 ||*

Having abstained from the thought of *quarrelling
one should first of all abandon completely
the thought of seducing ("cheating") the wife of someone else,
and, like a good person, accomplish bodily acts that benefit others.³³

This stanza is a good illustration of how a misunderstanding eventually led to a textual corruption. The ambiguous term *dvandva-* means both "couple; coupling" and "quarrel, dispute, fight."³⁴ Vairocanarakṣita took it in the latter sense, although the context makes it quite clear what is meant. Unfortunately he chose as the Tibetan equivalent a comparatively rare expression, *kha gtad pa*, "to confront, to oppose; law-suit," not to be found frequently in the texts translated from Indian languages where *dvandva* is usually rendered as *gnyis* (*kyi*) *gnyis*.³⁵ Therefore it later became corrupted as *kha ton* ("recitation"), which is quite meaningless in the context of the stanza. A second misunderstanding on the part of Vairocanarakṣita concerns *prāg eva*, "how much more; how much less," that he took in the sense in *ādau*, "in the beginning." Very interesting is the manner in which he translated *vinivṛttabuddhiḥ* twice: first (almost) literally as *blo las phyir log pas* ("having reverted from the thought of . . .") then as *blo yongs su gtang bya* ("one should abandon completely the thought of"). As for the nice linguistic *sujanasya ceṣṭāḥ* ("and appreciated by the good"), it is not clear whether *skyes bu mchog ltar* ("like a good person") goes back to a correct understanding or is just a guess.

Although Vairocanarakṣita missed the meaning of two Sanskrit terms, the Tibetan stanza makes sense in the context of a chapter dealing with morality. Moreover, its syntax is genuine and shows no traces of Sanskritisms. As stated before, mistakes of this kind are comparatively rare.

(c) A stanza that was translated rather freely is the following one:

*kudṛṣṭipaṅkākramaṇālasas tu
prāpnoti kalyāṇaḥṛdaḥ sahāyān |
karmasvako 'stīti ca karma pāpaṃ
viśasyamāno 'pi karoti naiva || 2.42 ||*

However, he who is reluctant
to step into the mud of wrong views
will have friends who care for his (spiritual) welfare;
and being aware that man will have to bear
the fruits of his own deeds³⁶
under no circumstances he will commit a bad deed
even when [threatened to be] cut apart.

*log par lta ba'i 'dam la mi 'dug na |
dge ba sgrub pa'i grogs dang phrad par 'gyur |
rang gi las bzhin 'gyur bar *rnam mthong bas |
sdiḡ pa'i las rnams *des ni yongs su spong | 2.42 |*

If he does not dwell in the mud of wrong views
he will definitely meet a friend who accomplishes his (spiritual)
welfare.
Since he clearly sees that [his life] will develop according to his own
deeds
he completely abstains from evil deeds.³⁷

We see that the two expressions (*ā*)*kramaṇālasas*³⁸ and *kalyāṇaḥṛdas sahāyān* have been translated freely but nevertheless in accordance with the meaning of the Sanskrit original. The word *iti*, “(thinking) this,” has been expanded to **rnam mthong bas*, “since he clearly sees”; *viśasyamāno 'pi* was left untranslated; and *karoti naiva*, “under no circumstances he will commit,” was suitably changed to *yongs su spong*, “he completely abstains.”

A detailed analysis of the stanzas translated in such a free manner reveals that in most cases the meaning of the original stanzas was maintained although sometimes expressed rather freely. One can only guess what was the reason for the peculiar way of rendering a Sanskrit text. I have two explanations to offer. The first is that the *Principles of*

Literary Composition had not yet been laid down, that this translation is actually one of the earliest translations that provoked the conference and the formulation of these principles. The second is that the translator wished to make the translation more palpable for a Tibetan audience or readership, that he wished to write Tibetan, not translationese. The early date of this translation—it was done at the end of the eighth century—makes such an assumption likely. It is noteworthy that the translation was done only by a Tibetan, Vairocanarakṣita, without the assistance of an Indian pandit. Some of the interpretations are so peculiar that one gets the impression that they reflect the interpretation of a now lost commentary. The original Sanskrit text is partly so condensed that one indeed wishes to have the assistance of a reliable commentary.

The interruption of the first period of Tibetan translations of Indian works that was caused by the political events in the ninth century had as a consequence a considerable change in the standard of the Tibetan translations. The new style of the new language became more mechanical, and the wise rules of the *Principles of Literary Composition* were largely ignored. Among the *kāvya* texts translated during this period are a great number of hymns and epistles, Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, Haribhaṭṭa's *Jātakamālā*, Candragomin's *Lokānanda*, Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta*, and the five works translated by Shong-ston rdo-rje rgyal-mtshan:

1. Kṣemendra's *Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā*, a collection of 108 Buddhist legends in verse form, counting 7,361 stanzas (it is on this work that Shong-ston's fame in Tibet is founded);
2. Harṣadeva's six-act play *Nāgānanda* ("Joy for the Nāgas");
3. Vajradatta's *Lokeśvaraśataka* ("Century of Stanzas in Praise of Avalokiteśvara"), composed in a very baroque style;
4. Daṇḍin's poetological treatise *Kāvyaḍarśa* ("Mirror of Composition"); and
5. Jñānaśrīmitra's *Vṛttamālāstuti* ("Praise [of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī] in the Form of a Garland of [Various] Meters"), a very refined work that illustrates 150 different Sanskrit meters.

Shong-ston has developed a very regular style. As a rule he uses only one or two standard equivalents of a Sanskrit term, and prefixes are frequently rendered separately even when this is not necessary. As a rule he follows the rules of Tibetan syntax; only occasionally do we observe syntactical Sanskritisms, but mostly in such cases it is when

the meaning becomes clear from the context. A special feature is his frequent use of the collective particle *dag* and the isolation particle *ni*. It is surprising that despite the great amount of *kāvya* translated he never developed a technique for translating *śleṣas* or double entendres. He never translates a stanza twice in order to convey both meanings to the prospective Tibetan reader, but he always makes an awkward compromise by translating the first meaning of one word and the second meaning of the next word, the result being a strange mixture of incompatible parts. Nevertheless, as a whole his translations are to 95 percent reliable and quite often clear and pleasant to read. They surpass those of Haribhaṭṭa's *Jātakamālā* and Candragomin's *Lokānanda* by far, which is somewhat unfair since the latter two works are partly or entirely lost whereas the works translated by Shong-ston are available in Sanskrit. It would have been better for us if we had excellent translations of lost works while we could live quite well with mediocre or poor translations of extant works.

Lack of time prevents me from presenting two interesting cases of two Buddhist hymns that were translated thrice, Sarvajñamitra's *Sragdharāstotra* and Carpaṭi's *Lokanāthastotra*. The first case is interesting insofar as the second translation is little more than a revision of the first one, whereas the third translation is a complete reorganization: the long lines of the first two translation with their nineteen syllables are broken into units of seven syllables only, very much in the line of the *Subhāṣitaratna*. The three translations of the *Lokanāthastotra* are obviously completely independent of each other, thereby offering a good illustration of how differently one can translate the same text. This is actually the best counterevidence against the alleged uniformity of the Tibetan translations as a whole.

At the end of this article I would like to quote Sa-skya Paṇḍita's critical assessment of the transformation of Indian meter into Tibetan that is valid—*cum grano salis*—for many translations of Indian texts:

*rang nyid kyi skad la ngo bo nyid kyi sdeb sbyor gyi tha snyad med la*³⁹ | *legs par sbyar ba'i skad nyid las* [4] *bod du bsgyur yang za 'og gi mdun gyi ri mo bsgyur ba rgyab tu mi 'byung ba ltar | don tsam zhig bsgyur bar nus kyi | sdeb sbyor bsgyur du mi rung zhing | bdag cag lta bu legs par shes pa dag*⁴⁰ *gis kyang bod kyi skad la ji ltar 'bad du zin kyang | lwa ba'i thags la gos chen gyi ri mo mi shes* [5] *pa ltar | legs par*⁴¹ *sbyar ba'i sdeb sbyor bod kyi skad la mi 'byor bas | sdeb sbyor mtshan nyid pa bod skad la dper brjod pa ma byas so |* (vol. *tha*, foll. 283a3–5)

In our own language there is no established usage of genuine meters, and yet [verses] have been translated from the Sanskrit language into Tibetan; however, [this] resembles a painting on a precious piece of brocade that has been turned and then does not appear on its reverse side. While the meaning alone can be translated, the meters are not suited to be translated. Even people like us who are familiar with [Indian meters] have made any possible effort with the Tibetan language; however, since the meters of Sanskrit cannot be adapted to the Tibetan language like a pattern of brocade cannot be [drawn] on a woolen cloth, [we] have not illustrated in Tibetan the [Indian] meters with [all] their characteristics.

While several of the illustrations given above seem to confirm quote Sa-skyā Paṇḍita's critical statement, there are fortunately many noteworthy exceptions, most of which can be found among the translations done during the first spread of the dharma to Tibet.

NOTES

1. Heinz Zimmerman, *Die Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā*, Freiburger Beiträge zur Indologie 8 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975).
2. Michael Hahn, "Zu Heinz Zimmermann: Die Subhāṣita-Ratna-Karaṇḍaka-Kathā und ihre tibetische Übersetzung," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 22 (1978): 49–56.
3. A. C. Banerjee, ed., "Appendix: Subhāṣita-Ratnakaraṇḍaka-Kathā of Ārya Śūra," in *Jātaka-Mālā by Ārya Śūra*, ed. P. L. Vaidya, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts 21 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1959), 275–307.
4. Michael Hahn, *Die Subhāṣitaratnakaraṇḍakakathā: Ein spätbuddhistischer Text zur Verdienstlehre*, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).
5. "The Tibetan translations are, as a rule, very faithful and almost verbatim. But the present text on collation with the Tibetan versions is found to have more divergence than agreement. Further, there is a slight difference between the two Tibetan versions. It is, therefore, likely that the Tibetan renderings were made not from the present work but from some other, lost to us. In other words, there were texts other than our present text that the Tibetan translators made use of." *Ibid.*, 277.
6. In my presentation of the Tibetan text I have adopted Zimmermann's marking system by which he indicates at the left side to which of the four lines of the Sanskrit stanza a Tibetan line corresponds.
7. Siglinde Dietz, *Die buddhistische Briefliteratur Indiens: Nach dem tibetischen Tanjur herausgegeben, übersetzt und erläutert* (The Buddhist Epistolary Literature of India: Edited, Translated and Commented upon according to the Tibetan Tanjur), Asiatische Forschungen vol. 84 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1984).
8. "Bemerkenswert ist die gegenüber der TV von SRKK weitaus bessere tib. Übersetzung in unserem Text" [Noteworthy is the fact that the Tibetan translation in our text is by far superior to the Tibetan version of *Subhāṣitaratna*]; *ibid.*, 203 n. 151. Stanzas 6 and 7 of the *Maṇḍalavidhi* quote *Subhāṣitaratna* 67 and 65.
9. Cf. John Brough, "The Chinese Pseudo-Translation of Ārya-Śūra's Jātaka-Mālā," *Asia Major*, n.s., 11 (1964): 27–53. Reprinted in John Brough, *Collected Papers*, ed. Minoru Hara and J. C. Wright (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1996), 217–243.

10. Michael Hahn, "On Some Old Corruptions in the Transmission of the Tibetan Tanjur," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 43 (1989): 359–367.
11. These are the abbreviations used for the four Tibetan xylographs: C = Chone, D = Derge, N = Narthang, Q = Qianlong. GŚT = The canonical Tibetan translation of Vararuci's *Gāthāśataka*; see Géza Bethlenfalvy, "The *Śatagāthā* attributed to Vararuci," in *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 1, Bibliotheca orientalis hungarica 24/1 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), 17–58.
12. Ludwik Sternbach, *Cāṇakya-Nīti-Text-Tradition*, vols. 1–2 (Hoshiyarpur: Vishveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute, 1967–1968); Ramshankar Bhattacharya, ed., *Garuḍapurāṇa: Garuḍapurāṇam of Maḥarṣi Vedavyāsa*, Kashi Sanskrit Series 165 (Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1964); the original Sanskrit of Vararuci's *Gāthāśataka* is now lost.
14. In the Sanskrit text as quoted from *Cāṇakya-Nīti* I cannot account for the two instances of *ca* in line c. I think the variant reading *cāpriyādinī yā* is to be preferred.
15. The exceptions are, for example, the precanonical versions found in Central Asia or Dunhuang or quotations in older Tibetan texts.
16. Masaaki Hattori, *Dignāga, On Perception: Being the Pratyakṣapariccheda of Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya from the Sanskrit Fragments and the Tibetan Versions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).
17. Ernst Steinkellner, "Review of Hattori 1996," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 15 (1971): 222–224.
18. Cf. Michael Hahn, *Candragomin's Lokānandanāṭaka. Nach dem tibetischen Tanjur herausgegeben und übersetzt. Ein Beitrag zur klassischen indischen Schauspieldichtung*, Asiatische Forschungen 39 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), 192; and Michael Hahn, trans., *Joy for the World: A Buddhist Play by Candragomin* (Berkeley, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1987), 111.
20. This example was already given in my paper "On Some Rare Particles, Words and Auxiliaries," *Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Sixth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Fagernes 1992*, ed. Per Kværne, vol. 1.2 (Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1994), 288–294.
21. Nils Simonsson, *Indo-tibetische Studien: Die Methoden der tibetischen Übersetzer, untersucht im Hinblick auf die Bedeutung ihrer Übersetzungen für die Sanskritphilologie*, vol. 1 (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1957), 248. The transliteration of Tibetan was replaced by the one used here.
22. *Ibid.*, 249.
23. *Ibid.*, 255.

24. David Jackson, "On the Date of the Tibetan Translation of Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita*," *Studia Indologica* 4 (1997): 41–62.
25. Albrecht Hanisch, *Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā: Untersuchungen zu den Legenden 1 bis 15, Einleitung, Textausgabe, Anhänge, Register*, Indica et Tibetica Philologische vols. 43.1 and 43.2 (Marburg: Indica et Tibetica, 2005).
26. From J. S. Speyer, *Garland of Birth-Stories*, Sacred Books of the Buddhists vol. 1 (Oxford: H. Frowde, 1895), 12.
27. Peter Khoroché, trans., *Once the Buddha Was a Monkey: Ārya Śūra's Jātakamālā* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 12.
28. The incomplete *Jātakamālāṭīkā* on Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*, which covers only the first fifteen legends, has been edited by Ratna Basu in her unpublished thesis, "Eine literatur-kritische Studie zu Āryaśūras *Jātakamālā* zusammen mit einer kritischen Edition der anonymen *Jātakamālāṭīkā* und einer kritischen Edition der *Jātakamālāpañjikā* des Vīryasiṃha" (Bonn, 1989). The thesis can be consulted in a mimeographed edition in the German university libraries.
29. The Sanskrit has 363 stanzas, 8 of which are omitted in Tibetan.
30. Recently this Tibetan text has been edited and studied in the doctoral thesis of my Japanese student Naoki Saito; see his *Das Kompendium der moralischen Vollkommenheiten. Vairocanaraksitas tibetische Übertragung von Aryasuras Paramitasamasa samt Neuausgabe des Sanskrittextes*, Indica et Tibetica vol. 38 (Marburg: Indica et Tibetica, 2005).
32. See *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "Hendiadys": "A figure of speech in which a single complex idea is expressed by two words usu. connected by *and* (e.g., *nice and warm* for *nicely warm*)."
33. We have emended the *byed pas* to *byed pa'i* because only this is in accordance with the Sanskrit original. The confusion of a genitive with an instrumental (and vice versa) is one of the most frequently occurring mistakes.
34. Cf. *dvandvaṃ tu mithune yugme dvandvaḥ kalahaguhyayoḥ | dvandvaṃ 'khrig pa dang zung la || dvandvaḥ 'thab dang gsang ba la |* in the *Abhidhānaviśvalocanam of Śrīdharasena*, ed. Lozang Jamspal in collaboration with Alex Wayman (Narita: Naritasan Shinshoji, 1992), entry 2136cd.
35. Cf. Akira Hirakawa, *Index to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (P. Pradhan Edition), Part One: Sanskrit-Tibetan-Chinese* (Tokyo: Daizo Shuppan, 1973).
36. The Sanskrit *karmasvako 'smṛti* would be stylistically preferable.
37. The Tibetan text has a different form in the eighteenth century editions of the Tibetan Tanjur. In line (b), all of them (i.e., CDGNQ) read *de bas* instead of **dge ba*. Instead of **sgrub*, CD have *bsgrub* while GNQ read *bsgrubs*. In line (c) CDGNQ read *lam* instead of **rnam*, and in line (d) we have emended the transmitted readings *de* and *spongs* as **des* and **spong*. The emendation **dge*

ba[s] for *de bas* is undisputable because of *kalyāṇa*° in the Sanskrit original. The reading **dge bas bsgrebs pa'i* “accomplished by [one’s own] (spiritual) welfare,” which is closer to the Tanjur editions, is not entirely impossible, however very clumsy, and therefore rather unlikely in my opinion. A rendering of the canonical text could run as follows: “If (you) do not dwell in the mud of wrong views (you) will definitely meet a friend produced from that [cause]. Seeing the way in which one’s own deeds will develop (*'gyur *ba'i*) you should completely abstain from those (*de ?*) evil deeds.”

38. Perhaps the Sanskrit text should be emended as *kudṛṣṭipaṅkakramaṇālasas tu*.

The Buddhist *Pratimālakṣaṇa*: “Defining the Image”¹

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IN MANY ŚILPAŚĀSTRAS one finds a section that deals with iconometry, *tālamāna*. A text now often referred to is Varāhamihira’s *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (sixth century), and Bhaṭṭotpala’s commentary (967 CE).² Buddhist literature also has its iconometrical texts. They actually come from a common brāhmanical tradition. Ancient Indian craftsmen, such as painters, were not necessarily linked with a specific religious tradition. They were primarily members of a guild of painters.³ But the Buddhist tradition nevertheless introduced adaptations, producing Sthāvirīya texts,⁴ and later Mantrayāna texts too.

Early in the twentieth century Lévi discovered Sanskrit iconometrical texts in the Darbar Library in Nepal.⁵ Some of these Newārī Sanskrit manuscripts found their way to the Viśvabhāratī Library in Śāntiniketan and generated initial interest. Bagchi stimulated research there, drawing attention to the *Kriyāsamuccaya* too. Sri Lanka also has its share of Sanskrit iconometrical texts, such as the *Bimbamāna*, also called *Śāriputra*, and the *Alekhyalakṣaṇa*.⁶ These texts were really introduced by Ruelius in 1968, and published and studied in his doctoral dissertation in 1974.⁷ The *Alekhyalakṣaṇa* seems to be a more recent compilation, maybe twelfth or thirteenth century,⁸ with Buddhist elements only in its Sinhalese commentary.⁹ Consisting of thirty-one Sanskrit stanzas and its Sinhalese *sannaya*, the text speaks about the measurements of the human body. The *Bimbamāna* supposedly dates from about the same period. Its oldest manuscript dates from 1352 CE.¹⁰ The text counts 139 Sanskrit stanzas and has a Sinhalese *sannaya*. It only deals with the measurements of a Buddha statue. Marasinghe says that the *Bimbamāna* shows a definite link with the last two chapters of the *Citrakarmasāstra*, a text that may have been written before the seventh

century, but the two texts represent different traditions.¹¹ The *Citrakarma* is clearly Mahayana.

Laufer's study of the Tibetan *Citralakṣaṇa* in 1913 informed the scholarly world about Tibetan iconometrical scriptures.¹² The *bsTan-'gyur*, the translated doctrine, contains four texts. The catalogue of the Peking edition of the Tibetan *Tripitaka*, kept in the library of Ōtani University in Japan, mentions the following texts:¹³

no. 5804: *Daśatālanyagrodhapaṛimaṇḍalabuddhapratimālakṣaṇa*, i.e., the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, *Defining the Image*.

no. 5805: *Sam̐buddhabhāṣitapratimālakṣaṇavivaraṇa*, a commentary on the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*.

no. 5806 *Citralakṣaṇa*, *Defining a Painting* (of a *cakravartin*, a wheel-turning ruler).

no. 5807: *Pratimāmānalakṣaṇa*, *Defining the Measurements of Images*. Also called *Ātreyaṭilaka*.

There is no known Sanskrit original of the *Citralakṣaṇa* yet. A Sanskrit text of the other three now exists, and will be discussed *infra*. (1), (2), and (4) are Tibetan translations made by the Tibetan Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan and the Indian Dharmadhara. The *Pratimālakṣaṇa* exists in a Chinese translation from the Tibetan, made by the Mongol Gombojab, Tibetan name mGon-po skyabs, in 1741. Iconometrical literature has been discussed by de Jong in *T'oung Pao*, and more recently by Onoda in *Bukkyō Gakkai Kiyō*.¹⁴

THE CITRALAKṢAṆA

The best known text to this day is the Tibetan *Citralakṣaṇa*. It was studied and translated in the pioneering German work of Laufer in 1913. New and additional light was thrown on the *Citralakṣaṇa* by Roth in 1990. He translated *Citralakṣaṇa* as "The Characteristic Marks of a Painting."¹⁵ He clearly states that the text shows no trace of a Buddhist tradition. No attempt is made to give the *Citralakṣaṇa* a Buddhist appearance. Roth says that the text originated in a guild of craftsmen who were not Buddhists. The other texts mentioned above may have originated in the same circles, but they are given a Buddhist interpretation. Roth stresses that the Indian artist was a transmitter of a common cultural heritage, across sectarian borders. The three parts that together form the *Citralakṣaṇa* may be a product of the Gupta age,

sixth century or somewhat earlier.¹⁶ The same opinion has also been advanced by Ruelius, who traces the *Citralakṣaṇa* back to the time of Varāhamihira, sixth century.¹⁷

At the end of the first part of the text the title, “Traits of Painting,” is mentioned in Tibetan. The author is Nagnajit. In this part the supernatural origin of the painting is narrated. Brahma orders a king to paint the deceased son of a grieving *brāhmaṇa*, and then Brahma brings this likeness to life. Brahma had advised the king to go to Viṣvakarman for instructions to execute the painting. The term *nagnajit*, “conqueror of the naked,” is used for the king, who conquers the naked *pretas* and returns the dead son to life. Roth says that *nagnajit* originally was a designation of a victorious champion in athletic contests, a designation suitable for a king of Gandhāra. Later on, the term *nagnajit* became the name of the author of the treatise called *Citralakṣaṇa*, which relates that, after he had conquered Yama and his naked *pretas*, a king was called Nagnajit by Brahma. This Nagnajit may have lived before Varāhamihira.¹⁸ The second part of the text ends with the title “Origin of Sacrificial Rites.” The third and main part deals with the corporal measurements, actually of a *cakravartin*.¹⁹ The text does not speak about the thirty-two characteristic marks. The *Citralakṣaṇa* is, however, preserved by the Buddhists.

THE PRATIMĀLAKṢAṆA

Both the Sanskrit text and a Japanese translation have been published by Sakaki.²⁰ Banerjea edited and translated a Newārī Sanskrit manuscript in 1932, and Mitra edited another Newārī Sanskrit manuscript in 1933.²¹ Mitra supposes that the archetype of the manuscripts was written in Gupta script, certainly not later than the tenth century.²² The presently available manuscripts may be dated to the thirteenth century.²³ Mori proposes that the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* was completed in the tenth century, because Tucci mentions a Tibetan translation by Atīśa (982–1054).²⁴ The text is more recent than the *Citralakṣaṇa* and older than the *Bimbamāna*.²⁵ There is a commentary, *Vivaraṇa*, on the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan by Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan and Dharmadhara. The colophon of the Tibetan *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa* contains two parts.²⁶ The first one, in prose, informs us that the Indian sage Dharmadhara and the Tibetan Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (Kīrtidhvaja), *lo-tṣā-ba* (translator) from Yar-

kluṅs, translated the text in Guṅ-thaṅ, in Maṅ-yul. The second part, a stanza, makes it clear that the text was translated at the request of the Bhoṭapaṇḍita, Tibetan sage, Dam-chos-'dzin (Saddharmadhara) in Guṅ-thaṅ. The Chinese commentary gives the same information.²⁷ The Tibetan *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa* is mentioned in Bu-ston's catalogue of 1322.²⁸ So, the translation was made early in the fourteenth century, a period when Nepalese artisans had a considerable influence in the Yuan empire (1279–1368), spreading there Himalayan and Pāla art from Bengal.²⁹

The Sanskrit of the *Vivaraṇa*, as can be seen in Mitra's edition of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, reproduced three chapters of the *Kriyāsamuccaya*, the earlier text being the *Kriyāsamuccaya*. Roth has established this connection between the *Kriyāsamuccaya* and the *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*.³⁰ He says that the *Kriyāsamuccaya* was almost certainly compiled before the twelfth century by Avadhūti Śrīmad Jagaddarpaṇa from Vikramaśīla. The Sanskrit *Vivaraṇa* is a loan from the *Kriyāsamuccaya*.³¹ The basic Sanskrit *Pratimālakṣaṇa* has introductory prose that definitely makes it a Buddhist sutra. It contains a dialogue between Buddha and Śāriputra. Having returned to the Jetavana from the Tuṣita heaven, where he had expounded the doctrine to his mother, Buddha was asked by Śāriputra how to represent him after he had passed away. Thereupon Buddha expounds the measurements when making his likeness. The Chinese version, translated from Tibetan, also places the dialogue in the Jetavana in Śrāvastī, but Buddha is about to ascend to the Trāyastriṃṣa heaven to preach to his mother. At that moment Śāriputra asks Buddha how to make an image, and Buddha expounds the measurements. So there is more than one version of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. The Chinese commentary, referring to the Tibetan, mentions three translations and one commentary.³² Yuexi and Henmi have said that the three translations are *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa*, and *Citralakṣaṇa*, and that the one commentary is *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*.³³ The one commentary probably is *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*, but it is difficult to understand how *Citralakṣaṇa* could be one of those three translations.³⁴ Tucci says that the Tibetan tradition, as preserved by sMan-thaṅ-pa (fifteenth century), knows four versions of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*.³⁵ It seems that maybe three of the four versions mentioned by Tucci may have been a *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. One may have been a *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa*.³⁶ Of the three *Pratimālakṣaṇas*,

one is translated by Atīśa and called *Śāriputrapariṣcchā*, because it is expounded at Śāriputra's request.

Śāriputra appears as an artist in three *avadānas* in the *Mūlasarvāstivādinaya*.³⁷ In the Chinese *Kṣudrakavastu* of that same *vinaya*, Buddha, who is about to ascend to the Trāyastriṃśa heaven, was making conversions in Śrāvastī and sees *brāhmaṇas* and artisans from far and near, who then go forth to become *śramaṇas*.³⁸ So it is no surprise that the codification of rules for artists is connected with Śāriputra. This seems to be a Sthāvirīya tradition, of which there is more than one kind. The Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* and its Tibetan original may have belonged to the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition. This does not mean that the affiliation of the Singhalese texts, e.g., *Bimbamāna*, is exactly the same. Anyway, the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* is Buddhist, describing the Buddha, and only the Buddha, and his thirty-two characteristic marks. The Sanskrit versions mention the term “bodhisattva” in the introduction, but the Chinese (Tibetan) does not.³⁹ The Sanskrit clearly only describes Buddha, in forty-nine stanzas. I count thirty-three stanzas in the Chinese (Tibetan). It is beyond any doubt that there were a number of versions of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*.

The *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa* or *Ātreyaṭilaka*, a text that is close to the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, has a brāhmanical origin, but Buddhist elements have been included. Ruelius has established that the *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa* is mainly based on the *Pratimāsthāpanalakṣaṇa*, in which Buddha is not mentioned.⁴⁰ Roth explains that the author, Ātreya, a descendant of Atri, belongs to brahmanical circles.⁴¹ The *Pratimālakṣaṇa* also has been attributed to Ātreya, legendary descendant of Viṣvakarman.⁴² The measurements in the *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa* slightly differ from the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, and certainly from the *Citralakṣaṇa*. The *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa* was edited and translated by Bose in 1929. Banerjea, who is critical of Bose, edited the text again in 1956.⁴³

GRAGS-PA-RGYAL-MTSHAN (CA. 1285~AFTER 1378)

Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan, Kīrtidhvaja in Sanskrit, was a translator from Yar-kluṅs.⁴⁴ The *Blue Annals* informs us that he assisted at an ordination in 1378. He was a pupil of Śes-rab-seṅ-ge (1251–1315) and a master of bKra-śis-'od (1323–1350). He was a layman, a “respected uncle,” of the Sa-skyapa rulers of Tibet in Ža-lu Monastery. This title was given to him in 1306 when he was in Yanjing (Beijing) for the funeral

of Anige, the celebrated Nepalese artist at the Yuan court.⁴⁵ There and then the plans to renovate Ĵa-lu were made, supported by emperor Chengzong (成宗, 1295–1307), son of Cinggim (1243–1285) and successor of Qubilai. Anige's disciples played a role in this renovation.

Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan was a great patron of the arts. He considered himself to be a manifestation of Vaiśravaṇa. So, it is no surprise that he stimulated the translation of iconometrical texts from Sanskrit to Tibetan at that time. The first comprehensive *bsTan-'gyur* collection was made during the reign of Renzong (仁宗, 1312–1320) in sNar-thaṅ.⁴⁶ Bu-ston (1290–1364) made the final redaction and a catalogue in 1322.⁴⁷ The *Pratimālakṣaṇa* was known to Bu-ston, but Yuexi says that the *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa* and the *Citralakṣaṇa* are not in Bu-ston's catalogue.⁴⁸ Mori says that the Tibetan *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa* is mentioned by Bu-ston, who arrived in Ĵa-lu as abbot in 1320, invited by Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan.⁴⁹ Is it unreasonable, then, to assume that the Tibetan *Pratimālakṣaṇa* can be dated between 1306 and ca. 1315? Anyway, there can be no doubt about the early fourteenth century. The translation was made in southern Tibet, at the Nepalese border in Guṅ-thaṅ, on the way to Kathmandu.⁵⁰ Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan greatly contributed to the popularity of the so-called *Fan* (梵, Indian) style in Buddhist art in Yuan China. This Indian, Western, actually Newar style of image-making was known as *Fan* in eighteenth-century China.⁵¹ The style originated in Pāla-Himalayan art and is distinguished from the *Han* (漢, i.e., Chinese) style, which actually is the *Tang* (唐, 618–906) style, Gupta-inspired.

Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan collaborated with Dharmadhara, a sage from Kha-che (translated as Kaśmīra). Kha-che actually designates the whole of the northwestern Indian cultural area, of which Kaśmīra was the central part ever since the end of the second century CE, but by no means the only part. A Gandhāran may also be said to be from Kha-che. The Chinese term is *Jibin* (罽賓).⁵² Dharmadhara is also called an Indian (rGya-gar) sage. Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan also worked with the Indian Kīrticandra, who was active in Nepal, Svayambhū, in the Dhanvārāma. Both men brought out some important texts, such as the *Caryāgīti* and Munidatta's commentary, between ca. 1310 and 1334.⁵³ Naudou lists the following translations by Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan.⁵⁴ In collaboration with Dharmadhara: *Sekoddeṣaṭikā* of Nāropā; *Kulalokanāthasādhanaṇāloka* of Mahiman; *Jambhalastotra*, attributed to Vikramāditya; *Pratimālakṣaṇa* and *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*;

and *Sānudrikanāma tanūlakṣaṇaparīkṣā* of Narada.⁵⁵ In collaboration with Kīrticandra: a *pañjika* of the *Kriyāsaṃgraha*; *Amarakośa* and an incomplete *ṭīkā* by Subhūticandra; *Lokānanda*, a play attributed to Candragomin; and *Caryāgītikośavṛtti* of Munidatta. In general, his translations have been poorly appreciated by modern scholars.⁵⁶

GOMBOJAB (CA. 1690–1750)⁵⁷

This Mongolian aristocrat, scion of the Kiyan⁵⁸ family and the Yuan imperial family, author of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, served under three Qing emperors: Kangxi (1662–1722), Yongzheng (1723–1735), and Qianlong (1736–1795). He is better known by his Tibetan name, mGon-po skyabs (Ch. Gongbu Chabu, 工布查布).⁵⁹ He lived during a period of intensive *Tripitaka* editing. The four great Tibetan editions of the *bsTan-'gyur* were all brought out in the eighteenth century.⁶⁰ The Peking edition, started by Kangxi in 1684, came out in 1724. The sNar-thaṅ *bsTan-'gyur* came out in 1742, the year of publication of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. It is almost certain that Gombojab took part in these activities. The sDe-dge *bsTan-'gyur* came out in 1744, and the Co-ne edition in 1773, too late for Gombojab to see. The Chinese Dragon edition (1733–1738) was completed before the Chinese translation of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* was completed in 1741. The Mongolian *Tripitaka* was being printed, and in 1790 the Manchu *Tripitaka* was completed. Gombojab is known to have been fluent in Mongolian, Tibetan, Manchu, Chinese, and eventually also in Sanskrit.

He was an aristocrat of the Üjümüčün tribe, from the area of Inner Mongolia to the west of the Hinggan Range, which forms the border with Jilin province today.⁶¹ Because he had inherited his father's aristocratic title Fuguogong (輔國公), he was referred to as Gong, "Duke."⁶² He grew up in Beijing and married into the imperial family during Kangxi, i.e., before 1722. This earned him the title *yibin* (儀賓), princely in-law. He was appointed director-general of Tibetan studies, i.e., head of the Tibetan Institute, and he took care of translation activities. During Qianlong he was a Cabinet Member.⁶³ His literary activities span the period 1725–1743. No text is later than 1743. In 1748, in his preface to the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, Upāsaka Aiyue (愛月, 1695–1767), hereditary prince of the first rank during Kangxi,⁶⁴ refers to him as a former official, *yuanren* (原任). Aiyue was versed in mathematics and in music. In 1736 he was in charge of the Board of Works (Gongbu, 工部), which

made him responsible for the making of images. When Gombojab's Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* came out in 1742, immediately after its completion, and again in 1748, Aiyue must have played a role in it.

Gombojab's work has been discussed in detail by de Jong in 1968, making use of all publications available at that time.⁶⁵ In 1725 Gombojab completed the Mongolian translation of a Manchu text, and in that same year he wrote a history of Mongolia in Mongolian. He is also known for his Tibetan translation of Xuanzang's *Xiyuji* (西域記, T. 2087, "Record of the Western Region"). During Kangxi he also collaborated in the writing of the *Töbed üge kilbar surqu bičig*, a Mongolian translation from the Tibetan. In 1737 a supplement to this text was added. In 1741–1742 Gombojab took part in the compilation of a Tibetan-Mongolian dictionary. He also is the author of a short Tibetan-Mongolian syllabary. In 1734 he published a list of herbal drugs, in both Tibetan and Mongolian, and he also wrote another list of drugs. (Gombojab certainly was interested in medicinal subjects. One must not forget that physiognomy and iconometry are related with medical techniques.) Anige, who had come to Tibet in 1260, invited because of his architectural skills, was then asked to repair an old Song bronze statue, judged by Qubilai and his court to be beyond repair. The statue, which was useful for acupuncture, was repaired by Anige in 1265. This established his fame at the court.⁶⁶ Gombojab was interested in such subjects, topics that were considered to be artisanal by traditional Han intellectuals.

The Chinese *Tripitaka* contains three translations made by Gombojab. T. 927 is a text, written in 1742–1743, about Bhaiṣajyaguru, the *tathāgata* of healing. It was originally written in Tibetan by the fifth Dalai-lama (1617–1682). T. 1144, about Maitreya, was completed in 1743. Gombojab is said to have translated it from Sanskrit, but he may have used an already existing Tibetan version. T. 1419 is the Chinese translation of the *Pratimālakṣaṇa* from the Tibetan: *Zaoxiangliangdujingjie* (造像量度經解). It must have been completed in 1741, the oldest preface being dated Sunday, January 14, 1742.⁶⁷ Gombojab further completed a Tibetan text by Bu-ston, adding at the beginning his own Tibetan translation of the Chinese T. 887 (*Advayasamatāvijayanāmakalparāja* [?]). This T. 887 was translated from the Sanskrit by Dānapāla in 1006 in the Song Translation Bureau, and it is known for its numerous *anuttarayogatantra* texts.⁶⁸ In 1743 Gombojab translated T. 1008 into Tibetan. This Chinese *dhāraṇī* text is said to be the work of Amoghavajra (705–771),

the most important figure for Sino-Japanese esotericism. Finally, in 1736 Gombojab wrote his Tibetan historical work *rGya-nag chos-'byun*. It contains a Tibetan translation of the famous catalogue *Zhiyuanlu* (至元錄), compiled in 1285–1287 during Qubilai's reign under the leadership of Qing Jixiang (慶吉祥).⁶⁹ It may be remembered that Gombojab himself was actively involved in the publishing of the *Tripitaka* in the languages used during the Qing dynasty.

THE CHINESE PRATIMĀLAKṢAṆA (T. 1419).

The Chinese title of this work can be translated as *The Scriptural Text: Measurements in Image-making, Expounded by Buddha, and Its Explanation*. The text has five prefaces, which have all been translated by Cai in 2000.⁷⁰ The first preface is written by Prince Aiyue, on the auspicious day of the fifteenth of the seventh month, Qianlong 13, cyclical year of Wuchen, (i.e., Thursday, August 8, 1748). He seems to have re-edited the translation completed earlier in 1742.⁷¹ Yang had the text printed in Nanjing in the Jinling Printing Bureau (金陵刻經處) in Tongzhi (同治) 13, i.e., 1874. This Jinling edition was reproduced by Xinwenfeng Publishing Company in Taipei in 1993⁷² and by Chandra in 1984.⁷³ In 1885 Imaizumi Yūsaku (今泉雄作) rendered the Jinling edition more accessible in Japan by adding *kunten* and *siddham*.⁷⁴ The Jinling edition was published in Kyoto in the *Dainihon Zokuzōkyō* (1905–1912),⁷⁵ and this was the basis for the *Taishō* edition, T. 1419, 936a–956b.

T. 1419 contains five prefaces. The first, Aiyue's preface of 1748, is the most recent one. The second preface was written by the *lCang-skyā hu-thug-thu* Zhangjia Hutuketu (章佳胡圖克突), Rol-pa'i rDo-rje (1717–1786), the most eminent monk at the Qing court. In 1734, he was appointed National Preceptor (國師, Guoshi).⁷⁶ This learned scholar in the field of art⁷⁷ wrote his preface on the day of Buddha's first turning of the wheel in Qianlong 7, i.e., Thursday, July 5, 1742. He was probably responsible for publishing the text for the first time. The third preface is by the dGe-lugs-pa monk Dingguang (定光, Dīpaprabha). Sakaki calls him *jiezhu* (界珠),⁷⁸ *rJe-'jug* (?), disciple of the master (Atiśa?). His preface is dated on the day of Buddha's realization of enlightenment of Qianlong 6 (i.e., Sunday, January 14, 1742). This preface is the earliest one, and comes after the prefaces of the first two extremely important persons. The Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* must have been completed shortly before this preface. The fourth preface was written by Mingding

(明鼎) on Buddha's birthday, Qianlong 7 (i.e., Saturday, May 12, 1742). Mingding is referred to as Huang Sizu of Chu (楚黃嗣祖) in the colophon. He was a collaborator of Gombojab for some time starting in 1736, taking care of the editing of the *Tripitaka*. The fifth preface is by the monk Bencheng (本誠), written on the day of Buddha's going forth, Qianlong 7 (i.e., Wednesday, March 14, 1742).

T. 1419 comprises five parts. The five prefaces are the first part. Then comes Gombojab's own introduction, dated the day of Buddha's return from the Trāyastriṃṣa heaven, Qianlong 7. It is mentioned that this is the twenty-second day of the ninth month according to the Tibetan calendar (i.e., Saturday, October 20, 1742).⁷⁹ The fact that the Tibetan calendar is especially mentioned seems to imply that the prefaces follow the Chinese Buddhist calendar. It may also be remembered that the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* is expounded by Buddha before his ascension to that heaven. From the introduction we know that the monk Jingxue (靜學) provided the Tibetan text to Gombojab, who had been interested in iconometry and iconography for a long time. He had learned about the measurements of the mandala of the *Guhyasamāja* from his master. The third part is the main part, but the shortest one. It is the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, counting thirty-three stanzas. The fourth part is Gombojab's explanation of the stanzas. This part mentions the (Tibetan) *Samvarodaya-tantra* and *Kālacakra-tantra*.⁸⁰ No other text is mentioned, but it is difficult to believe that other Tibetan iconometric texts were not used, such as *Pratimālakṣaṇovivraṇa* and *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa*. The fifth and last part is a supplement in nine chapters, written by Gombojab, about the representation of bodhisattvas, wrathful deities, and so on. It may be noticed that there are five prefaces and that the whole text consists of five parts, five being a special number (e.g., five families, *kula*) in esoteric Buddhism.

The Chinese title and its Sanskrit (梵, *Fan*) original is explained in the text itself. I translate (945b28–c7):

The Scriptural Text *supra* is called *śāstra* in Sanskrit. *Nyagrodha-parimaṇḍalabuddhapratimālakṣaṇāma*. In translation: *śāstra*: exposition [meaning scriptural text]. *Nyagrodhaparimaṇḍala*: vertically and horizontally equal, just like the tree without segments. *Buddhapratimā*: Buddha image. *Lakṣaṇanāma*: systemic terminology. According to the wording the whole means: "Exposition of the Scriptural Text called *Iconometrical System of the Buddha Image, Vertically and Horizontally Equal, Just Like the Tree without Segments*." Taking up the meaning I

have now abbreviated the title to: *Scriptural Text about the Measurements in Image-making, Expounded by Buddha*.

Gombojab makes some incomprehensible mistakes. For example, the Tibetan clearly says *daśatāla*, not *śāstra*. Sakaki corrected that mistake in 1916, but this was overlooked by more than one scholar. Gombojab apparently translated *Pratimālakṣaṇa* as *Xiangzhi* (相制), which means “iconometrical system.” *Zhi* has the meaning of both *zhizao* (制造), “to make,” and of *zhigui* (制規), “rule or regulation,” i.e., system. *Xiang* (相) renders *pratimā*, “image.” So, in the final title *Zaoxiangliangdu*, the meaning of *zhi* (制) appears twice (1. *Zao*; 2. *Liangdu*). The text explains how to make a painted image of Buddha in ten spans, one hundred twenty digits, i.e., fingerbreadths, of the image itself. For tridimensional images (胎偶, *taiou*) one adds five digits altogether. So, a tridimensional image is one hundred twenty-five digits high and wide, if both arms are outstretched. The Chinese only explains a representation of a Buddha, not of a bodhisattva, etc. These are added in the supplement.

The basic Sanskrit text was edited in Devanāgarī twice. Both Mitra in 1933 and Banerjea in 1932 edited a Newārī manuscript. Banerjea also gives a translation. Another Newārī manuscript is kept in the University Library, Cambridge.⁸¹ Śāstri also mentions two manuscripts named *Devapratimālakṣaṇa*.⁸² The Sanskrit was for the first time edited in transcription and translated into Japanese by Sakaki.⁸³ The author edited a Sanskrit manuscript donated to the Kyoto University Library by Naitō Torajirō (内藤虎次郎).⁸⁴

The Tibetan *Pratimālakṣaṇa* was translated into Japanese by Sakai in 1941. The same author translated *Pratimālakṣaṇovivraṇa* in 1944.⁸⁵

The Chinese text was translated into literary Japanese by Henmi in 1930. In 1977 this was edited as a book in Kyoto. According to the introduction, the basic work for this Japanese translation was apparently done by Gotō Shōfū (五島正風), also called Gudō An (求道庵).⁸⁶

In 2000 Li and Bai composed a study of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* (T. 1419) in Beijing. In 2001 Huang published his study in Shijiazhuang.⁸⁷ In 2000 Cai gave a complete translation of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, but a new English translation is necessary and will be published soon.⁸⁸

NOTES

1. I immediately express my gratitude to S. Dietz, A. Bareja-Starzynska, and P. Verhagen for their precious advice.
2. Gustav Roth, "Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa* and Other Ancient Indian Works on Iconometry," in *South Asian Archaeology: Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe, Held in the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice 1987*, ed. Maurizio Taddei, Serie Orientale Roma 62 (Rome: IsMEO, 1990), 986–987.
3. Roth, "Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*," e.g., 981 and 1005; Hans Ruelius, "Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts," *Journal of the Bihar Research Society* 54 (1968): 171.
4. The Buddhist authority in iconometrical texts is Śāriputra. He is the ultimate authority for the Sthāvirīya family (Sarvāstivāda, Dharmaguptaka, Theravāda, etc.). The Mahāsāṃghika family reserves that role for (Mahā) Kātyāyana. This fact is obvious in *abhidharma* literature.
5. Sylvain Lévi, *Le Népal*, vol. 3, ed. Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibliothèque d'Etudes 19 (Paris: Ernest Lhux, 1908), 185ff. Cecil Bendall, in his *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge* (Cambridge: University Press, 1883), 199ff., had already catalogued Newārī iconometrical Sanskrit texts. See also Haral Prasād Śāstri, *Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper Manuscripts Belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal*, vol. 2 (Calcutta: n.p., 1915), 41 and 137.
6. See for example Roth, "Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*," 1006.
7. The doctoral dissertation of Hans Ruelius ("Śāriputra und Ālekhyalakṣaṇa. Zwei Texte zur Proportionslehre in der indischen und ceylonesischen Kunst" [PhD diss., Georg-August Universität, Göttingen, 1974]) is the most thorough study of these two texts. See also E. W. Marasinghe, introduction to *The Bimbamāna of Gautamīyaśāstra*, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series 138 (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1994), xiii–xxi.
8. Roth, "Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*," 1008.
9. Ruelius, "Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts," 170.
10. Ibid., 174.
11. Marasinghe, *Bimbamāna of Gautamīyaśāstra*, xvii–xxi.
12. For the latest study, see Roth, "Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*." He also gives an overview and his appreciation of the earlier studies (pp. 979–981), including Berthold Laufer, *Das Citralakṣaṇa*, Dokumente indischer Kunst, Hft. 1 Malerei (Leipzig: O. Harrassowitz, 1913); and its English versions by B. N. Goswamy and A. L. Dahmen-Dallapiccola, *An Early Document of Indian Art* (New Delhi: Mano-

har Book Service, 1976); and Asoke Chatterjee, *The Citralakṣaṇa. An Old Text of Indian Art*, B. I. Series 315 (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1987). For whatever reason, Chatterjee does not seem to know Laufer's work.

13. See D. T. Suzuki's catalogue of the Peking ed., *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, in the Library of Ōtani University (Kyoto: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1957–1958), vol. 143, nos. 5804–5807.

14. Jan Willem de Jong, review of O “Zolotoj knige,” S. Damdina, by Š. Bira, *T'oung Pao* 54 (1968): 173–189, esp. 178ff., provides a discussion of mGon-po skyabs; Shunzō Onoda (“造像量度經類研究史 [A Brief Survey of the Studies on Tibetan Iconometrical Literature],” *Bukkyō Gakkai Kiyō* 3 [1995]: 1–15) gives an overview of recent studies about iconometrical literature, paying much attention to Tibetan studies.

15. Roth, “Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*,” 987; see also 994: *citra* means “painting.”

16. Ibid., 1008, 987.

17. Ruelius, “Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts,” 174.

18. Roth, “Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*,” 985ff.

19. Ibid., 986.

20. Ryōzaburō Sakaki, “佛説造像量度經の梵本研究 [Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū],” *Geibun* 9 (1918): 255–261; the author also translates the text into Japanese, pp. 262–267.

21. Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, Texts from Nepal 2 (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1932); Haridas Mitra, *Buddhapratimālakṣaṇam*, Bhavana Texts 48 (Benares: Gov. Sanskrit Library, 1933).

22. Mitra, *Buddhapratimālakṣaṇam*, 12.

23. Ruelius, “Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts,” 172.

24. Noboru Mori, “造像量度經の成立背景と意義 [Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi],” *Mikkyō gakkaihō* 32 (1993): 98; Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1949), 292.

25. Roth, “Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*,” 1008.

26. The colophon was studied by: (1) Ryōzaburō Sakaki, “佛説造像量度經の梵本研究 [Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū],” *Geibun* 7 (1916): 260 (this author was the first to restore the first part of the Sanskrit title to *daśatāla*); (2) Shirō Sakai, “西藏文造像量度經註釋和譯 [Chibettobun Zōzōryōdokyōchūshaku Wayaku],” *Mikkyō Kenkyū* 89 (1944): 84. See also Jean Naudou, *Buddhists of Kaśmīr* (1968; repr., Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1980), 256ff.

27. T. 1419, 945c7–9. I translate: “Referring to this text [*Pratimālakṣaṇa*] there are

three translations and one commentary altogether. This copy was translated in the Guñ-thañ region by the western *Tripiṭaka* Dharmadhara, together with Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan, translator from Yar-kluGs” (達磨多囉 Damoduoluo, Dharmadhara; 恭唐 Gongtang, Guñ-thañ—this place is located in southern Tibet in the district 吉隆 Gyirong, sKyid-groñ, on the way to Kathmandu; 查巴建參 Chaba Jiancan, Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan; 亞哩弄 Yalinong, i.e., 雅龍 Yalong, Yar-kluñs). See also Sakaki, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū” (1916), 254–255.

28. Mori, “Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikei to igi,” 98. The *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa* is in the sNar-thañ edition of the *bsTan-'gyur*, of which Bu-ston made the final redaction.

29. Anige (1245–1306) was the main artist and official at Qubilai's court. His entourage and disciples are really responsible for this influence. See Anning Jing, “The Portraits of Khubilai Khan and Chabi by Anige (1245–1306), A Nepalese Artist at the Yuan Court,” *Artibus Asiae* 54, 1–2 (1994): 40–86; Roberto Vitali, *Early Temples of Central Tibet* (London: Serindia, 1990), 89–122: “Shalu Serkhang and the Newar Style of the Yüan Court.”

30. Roth, “Notes on the *Citrālakṣaṇa*,” 1016–1017. He says that “Appendix C: Extracts from the *Kriyā Samuccaya*” in Banerjea, *Pratimālakṣaṇam*, 67–73, agrees with Mitra's edition of the *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*, included in his *Buddhapratimālakṣaṇam*.

31. Roth, “Notes on the *Citrālakṣaṇa*,” 1008.

32. See note 24.

33. Baiei Henmi, “佛說造像量度經 [Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō],” *Kokka* 40 (1930): 22; Yuexi, “關於造像量度經的歷史 [Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi],” *Xiandai Foxue* (August 1959): 13. Kazumi Yoshizaki (in “金剛杵金剛鈴の製作図. 梵文造像量度經註釋 [Kongōsho Kongōrei no seisaku-zu. Bonbun Zōzōryōdokyōchūshaku ni yoru],” *Tōyō Daigaku Daigaku-in Kiyō* 17 [1980]: 32) advances the idea that the three translations are (1) Tibetan, (2) Mongolian, (3) Manchu.

34. The Tibetan title is completely different from the Tibetan titles of *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*, *Pratimāmānolakṣaṇa*; Onoda, “A Brief Survey of the Studies on Tibetan Iconometrical Literature,” 2, gives the Tibetan titles.

35. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, 292.

36. The first translation, by the Nepalese Jayasiddhi, has the term *sku-gzugs-kyi tshad*.

37. Ruelius, “Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts,” 175.

38. T. 1451, 345c. Yuexi, “Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi,” 15.

39. How can one explain this? Mantrayāna influence? Or is the bodhisattva Buddha before enlightenment?
40. Ruelius, “Some Notes on Buddhist Iconometrical Texts,” 170. The *Pratimālakṣaṇa* must not be confused with the text edited by Dipak Chandra Bhattacharyya, *Pratimālakṣaṇa of the Viṣṇudharmattara* (New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1991).
41. Roth, “Notes on the *Citralakṣaṇa*,” 1019–1020.
42. Naudou, *Buddhists of Kaśmīr*, 257. M. Henss in Jingfeng Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry* (Ulm: Fabri Verlag, 2000), 12.
43. Phanindra Nath Bose, in *Pratimā-māna-lakṣaṇam*, Punjab Oriental Series 18 (Delhi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1929), edits one Newārī manuscript and also gives the Tibetan. Jitendra Nath Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, 4th ed. (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1985), Appendix B, 579–617, presents his Sanskrit edition. Banerjea, Bose, and Mitra all give a Nāgarī ed. of their Newārī original manuscript.
44. Most information about him can be found in: Naudou, *Buddhists of Kaśmīr*, 256–257; Pieter C. Verhagen, *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*, Vol. 1: *Transmission of the Canonical Literature*, Handbook of Oriental Studies, India Bd. 8 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 93–94, 324; Vitali, *Early Temples of Central Tibet*, 89–106; Mori, “Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi,” 98.
45. See esp. Vitali, *Early Temples of Central Tibet*, 98ff.
46. *Ibid.*, 122 n. 222.
47. Mori, “Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi,” 98. Bu-ston 布敦, Budun; Źa-lu 夏魯, Xialu.
48. Yuexi, “Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi,” 15.
49. Mori, “Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi,” 98. Vitali, *Early Temples of Central Tibet*, 119 n. 138, 101.
50. See note 24.
51. Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 49, translating Gombojab’s introduction to T. 1419, the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. Image-making in China before the Tang is mainly inspired by Gandhāran art. T. 692 (25–220 CE), T. 693 (317–420, i.e., Eastern Jin), and T. 694 (by Devaprajña from Khotan, seventh century) do not speak about iconometry, but about the merits of image-making. Nevertheless, early painters may have painted images according to Chinese tradition, e.g. Cao Buxing 曹不興 in Wu 吳, early third century. See W. R. B. Acker, *Some T’ang and Pre-T’ang Texts on Chinese Painting*, vol. 2, Sinica Leidensia 12 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974), 19–20.
52. C. Willemen, “Sarvāstivāda Developments in Northwestern India and in

- China,” *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 10 (2001): 167.
53. Per Kvaerne, *An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs: A Study of the Caryāgīti* (Oslo, Bergen, & Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1977), 2.
54. Naudou, *Buddhists of Kaśmīr*, 256–257.
55. This text, as well as *Pratimālakṣaṇa* and *Pratimālakṣaṇovivtraṇa*, was translated at the request of the *Bhoṭapaṇḍita*, Tibetan sage, Dam-chos-'dzin (Sad-dharmadhara).
56. Kvaerne, *An Anthology of Buddhist Tantric Songs*, 2; Verhagen, *History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*, 94.
57. de Jong, review of O “*Zolotoj knige*,” *S. Damdina*, 175 n. 1; M. Henss in Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 8 n. 5, prefers 1669–1750, referring to L. Petech.
58. T. 1419, 945c18: Qiwowen 奇渥溫.
59. In the *Qingshigao* 清史稿, *Fanbu Zhuan* 2, 藩部傳 2, his name is written Gunbu Zhazhen 衮布札慎. See Yuexi, “Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi,” 16.
60. For the following editing activities: Mori, “*Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi*,” 97; Sakai Shirō, “*Ka-hoku Godaisan no Daizōkyō*,” *Mikkyō Kenkyū* 87 (1942): 66.
61. Today’s Ujimqin Banner 烏珠穆倫旗, situated to the west of the Hinggan Ling 興安嶺, has two parts: East Ujimqin, capital Uliastai 烏里雅; West Ujimqin, capital Bayan Ul Hot 巴音烏浩特.
62. For his biographical data see Yuexi, “Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi,” 15–16; Mori, “*Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi*,” 97; Yoshizaki, “*Kongōsho Kongōrei no seisaku-zu. Bonbun Zōzōryōdokyōchūshaku ni yoru*,” 29–30; Herbert Franke, *Chinesischer und Tibetischer Buddhismus im China der Yüanzeit* (München: Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996), 73–74.
63. This information can be found in the colophon of T. 1419, 941b. Cabinet member: 內閣, *neige*. In charge of the translation of Tibetan and Mongolian texts: 掌譯番蒙諸文, *zhangyibomengzhuwen*. Director-General of Tibetan studies: 西番學總管, *Xiboxuezongguan*.
64. Yuexi, “Guanyu Zaoxiangliangdujing de lishi,” 16; Mori, “*Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi*,” 97. Sakaki, “*Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū*” (1916), 252, calls him 壺月 Huyue.
65. de Jong, review of O “*Zolotoj knige*,” *S. Damdina*, 178ff.
66. Jing, “The Portraits of Khubilai Khan and Chabi by Anige,” 45. Physiognomy, of both Chinese and Indian origin, can be found in terminology of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa*. My complete translation and glossary (Chinese-Sanskrit)

of the Chinese *Pratimālakṣaṇa* is published in Charles Willeman, *Defining the Image: Measurements in Image-making*, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica 239 (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 2006). A Sanskrit *Pratimālakṣaṇa* in transcription with English translation is included.

67. See Wang Huanchun, *A Comparative Calendar for Western, Chinese, Muslim, Hui, Dai, Yi, Tibetan, Buddhist Calendars, and Julian Day Numbers AD 622–2050* (Beijing: Kexue Publications, 1991). The preface itself by Dingguang 定光 is dated “Day of realization of enlightenment, Qianlong 6,” i.e., the eighth day of the twelfth month of Qianlong 6. For the preface, see *infra*.

68. See Charles Willeman, *The Chinese Hevajratāntra* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1982), 23 n. 66. Shinkō Mochizuki, *Bukkyō Daijiten* 佛教大辭典 (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai 1960–1963), 8:265ff., s.v. “Yakuyōin 譯經院.”

69. Zhiyuanlu in *Shōwa Hōbō Sōmokuroku* 昭和法寶總目錄 (Taishō ed.) 2:25. Franke remarks that too often Chinese names and titles are erroneously translated. Franke, *Chinesischer und Tibetischer Buddhismus im China der Yüanzeit*, 74.

70. Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 33–46.

71. Pieter Hendrik Pott, *Introduction to the Tibetan Collection of the National Museum of Ethnography, Leiden* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1951), 45; M. Henss in Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 8 n. 6.

72. Renshan Yang, 佛說造像量度經附續補 (Foshuo Zaoxiangliangdujing fu xubu) (orig. Jinling ed. 1874; repr., Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1993).

73. Lokesh Chandra, *Buddhist Iconography in Nepalese Sketch Books*, Śata-piṭaka Series 302 (New Delhi: Mrs. Sharada Rani, 1984).

74. For these early editions, see Yoshizaki, “Kongōsho Kongōrei no seisaku-zu. Bonbun Zōzōryōdokyōchūshaku ni yoru,” 27, 31 n. 2; Sakaki, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū” (1916), 251; Henmi, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō,” 25.

75. *Dainihon Zokuzōkyō* (Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, 1905–1912).

76. M. Henss in Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 22–23; de Jong, review of *O “Zolotoj knige,” S. Damdina*, 183, mentions that he has written about Wutai Shan and about the sandalwood image of Buddha.

77. He was an art consultant to Qianlong and compiled the illustrated pantheon of Tibetan Buddhism, called *Three Hundred Icons*, a reference book ever since. See M. Henss in Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*, 23; Mori, “Zōzōryōdokyō no seiritsu haikai to igi,” 97.

78. Sakaki, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū” (1916), 252.

79. Dieter Shuh, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Tibetischen Kalenderrechnung, Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Supplementband*

- 16 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1973). See esp. p. 181 for 1742.
80. 戒生大教王經 *Jieshengdajiaowangjing*, *Samvarodayamahātantrarāja*: 941c11 and 945c13. 時輪大教王經 *Shilundajiaowangjing*, *Kālacakramahātantrarāja*: 942a12 and 945c12.
81. Add. 1706 (III–IV), as mentioned in Bendall, *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts*, 199ff.
82. Śāstri, *Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper Manuscripts*, 2:41 and 2:137.
83. Sakaki, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō no bonpon kenkyū” (1918), 255–261.
84. Yoshizaki, “Kongōsho Kongōrei no seisaku-zu. Bonbun Zōzōryōdokyō-chūshaku ni yoru,” 31 n. 2.
85. Shirō Sakai, “Kanyaku taishō Chibettobun Zōzōryōdokyō Wayaku,” *Mikkyō Kenkyū* 86 (1941): 87–102; and Sakai, “Chibettobun Zōzōryōdokyōchūshaku Wayaku,” 71–84.
86. Henmi, “Bussetsu Zōzōryōdokyō”; Baiei Henmi, *Zōzōryōdokyō 造像量度經* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1977).
87. Dingxia Li and Huawen Bai, 佛教造像手印 *Fojiao Zaoxiang shouyin* (Beijing: Yanshan, 2000); Chunhe Huang, *Fojiao zaoxiang yishu* (Shijiazhuang: Hebeisheng Fojiao Xiehui, 2001) (in Jpn.).
88. Cai, *The Buddhist Canon of Iconometry*. This artisanal text describes how to make a painting or a statue, starting from the head to the feet. Roth, “Notes on the *Citrakṣaṇa* and Other Ancient Indian Works on Iconometry,” 1026, aptly says that worship starts from the feet.

Mythologies of Bosat Viṣṇu¹

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SINHALA BUDDHISTS, who comprise two-thirds of the current population of Sri Lanka, are exceedingly proud of the fact that their culture is the oldest continuing Buddhist civilization in the world, dating back some 2,300 years. While Viṣṇu is mentioned just once, and that merely in passing, in all of Pāli canonical Buddhist literature sacred to the Theravāda tradition,² modern translations and interpretations of Sri Lanka's fifth-century CE, Theravāda Buddhist, quasi-historical monastic chronicle, the *Mahāvamsa*, identify Viṣṇu with the sacred role of being the people's and the religion's chief "minister of defense."³ For many, he is regarded as a veritable guardian deity of the island. This identification has been derived in part from a reading of a seminal migration myth recorded in the *Mahāvamsa* that explains that the ancient arrival of the progenitors of the Sinhala people and the subsequent arrival of Buddhism are in part the result of the protective powers of Viṣṇu. But a careful study of the *Mahāvamsa*, together with a study of inscriptions and medieval Sinhala literature, shows that Viṣṇu's Buddhist identity as the island's and the religion's "minister of defense" probably does not antedate the late seventeenth century CE. Nevertheless, it is now difficult to find any general appraisal of Sinhala religion, or of Sinhala deity propitiation more specifically, in either English or in Sinhala, that does not assume that Viṣṇu has been protecting the Buddhist religion since its inception. There are even some popular folkloric accounts in Sinhala *kavi* (poetry) that say that Viṣṇu protected the Buddha from Māra, the personification of death, on the night of his enlightenment experience. Moreover, Viṣṇu *dēvālayas*, or shrines to Viṣṇu, are now ubiquitous throughout all Sinhala Buddhist cultural areas in Sri Lanka, especially in rural, village contexts. His integration into popular conceptions and transactions of the Buddhist

ritual cult has been perhaps as thorough as any other deity in Sinhala Buddhist religious culture. His power is propitiated in invocations at the beginning of virtually every public ritual.

Late medieval Sinhala folk literature is replete with references to Viṣṇu's beneficent presence. Indeed, many Sinhalas living in rural areas of the country would be surprised to learn that Viṣṇu is a deity of Brahmanical, Vedic, and Hindu Purāṇic origins. In the popular mind, Viṣṇu is a very high "god" indeed, one who treads positively on the path leading to nirvana and eventually to buddhahood itself. Because of the vast amount of meritorious work he has performed on behalf of those who seek his help, he is popularly regarded as a bodhisattva, or future buddha.

In this paper, I will examine two mythic cycles among many that contribute to the heart of Viṣṇu's divine profile in Sinhala literature and Buddhist culture. The first has to do with a number of very abbreviated Sinhala remakes of episodes from the Hindu epic *Rāmāyaṇa* that shade the character of Rāma and his significance for the Viṣṇu cult in Sri Lanka.⁴ The second is an important myth that has enjoyed a wide dispensation in Sinhala folklore. It is about Viṣṇu as a conqueror of the archetypal *asura* Bhasma and reflects how moral and righteous power becomes associated with Viṣṇu. Both of these myths, which go beyond the mythic inheritance that the indigenous Sinhala deity Upulvan bequeathed to the "Buddhist Viṣṇu" after the late medieval conflation of these two deities, lend considerable insight into the character of Viṣṇu as it has been refracted within Sinhala Buddhist culture.

The historical importance of the *Rāvaṇa Haṭana*, the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*, the *Rāvaṇa Puwata*, and the *Palavāla Dānē*⁵ and the significant presence of Rāma and Rāvaṇa in the roughly contemporary chronicle, the *Rājāvaliya*,⁶ lies in the fact that not only do they provide evidence of the relative popularity of the *Rāmāyaṇa* story from at least the seventeenth century, but they also contain episodes that are either entirely unique or are framed very differently in comparison to Sanskrit or other Indian recensions.⁷ It is, of course, likely as well that the Pāli *Dasaratha Jātaka*, which sees Rāma as a previous incarnation of the Buddha, was also a well known story throughout Sinhala and Theravāda history in Sri Lanka from the early Anurādhapura period on, but this *jātaka* version of the story is so completely different from the *Rāmāyaṇa* episodes related in later Sinhala folk ballad literature that there can be no confusing the *jātaka* tradition with the *Rājāvaliya* or later Sinhala *kavis*

named after Rāvaṇa,⁸ or any merit in speculating that the latter were derived from the former. They represent two separate appropriations or transformations of the epic. However, there is considerable and very interesting overlap between the *Dasaratha Jātaka* and the *Rājāvaliya*.

The *Dasaratha Jātaka*⁹ is named for the righteous king of Benares whose chief queen, the eldest of sixteen thousand wives, gave birth to two sons and a daughter, the elder son being Rāma-pañḍita (“Rāma the wise”), the younger brother being Lakkhaṇa (Lakṣmaṇa), and the younger daughter being Sītā.¹⁰ In time, his chief queen, the mother of Rāma, died, and Dasaratha reluctantly finds another consort to replace her, who subsequently gives birth to Bharata, of whom the king becomes exceedingly fond, and on whose account the king promises his mother a boon, which she accepts but defers for seven years. After seven years, she approaches Dasaratha to grant her the boon of making her son king, which he refuses angrily. But she repeatedly and insistently makes the request so that Dasaratha, in turn, begins to fear that she may be plotting to kill Rāma and Lakkhaṇa. Determining from astrologers that he has twelve years left to live, he summons Rāma and Lakkhaṇa and says that, for the sake of their safety, they should repair to a neighboring kingdom where, after twelve years, they should return to inherit the kingdom. With great fanfare, they depart from Benares and Sītā elects to join them, Rāma being regarded like a father by the younger Lakkhaṇa and Sītā.¹¹ After nine years (rather than twelve), Dasaratha dies and the queen attempts to install her son Bharata as king. But the royal courtiers resist her designs and remind her that the “the lords of the umbrella are dwelling in the forest.” Bharata declares that he will go to find Rāma, return with him, “and raise the umbrella over him.” When he finds Rāma alone (Lakkhaṇa and Sītā are out gathering food in the forest, so they do not immediately receive the news of Dasaratha’s death), to Bharata’s surprise, Rāma receives the news without sorrow or emotion. On Lakkhaṇa’s and Sītā’s return, Rāma asks them to stand in a pond and he proceeds to break the sad news, to which they react with great lamentations. Rāma then preaches to them in *gāthās* about the nature of impermanence (*anicca*), which, when understood, allays their grief. Bharata requests them all to return to administer the kingdom, but since Rāma had promised his father he would return in twelve (rather than nine) years, he instructs Bharata to rule in his place. After Bharata continues to object, Rāma tells him to place his (Rāma’s) straw slippers on the throne until he re-

turns. Bharata departs with Lakkhaṇa and Sītā to the capital, and places the slippers on the throne. Whenever a royal adjudication is needed, the slippers indicate approval or disapproval by either remaining quiet or becoming agitated. In three years, Rāma returns with great fanfare, Sītā becomes his queen consort, they are anointed with the ceremonial sprinkling (*abhiṣeka*), and thereupon Rāma, as a *mahāsattva*, circumambulates the city to begin his reign of righteousness that lasts some sixteen thousand years. This is the ending of the abbreviated story of Rāma according to the *Dasaratha Jātaka*. The narrative is thus cut short and does not include the bulk of the remaining story as it has come to be known in Indian recensions. As I have noted, however, there are interesting overlaps with the *Dasaratha Jātaka* in the *Rājāvaliya*'s depiction of Rāma and there are significant Sinhala adaptations to the many further episodes of the *Rāmāyaṇa* within the Sinhala folk ballad tradition. I will turn to the *Rājāvaliya* first.

After giving an account of the traditional cosmography of the universe, and an account of the Okkāka lineage descending from the first primordial king Mahāsammata,¹² the *Rājāvaliya* narrative introduces a story about how Ariṭṭa, the last in the line of the Okkākas, had four sons and five daughters by his chief queen, Hastapālā, who subsequently dies and is replaced by another queen, who bears a prince named Jantu of whom the king is exceedingly fond, and as a result, asks his new queen to ask for whatever she desires. When Jantu attains age, his mother asks the king to abdicate in favor of Jantu. The king at first refuses and points out that his four sons by his previous queen have precedence over Jantu. But the queen persists and accuses him of lying by reminding him of his former promise to provide anything she desires. Shamed, the king summons his sons, telling them to go wherever they wish and to take whatever they desire, save the royal paraphernalia. The five princesses declare that they will also depart with their brothers and so, together with great retinues of ministers, brahmins, noblemen, and merchants, set out "to build a city for our Okkāka race"¹³ peacefully. Traveling for several days to the southeast of Benares, they come across the Bodhisattva who is in his incarnation as the hermit Kapila. Kapila is practicing austerities in the forest. He asks the princes what they seek and offers them to make use of the area he has been using for his *pansala* (temple) because of its auspicious qualities, on the condition that when their city is complete, they name it after him, "Kapilavastu." The four princes decide that they should

not marry from the families of other kings so as not to “be a scandal to our royal race,”¹⁴ and, since they can find no suitable royal partners for their sisters, they marry their four sisters and decide to treat the eldest sister as their mother. Apparently incest is preferable to violating caste dharma! The *Rājāvalīya* then proclaims:

Upon hearing that the princes had not united themselves to any other caste, their father was greatly pleased; and three times shouted with joy and declaimed as loud as thunder, saying, “These be *Sakya* princes!” And be it noted that since the time the said Okkāka king thus ejaculated, the title ‘Okkāka’ dynasty was changed into the title of ‘*Sakya*’ dynasty. Thus, 240,770 kings of the *Sakya* race reigned in the city of Kimbulvatpura.¹⁵

This would seem to be the end of the mythic account of how the Buddha’s city of Kapilavastu and his *Sakya* family originated, the borrowings or similarities with the *Dasaratha Jātaka* and Vālmīki’s *Rāmāyaṇa* being quite obvious, the main themes having been enlisted into a different mythic service. But the narrative in the *Rājāvalīya* does not end here. Subsequently, the connections with Rāma and allusions to Sītā only intensify.

The eldest sister, who had “become as a mother” to the four other princesses and princes, contracts leprosy, and as a result, is taken by her brothers a great distance from the new city where she is placed into a pit, along with all the necessary requisites she would need to live. Meanwhile, King Rāma of Benares also contracts leprosy, abdicates in favor of his son, and retires to the forest, “being resolved to die.”¹⁶ He begins to eat the bark and flowers of a certain tree and builds a loft in the hollow of a *kolom* tree (it is unclear if this is a separate tree) where he survives the difficulties of living in the wild. One night, Rāma hears the screams of the elder princess as a tiger attempts to enter her pit. The next morning, he descends from the *kolom* tree, encounters the princess, inquires who she is, and learns of her similar condition of leprosy. While she bashfully explains that she would rather lose her life than disgrace her family, caste, and race, Rāma explains that he is the King of Benares, has suffered from the same disease as she, but has cured himself and will cure her too. She is so cured, he “lived with her in love. In the course of time she bore the king twins at sixteen births, altogether thirty-two princes.”¹⁷

Subsequently, one day Rāma encounters an archer who inquires about the identity of the thirty-two princes. When Rāma explains his

story, the archer returns to Benares and tells Rāma's son, the current king, that his father is alive and living in the forest. Rāma's son then proceeds to the forest, finds Rāma, and constructs a magnificent city on the site of the *kolom* tree, naming the city "Koliya."

Meanwhile, the four younger brothers and four younger sisters of the princess (Sītā) who Rāma has married had given birth to eight daughters each, thirty-two princesses in all. While at first rejecting a marriage proposal collectively from Rāma's (and Sītā's) thirty-two sons "because they were born in the hole of a *kolom* tree," they later accepted invitations "to attend aquatic sports" and "and during the sports on the river the princes took each princess by the hand and led her into the Koliya city." The story ends with the following denouement:

The royal fathers of the said princesses laughed, saying, "Our nephews are clever: they have carried off their own cousins." Since that time there were intermarriages between the royalty of Kimbulvat and Koliya cities. It should be noted that the royal families . . . were united into one clan.¹⁸

In such a manner does the late seventeenth-century Sinhala Buddhist *Rājāvaliya* coopt and transform the story of Rāma and turn him into an ancestor of Sinhala kingship. It is from the marriage alliance between Rāma and the eldest sister (apparently Sītā), that the Sakyans, and hence the Buddha, descend. This also becomes Vijaya's lineage. The narrative then proceeds to tell Vijaya's story in terms very close to those in the *Mahāvamsa*.

In the Sinhala folk ballad versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa* story, brief as they are, Rāvaṇa is clearly not regarded in such an unequivocal manner as the embodiment of *adharmic* or evil forces. He is regarded much more ambivalently. Indeed, this is how Seneviratne depicts Rāvaṇa as he is known from popular Sinhala folklore:¹⁹

People speak of [Rāvaṇa's] valour and intelligence; ten heads for his learning and wisdom. He was also a master of music. The musical instrument known as the Ravanahasta or Ravana vina is his invention. His knowledge of medicine is highly regarded and respected. The medical texts such as *Nadiprakāsa*, *Kumāratantra*, and *Arkaprakāsa* are attributed to him. He was so powerful and courageous that Rāma could kill him only by divine intervention.

Seneviratne's final point is all the more interesting, owing to the fact that in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāvaṇa had been given a boon so that he would be invincible in relation to deities and vulnerable only to hu-

mans. Here, the situation apparently has been reversed. Be that as it may, there are more hints of this “other side” of Rāvaṇa in the *Sinhala Kavi* renditions of the story.

The late medieval Sinhala poetic versions of the story, as I noted, are titled after Rāvaṇa, not Rāma. In itself, this is a signal of the fact that Rāvaṇa’s character is treated with much more empathy. In the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*,²⁰ Rāvaṇa’s sister becomes enchanted with Rāma and boldly asks Rāma, in a manner seemingly unbecoming of a princess (but in line with her true nature as a *rākṣasi*), to marry her. Rāma demurs and suggests that she approach, instead, his brother, Saman *dēviyō*.²¹ Saman also declines. She then returns to Rāma and begs him to divorce Sītā. In response to this suggestion, Rāma slices off her nose. When his sister reports what has happened to her to Rāvaṇa, out of revenge for this act of cruelty, Rāvaṇa abducts Sītā and the stage is set for monkey-king Hanumān’s famous visit to Rāvaṇa’s garden in Laṅkā where Sītā is held captive. Discovered by Rāvaṇa’s men, Hanumān’s tail is set afire by having cloths dipped in oil set ablaze and attached. The strategy backfires as Hanumān springs onto the thatched roofs of the city’s houses, and the entire city is set ablaze. Hanumān escapes amidst the chaos and returns to Rāma, an invasion of Laṅkā is launched, Rāma slays Rāvaṇa in a personal duel, and Sītā is finally recovered.

This Sinhala version of the story is not quite as melodramatic nor as defined as Vālmiki’s Sanskrit version. In the latter, while Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, and Sītā are still in the forest following the visit from Bharata, the *rākṣasi* Śūrpaṇakhā (Rāvaṇa’s sister) falls in love with Rāma and boldly offers herself, largely in the same manner as in the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*, in marriage to Rāma. When Rāma refuses, Śūrpaṇakhā determines that Sītā is the impediment to her desire and makes plans to devour her. In Sītā’s defense, Lakṣmaṇa mutilates Śūrpaṇakhā, who then flees to her brother Rāvaṇa to report the cruelty of the two brothers. In addition, she speaks of Sītā’s extraordinary beauty in such a way that her description excites Rāvaṇa’s passion. Rāvaṇa devises a plan to trick Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa away from their hermitage in pursuit of a deer. While they are gone, he arrives at the scene posing as a wandering mendicant, gains entrance, and manages to carry Sītā off to Laṅkā. Hanumān sneaks to Laṅkā on a spy mission and witnesses Rāvaṇa’s attempted seductions and intimidation of Sītā, who staunchly resists his advances and threats.

There is, of course, much more to Vālmiki's narrative, but enough has been said to compare the two versions in terms of how the characters are depicted. In the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*, while Rāvaṇa's sister acts in manner that is not appropriate for a princess, her behavior does not appear to warrant the response that Rāma (not Lakṣmaṇa as in the Vālmiki narrative) gives to her. There is some justification, then, in Rāvaṇa's abduction of Sītā, since it is seen as an act of revenge for the cruelty that Rāma has visited upon his sister. Further, in the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*, there is no mention made of Rāvaṇa's attempted seductions of Sītā, nor of his sister's descriptions of her beauty that incite his passions. The portraits of both Rāma and Rāvaṇa, therefore, are a good deal more ambivalent than the neat constructions in Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*.

That ambivalence is further evident in another Sinhala episode of the story that has no provenance in the Sanskrit or Tamil versions. The *Palavāla Dānē* (#1),²² which seems to be of later origin than the *Rāvaṇa Katāwa*, contains a remarkable series of episodes that cast Rāma's character in a considerably different light, though in the end, he is clearly identified with Upulvan. The 216-verse poem actually begins with the coronation of Kuvēni by Vijaya, his perjured repudiation of Kuvēni for the Pāṇḍyan princess, the *divi dos* that he and Paṇḍuvas suffer as a result, and then how Sakra, with thirty-six *vāli yakṣas* and Veddhā chiefs in the service of Mala Rāja (the "flower king"), with the assistance of Rāhu disguised as a boar, effects Paṇḍuvas's cure. This is followed by a long description of the Himalayan wilderness where Upulvan and Sītā are said to dwell in the Vaikuṇṭha palace. Then, as a retrospective, the story of Rāma's conquest of Rāvaṇa is told containing the episodes I wish to highlight.

One day Sītā *dēvi* painted a picture of Rāvaṇa and was detected gazing upon it by Rāma. In anger, Rāma took her to the forest and instructed Saman *dēva* to cut her body in two. Saman, however, took pity on Sītā, since she was pregnant with a child, and left her alone in the forest. Soon thereafter, she encountered a *ṛṣi* who gave her shelter in a hut near his own. She fed herself on herbs until the time came for her to deliver her child, which she did successfully. Her son's name was Sandalindu. One day while Sītā was out collecting herbs, the child slipped off her bed, fell to the floor, and crawled under the bed. The *ṛṣi*, whom Sītā had asked to watch over the child in her absence, became anxious when he could not locate Sandalindu. Assuming the child had somehow become lost, and not wanting Sītā to suffer grief, he created a

second child from a flower and laid it asleep on the bed. Sītā returned, began suckling the child, while Sandalindu began to cry. Sītā assumed that a divine miracle had occurred and doubted the ṛṣi's explanation. To convince her, he took some arrow grass and created yet a third child. The third child was named Kistiri Rāja, while the second was Mala Rāja. Hence, the mythic account of the "flower king" who, under Sakra's direction, cured King Paṇḍuvas of his *divi dos*. But the story continues to play out. One day Rāma happened to see Sītā's three young princes playing and became annoyed when they paid him no respect. So, he shot three arrows at them, but to no avail. They simply glanced away. Bewildered, Rāma asked the children about their parents. When he learned of their identity, he was overjoyed that Sītā was still alive, and he restored her as his queen.

What I have just outlined above is one of the root myths celebrated in a ritual known as the *valiyak nāṭum* ("dance") performed annually at the Mahā Dēvālaya in Kandy following the conclusion of the *āsaḷa perahāra*. In the *Rāvaṇa Puwata* and in the *Palavāla Dānē*, it is fair to say that Rāma's profile is much more ambiguous or ambivalent than the image of Rāma as the embodiment of dharma usually associated with the figure in Vālmiki's or other Indian versions of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Not only is there a moral question raised by Rāma's treatment of Rāvaṇa's sister in the *Rāvaṇa Puwata*,²³ but it hardly seems incumbent for an embodiment of dharma to be shooting arrows at three young children simply because they did not pay a formal obeisance, as is the case in the *Palavāla Dānē*. My sense is that these portrayals are not accidents and that what they reflect is something of the ambivalent Sinhala Buddhist disposition. That is, these instances would seem indicative of attempts to "cut Viṣṇu down to size" or to "make an immortal god mortal." From these episodes, and here I would also include the depiction of Rāma that is offered in the *Rājāvaliya* as well, Rāma is much more of a human figure than a divine one. Not only does he suffer from moral failures, but he also suffers from physically debilitating diseases too. No doubt he remains a royal warrior in the Sinhala mindset. I also would submit that his royal warrior profile is precisely why he was regarded so congenially in relation to Upulvan, the great protector of royal interests in medieval Sri Lanka. This would seem to be substantiated in *Palavāla Dānē*. Here, as I have mentioned, Upulvan and Sītā are first mentioned as dwelling together in the Vaikuṇṭha palace in the Himalayas and the *Rāmāyaṇa* episodes are inserted as a kind of retrospect. They explain

the background of how Upulvan and Sītā achieved their heavenly conditions as Rāma and Sītā. The implication is that Rāma is understood to be the human king who later becomes a deity whose power continues to be associated with the well being of kingship and righteous rule.

There is one more variant to the *Rāmāyaṇa* as it is articulated within Sinhala literature that I will briefly explore before attending to other mythic orientations of Viṣṇu. This is found in the *Rāvaṇa Puwata*,²⁴ a poem that is brief, but forty verses in length. Though the poem clearly takes the *Rāmāyaṇa* as its subject, it is unique in two ways: the first is that Viṣṇu (rather than Rāma) is explicitly identified as the protagonist throughout; the second is it contains a unique episode, one somewhat mindful of Kṛṣṇa in his association with the *gopīs* of Vraja. This episode is inserted at the beginning of the poem before referring to the familiar episodes of the story. Viṣṇu goes to bathe in the pond in his park and finds that all the purple lotuses (*upul*) have been picked and that the water has become muddied. Angry at this spoilage, he determines to get to the bottom of this outrage. He conceals himself in the bushes besides the pond and begins to hold watch. Shortly, seven goddesses arrive to bathe, leaving their clothes on the pond's bank. Viṣṇu stealthily steals one set of clothes, but is then discovered by the goddesses, who immediately take flight. But one goddess, whose clothes are in Viṣṇu's possession, remains behind, unable to leave without her garments. This is Sītā. Viṣṇu approaches her, takes her away, and makes her his wife. Then the poem proceeds to recount other *Rāmāyaṇa* episodes, including the encounter with Rāvaṇa's sister. In this rendition of the encounter, rather than Rāma or Lakṣmaṇa cutting off her nose and/or ears, Viṣṇu, in an angry rage, breaks her leg instead! Though the *Rāvaṇa Puwata* is written skillfully in fine literary Sinhala, it articulates a much coarser conception of episodes in comparison to other Sinhala renditions. Sītā is won not by the chivalry or cultivated martial skills of Rāma, but by the cunning character of Viṣṇu, a profile evident in other myths I shall now proceed to explore. That Viṣṇu, rather than Rāma, is identified explicitly throughout the poem as the protagonist represents, I think, the eventual manner in which the various personalities constitutive of his general cult in Sri Lanka have been eventually submerged or coalesced within the profile of the "Buddhist Viṣṇu."

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Viṣṇu's identity as one of the four "guardian deities" of Laṅkā had been formally established, as evident from his inclusion, along with Nātha, Pattini, and Kataragama,

in the ritual proceedings of the annual *āsaḷa perahāra* during the reign of Kīrti Śrī Rājasimha (1751–1782 CE). That identification may have been solidified much earlier, in the very late seventeenth-century reign of Vimaladharmasūriya II (1687–1707). In any case, the identification of these four guardian deities sustains the original concept of the four guardian deities introduced during the fourteenth-century Gampola period, and the specific identities have been changed. A number of folk ballads, which must post-date these times, were written to celebrate the provenance of these four deities. One of these ballads, the *Satara Dēwāla Dēvi Puvata*, contains a very important myth rooted in Purāṇic origins—one well-known, as well, in Tamil culture. The entire *kavi* is but forty-four verses in length, so verses relevant to each deity are compact and to the point. The section on Viṣṇu begins with a reference to his arrival in Laṅkā and his binding of the *Demala yakas* (“Tamil *yakṣas*”), an indication of the definite Sinhala provenance of this version of the myth. It then refers to Viṣṇu’s Purāṇic boar incarnation, where he dove into the primordial waters to spear the earth with his tusk to establish the inhabitable land of this *kalpa*. This cosmogonic act is followed by a description of his tortoise *avatāra* in which he supported Mount Meru after the chief of the *nāgas* had entwined himself around the mountain’s base and a fierce wind threatened to topple it over. The verses to Viṣṇu conclude with how, as “Pulvan *dēva*,” he alone, of all the gods, stood firm beside the Buddha during the paradigmatic struggle with Māra on the night of the enlightenment experience. While there are no mythic instances that are new in this description, instances that haven’t been alluded to before as being incorporated into the profile of the “Buddhist Viṣṇu,” the combination of all of these specific attributes within one telling is novel.

What is also new are additional verses that allude to a myth of great salience. It is a myth with a fairly common Purāṇic theme: how an *asura*, either through the practice of austerities or through the acquisition of knowledge, gains great power and threatens to destroy the universe. In this instance, the myth is about how Bhasma Asura had learned a mantra from Śiva, which, when recited, in connection with placing the hand on the head, would reduce any physical body to ashes. Having discovered this great power, Bhasma began to chase Śiva himself with the intention of destroying the great deity and taking over the universe. While Śiva was in flight from Bhasma, he told Viṣṇu of the predicament. Viṣṇu assumed the form of a beautiful young woman

in a swing who was singing love songs. When Bhasma encountered her, he was overcome with infatuation and began to make passionate overtures to the young woman. Viṣṇu, in the guise of the beautiful young woman, enamored him further and so possessed Bhasma's attention that he became single-minded in his pursuit of her by falling deeply in love. With his bait so hooked, Viṣṇu, as the beautiful young woman, asked Bhasma to swear his undying fidelity to her by reciting an oath with his hand placed upon his head. As he did so, Bhasma was immediately incinerated, completely reduced to ashes.

In Obeyesekere's account of the main ceremony of the *gammaḍuva* series of rites chiefly held in honor of Pattini, there is a set of observances known as the *kāla pandama*, or the "ritual of the torch of time." He explains the significance of these observances in this way:

The torch of time, according to informants, is meant to avert "bad times." It is planted in honor of three gods: Viṣṇu, time past; Kataragama, time present; and Dēvatā Baṇḍāra, time future. . . . Viṣṇu is the head of the pantheon, but he is a benign god; he belongs to the time past. In fact, in the past he was less benign and more involved in the affairs of man. . . . Kataragama is today widely propitiated for overcoming current problems: he belongs to time present, the operative here and now. But according to karmic logic . . . his rise must eventually result in his downfall; when this happens a lesser god like Dēvatā Baṇḍāra must take his place. This is in fact what is happening now. Thus, Dēvatā Baṇḍāra represents time future.²⁵

I cite Obeyesekere's comments about this ritual context now because it is the venue within which he recorded the following oral continuation of the myth of Viṣṇu and Bhasma. The "torch of time" observances function as a preliminary liturgical invocation in a way similar to the chanting of the *Satara Dēwāla Dēvi Puvata*, although in regard to a different set of deities. In any case, the fascinating continuation of the myth at hand that Obeyesekere has recorded is as follows:

Bhasma the *asura* was so infatuated that he forgot his hand was charmed. He touched his head and swore fidelity to the beautiful woman and thus was consumed into ashes. Out of those ashes arose Devol Deviyo and Gini Kurumbara.

Īśvara [Śiva] meanwhile saw no sign of Bhasma, so he came back from hiding. He saw instead the same beautiful woman on the swing. He was also infatuated and wanted to marry her. But the woman [Viṣṇu] asked him: "Are you married?" He said, "Yes." "Then I can't marry you." "Go tell Umayanganā that there is a beautiful woman on

the swing singing love songs, and ask her if you may bring her as your chief queen [*mahesi*].”

Īśvara went to his palace and asked Umayanganā’s permission to bring home the beautiful woman as his queen [*mahesi*]. “Yes, go bring her,” said Umayanganā.

But when Īśvara came back, the beautiful woman was pregnant. She said, “I can’t marry you now since I am pregnant. So ask Umayanganā’s permission to bring home a pregnant woman.” Īśvara went back to Umayanganā, and once again Umayanganā agreed. But when he returned this time the woman had had a child and was once again pregnant. She said, “This cannot be done, you have to ask your wife’s permission to bring home a pregnant woman with a child.”

This happened six times. Meanwhile, the eldest child was big enough to walk, and he was away picking flowers. When Īśvara came for the seventh time he thought that this was a wonder, a miraculous creation, not a normal birth. So Īśvara brought Umā to see the woman. Viṣṇu saw them come and shed his female guise. He awaited their arrival with the six children, since the eldest was away picking flowers. Īśvara’s wife saw the child and said, “Ane, my brother has a heap of children [*kanda*, “heap,” “mountain,” “lot of”]. She embraced the children together saying, “*is kandak*” [“a mountain of heads”]. Thus Skanda [i.e., Is-kanda] was born with six faces and twelve arms. The eldest brother escaped this transformation. He was named Aiyānāyaka, “eldest brother,” “chief brother.”²⁶

Obeyesekere points out that there is also a Tamil version of this myth. In the Tamil version, only Aiyānār is born, and he is born of a sexual union of Śiva and the beautiful woman (Viṣṇu).²⁷ Obeyesekere adds: “The Sinhala myth is their own invention, I suspect. The folk etymology of Skanda as ‘Is’ plus ‘Kanda’ cannot be justified in Tamil. In the Tamil myth Viṣṇu as female (Mōhinī) has intercourse with Śiva; this would be much too indecorous for the Sri Lankan Viṣṇu.”²⁸

This continuation of the myth at hand, and Obeyesekere’s comments, raise a number of interesting issues. Though the provenance of this continuation is somewhat removed from the context of the medieval literature I have been surveying (since it was recorded in the late twentieth century), it still provides an interesting opportunity to ascertain something additional and something unique about the “Buddhist Viṣṇu.”

The first is that the myth has been reworked in such a way that it not only establishes Viṣṇu as the most clever of the deities, the deity with the ingenuity and power to reduce *asura* usurpers, but it also

casts him in the role of being responsible for the birth of a number of other deities. In this myth, it is through his creative *māyā* that Skanda (Kataragama Dēviyō), Devol, and Aiyaṇār are all born. Other mythic traditions elaborate upon these “Vaiṣṇava” introductions. The process illustrated within this particular myth would seem to represent a re-working of Viṣṇu’s power to be incarnated as *avatāras*, a way of explaining the origins of particular deities in relation to a higher, divine creative power or principle. In several other myths about the introduction of deities to the island, Viṣṇu plays the role of the deity who grants them permission to land and to take up residence on the island. That is, he provides a warrant for their presence, a warrant that, in turn, is based on his own warrant derived from the Buddha to protect Laṅkā. Both of these ways of accounting for the presence of a myriad of deities who become important within the Sinhala cultic context illustrate how the “Buddhist Viṣṇu” occupies such an exalted and powerful position, and why he is regarded as an eventual Buddha. In this mythic retelling, he is the presence of the ethical voice throughout: by means of his guile, saving Śiva and the world from the power-crazed Bhasma Asura, and then correctly instructing Śiva on what is proper so that the final end of accessible benevolent power (in the presence of Skanda and Aiyaṇār) is realized.

Obeyesekere has made the very interesting observation in his discussion about the nature of deities within the Sinhala pantheon that “while the Buddha is made into a kind of god, the god is made into a kind of Buddha.”²⁹ What he is suggesting here is that the Buddha functions as the ultimate legitimator of all benevolent actions in the world. Viṣṇu, for instance, receives his warrant or instructions to act for the benefit of the *Buddhasāsana* and therefore for the benefit of those who understand their existence in light of the *sāsana*’s soteriological significance. Furthermore, Buddhist deities are meant to personify Buddhist virtues. They, in fact, are ethical postulations expressed in the mythic mode. The higher the deity, such as Viṣṇu, the more virtue he embodies, and thus the closer he is to *nibbāna*’s realization. Viṣṇu’s responsibility in introducing powerful benevolent forces into the world is a virtuous act, part of his guardian or “warrant” deity responsibilities for the benefit of those in existential need.

The second point is related to this first and has to do with the manner in which “divine sexuality” is conceptualized in Sinhala Buddhist culture. While there is one instance in *sandēśa* literature where Upul-

van is seen as an attractive figure for Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī (Viṣṇu's and Brahma's traditional consorts or *śaktis*), the Sinhala deities *in general*, and Viṣṇu in particular, are decidedly *asexual* in orientation. In the *past*, Viṣṇu may have been sexually impassioned, as indicated in the *Rāvaṇa Puwata* where he hides Sītā's clothes, is enamored, and marries her. But as Obeyesekere has pointed out, Viṣṇu having intercourse is too "indecorous" for the Sinhala, or it is too anomalous to be compatible with the image of a deity who is now a bodhisattva and who is, relatively speaking, close to the attainment of *nibbana* (i.e., the extinguishing of *taṇhā* or desire). The "Buddhist Viṣṇu's" profile, then, stands in sharp contrast with his image as it has been cultivated in popular Tamil myth. Shulman describes a related cycle of myths that celebrate Viṣṇu's sexual transformations and reproductive powers.³⁰ Here, for example, is how he briefly retells the myth of Bhasma Asura:

A demon worshipped Śiva and was given the power to turn anything to ashes with the touch of his hand. He tried to turn Śiva himself to ashes; the god fled from him, and Viṣṇu took the form of Mohinī and bewitched the demon into imitating the hand movements of her dance. Mohinī put her hand on her head, and the demon followed suit—and turned himself to ash. Śiva made love to Mohinī, and their son, Aiyaṇār, was born.³¹

Note that in this myth, Śiva's engaging in sexual intercourse with Viṣṇu is reported as almost a matter of fact. In the Sinhala version of the myth, great care is taken to avoid the mention of sex altogether, and the beautiful woman (Viṣṇu) is insistent on propriety in asking for Umā's permission for accepting an increasingly ridiculous demand, one that is eventually abandoned. For several pages after retelling the Tamil version of this myth, Shulman proceeds to discuss the meaning of the "widely distributed insistence on Viṣṇu's female capabilities" in the Tamil Śaiva Hindu context. He notes that it may reflect a sectarian effort to turn Viṣṇu into Śiva's *śakti* and, hence, signal the subordination of Viṣṇu within the context of Śaiva interpretive frames. Or, he muses, perhaps this myth can be seen as "expressing syncretistic or harmonizing tendencies between the two cults of Śiva and Viṣṇu."³² Whatever may be the socio-political origins or significance of this mythic version, the point is that Viṣṇu's sexual transformations are a celebrated, rather than avoided, aspect of his divine personality. On the other hand, in the Sinhala context, the "Buddhist Viṣṇu" is kept at a distance from the sexual act, and the reproduction of the six children

who become Kataragama and the seventh who becomes Aiyaṇār are understood as the products of his magical, rather than sexual, capabilities. This is completely consistent with Viṣṇu's image as it has been cultivated among the Sinhalese. In *dēvālayas* dedicated to his propitiation, he is never represented iconographically with a *śakti*, a spouse or consort. *In situ*, he is always presented alone, presumably a celibate deity, yet his reproductive abilities are acknowledged in different ways.

In conclusion, I don't think I can do much better than to quote from Martin Wickremesinghe, the early twentieth-century Sinhala novelist, essayist, and part-time anthropologist who has become something of an icon of traditional Buddhist cults in Sri Lanka:

Buddhists in a very late stage in their history borrowed the Vishnu image from India, and it found a shrine in their temple. But they do not worship the new god or offer flowers to him [as they do the Buddha]. They merely ask favours and make offerings of tokens, or bribes. To make an immortal god mortal requires, I believe, originality as daring as that required for creating an immortal god for a pantheon, if not more so.³³

NOTES

1. This essay was initially presented at the conference celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Numata Endowment at the University of Calgary. Portions of it were used as the basis of a section for chap. 4 in my *The Buddhist Viṣṇu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
2. *Mahāsamaya Suttanta*, in *Dīgha-nikāya* II:253.
3. Wilhelm Geiger, among others, has identified Viṣṇu with the indigenous deity Upulvan, who in the seminal *Mahāvamsa* myth recounting the first migration of “Sinhalese” to the island, is appointed by Sakka (Indra), who was in turn appointed by the Tathāgata, to protect the Sinhalese and their religion on this island where the dhamma will flourish. See Wilhelm Geiger, *The Mahāvamsa or The Great Chronicle of Ceylon* (Colombo: Ceylon Government Department of Information, 1912), 55 (VII:1–8).
4. Frank E. Reynolds (in “*Rāmāyaṇa*, *Rāma Jātaka*, and *Rāmakien*: A Comparative Study of Hindu and Buddhist Traditions,” in *Many Rāmāyaṇas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia*, ed. Paula Richman [Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994], 60) has said, in relation to the fact that the *Rāmāyaṇa*’s significance has not been studied much, if at all, by scholars interested in Theravāda Buddhism: “In part, this serious lacuna in Theravāda scholarship can be traced to some very influential Buddhologists, who have concluded from the seeming paucity of classical Rāma traditions in Sri Lanka that these traditions do not play a significant role in Theravāda culture as a whole.” I think Reynolds is very right here. While I would hesitate to identify the Rāma traditions I will examine as “classical” in nature, I think they are much more important than what Richard Gombrich (in “The *Vessantara Jātaka*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Dasaratha Jātaka*,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105 [1985]: 427–437) has indicated. On the other hand, the Sri Lankan sources are not nearly as important as the Rāma traditions in the traditional Thai-Lao historical and cultural contexts that Reynolds has studied.
5. Hugh Neville, trans., *Sinhala Verse (Kavi)*, ed. P. E. P. Deraniyagala, 3 vols. (Colombo: Ceylon National Museums, 1954), 3:97; 1:205; 3:99, and 1:38.
6. B. Gunasekera, *The Rajavaliya or a Historical Narrative of Sinhalese Kings from Vijaya to Vimala Dharma Surya II* (Colombo: George J. A. Skeen, 1900).
7. For an excellent study of the many various “crystalizations” of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in various Indian and Southeast Asian contexts, see Paula Richman, ed., *Many Rāmāyaṇas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), especially the articles by A. K. Rāmanujan, “Three Hundred *Rāmāyaṇas*: Five Examples and Three Thoughts on Translation” (pp. 22–49) and Frank Reynolds, “*Rāmāyaṇa*, *Rāma Jātaka*, and *Ramakien*: A Compara-

tive Study of Hindu and Buddhist Traditions” (pp. 50–63). Rāmanujan points out that there are some twenty-five Sanskrit recensions, in addition to a legion of other versions in diverse languages from Central Asia to the Indonesian archipelago. The variations in substance and in didactic intention are so great that Rāmanujan is finally forced to illustrate the issue by referring to “Aristotle’s jack knife” (p. 44): “When the philosopher asked an old carpenter how long he had had his knife, the latter said, ‘Oh, I’ve had it for thirty years. I’ve changed the blade a few times and the handle a few times, but it’s still the same knife.’”

8. The *Daśaratha Jātaka* (see E. B. Cowell, *The Jātaka* [New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1990], 4:78–82) in Pāli confirms the fact that the *Rāmāyaṇa*, at least in part, goes back to possibly the later centuries of the first millennium BCE. Its adaptation here stresses the Buddhist virtues of detachment and awareness of change, as the major focus is upon how Rāma-pañḍita responds to the news of his royal father’s death. There is no mention of Ravaṇa, Laṅkā, or Ravaṇa’s abduction of Sītā, and Sītā is simply known as the younger sister of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (Lakṣmaṇa). The conclusion to the *jātaka* adds that the Buddha was Rāma in this former life, “Rāhula’s mother” was Sītā, and Ānanda was Bharata, Rāma’s half brother whose mother had tried to claim the royal throne for Bharata when it rightfully belonged to Rāma. Rather than Ayodhyā, the setting is Benares. A summary of the story is given below in relation to the *Rājāvaliya*’s account of Rāma.

9. Cowell, *The Jātaka*, 4:78–82.

10. In Vālmiki’s *Rāmāyaṇa*, Daśaratha is king of Ayodhyā and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa (and his twin Śatrughna who is not mentioned in this *jātaka*) are born of separate mothers. Sītā, of course, is not Rāma’s sister but the bride he wins by stringing his enormous divine bow.

11. In Vālmiki’s account, it is Daśaratha’s youngest queen, Kaikeyī, who had previously saved King Daśaratha’s life and consequently had been rewarded with two boons, who gives birth to Bharata. Fearing Rāma, she first requests that he be banished to the forest for fourteen years and that Bharata become the heir apparent to rule in the meantime. Rāma accepts these conditions and departs with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, but Bharata has misgivings and pursues Rāma in the vain hope of persuading him to return, which he doesn’t because of his loyalty to his father’s, King Daśaratha’s, wishes. Bharata says he will reign only until Rāma returns, and in the meantime places his slippers on the throne as a symbolic gesture of the true kingship.

12. See Gunasekera, *Rajavaliya*, 1–7.

13. *Ibid.*, 8.

14. *Ibid.*, 9.

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 10.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., 11.
19. Anuradha Seneviratne, "Rāma and Rāvaṇa: History, Legend and Belief in Sri Lanka," *Ancient Ceylon* 5 (1984): 235.
20. Neville, *Sinhala Verse (Kavi)*, 1:205.
21. The identification of Saman in this story with Lakṣmaṇa lends more support to the assertion that the first formulation of the "four guardian deities" of Laṅkā were drawn from the *Rāmāyaṇa* epic.
22. Neville, *Sinhala Verse (Kavi)*, 1:38.
23. This very question is raised and explored at some length in Kathleen Erndl's "The Mutilation of Śūrpaṇakhā," in *Many Rāmāyaṇas: the Diversity of Narrative Tradition in South Asia*, ed. Paula Richman (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 67–88. It would seem that the question is even more sharply focussed in the Sinhala context, insofar as it is Rāma, rather than Lakṣmaṇa, who mutilates Śūrpaṇakhā. Neville (*Sinhala Verse [Kavi]*, 98–99) also makes a lengthy comment on this episode, but focuses instead on Śūrpaṇakhā's "unmaidenly conduct." Here is part of it:

I think this is important and an ancient and intentional feature. It probably reflects the contempt felt by the people of Northern India, for the ancient and matriarchal custom still kept up by the Nairs and others, in southern India, by which the wife has full authority over her affairs, selects her own husband, and gives her son the right of inheritance to her mother's brother's estate. A connected custom exists among the Sinhalese, called a *binna* marriage, under which the woman selects and discards her husband at her will.

Neville's explanation of *binna* marriages is a bit overwrought, but I think his point in general about some tension between northern and southern, or Aryan and Dravidian, has an element of merit in it. In addition to the more favorable way that the Sinhala depict Rāvaṇa, some communities in Tamilnad even today understand Rāvaṇa as a great culture hero. For an extended example, see Richman, *Many Rāmāyaṇas*, 175–201.
24. Neville, *Sinhala Verse (Kavi)*, 3:98–99.
25. Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Cult of the Goddess Pattini* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 113.
26. Ibid., 114. Henry Parker (*Ancient Ceylon* [1909; repr., New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1981], 156–158) collected another and more extended ver-

sion of this myth early in the century. In Parker's version, among the various differences, the seventh and eldest child is Kaḍavara.

27. Obeyesekere, *Cult of the Goddess Pattini*, 114. Viṣṇu's role as a progenitor of deities, or as a god providing their warrant, is also seen in myths related to the cult of Aiyaṇār. Aiyaṇār seems to have been worshipped in Laṅkā since at least the time of *Kokila Sandēśa* (vs. 203), which refers to his shrine at Man-nar. H. B. M. Ilangasinha, in "A Study of Buddhism in Ceylon in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries (Circa 1400–1600)" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1972; subsequently published as *Buddhism in Medieval Sri Lanka* [Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1992]), says that Aiyaṇār may have come to Laṅkā with the "Aryans" who migrated to Kandy region during the Gampola reign of Bhuvanekabāhu IV (1335–1341). He wonders if the worship of the god had something to do with the emergent power of the Jaffna *āryacakravarti* at that time. What is interesting here is that the *Ayyanāyaka Devi Kavi* (L. D. Barnett, "Alphabetical Guide to Sinhalese Folklore from Ballad Sources," *Indian Antiquary* 29 [1916]: 7), another Sinhala folk ballad, notes that Aiyaṇār came to Laṅkā after having been born from the right side of his mother by virtue of the power of Upulvan, and that it was Upulvan who granted him permission to come to Laṅkā (Ilangasinha, "A Study of Buddhism in Ceylon," 371).

28. Obeyesekere, *Cult of the Goddess Pattini*, 114–115.

29. *Ibid.*, 59.

30. David Shulman, *Tamil Temple Myths: Sacrifice and Divine Marriage in the South India Śaiva Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 308–316.

31. *Ibid.*, 308.

32. *Ibid.*, 309.

33. Martin Wickramasinghe, *Aspects of Sinhalese Culture*, 4th ed. (1952; repr., Dehiwala, Sri Lanka: Tisara Prakasakayo, 1992), 8.

Expanding Notions of Buddhism: Influences beyond Meiji Japan

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FOLLOWING CENTURIES of relative stability, Buddhism in Japan faced significant challenges in the turbulent Meiji era. The persecution of Buddhism in the late 1860s and early 1870s was the most dramatic instance of disruption and provided a serious threat to the tradition as it was castigated as foreign by the nascent Shinto nationalism and as antiquated by the advocates of rapid modernization. Although the persecution threatened to diminish Buddhism in Japan, subsequent reactions, reforms, and reformulations of Buddhism sought to expand its scope in Japan and beyond.

In addition to domestic forces, cross-cultural influences shaped ideas, practices, and views of Buddhism. Ambiguities in the title of this article are intended to reflect both how influences from beyond Japan, such as Western scholarship about Buddhism and interest in the Theravāda tradition, expanded notions of Buddhism in Japan and how Japanese Buddhists in turn exerted influence beyond their nation by reforming the representation of their tradition abroad. In order to illustrate both directions of influence and types of expansion, I will make reference to Kiyozawa Manshi and Shaku Sōen. There are significant differences between these well-known Meiji Buddhist figures, but each exemplifies a keen awareness of religious and intellectual movements beyond Japan—of both other schools of Buddhism and Western traditions—and each forges rhetorical links between science and Buddhism in order to propel Japanese Buddhism through the tumultuous cross-cultural currents of the Meiji era.

In the late nineteenth century, Japanese Buddhist apologists became considerably more aware of and interested in non-Mahayana teachings and practices. This awareness was fueled by unparalleled ac-

cess to a variety of Buddhist texts and travel beyond East Asia to countries where Theravāda Buddhism predominated.¹

The variety of texts included a geographical and chronological diversity of sources from early Indian sutras to very recent works about Buddhism written by both Asian and Western scholars. Western publications included academic treatises and popular works, such as the influential poetic account of the Buddha's life, *The Light of Asia*, written by Edwin Arnold in 1879. The Mahayana tradition was not well represented in the early Indian or contemporary Western cases.

Greater access to texts followed currents of modernization and globalization from the remarkable rise in printed materials to the global dissemination of information that accompanied "opening" Japan in the middle of the nineteenth century. Admittedly, Japan was never completely "closed" to the outside world during the Tokugawa era. Japan continued to trade with Asian neighbors, but interaction with the West was severely regulated with negligible influences beyond limited trade and the transfer of medical knowledge and technology from the Dutch. The "opening" of Japan from the mid-nineteenth century brought spectacular change in the quantity and variety of Western information, technology, and influence.

In addition to the influx of foreign materials, currents of change in the Meiji period brought some once-obscure Japanese Buddhist works to the surface. For example, Kiyozawa Manshi (1863–1903), the Jōdo Shin founder of the journal *Seishinkai* (Spiritual World) and first president of what is now known as Ōtani University, awakened renewed interest in the Kamakura text, *Tannishō*. This posthumous account of the teachings of Shinran (1173–1262), the founder of the Jōdo Shin school, had been closely guarded by high Pure Land officials.

Tokunaga Michio notes that although this text "has come to be quoted in sermons far more than any other work of Shinran," there was little interest in it or knowledge of its existence until the Meiji period.² Limited access to the text was due to warnings by both the compiler, Yuien, and the great fifteenth-century head of the order, Rennyo, that this text "should not be shown about" as this "razor-edged scripture" (*kamisori shōgyō*) was dangerously prone to misinterpretation for those lacking purity of heart/mind (*shinjin*).³

Among Japanese Buddhist reformers, Kiyozawa Manshi epitomized how access to a wider variety of texts in an increasingly global intellectual milieu led to new juxtapositions of religious perspectives. He

listed the following as the religious works that exercised the most influence over his own thought: the Shin classic *Tannishō*, the *Āgama* sutras—particularly depictions of the historical Buddha’s early life—and the writings of the Greek stoic philosopher Epictetus.⁴

Shaku Sōen embodied the broader sphere of Buddhist influences by traveling to Theravādin Buddhist countries and then later to the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago. He traveled to Ceylon and lived there for two years early in his illustrious career in order to learn from and practice with Buddhist communities from other traditions. A few Theravādin monks, such as fellow future Parliament delegate Anagārika Dharmapāla, reciprocated by traveling to Japan from Ceylon when the American Theosophist and Buddhist convert Colonel Henry S. Olcott made the same trip during his attempts to rally the Buddhist world around his own core Buddhist creed.

Olcott’s conversion to Buddhism was emblematic of a budding fascination with Buddhism in Europe and America. Western scholars and practitioners generally evaluated early Buddhism to be superior to the later “degenerations” of the tradition by which many of them described the Mahayana. This privileging of the “Southern Buddhism” in the West spoke to intellectual currents characterized by ascertaining origins and associating antiquity with authenticity.

Moreover, the views of many Protestant scholars betrayed analogical preferences for the Theravāda. They associated their descriptions of early Buddhism—a philosophical system modeled on the life and teachings of the Buddha free of later clergy or superstition—with their own Protestant Christianity. Conversely, through this analogy their polemical wariness of Catholicism cast distrust, if not disdain, on to the Mahayana for what the Protestant interpreters perceived to be excesses of intermediaries and ritual.

Philip Almond explains how Protestant polemics were imposed onto scholarship of Theravāda and Mahayana Buddhism in his work *The British Discovery of Buddhism*.⁵ Almond addresses how Victorian Christians were generally very impressed by Buddhist ethics and morality though they argued about the extent to which they were put into practice. Mahayana, in particular, was seen to be wanting in this regard. Meiji Buddhists were, therefore, simultaneously defending their Mahayana tradition in the West even among those who were sympathetic to the more esteemed Theravāda, promoting Buddhism more generally among those with little or negative understandings of the

tradition, and securing the position of their tradition in Japan against other religions and anti-religious sentiments.

Meiji Buddhists found a very useful ally in science and the theory of evolution. Portraying Buddhism as consistent with science worked domestically to link Buddhism to the modernization of Japan and to mitigate the criticism that it was an antiquated drag on this nation-building project. Moreover, science in general came to be perceived as a potent weapon in Buddhist-Christian polemics at home and abroad. The theory of evolution was perceived to support the Mahayana claim of being a culmination of Buddhism, rather than a later degeneration, even while it elevated Buddhism as a whole relative to Christianity, which was seen to be vulnerable on this point and under attack in the West.

SCIENCE AND BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN POLEMICS IN JAPAN

The popularity of Christianity among reform-minded Japanese intellectuals fluctuated according to their understanding of its consonance with modernization. Even while officially proscribed for Japanese, until early in the Meiji era, Christianity appealed to a number of “civilization and enlightenment” advocates of modernization and openness to the West. Many of these adherents thought that Christianity was a necessary component of Western progress.

Such an understanding was promoted by the new Protestant missionaries and some Japanese who had extensive contact with the West. However, counter-evidence from the West could as easily dispel the centrality of Christianity to modernization. Robert Schwantes describes this reversal as follows:

Beyond that, the legal system, literature, and whole culture of the West were so permeated by religious elements that many thinking Japanese reluctantly concluded that it was impossible to become modern without becoming Christian. Escape from this dilemma was to be provided by Western thought itself, through new materialistic philosophies based upon science, and through the historical relativism of the higher Biblical criticism. The battle between science and theology, evolution and revelation, then raging in England and America was fought again in the Japanese press and lecture hall.⁶

Japanese Buddhists seized upon the scientific critiques of Christianity that countrymen had encountered abroad. Western professors at Jap-

anese universities reinforced the idea that various modes of modern scholarship—including the turn to scientific empiricism—challenged core doctrines of Christianity. Both sources fed into a domestic discourse influenced by Japanese intellectuals, religious reformers, and the increasingly numerous journals and newspapers of the era. These interconnected cross-cultural critiques informed intriguing polemics between Buddhist and Christian apologists. Buddhist apologetics emphasized the perceived consonance between Buddhism and science and advanced the idea that evolution could serve as another tool to undermine Christianity.

A life-altering career suggestion made by Kiyozawa Manshi to an admiring friend provides a fascinating domestic Japanese example of the perceived power of evolutionary theory to combat Christianity. Kiyozawa Manshi, Inaba Shōmaru, and others were pursuing studies and meeting in discussion groups in Tokyo when Nanjō Bunyū joined their group six months after returning from England in May of 1884. Their meetings led Kiyozawa to pursue philosophy and Inaba to study zoology—both choices were understood as means to help promote Buddhism.⁷ Inaba Shōmaru's reminiscence of this decision reveals the underlying logic of his determination to embark upon a scientific career path.

In order to follow Kiyozawa Manshi's advice, I came to master zoology. At that time, in Kiyozawa Manshi's words, if one was to cast off Christianity, one would have to crush it somehow. The quickest way to crush it is by means of the theory of evolution. To master the theory of evolution was the reason I had to master zoology; [he said] you be sure to master zoology. I followed this and mastered zoology, but people were not attending lectures on evolutionary theory. We were doing things like dissecting rats. . . . Clearly the order of things even up to today is that I continue to spend my days in a similar ordinary way without crushing Christianity.⁸

This career decision indicated that the polemical potential of evolutionary theory for religious apologetics could be a sufficient motivation to undertake the study of zoology. Inaba's experience acknowledged that such a serious pursuit of science proved to be less of a crushing blow against Christianity than did the more general and varied attacks on Christian legitimacy, of which evolution was but one weapon. This example also demonstrates the difficulty of differentiating domestic currents of thought from foreign influences.

Nanjō's influence upon the decision represents a domestic voice trained, in part, in Europe under Max Müller. Kiyozaawa never left Japan, but he read widely and studied under an American professor of philosophy at Tokyo University, Ernest Fenollosa. Fenollosa was sympathetic to Buddhism (and, in fact, converted according to some accounts) and shared significant skepticism concerning Christianity with his fellow American ex-patriots in Japan, such as Edward Morse and Lafcadio Hearn. The Japanese who had studied in the West, the Americans whose lives were in Japan, and the Japanese students who studied with them were all submerged in the confluence of cross-cultural currents. Sorting out separate influences might be problematic. However, we can locate a shared critique of Christianity.

Schwantes reports on the shared interest in evolutionary thought, religious applications of social Darwinism, and preference for Buddhism over Christianity among these Western professors, as well as how for "many Japanese a materialistic philosophy seemed to solve the problem of how to become Westernized and modern without becoming Christian."⁹ Morse popularized the theory of evolution as the first professor of zoology at Tokyo University. His first lecture on the subject "was headed by this motto: 'To study the truth of things and not to follow the doctrines of religion.'" Fenollosa attacked biblical authority in a lecture series on "The Evolution of Religions," and Lafcadio Hearn "habitually told his students at Tokyo Imperial University that no European scientist or philosopher of note believed any longer in Christianity."¹⁰

SCIENCE AND BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN POLEMICS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

Asian Buddhists who came to the West and Western sympathizers throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century found in Buddhism scientific, positivistic, and humanistic traits. Their characterizations of Buddhism—with particular focus on the exemplary life, humanity, and philosophy of the Buddha—proved resistant to many modern critiques of Christianity, miracles, superstition, and religion itself. The scientific theory of evolution was especially challenging to the Western religious traditions that emphasized God as Creator and looked to biblical accounts of creation as authoritative. Portrayals of Asian religious traditions as consistent with Darwinian evolution ap-

pealed to Westerners who were unconvinced by biblical explanation. Moreover, social implications of evolution found expression in various forms of cultural comparison, including the new field of comparative religion.

Christopher Clausen addresses reactions to Buddhism and the new line of scholarly inquiry in his essay, "Victorian Buddhism and the Origins of Comparative Religion."¹¹ His description of the battle lines of Victorian religious reform highlights the displacement of religion by science for some and the call taken up by others to form a "new religion of the future"—an idea that appealed to many Japanese reformers as well as to their Victorian contemporaries.

On one side were the conservatives in religion and philosophy, the missionaries, and most of the clergy—roughly the same alliance that opposed Darwin. On the other was a heterogeneous group of scholars, travelers to the East (many of them the military and civil servants of Empire), philosophers, and at least one poet. Some of them were genuinely looking for a religion to replace Christianity; others had done away with all religions except that of science; still others called themselves Christians but were also looking for a field for disparate materials with which to construct a new religion of the future.¹²

Buddhism was not only "far afield," but proved a popular "other" to Christianity. It was perceived to be similar in terms of morality but different in important doctrinal ways, including an orientation to both natural law and metaphysics that avoided some of Christianity's perceived transgressions. Clausen cites examples of Westerners sympathetic to Buddhism connecting Buddhist doctrine with later European scientific theories of evolution. For example, Edwin Arnold, in the 1896 work *East and West*, claims, "If we will see it, we have in this doctrine of transmigration an anticipatory Asiatic Darwinism, connoting evolution."¹³

The academic comparison of religions was itself deemed to be a scientific enterprise. Max Müller led the new "science of religion," strongly defending the scientific basis of the comparative study of religion. Curiously, the evolutionary analysis of its practitioners often favored earliest forms rather than later developments in an exercise of philology and high criticism strikingly different from the conclusions of Darwin's biological theory. The chief method of the new discipline would be the study of ancient religious documents, both comparatively and philologically. This technique would enable the student to peel

away the layers of accretion and priestly corruption that hid the original form of the religion from view, and also assist in restoring his own faith to its original purity.¹⁴

The philological process advocated by Müller resembles the careful digging of the archeologist or paleontologist down through layers of accretion to reveal the earliest skeletons and to restore original forms. In the case of the “science of religion,” Müller emphasized the purity and, to an extent, the superiority of the oldest forms, whereas evolutionary theory posits a progression from less to more evolved through accidental mutation and natural selection. The random element of natural selection rarely appears in social Darwinian adaptations, including late-nineteenth century descriptions of comparative religion that adopted the language of evolution.

Whatever the scientific legitimacy of Müller’s comparative religion, disputes arose as to whether Buddhism could be characterized as scientific. Douglas Brear notes a number of dissenting opinions:

For Hardy “among all the numerous efforts that have been made to explain the phenomena of existence, that of the Buddhist is the least logical or conclusive,” whilst Scott considered that “it was evidently a theory of continuity as unscientific as it was unphilosophic” and “a superstition and nightmare.”¹⁵

An example from the 1876 *Contemporary Review* was less condemning of Buddhism as “superstitious,” but commented on the variety of interpretation:

Much diversity of opinion appears still to exist respecting the teaching of Buddhism. According to one it is a system of barren metaphysics, according to another it is sheer mysticism; a third will tell you that it is a code of pure and beautiful morality; while a fourth looks upon it as a selfish abstraction from the world, a systematic repression of every impulse and emotion of the heart.¹⁶

An issue of the same journal one year later returned to the topic of Buddhism and highlighted teachings more conducive to the evaluation of Buddhism as scientific. The article by T. W. Rhys Davids, the well-known scholar of Buddhism, indicated that Buddhism avoids certain metaphysical speculation such as attempting “to solve the problem of the primary origin of all things.”¹⁷ He cited the Buddha’s refusal to answer “whether the existence of the world is eternal or not eternal,” as the “inquiry tended to no profit.”¹⁸ He then made reference to the Bud-

dhist “law of cause and effect” that operates without a divine power, miracles, or exceptions for heaven and hell:

Buddhism takes as its ultimate fact the existence of the material world and of conscious beings living within it; and it holds that everything is subject to the law of cause and effect, and that everything is constantly, though perhaps imperceptibly, changing. There is no place where this law does not operate; no heaven or hell therefore in the ordinary sense.¹⁹

These comments by Rhys Davids, and most others by Westerners who supported the scientific, moral, or other perceived strengths of Buddhism, were primarily directed at the early Buddhism of the historical Buddha.

The Japanese Buddhists who attended the 1893 World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago attempted to ameliorate the negative view of later Mahayana Buddhism by reconnecting interpretations of their tradition with scientifically and philosophically pleasing teachings, such as the law of cause and effect. Diversity of views on the scientific consistency of Buddhism—compounded by accusations that “superstition” was most pervasive in later Mahayana branches of Buddhism—required a proactive and consistent response from the Japanese delegates.

Apologists at the 1893 Parliament sought to convince skeptics about the consonance between Buddhism and science—both of which were characterized as universal reflections of truth—and thereby to raise the status of Buddhism. For the Japanese Buddhist delegates, claims of alliance between science and their tradition offered the added potential to rise above other religions in Japan, including Christianity, and to elevate their nation as a whole—where, they claimed, Buddhism reached its Mahayana culmination.

SCIENCE AS APOLOGETIC ALLY

The Japanese Buddhist delegation at the Parliament asserted that Buddhism was authentically ancient, pragmatically modern, and preeminently capable of becoming a universal future religion for the world. As a result, Japan, and Asia more generally, could provide spiritual sustenance to the troubled West. The strategy of portraying Buddhism as consistent with science recurs in the delegates’ presentations.

For example, the Zen abbot Shaku Sōen presented “The Law of Cause and Effect, as Taught by Buddha.” This paper explained a core concept of Buddhism, indicated the essential unity within Buddhism on this teaching, and allied Buddhist cosmology with the laws of nature. Sōen contrasted this Buddhist law, which does not rely on supernatural interference, with Western religious notions of creationism, an active divine agent, and divinely meted out teleological possibilities. Sōen stated that

Buddhism considers the universe as no beginning, no end. Since, even if we trace back an eternity, absolute cause cannot be found, so we come to the conclusion that there is no end in the universe. . . . [T]he causal law is in a logical circle changing from cause to effect, effect to cause.²⁰

Sōen also identified this causal law as the source of moral authority, and repeatedly insisted that there is no divine agency at work in the law of cause and effect. Buddha does not make it happen, he is just a man who discovered with clarity how it works. Sōen noted that according “to the different sects of Buddhism more or less different views are entertained in regard to the law of causality, but so far they agree in regarding it as the law of nature, independent of the will of Buddha, and still more of the will of human beings.”²¹

Shaku Sōen’s presentation on the “Law of Cause and Effect” resonated with Paul Carus (1852–1919) and his religion of science. Sōen spent a week with Carus after the Parliament, and from that point Carus’s journal, *The Monist*, and his press, Open Court Publishing Company, provided an outlet for Shaku Sōen’s representation of Buddhism to the West. The connection between Sōen’s activities in Japan and the Zen that became ascendant in the West came to be most recognizably embodied by his lay Buddhist student, Daisetsu Teitaro “D. T.” Suzuki (1870–1966).

Suzuki was extremely influential in later representations of Buddhism, and his interaction with both Japanese and Western thinkers and audiences exemplifies ongoing cross-cultural influences. However, for this article the focus remains on the earlier Meiji discourse for which Suzuki served first as a translator; only after the turn of the century did his voice emerge as one of the forces forming the discourse about Buddhism in Japan and the West. In this last section, correspondences between Paul Carus and Shaku Sōen, translated by Suzuki, il-

illustrate the relationship between these figures and ideas concerning Buddhism, science, and religious reform.

BUDDHIST APOLOGETICS, TRUTH,
AND THE “RELIGIONS OF SCIENCE” AFTER 1893

Letters, books, and journal articles provide evidence of connections between science, ideas of truth, and religious reform internationally and domestically. In his first letter to Carus upon returning to Japan, Shaku Sōen applauded Carus’s “religion of science” and indicated its accord with his own Buddhist reformation movement.

My Dear Dr Carus—

It was certainly a good fortune that through the light of Buddha we met together in the hall of Truth while I sojourned at Chicago to attend the Parliament of religions. I am very glad to see your impartiality—which inspired you to establish a new word of the religion of science, without any bigot allegiance to Christianity or to Buddhism. As for my part, I am a Buddhist, but far from being a conservative religionist, my intention is rather to stir a reformation movement in the religious world. In other words, I am one who insists on the genuine and spiritual Buddhism to renovate that formal and degenerate Buddhism. And I believe that if the present Christianity be reformed it will become the old Buddhism, and if the latter be reformed it will become the future religion of science. . . .²²

Shaku Sōen positioned Christianity, the formal and degenerate old Buddhism, and the future religion of science in an evolutionary hierarchy. According to this continuum, Christianity required reforms to advance to the level of the old Buddhism. Shaku Sōen stated that if old Buddhism is reformed it will become the future religion of science—the culmination of the evolution of religion. Thus, his own activity of insisting “on the genuine and spiritual Buddhism to renovate the formal and degenerate Buddhism” was equated with the very “religion of science” described by Carus.

This nexus of religion, science, and social Darwinian evolution served the polemical purpose of situating Christianity beneath Buddhism. In the spirit of brotherhood and connection among religions, Shaku Sōen allowed that Christianity too can be reformed and attain the lowest rung of Buddhism—that of old Buddhism. From that position, one can logically assume that Christianity could in time reach the level of reformed Buddhism and the religion of science.

Subsequent letters continue the discourse of Truth with a capital “T” in opposition to unscientific myth, superstition, and dogma. In his letter written in March of 1894, Shaku Sōen complimented Carus on his “theories which I have many reasons to approve” and flattered Carus in terms that recall their shared endeavors at the Columbian Exposition:

I think you may well be said to be a second Columbus who is endeavoring to discover the new world of Truth. I earnestly hope your valuable work will soon be put into my hand. I have often thought on sending you some sacred books of Buddhism, which may be of some service on your study of it. But I am sorry our books are written all in Chinese, and they may fail to interest you. . . .²³

Even as Shaku Sōen conceded that East Asian books of Buddhism may not be of much use to Carus without translation, he mentioned in this same letter that the ideas of Carus are being translated by D. T. Suzuki into Japanese and “published in some Buddhist magazines.”

Shaku Sōen wrote in his next letter to Carus on April 18, 1894, “I deeply sympathize with your intention to continue the work of the Parliament of Religions. In my opinion the present century is the period of preparation for a religious reformation, and it is our duty to destroy false opinion . . . that the light of Truth may shine brighter and brighter.” He warned: “Some bigots dream to act against the general tendency of the world, which called into existence the late World’s Religious Parliament.” In defense of the Parliament’s aims, Shaku Sōen continued to invoke science and truth in a struggle of religious reform:

We have now to fight a religious battle against an old and superstitious faith by taking the spirit of science and philosophy as shield and the principle of universal brotherhood as sword. There is no such distinction as Christianity, Mohammadanism and Buddhism before the altar of Truth.²⁴

Furthermore, in his third letter in as many months, Shaku Sōen wrote on May 17 that “Buddha who lived three thousand years ago, being named Gautama, now lies bodily dead in India; but Buddha in the twentieth century being named Truth is just to be born at Chicago in the New World.”²⁵ This was a striking statement on several levels. It exalted the importance of the World’s Parliament and the reform efforts of Shaku Sōen as well as Carus’s science of religion. And it exuded the optimism of the late nineteenth century—a sense of confidence in the progressive unfolding of history diametrically opposite to the Bud-

dhist idea of *mappō*, the latter days of the Buddhist law where enlightenment becomes increasingly difficult in the degenerative movement away from the time of the last historical Buddha.

Shaku Sōen's confident evaluation of progress and the promise of the coming age was consistent with the tenor of social evolutionism and the positive portrayal of Mahayana Buddhism as the culmination of Buddhism. In this same May letter, he addressed the "real, positive, altruistic, and rather optimistic . . . sense of Nirvana taught in the Mahāyāna." Such an emphasis upon the altruistic and optimistic interpretation of nirvana distinguished the Mahayana from other forms of Buddhism criticized for what had been described in the West as a nihilistic religious ideal. Along with the positive characterization of nirvana and an optimistic sense of progress, there is the assertion of "Buddha in the twentieth century being named Truth." The attribution of "Truth" permeated his correspondences with Carus and was frequently linked with science and philosophy as well as religion properly reformed.

Shaku Sōen's representation of Buddhism was calculated to communicate his ideas consistent with the current language and concerns of his time, but he was not constructing Buddhism out of whole cloth. The contrasting identifications of "Buddha" with "Truth" and with the historical and corporeal Gautama, who "now lies bodily dead in India," were not new to Buddhism. Buddhist thought had long made distinctions between the emanation body (*nirmāṇakāya*) of the historical Buddha (Guatama, or Śakyamuni Buddha, as well as buddhas before him) and the truth body (*dharmakāya*), which is identified with ultimate reality. However, *dharmakāya* is understood to be ever present, existing before the physical manifestation of Guatama and other buddhas, much less the twentieth century. Thus, the idea of "Buddha in the twentieth century being named Truth is just to be born at Chicago in the New World" was a strikingly different twist from the typical *trikāya* theological formulations.

What does this mean? It seems that this correspondence was yet one more instance of the dynamic exchange between a Japanese representative of Buddhism, in this instance Shaku Sōen, and developments in the West, in this case Carus and his ideas about Truth, Buddhism, and the religion of science. That is, rather than merely presenting Buddhism to the West as a hermetically sealed package of Asian beliefs and history, Shaku Sōen was instead interpreting developments in the West

and elsewhere through the Buddhist and nineteenth-century lenses of flux, interconnection, and evolution. Carus's ideas of Truth and the religion of science were simply cast as new emanations of Buddha.

Shaku Sōen simultaneously complimented Carus, linked together their ideas and shared vision for the future, and asserted the priority of Buddhism. Buddhism was presented as prior to Christianity in the evolution of religious insight, which would culminate in the Truth of the future religion of the world. Moreover, the realization to which the Buddha awoke was identified as fundamental reality and therefore the ultimate source of subsequent emanations of truth. Such an understanding allowed for the collapse of apparent distinctions between Buddhism, the religion of science, and Truth. As Sōen said, "We, the followers of Buddha, nay, of the truth. . . ."²⁶

Thus, in addition to the domestic use of science for Buddhist apologetics, rhetoric emphasizing the consonance between Buddhism and science was employed internationally to promote Japanese Buddhism as a modern, universal religion. Buddhist adherents and sympathizers from Japan and abroad promoted Buddhism through this understanding and helped to shape discourse about modern Buddhism in this way. Ideas about Buddhism not only expanded within Japan to include a greater understanding of other Asian traditions and Western scholarship about Buddhism, but currents beyond Meiji Japan—both flowing in from the West and out from Japan—influenced scientific and evolutionary rhetoric that propelled the idea of Buddhism as the preeminent modern religion and of Mahayana as the culmination of Buddhism.

NOTES

1. I am drawing from chaps. 5 and 6 of my dissertation, John Harding, "Mahāyāna Phoenix: Japan's Buddhists at the World's Parliament of Religions" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2003), for evidence of polemics between Mahayana and "Hinayana," Buddhism and Christianity, and the use of science as a rhetorical ally among Meiji Buddhists.
2. Tokunaga Michio, introduction to *Tannishō*, trans. Dennis Hirota (Kyoto: Ryukoku University, 1982), 15–18.
3. Ibid.
4. The *Āgamas* are essentially the Saravāstivādin school's version of the better known Pāli *Nikāyas* of the Theravādin school. For this connection and a discussion of Kiyozawa's *sambukyō*, the Buddhist tradition "that every thinker holds three texts in highest esteem," see Mark Blum, "Kiyozawa Manshi and the Meaning of Buddhist Ethics," *The Eastern Buddhist*, n.s., 21, no. 1 (1988): 62.
5. Philip Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
6. Robert S. Schwantes, "Christianity versus Science: A Conflict of Ideas in Meiji Japan," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1953): 123.
7. Wakimoto Tsuneya, "Kiyozawa Manshi," in *Jōdo Bukkyō no shisō*, vol. 14 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1992), 26.
8. Ibid.
9. Schwantes, "Christianity versus Science," 124.
10. Ibid., 125–126, 130.
11. Christopher Clausen, "Victorian Buddhism and the Origins of Comparative Religion," *Religion* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1975): 1–15.
12. Ibid., 13.
13. Edwin Arnold, *East and West* (London: Longmans, Green, 1896), 162; as cited in Clausen, "Victorian Buddhism," 5.
14. Clausen, "Victorian Buddhism," 4.
15. Douglas Brear, "Early Assumptions in Western Buddhist Studies," *Religion* 5, no. 2 (Spring 1975): 147.
16. Robert Childers, *Contemporary Review* 27 (1876): 417, as cited in Clausen, "Victorian Buddhism," 7.
17. T. W. Rhys Davids, "On Nirvana, and on the Buddhist Doctrines of the 'Groups,' the Sanskara, Karma, and the 'Paths,'" *Contemporary Review* 29 (1877): 250.

18. Ibid. Rhys Davids excerpts the Buddhist passage from Spence Hardy's *Manual of Buddhism in Its Modern Development* (London: Partridge & Oakley, 1853), 375.
19. Rhys Davids, "On Nirvana," 250.
20. Shaku Sōen, "The Law of Cause and Effect, as Taught by Buddha," in *The World's Parliament of Religions*, ed. John Henry Barrows, vol. 2 (Chicago: Parliament Publishing Co., 1893), 830.
21. Ibid., 831.
22. Letter from Shaku Sōen written in Kamakura, Japan, to Paul Carus on December 16, 1893. I located this letter and other correspondences among these three at the Open Court Collection in the Special Collections archives at the Southern University of Illinois—Carbondale.
23. Ibid., March 9, 1894.
24. Ibid., April 18, 1894.
25. Ibid., May 17, 1894.
26. Ibid.

The Names of Buddhist Hells in East Asian Buddhism

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RELEVANT SOURCES

THE OLDEST ĀGAMA STORIES speak of just one hell, (Mahā)niraya. Especially important in this context are the *Devadūta-sūtra* (“The Heavenly Messengers”) and the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* (“The Fool and the Wise”). They provide the basis for all later hell descriptions. The image of hell as a blazing iron cube with four gates each leading to a set of penance courts goes back to the *Devadūta-sūtra*, whereas the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra*, besides giving evidence of further developed retribution theories, inspired many of the later *utsadas*, or supplementary hells.

Around the beginning of the Common Era, a new system of multiple hells, based on the early Mahāniraya structure, enters into the picture. It consists of eight hot hells, each surrounded by four times four supplementary hells, now called *utsadas*. Representative texts that describe this newly developed system are the cosmologies of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (T. 1.30) and related scriptures. They also mention a second series of hells, which may be called the Arbuda series. The Arbuda series goes back to the *Kokālika-sūtra*, another *Āgama* text of which many versions exist. They are well known as the cold hells of the Northern tradition.

The final stage in the development of the cosmological image of hell is reached at the moment when the Eight Great Hells, which developed from the Mahāniraya concept, are combined with the Arbuda series. This does not mean, however, that from this point onwards no variations are possible. Quite the contrary: how the various elements are combined varies greatly from text to text. Representative examples of this stage may be found in such texts as the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (T.

1558) and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (T. 1509). Sources such as the *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T. 1545) from Kaśmīra or Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* ("Path of Purity") of the Theravāda tradition may be equally important, but their influence in East Asia is minor in comparison to the texts of the western Sarvastivāda, Dharmaguptaka, and Mahāsāṃghika traditions mentioned above. They will not be discussed here.

Early Āgama Sūtras

The *Devadūta-sūtra* and *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra*, which according to Przyluski go back to a common source,¹ were produced by the Sthaviras of Kauśāmbī and the Sarvāstivādins of Mathurā, respectively. Later, the ideas contained in both sūtras were exchanged, leading to a Kauśāmbī version of the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* and a Mathurā version of the *Devadūta-sūtra*. Still according to Przyluski, the Sarvāstivāda texts were preserved as the *Tianshijing* (Jpn. *Tenshikyō* 天使經, T. 26.64) and *Chihuijing* (Jpn. *Chiekyō* 痴慧經, T. 26.199) of the Chinese *Madhyamāgama*. The Kauśāmbī texts correspond to *Majjhima* no. 129 (*Bālapaṇḍita-sutta*) and no. 130 (*Devadūta-sutta*).² He also places the compilation of both sūtras in the Mauryan era (324–187 BCE). The translation of the *Madhyamāgama* into Chinese was made between 397 and 398 by Gautama Saṃghadeva (fl. end of the fourth century CE).

There are also other versions of both texts available, such as the *Scriptural Texts about Niraya* (Ch. *Nilijing*; Jpn. *Nairikyō* 泥犁經; T. 86). The first part of the text (907a13–909b01) is related to the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra*, whereas the second part (909b02–910c22) is related to the *Devadūta-sūtra*. Another, almost equal version of the second part also exists as a separate sūtra, called the *Scripture about the Niraya of the Iron Citadel* (Ch. *Tiechengnilijing*; Jpn. *Tetsujōnairikyō* 鐵城泥犁經; T. 42). The alleged translator of both the *Scripture about the Niraya of the Iron Citadel* and the *Scripture about Niraya* is Zhu Tanwulan (Jpn. *Jiku Donmuran* 竺曇無蘭; Skt. Dharmarājan?).³ He translated both texts during the second half of the Eastern Jin (317–419). Most probably his affinity was with the Dharmaguptakas.⁴

Other texts related to the *Devadūta-sūtra* are the *Āṅguttara -nikāya* (III, 35),⁵ T. 125.32.4 of the Chinese *Ekottarāgama*, and the *Scripture about King Yamarāja and the Five Heavenly Messengers* (Ch. *Yanluowangwutianshizhejing*; Jpn. *Enraōgotenshishakyō* 閻羅王五天使者經; T. 43); a text related to the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* is *Āṅguttara -nikāya* (II, III).⁶ The Chinese

Ekottarāgama was translated by Gautama Saṃghadeva between 397 and 398, the *Scripture about King Yamarāja and the Five Heavenly Messengers* by Huijian (Jpn. Ekan 惠簡; fl. 457 CE).

The *Kokālika-sūtra* has many versions in both Pāli and Chinese. The oldest and most complete version is the *Suttanipāta* (III, 10) from around 300 BCE.⁷ Related texts are the *Samyutta-nikāya* (VI, i, 10) and *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (X, 9 [89]), as well as T. 99.1278 (Ch. *Jujiali*; Jpn. *Kukari* 瞿迦梨) and T. 100.276 (Ch. *Jujiali*; Jpn. *Kukari* 瞿迦梨) of the Chinese *Samyuktāgama* and T. 125.21.5 (Ch. *Juboli*; Jpn. *Kuhari* 瞿波離). The *Taishō* 99 translation of the Chinese *Samyuktāgama* was made by Guṇabhadra (394–468); the *Taishō* 100 translation was made between 350 and 431. The translator is unknown. Lamotte mentions versions in the *Divyāvadāna*, *Avadānaśataka*, and *Mahāvvyutpatti* (nos. 4929–4936) for the *Sarvāstivāda* tradition, as well as the *Dharmasamuccaya* (chap. 122).⁸

EARLY COSMOLOGIES (CA. 100 BCE–200 CE)

The *Lokaprajñapti* of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (Jpn. *Sekikyō* 世記經; T. 1.30), which is considered to belong to the Dharmaguptaka tradition,⁹ was translated in 413, soon after Buddhayaśas (384–417) brought the text from the Gandhāran cultural area¹⁰ to China. According to Ishigawa Kaizu, the original text dates from between 100 BCE and 200 CE.¹¹ This is relatively late for an *Āgama* text. Of the related texts, the *Qishijing* (Jpn. *Kisekyō* 起世經; T. 24; trans. Jñānagupta, 523–600) and the *Qishiyinbenjing* (Jpn. *Kiseinpongyō* 起世因本經; T. 25; trans. Dharmagupta, d. 619) are based on the same original. The *Daloutanjing* (Jpn. *Dairōtanyō* 大樓炭經; Skt. *Lokasthāna*?; T. 23) seems to be a translation of an older text belonging to the same tradition. The last text was translated between 290 and 306 by Fa Li (法立, 265–316) and Fa Ju (法炬, dates unknown). There is no corresponding Pāli of either the *Lokaprajñapti* or of its related texts. Denis believes that the *Lokaprajñapti* of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama*, the *Lokaprajñapti*abhidharma (*Lishiapitanlun*; Jpn. *Risseabidōron* 立世阿鼻曇論; T. 1644) and a Burmese *Lokapaññatti* of the eleventh or twelfth century go back to the same, no longer extant Sanskrit cosmology.¹² The *Lokaprajñapti*abhidharma, which was translated by Paramārtha (500–569), is traditionally ascribed to Aśvaghōṣa (first to

second century CE), but may be older.¹³ New research by Kiyoshi Okano has pointed out the Sāṃmitiya affiliation of the text.¹⁴

LATER COSMOLOGIES (CA. 200–500 CE)

The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (Jpn. *Abidatsumakusharon* 阿毘達摩俱舍論, T. 29 no. 1558) by Vasubandhu (fifth century CE) has been translated twice, once by Paramārtha (500–569) and once by Xuanzang (602–664). Belonging to the Sarvāstivāda tradition, the text played an important role in the development of Sino-Japanese Buddhism. Its ongoing influence is obvious from the fact that it was used as the main source for the *Śes-bya rab-gsal* (Skt. *Jñeyaprakāśaśāstra*), a Buddhist manual written for Qubilai's son and crown prince, Zhenjin (1243–1285), by 'Phags-pa (1235–1280). The text was translated from the Tibetan to Chinese as the *Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable* (Ch. *Zhangsuozhilun*; Jpn. *Shōshochiron* 彰所智論; T. 1645).¹⁵ Hell descriptions in other influential texts such as the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (Ch. *Yuqieshidilun*; Jpn. *Yugashijiron* 瑜伽師地論; T. 30 no. 1579), attributed to Asaṅga (ca. 400) and translated by Xuanzang (602–664), offer basically the same hell system as the one presented in the *Kośa*.

The *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (Ch. *Dazhidulun*; Jpn. *Daichidoron* 大智度論; T. 25 no. 1509) is traditionally attributed to Nāgārjuna (ca. 200 CE), but new insights in the developments of Sārvāstivāda Buddhism¹⁶ lead to the conclusion that its main author might have been Kumārajīva (350–409, 413?) himself. Lamotte's suggestion that the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (hereafter *Mahāprajñā*) was written about one century after Nāgārjuna supports this view. Kumārajīva, who was educated in Kaśmīra, probably compiled the work as a Mādyamika *abhidharma*, resembling the Kaśmīra *abhidharma*, which he had studied. The *Mahāprajñā* is one of the most important non-Sarvāstivāda texts that contributed to the perception of Buddhist hell in East Asia.

The Development of the Single Hell Structure of Mahāniraya into the Eight Hot Hells

The basic hell structure as described in early *Āgama* sutras consists of one single hell. In the Pāli *Majjhima-nikāya* this hell is called Mahāniraya, whereas in the Chinese *Madyamāgama* it is called Four-Gate Hell (Ch. *Simen Dadiyu*; Jpn. *Shimon Daijigoku* 四門大地獄) or

just “hell” (Ch. *diyu*; Jpn. *jigoku* 地獄). *Majjhima* no. 130 also uses the expression *catudvāro*, but only in the stanza.¹⁷ The *Devadūta-sūtras* as well as the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtras* describe Mahāniraya as an enormous hot burning iron cube with a gate at each of the four sides. The main difference between the texts concerns the tortures. The *Devadūta-sūtras* speak of several places of torture outside the eastern gate of hell. In the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtras* the evildoers are subjected to various tortures before entering (*Majjhima-nikāya*) or after having entered hell (Chinese *Madyamāgama*). The names of the extramural courts of penance—Kukūla, Kuṇapa, etc.—and the implements of torture—iron pellets (*ayoguḍa*), copper cauldron (*lohakumbhi*), etc.—are recycled by later cosmologies as *utsadas* (table 1).

The Eight Hot Hells

In the eightfold hell structure, Mahāniraya corresponds to Avīci, the “inferior limit of the Kāmadhatu” (*Dhammasaṅgaṇi* 1281¹⁸) and the most fearful of the eight hot hells. This development of the single hell structure into the complex structure of eight hells seems to be related to the development of Buddhist cosmology. As can be seen in the *Samkicca Jātaka* (*Jātaka* 530), or the *Chapter about the Eight Hardships* of the Chinese *Ekottarāgama* (Ch. *Banan*; Jpn. *Hachinan* 八難; T. 125.42), there was a time that Avīci occupied the sixth place, followed—not preceded—by Tapana and Pratāpana:

“Saṅjīva, Kālasutta and Roruva, great and small,
Saṅghāta, Great Avīci, are names that may well appal,
With Tapana and Patāpana, eight major hells in all.”¹⁹

“There are eight great hells.” “Which are these eight?” “The first is the Saṅjīva hell, the second the Kālasūtra hell, the third the Saṅghāta hell, the fourth the Raurava hell, the fifth the Mahāraurava hell, the sixth the Avīci hell, the seventh the Tapana hell, the eighth the Pratāpana hell. The eight are the great burning hells. Such, *bhikṣus*, are the eight great hells.” (T. 125.42, 747c06–10)²⁰

The reason is probably as follows. When placed in a cosmological context, hell, *in casu* Mahāniraya, would be given a position opposed to heaven. Heaven was, from a very early stage on, considered to be six-fold with each heaven being located one level higher on Meru Mountain. As Buddhist cosmology developed, hell was to counterbalance the

heavenly realm. As a result, the single Mahāniraya structure was replaced by six hells in accordance with the six heavens.

Avīci, the hell of hells and in that sense the successor of Mahāniraya, became the antipode of the sixth heaven, Paranirmitavaśavartin. Tapanā and Pratāpana (or Paritāpana), initially in the seventh and eighth place, served as antipodes of the Rūpa- and Ārūpyadhātus.²¹ The original function of both Tapanas blurred away as they were relocated as the sixth and seventh hells, and Avīci was placed at the bottom of the world system. The following passage from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* still indicates the relation between the six hells and the six heavens:

What about [the lifespan of] the evil destinations? The stanza says:

“From Sañjīva, etc., six [hells] up, they follow the sequence of the Kāmadeva
A life [in heaven] being one day and night [in hell], their lifespans
are the same.
Pratāpana half an intermediate *kalpa*, Avīci a complete intermediate
kalpa.” (T. 1558, 61c04–18)²²

It seems that even here, Avīci may have originally been placed in the sixth position, so that both Tapanas would have been paired, which seems more logical:

Sañjīva	Caturmahārājakāyika	500 years
Kālasūtra	Trāyastriṃśa	1,000 years
Saṅghāta	Yāma	2,000 years
Raurava	Tuṣita	4,000 years
Mahāraurava	Nirmāṇarati	8,000 years
Avīci	Paranirmitavaśavartin	16,000 years
Tapana	Rūpadhātu	½ intermediate <i>kalpa</i>
Pratāpana	Ārūpyadhātu	1 intermediate <i>kalpa</i>

The Kokālika-sūtra and the Cold Hells

Where the Kokālika (var. Kokāliya) story first originated is uncertain, but after some time it must have been known in both the north-western area and in central and south India. The oldest version of the story is the *Kokāliya-sutta* of the *Suttanipāta* (III, 10). It is the longest and most complete extant version. The story contains the following five elements:

1. Kokālika speaks badly about Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. Although the World-Honored One tries to stop him, Kokālika continues slandering both monks.
2. Soon after, his whole body is covered with continuously growing boils. They grow until they burst and blood and pus is coming out of them.
3. Kokālika dies from this disease and is reborn in the Paduma (Skt. Padma) hell.
4. The monks assemble and ask the Buddha to explain the length of one lifespan in Paduma hell. The Buddha explains that when a person would pick one sesame seed every hundred years from twenty Kosalan cartloads of sesame seeds, the carts would sooner be empty than the lifespan in one Abudda (Skt. Arbuda) hell. Twenty Abudda hells equal one Nirabbuda (Skt. Nirarbuda) hell, twenty Nirabbuda hells one Ababa (Skt. Ababa) hell, twenty Ababa hells one Ahaha (Skt. Huhuva) hell, twenty Ahaha hells one Aṭaṭa hell, twenty Aṭaṭa hells one Kumuda hell, twenty Kumuda hells one Sogandhika (Skt. Saugandhika) hell, twenty Sogandhika hells one Puṇḍarika hell, and twenty Puṇḍarika hells one Paduma hell.
5. The story ends with a long verse of twenty-two stanzas. The first couple of stanzas speak in general terms about the fate of transgressors, in particular those who speak evil, to be reborn in hell. The remaining stanzas give a detailed description of the tortures of hell.

In the English translations of the PTS, Kokālika is moreover referred to as the “Kokālikan” monk. According to Woodward, it refers to the fact that “he was a native of the town Kokālī.”²³ One wonders, however, whether the name is not related to the terms *koka(-nada)*, meaning “the (red) lotus,”²⁴ and *alika*, meaning “contrary, false, untrue (adj.); a lie, falsehood (n).”²⁵ The name of Kokālika’s hell, Paduma, also means lotus. According to Monier-Williams, another meaning is “a particular mark or mole on the human body.”²⁶ Whether the second meaning is derived from the Kokālika story or whether it is another pun is unclear.

It is interesting to note that the difference between the various Arbuda hells concerns the period of time spent inside only. Different from the hell descriptions in the *Devadūta-* and *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtras*, the fear factor is the amount of time spent inside, not the tortures. The story seems to suggest that for one's bad karma to be extinguished more time should be spent, depending on the degree of wrongdoing. Buddhaghosa in his commentary on the *Suttanipāta* must have thought along similar lines when he stated that the Arbuda hells are timespans of Avīci.²⁷

In the northwestern area some versions of the original Kokālika story appear to have been combined with the bodhisattva ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. For example, in *T. 125.21.5* Maudgalyāyana asks permission to visit Kokālika in hell. Once there, he sees how Kokālika's body is burned, and how a hundred-headed bull is plowing his tongue. Maudgalyāyana shows pity, but since Kokālika feels no remorse, the former returns to the side of the Buddha. In the *Storehouse of Sundry Valuables* (Ch. *Zabaozangjing*; Jpn. *Zappōzōkyō* 雜寶藏經; *T. no. 203*), parable 28, called "Kokālika Slanders Śāriputra" (仇伽離謗舍利弗等緣; 460c29–461b28),²⁸ it is explained that neither Maudgalyāyana nor Śāriputra could rescue Kokālika from hell, because they did not have bodhisattva powers. Typical for the "Mahayana" versions of the story is that they do not include the passage in which the monks ask about the lifespan in Padma hell.

The Kokālika story appears also in the hell chapters of the *Lokaprajñapti* of the Chinese *Dirghāgama* and related texts as well as in the *Lokaprajñaptiabhidharma*, mostly following an account of the Arbuda hells. In these texts the Arbuda hells are not yet qualified as cold. This is only the case in later texts such as *Mahāprajñā* and *Kośa*, where they have been integrated in a larger system together with the Eight Great Hot Hells.

The questions of how and why the Arbuda hells developed from "timespans" to be spent in hell into cold hells are in my opinion related to developments in cosmological theory and the subsequent relocation of *niraya* from the outer-worldly Lokāntarika, the cold, intermundane darkness between three tangent worlds, into "this world."²⁸

GLOSSARY: SOME INFERNAL TERMINOLOGY

NARAKA/NIRAYA

Chinese translation. 地獄 T. 1.30, T. 24, T. 26.64, T. 26.199, T. 1558, T. 1509

Sound translation. 泥犁 T. 23, T. 42, T. 86; 捺落迦 T. 1558

A *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Niraya (Skt., Pāli),” gives two explanations for the term: (1) nis+i = egression, sc. from earthly life, or (2) nir+aya “without happiness.” According to Kane, *naraka* may mean “going below (the earth)” (ni+araka), or “where there is not the slightest place for joy” (na+ra+ka).²⁹ Iwamoto understands *naraka* as the “human (world)” (人間の[世界]).³⁰ Whatever the correct etymology may be, it seems that *niraya* is the Prakrit form of Sanskrit *naraka*.³¹ This explains the transliteration of *niraya* in T. 23, T. 42, and T. 86, and of *naraka* in the *Kośa* (T. 1558).

GREAT HOT HELLS**Avīci**

Chinese translation. 無間大地獄 T. 1.30; 無間地獄 T. 1558

Sound translation. 阿鼻摩訶泥犁 T. 23; 阿毘至大地獄 T. 24; 阿鼻麻泥犁 T. 42, T. 86; 阿鼻地獄 T. 1509; 阿鼻旨大捺落迦 T. 1558

Description. The *Kośa* explains the meaning of Avīci as follows:

Because unlike the other seven *narakas* there one receives suffering without interval, and because the suffering is extreme, it is called Without Interval (T. 1558: 58b6). . . . There is another master who explains: “In Avīci there is suffering without happy intervals. Therefore it is called Without Interval. In the other hells happy intervals occur” (T. 1558: 58b9–58b10).³²

Buddhaghosa explains Avīci as *nirantarapūrita*, “completely filled.” According to Haldar this refers to the fact that Avīci is filled with fire,³³ but apparently the word was also used to denote density of population.³⁴ The *Pañcagatidīpana*’s explanation of the word as *a-vīci*, “without a ripple (of happiness),” reminds one of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*’s description:

a person who utters any lie at the time of deposing evidence, money-transactions or donating a gift, enters after death a supportless hell called *Avīcimat*. In that hell, he is hurled down headlong from a (steep) mountain top one hundred Yojanas in height to a place with

rocky surface appearing as water. Hence it is called *avīci-mat* (A place with hard surface but appearing like water with ripples).³⁵

The texts of the Chinese *Tripitaka* use both the translation *wujian* (Jpn. *mugen* 無間), “without interval,” and a series of transliterations, which generally read *A-bi-shi* or *A-bi*. In the *Niraya-sūtras* T. 42 and T. 86, we find the expression “Abimonili,” which seems to stand for “Avī(ci) ma(hā) niraya.” Here *Avī(ci) ma(hā)niraya* is used as a synonym for *Mahāniraya*, not as an appellation for *Avīci* as one of the Eight Hot Hells. The close relationship between *Avīci* and the *Mahāniraya* of the *Devadūta-* and *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtras* is also apparent in the *Mahāprajñā*’s description of *Avīci*, where *Avīci* is surrounded by the penance courts *kukūla*, *kuṇapa*, *kṣuramārga*, *ayaḥśālmālivana*, and *kṣārodakanadī* (see *infra*). *Avīci* is often associated with offenses that cause *ānantarya*, “immediate (retribution),” also translated *wujian*.

Offenders. According to T. 1.30, those who commit any of “the worst of criminal actions” (極重罪行) fall into *Avīci*. Probably the five actions of immediate retribution, or *ānantarya* (五逆罪・無間業) are meant. These are (1) matricide (*mātrghāta*), (2) patricide (*pitrgghāta*), (3) shedding the blood of a *tathāgatha* (*tathāgatasyāntike duṣṭacittarudhiropādaṇa*), (4) causing a schism (*saṃghabheda*), and (5) killing an *arhat* (*arhadghāta/arhadvadha*).³⁶ The *Mahāprajñā* also relates *Avīci* to the five actions of immediate retribution. The *Mahāprajñā*’s definition of the five *ānantarya*, however, differs from the common one. In the *Mahāprajñā* they are: “(1) Destroying wholesome roots, (2) Calling right ‘wrong,’ (3) Calling wrong ‘right,’ (4) Denying cause and effect, and (5) Detesting good people.”

Lifespan. One intermediate *kalpa* (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

Sañjīva—Hell of Revival

Chinese translation. 想大地獄 T. 1.30; 想泥犁 T. 23; 活(大)地獄 T. 24; 活大地獄 T. 1509; 等活榛落迦 T. 1558

Description. *Sañjīva* means “reviving” and is usually translated as such. T. 1.30 and T. 23 translate *xiang* (想), which could be a translation of *saṃjñā*. In the *Mahāprajñā*, the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, and the *Ōjyōshū* the hell wardens shout, “revive, revive,” which is the signal for the beings to come back to life and continue fighting. In T. 1645 “a voice from space” revives them. In an effort to explain *saṃjñā*, T. 1.30 clarifies that the beings “imagine” that they are dead, and in T. 23 they “imagine” wanting to kill the other beings.

Offenders. T. 1. 30: those who physically act wrongly without verbally or mentally doing good; T. 1509: killers of animals and those who kill for the acquisition of wealth.

Lifespan. Sañjīva is 500 years, of which each day equals the total lifespan of the Cāturmahārājakāyika gods (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

Kālasūtra—Hell of the Black Thread

Chinese translation. 黑繩大地獄 T. 1.30; 黑耳泥犁 T. 23; 黑大地獄 T. 24; 黑繩大地獄 T. 1509; 黑繩(捺落迦)/黑繩地獄 T. 1558

Description. In the hell of the Black Thread the hell wardens, like carpenters sawing wood, mark the bodies of the beings with a black thread as an indication of where to cut. Japanese hell paintings depict yet another Kālasūtra scene, which involves hell wardens who chase the beings on an iron rope. The rope is hung between two poles above a hot boiling kettle, in which they fall when they lose their equilibrium. This scene is described by the *Ōjyōshū*, which in turn cites from the *Guanfoshanmeihaijing* (Jpn. *Kanbutsusanmaikaikyō* 觀世音菩薩三昧海經; T. 15, no. 643, 673c26ff.). In T. 23 the name of this hell is literally translated as “Niraya of the Black Ear.” Probably the translator took “sūtra” to be “śrotra.” Or maybe the corruption took place in India proper.

Offenders. T. 1.30: those who offend father, mother, a *tathāgata*, or a *pratyekabuddha*; T. 1509: those who cause death by lying (*mṛṣāvāda*), harsh speech (*pāruṣyavāda*), slander (*paśūnyavāda*), or idle talk (*saṃbhinnapralāpa*); cruel and dishonest magistrates.

Lifespan. 1000 years, of which each day equals the total lifespan of the Trāyastriṃśa gods (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

Samghāta—Crushing Hell

Chinese translation. 堆壓大地獄 T. 1.30; 合大地獄 T. 24; 合會大地獄 T. 1509; 衆合(捺落迦)/衆合地獄 T. 1558

Sound translation. 僧乾泥犁 T. 23

Description. The name of this hell is derived from the fact that in this hell the beings are crushed between mountains (T. 1.30, T. 23, T. 24, T. 1509, T. 1645). In some texts they are additionally pounded in a mortar or ground between stones (T. 1.30, T. 24, T. 1509), trampled by iron elephants (T. 1.30), or hit with iron hammers (T. 1645). The verse at the end of T. 24 (328c02) uses the expression “Hell of the Grinding Mountains” (Ch. Weishan Diyu, Jpn. *Gaisan Jigoku* 磑山地獄). This reminds one of Landresse’s “Enfer des Montagnes,”³⁷ which Mus³⁸ relates to the

Burning Mountains of the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* (*Majjhima* 129), as well as to a legend about flying mountains.

Offenders. *T.* 1.30: those who do the three kinds of wrongful deeds without doing the three kinds of good deeds; *T.* 1509: those who kill animals and abuse their power; those who, deluded by cupidity (*rāga*), hatred (*dveṣa*), foolishness (*moha*), or fear (*bhaya*), did not follow the right principles in their judgments or who destroyed the right path and perverted the good law (*dharma*) due to delusion.

Lifespan. Saṃghāta is 2000 years, of which each day equals the total lifespan of the Yāma gods (*Kośa*, *T.* 1645).

Raurava—Wailing Hell

Chinese translation. 叫喚大地獄 *T.* 1.30, *T.* 24, *T.* 1509; 號叫 (捺落迦)/號叫地獄 *T.* 1558

Sound translation. 盧獨泥犁 *T.* 23

Description. Raurava is derived from the fact that the beings scream out loud because of the pains they suffer. In *T.* 1509 and *T.* 24, the evil-doers are confined into a blazing room; in *T.* 1.30 and *T.* 23 they are boiled in an iron cauldron. *T.* 1645 describes the punishment in Raurava as follows: “Because of the power of their former deeds the extent of their tongue measures one thousand *yojanas*. There is a big ox with iron horns and hooves and equipped with an iron plough. Ablaze with flames, it ploughs their tongues.”³⁹ The image described here is often seen in Chinese and Japanese hell paintings. The *Pañcagati* and the *Jātaka* use the term “Jālaroruva,” or “Roruva of Flames.”⁴⁰ In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the term is explained as being derived from “Ruru,” vengeful and cruel beings, which are the resuscitated victims of the evildoers.⁴¹

Offenders. *T.* 1.30: those who kill with evil intent; *T.* 1509: those who cheat with weight and measures, those who sentence unjustly, those who steal from inferiors and of goods one was entrusted with, those who are involved in tormenting and hurting people, those who engage in pillaging and killing.

Lifespan. 4000 years, of which each day equals the total lifespan of the Tuṣita gods (*Kośa*, *T.* 1645).

Mahāraurava—Great Wailing Hell

Chinese translation. 大叫喚大地獄 T. 1.30, T. 1509, T. 1558; 噉泥犁 T. 23; 大叫 T. 24

Description. The Great Wailing Hell, Mahāraurava, is usually described as the superlative of Raurava (see *supra*). The *Pañcagati* and the *Jātaka* speak of “Dhūmaroruva,” or “Roruva of Smoke”;⁴² in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* the Rurus are *kravyādas*, flesh-eaters.⁴³

Offenders. T. 1.30: indulging in sexual activity only; T. 1509: stealing.

Lifespan. 8000 years, each day of which equals the total lifespan of the Nirmāṇarati gods (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

Tapana (var. Tāpana)—Scorching Hell

Chinese translation. 燒炙大地獄 T. 1.30; 燒炙泥犁 T. 23; 熱惱大地獄 T. 24; 炎熱大地獄 T. 1509; 熱(榛落迦)/炎熱地獄 T. 1558

Description. The main characteristic of Tapana (var. Tāpana) is heat. In T. 1509 the evildoers are intensely boiled. In T. 1.30 they are placed into an iron room and their flesh is broiled; in T. 24 they are boiled in a pot. According to Przyluski, both Tapana and Pratāpana were created to indicate the increasing heat as one descends into the hells below the earth.⁴⁴ Although they are now understood to be the sixth and seventh hells of the eight hot hells, there was a time that they were placed seventh and eighth.

Offenders. T. 1.30: those who burn living beings; T. 1509: those who torment their parents, their master, *śramaṇas*, or *brāhmaṇas*; those who cook or grill living animals and humans; those who put fire on villages and Buddhist buildings and temples; those who throw living beings in a burning pit.

Lifespan. 16,000 years, each day of which equals the total lifespan of the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

Pratāpana (var. Paritāpana)—Great Scorching Hell

Chinese translation. 大燒炙(大)地獄 T. 1.30; 釜煮泥犁 T. 23; 大熱惱大地獄 T. 24; 大熱地獄 T. 1509; 極熱地獄 T. 1558

Description. In Pratāpana, the heat is twice as great as in Tapana (cf. *supra*).

Offenders. T. 1.30: those who discard all meritorious deeds and do nothing but wrong; T. 1509: cf. Tapana (the text does not clearly differentiate between offenses that lead to Tapana and those that lead to Pratāpana).

Lifespan. Half an intermediate *kalpa* (*Kośa*, T. 1645).

UTSADAS⁴⁵**Kukūla (var. Kukkula)—Embers**

Chinese translation. 峰巖地獄 *T.* 26.64; 高峻泥犁 *T.* 23; 炭火泥犁 *T.* 86A;⁴⁶ 炭坑地獄 (*utsada*) 火坑 (court of Avīci) *T.* 1509;⁴⁷ 燄煨增 *T.* 1558

Sound translation. 鳩延泥犁 *T.* 42, *T.* 86B

Description. Kukūla is one of the penance courts outside Mahāniraya of *T.* 26.64 and *Majjhima* 130. When the beings place their feet on the blazing floor, they are consumed by fire; when they lift their feet, they grow again; etc.

The translations in *T.* 26.64 and *T.* 23 as “Hell of the Mountain Peak” seem to be translations of *kuṭa*, which probably sounded similar to a Prakrit form of *kukūla*. Also the “Hell of the Rooster” (雞[小]地獄) of *T.* 24 seems to have started as Kukūla. The text runs as follows:

Thereupon they then enter the sub-hell of the Rooster. The width of this prison still is 500 *yojanas*. In that hell, only roosters are born, filling that prison everywhere. The bodies of the roosters up to their knees are all fiercely hot and ablaze with bright flames. The beings are among them. They run from east to west. They step on the hot flames. They look around in the four directions, but nowhere can they find any support. As a big fire is ablaze, it burns their hands and it burns their feet, it burns their ears and it burns their nose. Thus gradually it burns their limbs completely. The bodies large and small are completely burnt in one moment. (*T.* 24, 0323a15–0323a20)⁴⁸

Although the text explains the name of the hell and describes the role of the roosters inside this hell, there are some arguments to believe that its origins lie with the Hell of Embers. To start with, *kukūla* and *kukuṭa* are phonologically very close. Lamotte, on occasion of the Gokulikas, writes, “[they] are also called Kukkuṭika ‘of the posterity of the cock’ . . . and Kukkulika, . . . because they inhabited the Mountain of Embers, or because they taught that ‘all conditions (*dharma*) are absolutely nothing but a pile of embers.’”⁴⁹ Secondly, the description of the beings being burnt is very similar to what one reads about *kukūla* in other texts. Thirdly, the texts that are discussed here usually do not come up with completely new names or descriptions; rather, they recycle elements from older descriptions. Even the related texts *T.* 1.30 and *T.* 23 do not have a single reference to blazing roosters. Of course, this does not prove anything. On the other hand, the hypothesis that, probably still in India, Kukūla Niraya was locally understood as Kukuṭa Niraya, or “Hell of the Roosters,” leading to an additional description

of blazing roosters, seems quite possible. Adding to this Yamaguchi's explanation that roosters were thought to cause fire, the hypothesis seems even more plausible.⁵⁰

Kuṇapa—Excrements

Chinese translation. 沸屎地獄 T. 1.30; 沸屎(泥犁) T. 23; (熱) 糞屎(小)泥地獄 T. 24; 糞屎大地獄 T. 26.64; 沸屎泥犁 T. 86A; 沸屎 (var. 沸屎) 地獄 (*utsada*) 熱沸屎河 (court of Avīci) T. 1509; 屍糞增 T. 1558

Sound translation. 彌離摩得泥犁 T. 42; 彌離摩德泥犁 (*Milimode nili*) T. 86B

Description. Kuṇapa is one of the penance courts outside Mahāniraya of T. 26.64 and *Majjhima* 130 and a popular *utsada* of later hell texts. In Kuṇapa, the evildoers are thrown into a cesspool inhabited with worms called *nyaṅkuṭā*. Their mouths are like needles and they consume the beings. The Sanskrit term *kuṇapa* means, besides “excrements,” also “a dead body, corpse.”⁵¹ The names in T. 42 and T. 86 seem to be “sound translations” of *miḍha nyaṅ(ku)ṭaka niraya*, which may be translated as “Niraya of Excrements and *Nyaṅkuṭa*” or “Niraya of Excrement-*Nyaṅkuṭa*.”⁵²

Kṣuradhāra—Razor Blade

Chinese translation. 鋒刃增 T. 1558

Description. The *utsada* of the Razor Blade consists of three compartments: (1) Razor Blade Road, (2) Asipattravana, and (3) Ayaḥśālmālivana. The *Śes-bya rab-gsal* (Skt. *Jñeyaparakāśaśāstra*) explains the origin of the threefold Kṣuradhāra as follows: “The three kinds, *Kṣuramārga*, and so on, may be different, but because the iron weapons are the same, they are comprised in one supplementary hell (T 1645, 228c).”⁵³ Although the name Razor Blade is typical for the Kośa and T. 1645, the same technique of subdividing one *utsada* into three compartments is also used by T. 86. Here it is called Bloody Pus, and it consists of (1) Razor Mountain, (2) Asipattravana, and (3) Ayaḥśālmālivana.

Kṣura(dhāra)mārga—Razor (Blade) Road

Chinese translation. 利刀道地獄 (var. 刀道) (*utsada*), 劍道 (inside Avīci) T. 1509; 刀刃路 T. 1558

Description. In the Kośa, the Razor Blade Road is one of the three compartments of the *utsadas* of the Razor Blade; in the *Mahāprajñā* it is one of the tortures inside Avīci. Already in the *Lokaprajñāptyabhidharma*, which according to Denis dates from before the first or second cen-

tury CE,⁵⁴ the seed of a future *Kṣuramārga* is present. Although the text counts only four (times four) *utsadas*—(1) Kukūla, (2) Kuṇapa, (3) Asipattravana, and (4) Vaitaraṇī Nadī, it also mentions “a road covered with knives,” which encircles the third *utsada*, Asipattravana. When the beings walk on that road, their feet and bodies are cut.

Asipattravana—Sword-Leaf Forest

Chinese translation. 鐵鑠林大地獄 *T.* 26.64; 鐵竹蘆 *T.* 86A; 劍樹地獄 *T.* 1.30; 劍樹泥犁 *T.* 23; 劍地獄 *T.* 24; 劍林(地獄) *T.* 1509; 劍葉林 *T.* 1558

Sound translation. 阿夷波多桓泥犁/阿夷波多洹泥犁 (*Ayipoduohuan nili*) *T.* 42, *T.* 86B

Description. One of the penance courts outside *Mahāniraya* of *T.* 26.64 and *Majjhima* 130, and a popular *utsada* of later hell texts. According to the *Devadūta-sūtras*, a wind blows inside the forest causing the sword-leaves to fall, thereby cutting off the limbs of the beings. Hell hounds and crows, which devour the beings, inhabit the forest. Not all elements are repeated in every text, but most mention the falling leaves and the hounds. In *T.* 86A and the *Kośa*, the Asipattravana is part of a threefold *utsada*, respectively called Bloody Pus and Razor Blade. As the Chinese translations are very similar to the ones used for *Ayaḥśālmālīvana*, both forests are often mixed up in secondary literature.

Ayaḥśālmālīvana—Iron Cotton Tree Forest

Chinese translation. 鐵劍樹林大地獄 *T.* 26.64; 劍樹 *T.* 86A; 鐵刺林地獄 (*utsada*), 大刺林 (court of *Avīci*) *T.* 1509; 鐵刺林 *T.* 1558

Sound translation. 阿喻操波(泥)桓泥犁 (*Ayucapo[ni]huan nili*) / 阿喻慘波犁洹泥犁 (*Ayucanpolihuan nili*) *T.* 42, *T.* 86B

Description. One of the penance courts outside *Mahāniraya* of *T.* 26.64 and *Majjhima* 130 and a popular *utsada* of later hell texts. Inside this forest, the evildoers are forced to climb the trees. When they climb up, the sword-leaves turn down, and when they come down, the sword-leaves turn up again. In the *Mahāprajñā* the evildoers additionally have visions of beautiful women sitting on the top of a tree. Once up, the women turn into snakes, which devour the evildoers. This image of a beautiful woman (or man) sitting on or below an Iron Cotton Tree is often depicted in Japanese hell paintings. The *śālmali* tree is a red cotton tree, or *Salmalia malabarica* of the Bombacaceae. In *T.* 86A and the *Kośa*, *Ayaḥśālmālīvana* is part of a threefold *utsada*, called Bloody Pus or Razor Blade. As the Chinese translations are very similar to the ones

used for Asipattravana, both forests are often mixed up in secondary literature.

Kṣārodakā Nadī—Caustic River

Chinese translation. 灰河 T. 26.64; 灰河地獄 T. 1.30; 灰河地獄 T. 24; 鹹水泥犁 T. 86; 鹹河 (var. 熱沸鹹水) (*utsada*), 鹹河 (court of Avīci) T. 1509; 烈河增 T. 1558

Description. *Kṣāra* means “caustic, . . . saline, converted to alkali or ashes by distillation,”⁵⁵ which explains most of the Chinese translations. The Caustic River is one of the penance courts outside Mahāniraya described by the *Devadūta-sūtras* T. 26.64 and *Majjhima* 130. Both texts describe how the beings longing for the coolness of the water jump into the river, and how their skin and flesh is consumed by the caustic water. Some time later, the hell wardens hook them up and put them on the flaming ground. They ask the beings why they have come. The beings answer that they do not know but that they are very hungry. The hell wardens feed them hot iron pellets. The second time they answer that they are very thirsty, upon which they get liquid copper to drink. The description of the *Kośa* is much less detailed, but most texts are quite close to the original one, sometimes adding hounds, etc. to the scene.

The name of the river in T. 23, Naolaohe 撓撓河, stands for Vaitaraṇī Nadī, not Kṣārodakā Nadī. *Naolao* means “to pull out (of the water),” which seems to correspond to the meaning of *vitṛ°*, “to bring away, carry off, remove.”⁵⁶ The *Kośa* and the *Śes-bya rab-gsal* (Skt. *Jñeyaparakāśasāstra*) speak of the “Blazing River” (烈河). As such, it is not very clear whether this term should be interpreted as a translation for Kṣārodakā Nadī or rather Vaitaraṇī Nadī. The explanation in the *Kośa* describes it as a “hot caustic river” (熱鹹河; T. 1558, 58c11), which clearly refers to the Kṣārodakā Nadī. Nakamura, on the other hand, says that the Sanskrit original has *utsado nadī vaitaraṇī*.⁵⁷ The *Śes-bya rab-gsal* (T. 1645, 228c29) says of this “Blazing River” that the name means “without a ford” (無渡), namely, *Vaitaraṇī* as composed of *Vi* (“difficult”) and *tr* (“to cross”). One may conclude that if ever there was a clear distinction between Kṣārodakā Nadī and Vaitaraṇī Nadī, it obviously disappeared in the Chinese texts discussed.

Āgamas		Later Texts			
Mahāniraya		Eight Hot Hells			
Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra (T. 26.199)		Lokaprajñapti of the Ch. Dirghāgama (T. 1.30)	Abhidharma-kośabhāṣya (T. 1558)	Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa (T. 1509)	
Tortures inside Mahāniraya:		Sixteen Utsadas	Four x Four Utsadas	Sixteen Utsadas	Courts of Avīci
Axe	Kūṭhāra →	13. Iron Axes			
Knife	Vāsi				
Iron Pellet	Ayoguḍa →	12. Iron Pellets			
Liquid Copper	Taptatāmra, taptaloha				
Fivefold Pinion	Pañcavidha-bandhana →	3. Fivefold Pinion			
Hundred Nails					
Chariot	Ratha				
Fire	→	10. Measuring Fire			
Blazing Mountain	Angāraparvata				
Cauldron	Lohakumbhi →	7. Many Bronze Cauldrons			
		6. One Bronze Cauldron (6)			
		1. Black Sand			

Tortures inside Mahāniraya (cont.)		Sixteen <i>Utsādas</i> (cont.)	Four x Four <i>Utsādas</i> (cont.)	Sixteen <i>Utsādas</i> (cont.)	Courts of Avīci (cont.)
<i>Devadūta-sūtra</i> (T. 26.64)		8. Grinding stone			
Extramural Penance Courts		9. Pus and Blood		(Eight Hot <i>Utsādas</i>)	
Embers	Kukūḷa →		1. Embers →	1. Embers →	Embers
Excrements	Kuṇapa →	2. Excrements →	2. Excrements →	2. Excrements →	Excrements
			3. Razorblade (Kṣuradhāra) →	3. Blazing Forest (Ādīptavana?)	
			Razor(blade) Road (adhāramārga) →	4. Razor(blade) Road →	Razor(blade) Road
Sword-Leaf-Forest	Asipattravana →	15. Sword-Leaf Forest →	Sword-Leaf-Forest →	5. Sword-Leaf Forest	
(Giant Hounds)		14. Hounds			
Iron-Cotton-Tree-Forest	Ayaḥśālmalivana →		Iron-Cotton-Tree-Forest →	6. Iron-Cotton-Tree-Forest	Iron-Cotton-Tree-Forest
Caustic River	Kṣārodaka nadi →	11. Caustic River →	4. Caustic River →	7. Caustic River →	Caustic River
(Hunger)		4. Hunger →		(8. Copper Pole, Tāmraśambha)	
(Iron Pellets)	Ayoguḍa	(12. Iron Pellets)			
(Thirst)		15. Thirst			
		16. Cold Ice			

Arbuda Hells		10 Hot Hells	8 Cold Hells	(8 Cold <i>Utsadas</i>)	
<i>T. 99.1278</i>	<i>Suttanipāṭa</i> III, 10				
Arbuda →	Abbuda →	Thick clouds →	Arbuda →	Arbuda	
Nirarbuda →	Nirabbuda →	No clouds →	Nirarbuda →	Nirarbuda	
Aṭaṭa →	Ababa →	Hahava →	Aṭaṭa →	Aṭaṭa	
Hahava →	Ahaha →	What to do? (Aṭaṭa?) →	Hahava →	Hahava	
Huhuva →	Aṭaṭa →	Sheep's Bleat (Huhuva?) →	Huhuva →	Huhuva	
	Kumuda →	Saugandhika			
	Sogandhika →	Utpala →			
Utpala →	Uppala →	Kumuda	Utpala →	Utpala	
Padma →	Puṇḍarika →	Puṇḍarika	Padma →	Padma	
Mahāpadma →	Paduma →	Padma →	Mahāpadma →	Mahāpadma	

Table 1. Relevant Sources for the Description of Hell in East Asian Buddhism

NOTES

1. Jean Przyluski, *La légende de l'Empereur Açoka (Açoka-Avadāna) dans les textes Indiens et Chinois* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1923), 121–130.
2. *Majjhima* nos. 129 and 130 are translated as the “Discourse on Fools and the Wise” and the “Discourse of the Deva-Messengers” in I. B. Horner, *The Collection of the Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya)*, vol. 3, Pali Text Society Translation Series no. 31 (London: Luzac & Co., 1967), 209–223 and 223–230; the Pāli text is offered in R. Chalmers, ed., *The Majjhima-Nikāya*, vol. 3, PTS Text Series no. 62 (London: Pali Text Society, 1977), 163–178 and 178–187.
3. E. Zürcher (*The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, 2 vols. [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972], 1:55) suggests Dharmaratna; Nanjio Bunyiu (*A Catalogue of the Chinese Translation of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka: The Sacred Canon of the Buddhists in China and Japan* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883], 398) and Sawa Ryūken (『密教辞典』 *Mikkyō jiten* [Kyoto: 法蔵館 Hōzōkan, 1997], 530) speak of Dharmarakṣa; and Alfred Forke (*Die Ostasiatischen Sammlungen der Königlich Bibliothek zu Berlin, Erster Band, Katalog des Pekinger Tripiṭaka* [Berlin: Behrend & Co., 1916]) has Dharmāraṇya. Dharmarājan has been suggested to me by Charles Willemsen. He argues that the second character of Tanwulan’s Chinese name, Fazheng 法正, is sometimes used in the sense of “rule(r).” One such example may be found in the Chinese *Buddhacarita* (T. 192, 17c12 and 18a3), where the expression wangzheng 王正 is used, meaning “royal rule.” Since Dharmarājan explains both the Chinese transcription Tanwulan as well as the Chinese name Fazheng, it is the best suggestion so far. Fazheng may, moreover, conceal a clue concerning his identification as a popular teacher: when read backwards, Fazheng means “Saddharma,” a befitting name for a teacher of morals.
4. For a detailed discussion of Zhu Tanwulan and the two *Niraya* scriptures he allegedly translated, see Ineke Van Put, “The Popular Indian Teacher Zhu Tanwulan. With a Translation of his *Devadūtasūtra*,” in *Recent Researches in Buddhist Studies: Festschrift in Honour of Professor A.K. Chatterjee*, India (forthcoming); and Ineke Van Put, “The Identification of Hells in the *Tetsujōnairikyō: The Sūtra on the Hell of the Iron Fortress*,” in *Buddhism in Global Perspective*, eds. Kalpakam Sankarnarayan, Ichijo Ogawa, and Ravindra Panth (Mumbai: Somaiya Publications, 2003), 223–233..
5. Cf. Richard Morris, ed., *The Anguttara Nikāya*, vol. 3 (London: Luzac & Co., 1961), 138–142 for the Pāli; and F. L. Woodward, trans., *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya) or More-numbered Suttas*, vol. 1, PTS Translation Series no. 22 (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 121–125 for an English translation of the text.

6. Cf. Morris, *Anguttara Nikāya*, 3:59–61 for the Pāli and Woodward, *Book of the Gradual Sayings*, 1:54–56 for an English translation of the text.
7. The Pāli text is published in Dines Andersen and Helmer Smith, ed., *The Sutta-nipāta*, new edition (London: Pali Text Society, 1984), 123–131; an English translation of the text is offered in E. M. Hare, trans., *Woven Cadences of Early Buddhists (Sutta-Nipāta)*, Sacred Books of the Buddhists vol. 15 (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), 97–102.
8. Etienne Lamotte, *Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra)*, Tōme II, Chapitre XXVI, Bibliothèque du Muséon, vol. 18 (Leuven: Instituut voor Oriëntalistiek, 1967), 955 n. 2.
9. Ibid., 955 n. 2.
10. On the interpretation of “Jibin” as the Gandhāran cultural area, not Kāśmīra as is usual, see Charles Willemen, *From Where Did Zen Come? Dhyāna in the Early Buddhist Tradition*, Numata Yehan Lecture in Buddhism 2002–2003 (Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary, 2003), 3–4.
11. Cited in Takumi Matsumura 巧松村, 『世記経』地獄品・訳注 “*Sekikyō, Jigokuhon-Yakuchū*,” in 『地獄の世界』 *Jigoku no sekai*, ed. Sakamoto Kaname 坂本 要 (Hiroshima-shi: Keisuisha, 1995), 65.
12. Eugène Denis, *La Lokapaññatti et les idées cosmologiques du bouddhisme ancien*, Thèse présentée devant l’Université de Paris IV - Le 16 juin 1976, 2 vols. (Lille: Atelier Réproduction des Thèses Université de Lille III, 1977), 1:xiv, xxv, xxxvii.
13. Ibid., 1:ix–x.
14. See Okano Kiyoshi 岡野 潔, “*Lishiapitanlun* (**Lokaprajñāpty-abhidharmasastra*) as a Cosmological Work of the Sammitiya School” 「インド正量部のコスモロジー文献・立世阿毘曇論」, *Memoirs of the Chuo Academic Research Institute* 『中央学術研究所紀要』 27 (1998): 55–91.
15. For a translation of the text, see Charles Willemen, *The Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable*, Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai Translation Series (Berkeley, CA: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2004).
16. Willemen, *From Where Did Zen Come*, 14 n. 39.
17. Cf. Chalmers, *Majjhima-Nikāya*, 183.
18. Cited in Louis de la Vallée Pousin, *L’Abidharmakośa de Vasubandhu: Traduction et annotations*, Nouvelle édition anastique présentée par Etienne Lamotte, Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques vol. 16 (Bruxelles: Institut Belge de Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1971), 2:148 n. 5.
19. E. B. Cowell, ed., *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births*, trans. H. T. Francis, vol. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 135. In Pāli (V.

Fausbøll, ed., *The Jātaka together with the Anterior Births of Gotama Buddha*, vol. 5, Pali Text Society [London: Luzac & Co, 1963], 266):

*Adhammacārino rāja narā visamajivino
yaṃ gatiṃ pecca gacchanti niraye te suṇohi me:
Saṅjīvo Kālasutto ca Saṃghāto dve ca Roruvā
athāparo Mahāvīci Tapano ca Patāpano*

20. 有八大地獄。云何爲八。一者還活地獄。二者黑繩地獄。三者等害地獄。四者涕哭地獄。五者大涕哭地獄。六者阿鼻地獄。七者炎地獄。八者大炎地獄。如是比丘八大地獄。(T. 125.42, 747c06–10)

21. Is there a relation between cooling off through meditation, *tapas*, and burning more and more fiercely in Tapana and Pratāpana?

22. 惡趣云何。頌曰
等活等上六如次以欲天
壽爲一晝夜壽量亦同彼
極熱半中劫無間中劫全 (T. 1558, 61c11–18)

23. F. L. Woodward, trans., *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya) or More-numbered Suttas*, vol. 5, PTS Translation Series no. 27 (London: Luzac & Co., 1972), 113 n. 4. See also Chizen Akanuma, *A Dictionary of Buddhist Proper Names*, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series no. 130 (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1994), s.v. “Kokālika.”

24. T. W. Rhys-Davids and William Stede, ed., *Pāli-English Dictionary* (London: Pāli Text Society, 1972), s.v. “Kokanada.” M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, new edition (Delhi: Motilal, 1981), s.v. “Kokanada” says, “the flower of the red water-lily.”

25. *Pāli-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Alīka.” A *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* gives again the same meaning.

26. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Padma.”

27. Léon Féer, “L’Enfer Indien,” *Journal Asiatique* 8, no. 20 (September–October 1892): 220.

28. The story is translated in Charles Willemen, *The Storehouse of Sundry Valuables*, trans. from the Chinese of Kikkāya and Liu Hsiao-piao, comp. by T’an-yao (*Taishō* vol. 4, no. 203), Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai Translation Series (Berkeley, CA: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1994), 27–29.

29. Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmasastra: Ancient and Mediaeval Religious and Civil Law*, vol. 4, 2nd ed. (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1973), 161.

30. Yutaka Iwamoto 岩本裕, 『仏教文学研究』 第五卷 *Bukkyō bungaku kenkyū*, Dai 5 kan, ed. Bukkyō Bungaku Kenkyūkai 仏教文学研究 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan 法蔵館, 1967), 47.
31. Féer, “L’Enfer Indien,” 187 already noticed that *niraya* was used in Pāli texts, whereas the word found in Sanskrit texts was *naraka*.
32. 以於其中受苦無間非如餘七大榛落迦受苦非恒故名無間。有餘說。(T. 29, no. 1558: 58b6); 阿鼻旨中無樂間苦。故名無間。餘地獄中有樂間起。(T. 29 no. 1558: 58b9–b10)
33. J. R. Haldar, *Early Buddhist Mythology* (Delhi: Manohar, 1977), 53.
34. De la Vallée Poussin, *L’Abidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, 148 n. 5.
35. G. V. Tagare, trans., *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, vol. 2, Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology vol. 8 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2002), 770.
36. The order of the offences sometimes differs according to the text and tradition (in China and Japan, for example, patricide precedes matricide).
37. Cited in Féer, “L’Enfer Indien,” 192.
38. Paul Mus, *La lumière sur les six voies: Tableau de la transmigration bouddhique d’après des sources Sanskrites, Pāli, Tibétaines et Chinoises en majeure partie inédites*, vol. 1 (Paris: Institut d’Ethnologie, 1939), 66–74.
39. Willemen, *Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable*, 22.
40. Féer, “L’Enfer Indien,” 193.
41. Tagare, *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, 2:766.
42. Féer, “L’Enfer Indien,” 193.
43. Tagare, *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, 2:767.
44. Przyłuski, “L’enfer d’Açoka,” 132–139.
45. The selection of *utsadas* has been based on their occurrence in the *Kośa*.
46. T. 86 is a compound text, consisting of (A) a text related to the *Bālapaṇḍita-sūtra* and (B) a text related to the *Devadūta-sūtra*, as mentioned earlier.
47. T. 1509 describes a separate series of courts around Avīci besides the sixteen *utsadas* that surround the Eight Hot Hells. It seems that the description of Avīci here is a remnant of the older Mahāniraya descriptions (see also under “Avīci”).
48. 爾時即入雞小地獄。其獄亦廣五百由旬。彼地獄中。純生諸雞。遍滿彼獄。其雞身分。乃至膝脛。一切猛熱。光焰熾燃。是諸衆生。處在其中。東西馳走。足蹈熱焰。四向顧望。無處可依。大火熾燃。燒手燒脚。燒耳燒鼻。如是次第。燒諸支節。大小身分。一時洞燃。(T. 24, 0323a15–0323a20)

49. Etienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism from the Origins to the Śāka Era*, trans. Sara Webb-Boin (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1988), 521.
50. Tsutomu Yamaguchi 務 山口, 「仏典における鶏について」 “Butten ni okeru tori ni tsuite,” 『東方』 *Tōhō* 3 (1987): 70–75.
51. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Kuṇapa.”
52. The Chinese characters read “Milimode.” Mi-li probably stands for a Prakrit form of *mīḍha* (Pāli *mīḥa*), “excrement.” In Pāli literature it is used in, for example, the compound *Mīḥakūpa*. *Mīḥakūpa*, or “Ditch of Excrements,” is another name for *Gūthaniraya* (“Hell of Excrements”), which is the first *niraya* surrounding the *Mahāniraya* of the Pāli *Devadūta-sutta*. It corresponds to the *Kuṇapa* hell of Sanskrit literature. “Mode” may be a transliteration of *nyari(ku) ṭaka (niraya)*.
53. Translated in Willemen, *Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable*, 23.
54. Denis, *La Lokapaññatti et les idées cosmologiques du bouddhisme ancien*.
55. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Kṣāra.”
56. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, s.v. “Vitṛ.”
57. Hajime Nakamura, 『原始仏教』 VI 『原始仏教の思想II』 *Genshi bukkyō*, Vol. 6: *Genshi bukkyō no shisō II* (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1994), 751 n. 8, 766.
58. Since a detailed discussion of this topic reaches beyond the scope of this article, I would like to refer the interested reader to my forthcoming book, *Buddhist Hells: The Northern Tradition* (New York: SUNY Press, forthcoming).

The Cult of Amitābha and the Apotheosis of the Tibetan Ruler

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INTRODUCTION

THE CULT OF AMITĀBHA¹ is often exclusively identified with so-called “Pure Land Buddhism” and treated as an idiosyncratic development of Buddhism in Japan that transformed an Indian religion into a genuine Japanese one.² The rise of the various Pure Land schools is seen in the context of the social, economic, and military hardships affecting the Japanese people during the transition from the Heian (794–1185) to Kamakura (1185–1333) periods.³ The sense of “end-time” marking the decline of Heian Buddhism found its metaphor in the concept of *mappō*, that is, the assumption that people were living in a period that made the practice of the *buddhadharma* almost impossible.

In this presentation, however, I would like to consider the Amitābha/Avalokiteśvara myth and the role it played in creating the ideology underlying the Tibetan concept of the ruler as the embodiment of Avalokiteśvara. In order to provide a textual basis and background for the later discussions, I shall first reflect on the symbolic organization we find associated with Amitābha as given in the *Sukhāvati-sūtras*. Then I shall discuss some non-canonical Tibetan texts that deal in one way or other with the Amitābha myth and suggest an apotheosis of the Tibetan ruler, seen as an emanation or incarnation of Avalokiteśvara. Furthermore, I present for discussion the hypothesis that the mythic core material found in late dynastic or early post-dynastic texts was reworked into a full-fledged dynastic myth in order to acquiesce public unrest and hardship during a period of Tibetan history when local feudal lords and their monastic backers plunged the country into continuous chaos and wars.

References to Amitābha are found in some of the older Mahayana sutras whereby the central texts were translated into Chinese during the second century CE. A more detailed discussion of the relevant texts will facilitate the subsequent deliberations.

AMITĀBHA/AVALOKITEŚVARA IN THE EARLY SUTRA LITERATURE

In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, Buddha Amitābha is mentioned in those parts that are dated into the first century CE.⁴ Already in these passages he is associated with the Western hemisphere. Only in passages that are seen as later is he referred to as presiding over Sukhāvatī.⁵ However, the cult of Amitābha is based primarily upon the larger and smaller *Sukhāvatī-sūtras* as well as the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra*. Another version of this sutra is preserved in the *Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra*.⁶ The larger *Sukhāvatī-sūtra* was translated into Chinese between 147 and 186 CE.⁷ Thus, the claim made in the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* that the Indian text may date from the late first century seems plausible.⁸ These data lead us to think that the Amitābha cult, at least in its seminal form, had originated roughly at the same time the Mahayana tradition became manifest, that is, during the first century of the Common Era. The textual nucleus for the development of the Amitābha/Sukhāvatī cult seem to be those *prañidhānas* the later Buddha Amitābha, still in his human embodiment as monk Dharmākara, articulate in the presence of the Buddha Lokeśvararāja. The gist of these forty-eight *prañidhānas* is to establish a sphere of purity and bliss that fosters unencumbered progress on the bodhisattva path toward enlightenment. *Prañidhānas* 18 and 20 seem to form the core of what became the Amitābha and Pure Land cult, that is, the belief that after hearing the name of Amitābha appropriately predispositioned sentient beings will cultivate the strong wish to be reborn in Amitābha's Pure Land. In developing unwavering confidence in the truth and efficacy of these *prañidhānas* the practitioner will experience a spiritual metamorphosis that will result in a mental disposition suitable for a rebirth in Sukhāvatī. The faith of the practitioner is the catalyst for the metamorphosis, while firmly believing that this is not of his or her doing. Rebirth in Sukhāvatī is available only to those whose mental disposition is of a purity compatible with that of the buddha realm. The faith does not obliterate or invalidate the concept of karma; to the contrary, faith produces the karma lead-

ing to the spiritual metamorphosis that becomes the condition for rebirth in the buddha realm. In this context faith becomes the motor for generating the good karma concomitant with purifying mind, speech, and body.

The canonical and extra-canonical texts seminal to the Sukhāvati and Amitābha cult unfold before the meditating eye of the practitioner a grand scene of otherworldly visions that map a landscape of spiritual experiences. Within this landscape the major players are placed: Amitābha as the source and center of that world, as well as other allegoric *figurae* of Buddhist spirituality, and lastly the practitioner.

I would like now to turn to the canonical texts and summarize the crucial events. In the larger *Sukhāvati-sūtra* the later Buddha Amitābha is in his previous rebirth as monk Dharmākara linked with the Buddha Lokeśvararāja. The main portion of the sutra is embedded in a frame narrative in which Ānanda admires Śākyamuni's unusual golden complexion as a signifier of his extraordinary accomplishments. The astuteness of Ānanda's questions leads to the narrative of Dharmākara and Lokeśvararāja. Embedded within this narrative is the one that details Dharmākara's future and final embodiment as Buddha Amitābha. Avalokiteśvara is introduced in paragraph 31 when he, arising amidst endless hosts of bodhisattvas, asks what the reason was for the extraordinary smile of Buddha Amitābha. Later in paragraph 34 Avalokiteśvara is confirmed as an outstanding bodhisattva. But, with the exception that he is called "the Buddha-son, glorious, . . . indeed the mighty Avalokiteśvara," nothing points to the effect of Amitābha being the "father" of Avalokiteśvara.⁹ Such a claim is found in some non-canonical Tibetan texts, which I shall analyze now.

AMITĀBHA AND AVALOKITEŚVARA IN TIBETAN NON-CANONICAL TEXTS

The concept of Amitābha being the father of Avalokiteśvara becomes apparent only in the Tibetan versions of this narrative whereby the *Mani bka' 'bum* has to be seen as the *locus classicus*, not because it is the oldest record but because of its influence on the formation of a Tibetan cultural identity. I shall now turn to summarize the symbolic organization as found in these Tibetan texts.

In the *Mani bka' 'bum* as well as in the *Gab pa mngon byung* Avalokiteśvara is established as nirvanic "ancestor" or existential

source of Srong-btsan sgam-po, the ruler whom Tibetan tradition presents as the foremost protagonist in the dissemination of the *buddhadharma* in the Land of Snow. Because the details of this myth have been covered elsewhere;¹⁰ here it may suffice to highlight those events that establish the relationship between Amitābha and Avalokiteśvara. In this myth, Amitābha is the ultimate reality (*dharmakāya*) while Avalokiteśvara is his manifestation as *sambhogakāya* and Srong-btsan sgam-po is his *nirmāṇakāya*. In Amitābha's Pure Land of Sukhāvātī Avalokiteśvara is born from a beam of light emanating from Amitābha's right eye. Amitābha realizes the spiritual potential of Avalokiteśvara and prophesizes that he will epitomize the charismatic deeds of all buddhas. Subsequently Avalokiteśvara enunciates the bodhisattva pledge to do everything to assist all sentient beings in actualizing nirvana. But overwhelmed with the task, he begins to doubt the wisdom of his resolution. As a consequence his head bursts into thousand pieces, leaving him "headless." Amitābha as a kind of archetypal "father" puts the pieces back together. But now there are more pieces than before. Before the incident Avalokiteśvara had only one head; but when all the shattered pieces were gathered, they resulted in a pyramid of no less than eleven heads.

One may ask what this narrative tries to communicate. Which theoretical approach would be suitable to unlock this enigmatic narrative? Psychoanalysis, although formulated by thinkers of contemporary Western cultures, tries to expose the organization of the human mind in response to and in interaction with socio-historical and cultural idiosyncrasies that form the context of society. Gananath Obeyesekere has argued, in my opinion effectively, in favor of using psychoanalysis as a tool that permits the scholar to understand the cryptic message that is encoded in the symbolic and mythic narratives or enactments.¹¹ Thus, the Amitābha myth once seen through the lens of psychoanalysis, I suggest, will yield a meaning pertinent to the further discussion of the apotheosis of the Tibetan ruler.

The narrative establishes Amitābha's fatherhood by having Avalokiteśvara born from a ray of light emanating from Amitābha's right eye. The use of light and rays of light to symbolize spiritual or spiritually significant ("pure") birth is well documented in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist texts. For instance, in the tantric meditation rituals (*sādhana*) the disciple is spiritually reborn through a beam of light coming forth from the deity. The images created in these texts are loaded

with sexual undertones. The text establishes, however, a sublimated plane for rendering an event that is otherwise deeply rooted in its own materiality and, thus, “impure.” Thus, Avalokiteśvara’s “birth” is an all male event, begotten by a father alone and in absence of female generative organs. An all male birth obliterates the possibility of an Oedipal dilemma arising, where the brothers not only kill the father due to their sexual desire for their mother but also attempt to destroy each other to enjoy the mother for themselves. As a consequence, the all male birth frees an all male society from carnal yearning and potential violence. It becomes the cornerstone of religions that strive for a mystic transmutation of the self, that is, Buddhism as well as Christianity.

As a mature bodhisattva, Avalokiteśvara failed the bodhisattva pledge by asserting, albeit only temporarily, his own self-interest by rejecting the bodhisattva’s task as too burdensome in light of the corruption of so many sentient beings. In violating the bodhisattva vow, Avalokiteśvara disobeys “the law of the father” as Amitābha predicted that he would excel as bodhisattva. The consequence of this disobedience is the shattering of his head. It is well established that in the language of the unconscious “head” is a displacement of the lower “head,” that is, the male sex organ. The shattering of Avalokiteśvara’s head in response to breaking the law of the father is hinting at a loss of egotistic self-perpetuation, in other words, there is a hint at the castration complex. The narrative lets Amitābha restore Avalokiteśvara’s potency, but only in an altered fashion. His “head” is exaggerated in a bizarre multiplication through which it becomes dysfunctional in a mundane context but extremely apt in fulfilling his spiritual vocation. Where one “head” (reproductive organ) is suitable for the reproduction of an egotistic self, the multiplied “heads” reflect the generative and parenting capabilities of a true bodhisattva. The narrative establishes Amitābha as the primordial father whose “law” (the bodhisattva vow) must be followed by transforming the “impure” drive for self-perpetuation into the great compassion (*mahākaruṇā*) that characterizes the bodhisattva. In carrying out this act of metamorphosis the son Avalokiteśvara becomes established as the rightful heir to Amitābha, the father.

By the late twelfth century, this symbolic template was imposed on the political organization of Tibet. This created its national identity by adopting Avalokiteśvara as patron of the Tibetan land whose earthly embodiment was present in king Srong-btsan sgam-po, whom the Ti-

betan tradition credits with introducing Buddhism to Tibet. A parallel development is documented for Japan where Prince Shōtoku, who was paramount in establishing Buddhism as the religion of the Japanese court, became worshiped as an embodiment of Avalokiteśvara.¹² In the Tibetan prayer text attributed to Rāga-asya that encapsulates the Pure Land meditation, Padmasambhava, the eighth-century tantric master accredited with adapting Indian Buddhism to Tibetan beliefs, is presented as the *nirmāṇakāya*, that is, samsaric, representation of Amitābha.¹³ While in the Japanese context prince and missionary conflate in one personage, in Tibet we have two different personages: Srong-btsan sgam-po as ruler and Padmasambhava as missionary. The bond between ruler and missionary is further documented within the tradition of the *rNying ma* school, which customarily portrays Srong-btsan sgam-po as one of Padmasambhava's disciples. As Amitābha is primary to Avalokiteśvara, his "son," so is Padmasambhava, the missionary, primary to Srong-btsan sgam-po, the ruler. Thus, these narratives that form the foundation for the political ideology of the Tibetan theocratic state present the mythic and supernatural realm as primary and superior to the secular and mundane one. Secular power is an outflow or progeny of the otherworldly one.

Above I tried to make the argument that the foundational narratives of the Tibetan polity as they evolved by the late twelfth century place the supernatural into an *a priori* position. In the following passage I shall discuss the historical situation of Tibet and its mythic representation in more detail.

APOTHEOSIS OF THE TIBETAN RULER IN HISTORICAL AND TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES

Snellgrove sees Amitābha as "the most famous cosmic Buddha" whose cult "seems to have started in North-West India, and spread across Central Asia to China, Korea, and Japan," while being less popular in India itself and Nepal.¹⁴ Only sporadic artistic and some textual evidence hint at a fledgling cult of Amitābha during the imperial period of Tibetan history (seventh to ninth centuries). An image of Amitābha is incorporated in the hat of the statue of King Srong-btsan sgam-po (r. 618–641), which stands in the Jo-khang temple of Lha-sa, said to have been built during the dynastic period. Tibetan historiographic texts name him as the first of the "religious rulers" (*chos rgyal*) who are

credited with the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet. To place an image of Amitābha at such a prominent position, that is, at the crown of the ruler's head, may be seen as indicating that Amitābha is the king's "father" or mythic ancestor. But other evidence may suggest a slightly different situation. Emperor Kao-tsung of China, a "fervent Buddhist, bestowed upon Srong btsan sgampo the title Pao-wang . . . an epithet of the ruler of the West" and "a title of the Buddha Amitābha."¹⁵ This reference may indicate that Srong-btsan sgam-po was seen as an embodiment of Amitābha rather than of Avalokiteśvara.

Furthermore, textual material pertinent to the imperial period needs to be examined as to whether it records Amitābha as a center of religious awareness. The *sBa bzhed*, one of the oldest texts chronicling the events leading to establishing the *buddhadharma* at the Tibetan court, is extant in several versions, each giving a slightly different account of the events leading to the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet. The so far most ancient version has recently turned up in the Tibet Autonomous Region and is now available in a critical, annotated edition and translation.¹⁶ The authors summarize the events leading to the compilation of the text as follows: "Given the role that the dBa's clan played during the disintegration of the Tibetan empire and in the post-dynastic political struggles, we could consider the hypothesis that the *dBa' bzhed* itself could be an early post-dynastic edition of carefully preserved dynastic materials compiled for legitimising purposes."¹⁷ This means that based on this recently discovered manuscript, the text was compiled, most likely as teamwork, in the decades after 842, the year when the last Tibetan king was murdered. The editorial team apparently made use of earlier material that dates from the dynastic era, that is, prior to 842. One of the characteristics of the text is that it presents "a simple linear narrative with some ancient mythological elements, which seem to be largely rooted in the late dynastic period or, at the least, in the immediate post-dynastic period."¹⁸ Among these mythological elements is Srong-btsan sgam-po appearing as emanation of Avalokiteśvara. The *dBa' bzhed* claims that this belief originated among the people of Khotan and was confirmed by two Khotanese monks who came to visit Srong-btsan sgam-po in person. This narrative seems to substantiate the interpretation I suggested of Srong-btsan sgam-po's headgear showing Amitābha. I proposed that this means that Amitābha was seen as the mythic ancestor or origin of Srong-btsan sgam-po, who then becomes identified with

Avalokiteśvara, Amitābha's "son." The *dBa' bzhed* contains only a brief narrative in which the two Khotanese monks see Srong-btsan sgam-po and recognize him as Avalokiteśvara. In contrast to that, the later historiographic texts contain a full-fledged mythology that gives reasons for the exalted status of Avalokiteśvara and his embodiment in the Tibetan rulers, not just in Srong-btsan sgam-po. However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that already by the end of the dynastic period, Srong-btsan sgam-po was seen as a semi-divine ruler by being identified with Avalokiteśvara. At the start of building the temple complex of bSam yas, a Nepalese artisan created the statues for the Aryapalo gling temple. When the temple was consecrated the following occurred:

In the afternoon, at dusk, from the top of the temple a light appeared, which became bigger and bigger and illuminated all of upper and lower Brag dmar, shining like the moon. The mkhan po said: "This is the light of Amitābha's coming. Tomorrow a temple of Amitābha shall be built as an upper storey above the dBu rtse."¹⁹

The importance of the mythological constellation Amitābha/Avalokiteśvara becomes further evident when one considers that the *Sukhāvati-sūtra* is listed among the books housed in the imperial library during the time of Khri-srong lde-btsan (756–797).²⁰

With the rekindling of Buddhism in western Tibet during the tenth and eleventh centuries Amitābha appears in several of the oldest murals, like that of the Alchi Sum-tsek temple (late eleventh century), and rock reliefs, such as those of Shey.²¹ In the earlier Alchi murals of Kashmirian style and in the Shey reliefs (no earlier than the tenth century) Amitābha appears as one of the five primordial buddhas with Vairocana in the center. Only in one of the murals of the later Lotsawa temple of Alchi (twelfth century) is he portrayed in a central position. However, in the so-called Red Temple of Tsaparang (built in the late fifteenth century), the place in the Western Himalayas from where the rejuvenation of Buddhism had started in the late tenth century, only a late mural depicting Amitābha as part of the Medicine Buddhas is extant.²² Thus, archeological evidence in support of an emerging Amitābha cult is inconclusive for the imperial period despite the Amitābha image appearing as part of the hat of Srong-btsan sgam-po's statue. Moreover, images of Amitābha are largely absent from those places where the rejuvenation of Buddhism had begun in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries.

However, by the early fourteenth century the Nepalese artist Anige was commissioned to cast statues of Amitābha for Hangzhou, which “was an active lamaist centre around the year 1300 AD.”²³ Similar statues were built for Juyong Guan, one of which “stands at the pass of the Great Wall north-west of Beijing” and which was constructed under Xundi, the last Emperor of the Mongol Dynasty.²⁴ For the later deliberations about the beginning of the Amitābha cult in Tibet these data are important.

In summary, one may ascertain the notion that during the imperial period Amitābha was known to the Tibetan aristocracy as nirvanic “ancestor” of the samsaric ruler and that the text that was seminal in the formation of the Pure Land cult, that is, the *Sukhāvati-sūtra*, was available in the imperial library. Whether the royal dynasty and some of the aristocratic families embraced a coherent cult of Amitābha remains, at least for the time being, unknown, although the building of an Amitābha temple or chapel housed on the upper floor of the main temple in bSam-yas may be seen as an indication of such a cult. Furthermore, the oldest extant version of the *dBa’ bzhed* supports the claim that already during the late dynastic or early post-dynastic period, Srong-btsan sgam-po was seen as an emanation of Avalokiteśvara and thereby as “son” of Amitābha.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

As a working hypothesis I suggest the possibility that the cult of Amitābha emerged in Tibet in response to socio-historical changes that threatened the identity of a considerable portion of the society while at the same time the cult of Avalokiteśvara as patron of Tibet provided a symbol of political stability and of end-time redemption when the actual political situation offered nothing of the kind. In the following paragraphs I shall flesh out these arguments and introduce what I see as supportive evidence.

In the Tibetan chronicle *rGyal rabs gsal ba’i me long* (completed in 1368 or shortly thereafter) it is said with regard to the birth of Srong-btsan sgam-po that Amitābha resided on the child’s head.²⁵ This statement needs to be reflected upon within the context of Buddhist iconography. As pointed out previously, when considering the symbolic organization of the Amitābha cult, Amitābha resides on the crown of Avalokiteśvara’s head. In Indian and Tibetan body symbolism, the head

is the most prominent and “purest” point of the body. It is in juxtaposition and antagonistically opposed to “that other end” of the body, the place of excretion. Many Buddhist *sādhana*s describe how the beams of light emanating from the heart of a visualized buddha enter the practitioner’s body through his or her head. Through the crown of the head the human body is linked with the pure spheres where the buddhas and bodhisattvas reside; it is the pure orifice through which, at the moment of death, the mind is expelled into realms of purity according to the *’pho ba* ritual. In contrast, the defilements (mental and physical) are excreted from the lower parts of the body. Thus, what is highly valued is brought into contact with the head; for instance, the books containing the Buddha’s words are placed upon one’s head before they find their proper place on the shelf. In contrast, the lower parts of the body are polluted and polluting. Consequently, sacred books must not be placed on the floor or on a seat. Only when one considers the symbolic values attached to the head in contrast to other body parts does the meaning of this brief statement found in the *rGyal rabs gsal ba’i me long* reveal its cultural implications. The text says in its own cryptic style that by the fourteenth century the foremost of the Tibetan rulers of the period, who became seminal in developing an understanding of national identity, was guided and inspired by the Amitābha/Avalokiteśvara narrative. Furthermore, by receiving Amitābha as his “crown jewel” Srong-btsan sgam-po became identified with Avalokiteśvara, Amitābha’s spiritual son.

The symbolic kinship of Srong-btsan sgam-po with Avalokiteśvara became the central theme in defining Tibet’s role within a Buddhist universe. The fully developed myth represents Srong-btsan sgam-po as embodiment of Avalokiteśvara, a role to be continued in the reincarnations of the Dalai Lamas. As we have seen, late dynastic or early post-dynastic texts contain already some textual snippets that were seminal in the formation of the later myth.²⁶ The fully developed narrative is recorded in texts that cannot be dated prior to the late twelfth century, with the chronicle by Nyang-ral nyi-ma’i ’od-zer (1124–1192) providing the oldest evidence.²⁷ It would lead too far away from the main theme of this presentation to engage in a survey of all available Tibetan chronicles to trace the development of this myth. For the present purpose it may suffice to say that by the end of the twelfth century it became a commonly accepted view that Srong-btsan sgam-po was an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara, thus fulfilling Avalokiteśvara’s pledge

promising to “discipline” the inhabitants of the Land of Snow (Tibet) in the *buddhadharma*. The mythic paradigm functioned then as an overlay imposed on historiographic writing.

What had happened during the last decades of the twelfth century and up to the middle of the thirteenth century in Tibet? The dynastic period had come to a sudden end by 842 with the assassination of the last ruler:

Nothing approaching central authority was restored until 1247, when Sakya Pandita was invested with the right to rule over the Trikor Chuksum (Thirteen Myriarchies) of Tibet by Prince Godan, a grandson of Genghis Khan. The dates 842 and 1247 therefore mark the period of decentralized control in central Tibet, during which time the country consisted of small hegemonies, which were constantly warring against, or allying with, each other as conditions warranted. These small power enclaves, each with its own fortresses, were ruled by men who gradually became clerics.²⁸

After Buddhism as a court religion had vanished in the collapse of the imperial dynasty, the eleventh century witnessed the reintroduction of Buddhism to the Tibetan land. Dedicated individuals, some living in the far west of Tibet (Guge and Ladakh) and some traveling to China in search for Buddhist learning, established Buddhism in Tibet—this time, however, as a religious tradition rooted among a multitude of small principalities from where it gradually gained a foothold among the people. By the late twelfth century monasteries were built that quickly became centers of cultural and political power. In the coming decades this process accelerated, with the monastic centers gaining more influence on the political scene than any one of the secular forces. Eventually, this process culminated in the ascendance of the fifth Dalai Lama to the throne of Tibet in 1642. The mythic paradigm of the imperial dynasty was modeled upon similar paradigms that had lent authority to the dynasties of China, Nepal, and Magadha. A mythological paradigm, blending the concept of the universal monarch (*cakravartin*) with elements of the princely bodhisattva ideal, was created to give divine authority to the rulers of these diverse Asian polities. With the collapse of the imperial dynasty in Tibet and the formation of political centers that were interlocked with the monastic system a need arose to adjust the inherited (and by the tenth century tattered) pre-Buddhist mythic paradigm to account for the change in the political and cultural organization of the country. The Avalokiteśvara myth rendering the great

Bodhisattva as the patron of Tibet and its religious rulers as his embodiments provided an appropriate answer. It displaced older myths of which we have only isolated fragments telling of the first ruler descending from the gods of heaven. Retroactively, the new myth was projected onto the first of the great kings, Srong-btsan sgam-po.

The fate of the ordinary people during these centuries of decentralization and constant warfare is not recorded in any of the accessible sources. We are left to speculate. From similar events recorded in other countries we may, with all necessary caution, surmise that the Tibetan people suffered more hardship during periods of political and military instability and ensuing chaos than at times when a central authority was capable of providing some sense of order and lawfulness. Thus, we may assume that between the collapse of the imperial dynasty by the middle of the ninth century and the rise of the Sa-skya dominance in 1249 the Tibetan populace was subject to ongoing raids and political chaos. Could one suggest that during these times, which were certainly difficult for ordinary Tibetans, they took refuge in the “father” of their monastic lords (who not always ruled as benignly as their symbolic “ancestor” suggested) in order to find spiritual comfort in times where an earthly one was almost beyond reach? The popularity of the Avalokiteśvara myth as the foundational narrative formulating the apotheosis of the Tibetan ruler seems to support this view.

NOTES

1. The word “cult” is used here in its original meaning indicating the cultivating of a set of spiritual and religious ideas expressed through behavior and acts. It is not meant to identify a marginal and often anti-social religious movement.
2. See Jonathan Z. Smith, ed., *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1995), 866.
3. Araki Michio, “The Schools of Japanese Buddhism,” in *Buddhism and Asian History*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa and M. D. Cummings (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 271ff.
4. J. H. C. Kern, trans., *The Saddharma-Pundarika or the Lotus of the True Law*, Sacred Books of the East 21 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968), xxii, 178, and chap. 7; G. P. Malalasekera, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* (Colombo: Government Press, 1961), 434; P. Schwieger, *Ein tibetisches Wunschgebet um Wiedergeburt in der Sukhāvātī* (St. Augustin: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag, 1978), 7.
5. Kern, *Saddharma-Pundarika*, 389, 417.
6. Garma C. C. Chang, ed., *A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras: Selections from the Mahāratnakūta Sūtra* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983), 339–360.
7. F. M. Müller and Bunyiu Nanjio, eds., *Sukhāvātī-vyūha: Description of Sukhāvātī the Land of Bliss* (London: Clarendon Press, 1883), iii.
8. Malalasekera, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 453.
9. F. Max Müller, *Buddhist Mahayana Texts*, Sacred Books of the East 49 (1894; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968), 48 verse 13.
10. E. K. Dargyay, “Srong-Btsan Sgam-Po of Tibet: Bodhisattva and King,” in *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia*, eds. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Oakville, New York, & London: Mosaic Press, 1988), 106ff.
11. Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Works of Culture: Symbolic Transformation in Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), xxiii.
12. Michio, “The Schools of Japanese Buddhism,” 267.
13. Needless to say, contemporary historical assessment of these narratives cannot substantiate their factual veracity.
14. David L. Snellgrove, ed., *The Image of the Buddha* (Tokyo: Kodansha International; Paris: Unesco, 1978), 134.
15. Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the*

Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs, and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 25ff.

16. Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger, *dBa' bzhed: The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet* (Vienna: Verlag der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000).

17. *Ibid.*, 7.

18. *Ibid.*, 13.

19. *Ibid.*, 65.

20. Marcelle Lalou, "Les textes bouddhiques au temps du Roi Khri-sron-lde-bcan," *Journal Asiatique* 241 (1953): 313–353 (the text is listed under its Tibetan title *bde ba can gyi bkod pa* as no. 196 on p. 324).

21. D. L. Snellgrove and T. Skorupski, *The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1977), 1:10, 1:52 (table 37), 1:55 (table 42).

22. Jurgen C. Aschoff, *Tsaparang: Tibets Grosses Geheimnis* (Freiburg: Eulen Verlag, 1987), 14–16, table 24.

23. H. Karmay, *Early Sino-Tibetan Art* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1975), 23ff.

24. *Ibid.*, 25.

25. See *dbu la sangs rgyas A mi de ba bzhugs pa* in B. I. Kuznetsov, ed., *Rgyal rabs gsal ba'i me long (The Clear Mirror of Royal Genealogies)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966), 54.

26. See E. K. Dargyay, "Srong-btsan sgam-po of Tibet: Bodhisattva and King," in *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia*, eds. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Oakville, New York, & London: Mosaic Press, 1988), 101ff.

27. R. O. Meisezahl, ed., *Die grosse Geschichte des tibetischen Buddhismus nach alter Tradition*, Monumenta Tibetica Historica 1.3 (Sankt Augustin, Germany: VHG Wissenschaftsverlag, 1985).

28. Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), 54.

Ākāra and Direct Perception (*Pratyakṣa*)

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PRELIMINARY

THERE HAS BEEN considerable amount of discussion by various scholars on the notion of *ākāra* and *ākāra-vāda*. The following discussion therefore may not amount to much of an original contribution. Primarily, it aims to illustrate that the data commonly known by scholars from the logical texts can be corroborated and substantiated by those from the *abhidharma* texts. Accordingly, the importance of the latter cannot be neglected for the study in light of the relatively later articulation of the theory of perception in the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra tradition. It is also my intention here to clarify from the *abhidharma* material the exact connotation of the term *ākāra* as used by the Vaibhāṣika, thus determining whether the theory of perception of this school can be properly described as *sākāra-vāda* (as Xuan Zang's tradition seems clearly to suggest) or as *nirākāra-vāda* (as described by the latter-day Sanskrit texts).

SĀKĀRA-JÑĀNAVĀDA AS SEEN IN THE *NYĀYĀNUSĀRA

In the Vaibhāṣika *abhidharma* text, **Nyāyānusāra*, Saṃghabhadra argues that given the doctrine of momentariness and the denial of *sarvāstitva* and simultaneous causality, the Sautrāntika must acknowledge the resulting conclusion of the absolute impossibility of direct perception (*pratyakṣa*). The Sautrāntika leader, Śrīlāta, answers that direct perception is possible because of the *anudhātu* and because of the fact of consciousness being self-aware of the experience.¹ Accordingly, even though a knowledge has a non-existent as its perceptual object (*ālambana* = O-p), the two requisite conditions for perception are

nonetheless still fulfilled² by virtue of the successive cause-effect relationship involved:

It is only after having grasped [perceived] a present [object] that one is able to rapidly infer the preceding and the succeeding. That is, one is able to infer that such an effect in the present is produced by such a type of cause in the past. This cause in turn was produced by such a cause—in this manner back to the distant past. In each corresponding case (*yathāyogam*), through inference it is directly realized (*pratyakṣī-kr*, *sākṣāt-kr*) just as in the present moment (如現證得). One may also infer that such a type of cause in the present will produce such a type of fruit in the future; this fruit in turn will induce the arising of such a fruit—in each corresponding case, through inference it is directly realized just as in the present moment. In this way, successively examining the past causes accordingly as the case may be back to the distant past, one directly realizes just as in the present moment, without any error (*aviparītam*). Although at the particular stage, the object (*viśaya*) does not exist, the knowledge is nonetheless not without the two requisite [conditions: O-p and the supporting basis (*āśraya*)].

[This is so because] at the time when a particular cause-knowledge (*hetu-jñāna*) arises, there exist the causes and conditions [the *anudhātu*] in one's serial continuity. That is: there was formerly produced such a knowledge; through a causal succession (*pāramparyeṇa*), it gives rise to a present knowledge of such a form. Since this present knowledge has as its cause the former knowledge, the result is that this present knowledge arises with an understanding like the former one, having as its O-p the former object. However, that O-p is now a non-existent; yet though now a non-existent, it constitutes the O-p. Hence one cannot say that the present knowledge is without the two requisite [conditions].³

Śrīlāta's explanations, like Dharmakīrti's (see *infra*), show that for the Sautrāntika, the *pratyakṣa* knowledge is achieved retrospectively in the second moment. This stance is consistent with what we know about the Sautrāntika theory of cognition in other *abhidharma* sources. The author of the *Abhidharmadīpa-vibhāṣā-prabhāvr̥tti*, for instance, states that all perceptions are indirect.⁴ Later sources tell us that this Sautrāntika stance is known as the “inferability of the external object (*bāhyārthānumeyavāda*).” Śrīlāta's explanations above illustrate this stance. Put succinctly: no direct perception of the external object is possible. Nevertheless, there can be the exact knowledge of this object through inference, because the knowledge that arises in the second moment is completely and necessarily conditioned by that external

object grasped in the first moment. This knowledge, therefore, is none other than that of the external object. This constitutes the *pratyakṣa* knowledge.

In this theory, there is the assumption that (1) there is the grasping of the external object in the first moment, even though this grasping does not amount to its knowledge; (2) this grasping generates in the mental stream an effect that in turn serves as the cause—the knowledge-cause (智因, **jñāna-hetu*)—generating the corresponding knowledge-effect (智果, **jñāna-phala*) in the next moment. Śrīlāta states clearly that this knowledge-cause/knowledge-effect can be transmitted continuously for a long time in the mental series without its being distorted in any way in the process. With the presence of this causal conditionality, the mind always has the ability to exactly infer the object initially grasped, “just as in the present moment, without any error.”

The distinctive feature of Śrīlāta’s explanations here is in terms of his *anudhātu* doctrine. As Vibhajyavādins, all Sautrāntika explanations of the preservation of causal efficacy must be in terms of the present dharmas. Śrīlāta propounds the causal theory of the **pūrvānu-dhātu* (or more simply, *anudhātu*), which as Saṃghabhadra explains is a version of the better known *bīja* theory of the Sautrāntika.⁵ While its nature is said to be ultimately ineffable, it is explained as the serial continuity of the person—or more exactly, the six internal *āyatana*s—qua the presently existing causal matrix that subsumes the total causal efficacies and content of consciousness passed on from the preceding moment. This *anudhātu* is then “the nature of being the causal condition (*hetu-pratyayatā*)—the causal efficacy of the sentient serial continuity serving successively as the cause [of the arising of the subsequent moment of the series].”⁶ There are in fact numerous *anudhātus*, each of specific content perfumed into the individual’s mental stream of each moment.⁷ Yet they are not to be conceived of as being entities distinct from the mind itself—or for that matter from the whole psycho-physical complex constituting the individual.⁸ This way of explanation may make one think that the *anudhātu* is a singular causal matrix functioning as a whole within which, nevertheless, specific efficacies as potentialities can generate correspondingly specific effects. In these respects at least, it is rather similar to the Yogācāra concept of the *ālaya-vijñāna*.⁹

In terms of the karmic process, these *anudhātus* qua causal efficacy can remain operative even when the dharmas qua the original karmic forces have become extinct for over a *kalpa*.¹⁰ From the perspective of

this doctrine, the six *āyatana*s qua the *anudhātu* in the preceding moment are the karmic cause and those in the succeeding moment the retribution (*vipāka*). In this way, dharmas arising in every moment are all born of retribution (*vipākaja*).¹¹

This notion that the content of consciousness of the previous moment is kept in the *anudhātu* of the present moment—which serves as the equal-immediate condition of the succeeding moment¹²—plays an important role in the Sautrāntika explanation of the perceptual process.¹³ As the serially successive causal efficacy arising at each present moment of consciousness, it links the object in the preceding, or earlier, moment with the succeeding moment of mental consciousness. In it the content of the previous consciousness is stored, and via such a connecting principle the previous object can be experienced by the present mental consciousness that arises taking this previous consciousness in the *anudhātu* as its O-p.

Elsewhere, Śrīlāta further clarifies how the Sautrāntika arrives at the claim that a present consciousness/knowledge has as its *ālambana-pratyaya* (= O-p) a past object—how the external object that existed in the preceding moment can be grasped by the present consciousness:

Those mental consciousnesses that have the past, etc., as objects are not without the perceptual objects, [though] they do not exclusively have existents as objects. Why is that so? Because we say that the mental consciousnesses arisen with the five groups of consciousness as the equal-immediate [conditions] (*samanantara-pratyaya*) are [in each case] capable of experiencing (*anu-√bhū*) the [corresponding] object grasped by the preceding *manas* [i.e., the corresponding sensory consciousness that serves as the *samanantara-pratyaya* for the present mental consciousness]. Such a mental consciousness has as its cause (*hetu*) the *manas*, and its *ālambana-pratyaya* is none other than the object (*viṣaya*) of the [corresponding] sensory consciousness. [The preceding *manas* (= the sensory consciousness) is the cause] because it must have existed first in order that this [mental consciousness] can arise; and [the sensory object is the *ālambana-pratyaya* of this mental consciousness] because the existence or non-existence of this [consciousness] follows the existence or non-existence of that [object]. However, this mental consciousness does not exclusively have an existent as its object, since at this time [of its arising] that object has already perished. Neither is it without a perceptual object, since the existence or non-existence of this mental consciousness follows the existence or non-existence of that [object]. Furthermore, when one recollects (*anu-√smṛ*) an object that has long perished, the arising

of [the recollection] in the present moment has as its condition the former consciousness that perceived that object, for this consciousness of recollection belongs to the same series [of which this former consciousness is a member] and is arisen in a serial succession. Although there are other conditions that generate the consciousness of recollection, its arising must be preceded by the perception of that former object.¹⁴

This same Sautrāntika theory is also elucidated in the logical texts,¹⁵ even though the term *anudhātu* itself is not mentioned. In this connection, like Śrīlāta, Dharmakīrti too holds that the external object can be felt or experienced by the consciousness arising in the second moment, thus justifying the Sautrāntika position that despite the doctrine of successive causation, the perceptual object of consciousness is none other than the external object itself. Dharmakīrti explains as follows:

If it is asked how [an object] different in time can be grasped, we would say that the essence of being a graspable (*grāhyatā*) [i.e., an object] is none other than the fact of being the cause of [its] distinctive appearance, capable of transferring its knowledge-form (*jñāna-ākāra*).¹⁶

This explanation satisfies the twofold requirement for a dharma to be an *ālambana-pratyaya*: (1) it must contribute to the causal efficacy for the generation of the consciousness; (2) the consciousness must arise having a resemblance or representational form of it.¹⁷ Mokṣākaragupta, author of the *Tarkabhāṣā*, anticipating the question of why a knowledge of the nature of being a conceptual construction and therefore erroneous (*kalpanāvibhramātmaka*) is not an immediate perception (*pratyakṣa*),¹⁸ cites this very explanation by Dharmakīrti immediately before answering as follows:

Because it is the common understanding of all that immediate perception is a knowledge that directly realizes the object in its uniqueness (*artha-svarūpa*). And [the knowledges] that are conceptual constructions and erroneous are incapable of directly realizing the object. For the knowledge that grasps the object is the object's effect; the object, being that which is grasped, is the [generating] cause of the knowledge.¹⁹

Mokṣākaragupta further elaborates that, in contrast, a knowledge of the nature of a conceptual construction is born from nothing more than the residual force of a past experience without the object (*artham antareṇa vāsanāmātrāt*) and therefore cannot be the effect of the object:

That which can come into existence without another thing cannot be the effect of the latter.²⁰

One point emphasized in Mokṣākaragupta's explanation above, together with Dharmakīrti's comment, is this: the Sautrāntika would maintain that in spite of their theory of successive causation, which requires that the external object existing in the first moment comes to be known only in the second moment, in the case of immediate perception the object known is none other than the external object—or more correctly, the knowledge is that of the external object on account of the necessary causal relationship of the knowledge qua the “grasper” (*grāhaka*) and its object qua the “graspable” (*grāhya*). In the words of Śrīlāta, this necessary relationship is proved by the fact that “the existence or non-existence of the consciousness follows the existence or non-existence of the object” (see above). The other point is that whereas *pratyakṣa* is direct realization or seeing, a knowledge in the form of conceptual construction is imagining—a point similarly highlighted by Dharmottara (see below).

This doctrine that knowledge is acquired via a mental image of the object came to be described in relatively later time as *sākāra-(vi)jñāna-vāda*. The *Tarkabhāṣā* describes this as follows:

It is held by the Sautrāntika that all that appears in the form of blue, etc. is knowledge itself, not the external object, since an inanimate thing (*jaḍa*) is incapable of manifestation. As it has been said: the objects of the sense faculties are not perceptible, [though] they generate a knowledge possessing their corresponding form.²¹

The epistemological view that an inanimate or non-intelligent external object can never be known by the mind is one of the fundamental premises, along with successive causation and other related premises, that leads to the theory of *sākāra-vijñāna*: the object, for it to be a content of consciousness—for it to be known—must generate its own form or facsimile of a mental nature. And this is called the *ākāra*. In immediate perception, this *ākāra* corresponds exactly to the object, and there is absolutely no error. Accordingly, even though immediate perception is achieved only in the second moment at which time only the knowledge that the external object existed can be acquired retrospectively, the external object qua the *ālambana-pratyaya* has an existential and not merely inferential status.²² Its *ākāra* is the *pratyaya*, though not the *ālambana-pratyaya*, for the perception, and the necessary simultaneity of the perceptual condition with the perceiving consciousness, is in this

way satisfied. This, however, is not in the manner of the Sarvāstivāda notion of *sahabhū-hetu*, which requires the simultaneity of the external object and the consciousness. For this is a case not of mutual causation, but of necessary determination. This doctrine of *ākāra* also serves another important purpose: for the Sautrāntika, it is this specific *ākāra* that specifies the content of the particular consciousness; otherwise, as the opponents might argue, the nature of consciousness being the same in every case, the knowledge of a particular object in our consciousness would be an impossibility. *Tarkabhāṣā* argues succinctly:²³

Knowledge should be conceded as possessing a form (*sākāra*). Now if knowledge is not conceded as possessing a form, then on account of there being no [specifying] form, because of consciousness pertaining to every object being the same, the objects cannot be established as being distinct.²⁴

The particular *ākāra* is the coordination (*sārūpya*) or resemblance/conformity (*sādṛśya*) between the consciousness or knowledge and the actual external object and constitutes the source or means (*pramāṇa*, “measure”) of knowledge.²⁵ It being indistinguishable from the corresponding knowledge itself that arises, Dharmakīrti speaks of the *pramāṇa* and the *pramāṇa-phala* (= *pramiti*) as being the same. The latter is the fruit, that is, the knowledge acquired; but Dharmakīrti argues that since the relationship between *ākāra* and the consciousness is one of determination (*vyavasthāpya-vyavasthāpaka-bhāvena*) and not causation, there is no confounding of the cause with the effect in the statement.²⁶ It is in fact precisely because of this determinative function of the *ākāra* that one can prove the existence of the corresponding external object. *Tarkabhāṣā* explains how this proof works on the principle of *vyatireka*:

Surely, if what is manifesting is nothing but knowledge alone, then how [does one know that] there exists the external object? [The Sautrāntika answers:] the proof of the external object is possible by the principle of absence (*vyatireka*): for the forms blue, etc., do not manifest at all times and in all places. Nor is [the manifestation] possible even when there exists the force of merely our own material cause (*upādāna*), since this does not conform to the fact that [a specific consciousness] operates with a specific object. Hence it can be ascertained that there surely exists something that is their cause, distinct from the *samantara-pratyaya* [of the consciousness], due to the power of which they occur in a certain place at a certain time. That very one is the external object.²⁷

One question here arises. We can know the existence of the external object through an immediate perception only when a judgment in the form of “this is blue” is made. It is only then that it becomes a real source of knowledge.²⁸ Does it then mean that *pratyakṣa* becomes a *pramāṇa* only when conjoined with a conceptual judgment (*adhyavasāya* = *kalpanā*)? If so, would it not contradict the definition of *pratyakṣa* as a means of knowledge? Dharmottara answers as follows:

This is not so. Because through a judgment produced by the power of *pratyakṣa*, the object is ascertained (*avasīyate*) as seen, not as imagined. And seeing, called the direct realization of the object, is the function of *pratyakṣa*. Imagining, on the other hand, is the function of conceptual thought (*vikalpa*).²⁹

Indeed, even to be distinctly conscious of seeing a color such as blue as an *āyatana dravya* in the case of a sensory perception, some simple judgment has to be exercised. This is called *svabhāva-vikalpa*—a simple, rudimentary discrimination—in the Sarvāstivāda. In the case of a mental operation, two other types of discriminative functions are also possible: investigative/judgmental (*abhinirūpaṇa*), powered by *prajñā*; and recollective (*anusmaraṇa*), powered by *smṛti*. Saṃghabhadra explains that although both *prajñā* and *smṛti*, being among the ten universal mental concomitants (*mahā-bhūmika-caitta*), are always present in every cognitive act, in the case of a sensory perception they do not contribute prominently—and it is only to this extent that a sensory perception is said to be non-discriminative.³⁰ The Sautrāntika does not agree that there is such an intrinsic or simple *vikalpa* of the nature of *vitarka*, since it considers the latter as no more than the gross state of the mind. Nevertheless, from the above explanation given by Dharmottara, we can see that the Sautrāntika too concedes some amount of mental ascertainment, operating in the background as it were,³¹ in the *pratyakṣa* experience—even though it does not amount to *vikalpa* (= *kalpanā*; see below) in the proper sense, which is pure imagination or mental construction.

It is well known that although tradition generally regards Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as Vijñānavādins, it is also quite aware of their occasionally Abhidharmika-Sautrāntika stance. Thus, the well-known Yogācārin master Dharmapāla, in his commentary on Dignāga’s **Ālambana-parīkṣā*, states explicitly that Dharmakīrti acknowledges the real existence of external objects.³² Historically, the Sautrāntika was

evolved from the early Dārṣṭāntika masters of the Sarvāstivāda. Accordingly, doctrinal influences coming from the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharmika are only to be expected. At any rate, there is clear indication of such an influence on the doctrines of perception: Dignāga, followed by Dharmakīrti and others in the logical tradition of the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra, states that there are only two valid means of perception (*pramāṇa*): immediate perception (*pratyakṣa*), which perceives the specific characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*), and inference (*anumāna*), which perceives the common-characteristic (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*)—an inheritance from the Sarvāstivāda that recognizes only two characteristics of existents, *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*.

In the **Ālambana-parīkṣā*, Dignāga, rejecting all views advocating the independent reality of external objects, concludes that “although the external object does not exist, there is the internal *rūpa* that manifests resembling the external object and serves as the *ālambana-pratyaya*.”³³ It seems therefore evident enough that he is a Yogācāra Vijñānavādin—though possibly with some Sautrāntika leaning. Nevertheless, in his *Pramāṇa-samuccaya-vṛtti*, we can see him at times attempting to align with some fundamental Abhidharmika doctrines. Thus, a question is raised there as to whether his doctrine of *pratyakṣa* is contradicted by the *abhidharma* tenets that a sensory consciousness (a) takes an agglomeration of atoms as object, and (b) perceives only an *āyatana-svalakṣaṇa* and not a *dravya-svalakṣaṇa*—since an agglomeration can only be perceived by a mental construction. Dignāga’s answer betrays clearly his eagerness to conform to the Abhidharmika tradition:

Since it [viz., *pratyakṣa*] is caused by many substances [viz., atoms in aggregation], it is said, in respect of its sphere of operation, that it takes the whole as its object; but it is not [that it operates] by conceptually constructing a unity within that which is many and separate. [Therefore, the definition that *pratyakṣa* is free from conceptual construction is not inconsistent with the Abhidharmika tenets.]³⁴

Kalpanā in Dignāga’s definition of *pratyakṣa* is also essentially similar to the Sarvāstivāda notion of *vikalpa*. It is the process in which the perceived object, which in its intrinsic nature is inexpressible, comes to be associated with *nāman*, *jāti*, and so on.³⁵ This is consistent with the Abhidharmika notions of *abhinirūpa-* and *anusmaraṇa-vikalpa* owing to the absence of which the sensory consciousnesses are said to be *avikalpaka* (see *supra*). Indeed, some Yogācāra and other masters do ex-

plicitly equate *kalpanāpoḍha* with *avikalpaka*, and explain *kalpanā* precisely in terms of *abhinirūpaṇā* and *anusmaraṇa*.³⁶

NIRĀKĀRA-(VI)JÑĀNAVĀDA AND THE SARVĀSTIVĀDA

In contrast to the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra, the Sarvāstivāda theory of knowledge is described in the Sanskrit texts³⁷ as *nir-ākāra-(vi)jñānavāda*: the theory that the external object is directly perceived, without the need of any representational form in the consciousness. However, according to the tradition passed down by Xuan Zang,³⁸ among all the northern Buddhist schools it is only the Sāṃmitīya that really holds such a theory, since this school asserts that only mental dharmas are momentary; external things can last longer than one moment. All other schools, including the Sarvāstivāda, would therefore have to be included in the camp of *sākāra-vijñānavāda*. We know of course that the Theravāda school too holds that a *rūpa* lasts sixteen moments (*citta-khaṇas*) longer than a *citta*, so that direct perception in the true sense becomes possible.³⁹ The confusion between these two traditional sources can only be cleared by examining the notion of *ākāra* as differently explained in these schools.

As we have seen, the Sautrāntika notion is that the *ākāra* corresponds exactly to the external object. It allows no possibility of a cognitive error in a genuine *pratyakṣa* experience. However, this *ākāra* is a resemblance (*sadrśā*) constructed by the mind. In the case of the Sarvāstivāda tradition, we note at the outset the information from *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā-śāstra* (T. 27, no. 1545; hereafter *Mahāvibhāṣā*) that various Abhidharmika masters—most probably Sarvāstivādins—give various interpretations to “*ākāra*”:

Question: What is the intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) of the so-called “*ākāra*”?

Answer: Its intrinsic nature is *prajñā*. Herein it should be understood thus: [1] *Prajñā* is *ākāra*; it is also what cognizes with a form (*ākārayati*) and what is cognized with a form (*ākāryate*). [2] The *citta-caitta-dharmas* conjoined (*saṃprayukta*) with *prajñā*, while not being *ākāra*, are what cognize with a form as well as what are cognized with a form. [3] Those *viprayukta-saṃskāras* and other existent (*sat*) dharmas, while being neither *ākāras* nor what cognize with a form, are what are cognized with a form.

According to some: What is called *ākāra* has collectively all the *citta-caitta-dharmas* as its intrinsic nature. This theory would imply

that all *citta-caittas* are *ākāra*, and what cognize with a form (*ākārayati*) and what are cognized with an *ākāra*. All the other dharmas, while being neither *ākāra* nor what cognize with an *ākāra*, are what are cognized with an *ākāra*. According to some others: what is called *ākāra* has all dharmas as its intrinsic nature. This theory would imply that the conjoined dharmas are *ākāra*, as well as what cognize with a form and what are cognized with an *ākāra*. The disjoined dharmas, while being *ākāra* as well as what are cognized with an *ākāra*, are not what cognize with an *ākāra*.

Comment: It should be said that what is called *ākāra* has *prajñā* as its intrinsic nature, as given in the first explanation. . . .

Question: What is the meaning of *ākāra*?

Answer: *Ākāra* means the operation in the manner of examination/discernment (簡擇而轉; *pra-vi-√ci*) with regard to the nature of the object.⁴⁰

From this, it is clear that the orthodox Sarvāstivāda view is that *prajñā* is *ākāra*, explained as the function of “operating investigatively with regard to the object.” This is essentially the same as the definition given for *prajñā* as “the investigation of dharmas” (*dharma-pravicaya*).⁴¹ But this investigative operation may be correct or incorrect, skillful (*kuśala*) or unskillful (*akuśala*), sharp (*tikṣṇa*) or blunt (*mṛdu*), withoutflow (*sāsrava*) or outflow-free (*anāsrava*). Thus, when one commits the cognitive error of mistaking a rope for a snake, or an aggregate of five *skandhas* for a *pudgala*, it is a case of “the *ākāra* being topsy turvy (*viparīta*)”; the *ālambana* is existent and not illusory—the rope or the *skandhas*.⁴² In brief, as stated by Saṃghabhadra: “Only a discriminative (*sa-vikalpaka*) consciousness is capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object [in the form:] ‘it is blue, not green,’ etc.”⁴³ Accordingly, in the Sarvāstivāda epistemology, the operation of *ākāra* pertains to the domain of mental consciousness, not to that of a sensory consciousness where *prajñā* cannot properly function (see *supra*). Moreover, it may or may not correspond exactly to the actual form of the external object.

That with regard to one and the same perceptual object there can be various *ākāra* is clearly brought out in *Mahāvibhāṣā* in a consideration on the question: “If one gets out [of a *dhyāna*] from the *ākāra*, does one also get out from the perceptual object?” The answer to this is given as a fourfold alternative (*catuṣkoṭi*):

[1] There is a case where one gets out from the *ākāra* but not the perceptual object: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with

a given *ākāra*; without abandoning this characteristic, he further has another *ākāra*—e.g., he has as his object the *ākāra* of impermanence of the *rūpa-skandha*, and then immediately after that the *ākāra* of unsatisfactoriness of the *rūpa-skandha* arises before him. . . . [2] There is a case where one gets out from the perceptual object but not the *ākāra*: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with a given *ākāra*; with this same *ākāra*, he further has another characteristic—e.g., he has as his object the *ākāra* of impermanence of the *rūpa-skandha*, and then immediately after that the *ākāra* of impermanence of the *vedanā-skandha* arises before him. . . . [3] There is a case where one gets out from the *ākāra* as well as the perceptual object. . . . [4] There is a case where one gets out neither from the *ākāra* nor the perceptual object. . . .⁴⁴

The above passage also indicates the possibility of simultaneously having one and the same *ākāra* with regard to many and even all dharmas, excepting the knowledge itself at that given moment, its conjuncts, and co-existents, as when one contemplates that all dharmas are devoid of a self, etc.⁴⁵ In fact, the only case where the *ākāra* of an object corresponds exactly to the actual nature of the object is when the yogi acquires the *prajñā* qua true insight in the direct comprehension (*abhisamaya*) of the noble truths—he sees conditioned things truly as they are, in their aspects of being unsatisfactory, impermanent, etc. The contemplating yogi can see several aspects pertaining to a given object, each with a distinct and unconfounded *ākāra*—i.e., *prajñā*. Thus,

with regard to each with-outflow object (*sāsrava-vastu*), if the knowledge operates by way of the four *ākāras* [understanding it] as *duḥkha*, etc., it receives the name *duḥkha-jñāna*. If the knowledge operates by way of the four *ākāras* [understanding it] as *samudaya*, etc., it receives the name *samudaya-jñāna*. Hence the *ākāras* of the *duḥkha*- and *samudaya-jñānas* are not mixed (雜, *miśra*), while the *ālambanas* are mixed. . . .⁴⁶

This is clearly a case of mental exertion—mental application with regard to the common characteristics (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-manaskāra*).⁴⁷ It is for this reason that the sixteen *ākāras* of the four noble truths—*duḥkhatā*, etc.—as immediate perception of the yogi are said to be *prajñā*—the outflow-free or pure *prajñā*.⁴⁸ They clearly do not refer to images or “aspects” of the objects, but are in the active sense of the mental function of understanding. These common-characteristic (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*) are the universal principles of all dharmas intuited by spiritual

insight and pertaining to the absolute truth,⁴⁹ not universals abstractly constructed by the mind as in the case of mental inference. These are called dharma-knowledges (*dharma-jñāna*) where they pertain to the sense-sphere, and subsequent-knowledges (*anvaya-jñāna*) where they pertain to the two upper spheres. Both are *pratyakṣa-jñāna*.

Samghabhadra insists that the term *anvaya* does not imply that the subsequent-knowledges are *anumāna*, since in the sutra both knowledges are equally spoken of as capable of seeing truly *duḥkha*, etc. Moreover, the *ārya-jñānas* cannot be inferential in nature, and no object pertaining to the *ārya-satya*s can be realized by an inferential knowledge. He further argues that if the subsequent-knowledges are inferential, then there would not be even the dharma-knowledges having *nirodha* as object, since a *nirodha* is always non-empirical (*adrśya*). But it is from the point of view of *indriyāśrita*- and *anubhāva-pratyakṣa* that the objects of subsequent-knowledges are said to be non-empirical. And in that case there ought not even be the dharma-knowledges of *nirodha* since a *nirodha* cannot be an object for these two *pratyakṣas*. From the point of view of *buddhi-pratyakṣa*, however, it is not true that the objects of subsequent-knowledges are those of inferential knowledges. “Hence, all determination of things truly as they are (實義決擇, **tattvārtha-viniścaya*), properly accomplished (如理所引, **yoga-vihita*), are *pratyakṣa-jñānas*.”⁵⁰

Accordingly, from the Sarvāstivāda perspective, a sensory perception is definitely without an *ākāra*. It is for this same reason that *Mahāvibhāṣā* states that the *prajñā* conjoined with the five types of sensory consciousness is not *dr̥ṣṭi*, though it is also a knowledge (*jñāna*):

[1] It does not have a keen or sharp (*tikṣṇa*, *paṭu*) mode of activity (*ākāra*) and cannot penetrate deeply into the perceptual object; [2] it cannot discriminate; [3] it can have as the perceptual object only the *svalakṣaṇa*, but not the *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*; [4] it has only present objects, whereas a view can have as objects dharmas of all the three temporal periods as well as the unconditioned; [5] a view can grasp an object repeatedly, but this *prajñā* can only grasp an object in a single moment; [6] unlike a view, it cannot cogitate and examine a perceptual object.⁵¹

These explanations are essentially a good description of the Sarvāstivāda notion of sensory-immediate perception. We may note here once again the unambiguous notion that where *prajñā* operates, *ākāra* does not denote the “exact image/representation” of the *ālambana*.

The conclusion therefore is that, as far as sensory perception is concerned, the Xuan Zang tradition is not quite justified in grouping the Sarvāstivāda theory under *sa-ākāra-jñānavāda*. However, Pu Guang does speak of two aspects of the notion of “*ākāra*.” According to him, this notion connotes both a mode of understanding (行解) and a representational image (影像, *ābhāsā*, *pratibimba*):

A mode of understanding refers to the difference in the modes of understanding of the *citta-caittas* when they grasp [respectively] the generic and specific characteristics pertaining to an object. It refers to the difference in the activities of the *citta* and the *caittas*. This mode of understanding may generate a correct or wrong understanding with regard to the object . . . *ākāra* refers to the fact that the *citta-caittas* are clear by nature; as soon as they are confronted with an object, an image arises [in them] spontaneously without the need of any mental application—just as images appearing in a clear pond or mirror. . . . If one uses the term “mode of understanding,” only the difference in the activities of the *citta*, etc., is referred to. If one uses the term “*ākāra*,” it refers to two types [of *ākāra*]: (1) *ākāra* in the sense of an image, (2) *ākāra* in the sense of a mode of understanding. . . .

Question: With reference to which of the two—the mode of understanding or the *ākāra* [in the sense of an image]—is it said that [the *citta-caittas*] have the same *ākāra* (*sākāra*)?⁵²

Explanation: It is with reference to *ākāra* [qua image] that they are said to have the same *ākāra*. The *citta-caitta-dharmas* are clear by nature; as soon as they are confronted with a certain object, its form appears spontaneously. As they equally have this form, they are said to “have the same *ākāra*.” Thus, the *Abhidharmāvatāra*, in its second fascicle, says: “Just as visual consciousness, etc., are produced with eyes, etc., as their support, manifesting with an image of the object (義影像 **arthasya pratinidhi*, **arthābhāsā*), the visible, etc., [thus] comprehend their respective objects.”⁵³ Accordingly, it is only from the point of view of *ākāra* [as the image of the object] that they are said to be having the same *ākāra*. . . .

Question: From the point of view of which of the two—the mode of understanding or the *ākāra* [in the sense of an image]—is the perceiver so called?

Explanation: From the point of view of the latter, not the former: When the *citta*, etc., is confronted with the object, an image appears; in this sense [the *citta*, etc.,] is called the perceiver, and the object is the perceived. This is because, when the *citta-caittas* perceive an object, they do not do like a lamp-flame radiating its ray to reach an object, or like a pair of pincers grasping an object.⁵⁴ It is from the

perspective of the manifestation of the image that the perceiver and the perceived are so called.⁵⁵

Pu Guang's explanation that *ākāra* connotes both a mode of understanding and an image is likely to have been influenced by the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra stance. It shows that Xuan Zang's tradition describes the Sarvāstivāda theory as *sākāra* because (1) the conjoined *citta-caittas* are said to have the same *ākāra*, which Pu Guang takes in the sense of the object's image; and (2) the school speaks of a sensory consciousness arising with an image of the object. But, as we have observed, unlike the Sautrāntika, the Sarvāstivāda consistently equates *ākāra* with *prajñā*, so that only Pu Guang's interpretation of *ākāra* as "a mode of understanding" may be acceptable, even though at the same time his exposition of the Sarvāstivāda theory here is otherwise basically correct. In particular, his interpretation that *ākāra* can refer to the image of an object that "arises spontaneously without the need of any mental application" contradicts the Sarvāstivāda explanation of it as a mental application. Moreover, it must be noted that the Chinese *Abhidharmāvatāra* passage cited by him uses the word 影像, which clearly means an image, and not 行相, which is Xuan Zang's usual rendering for *ākāra*. In the corresponding example given in the *Abhidharmadīpa* (109; see also note 43) too, the word used is "pratinidhi" instead of "*ākāra*." Since both texts are authored by orthodox Vaibhāṣika masters, it seems safe enough to surmise that in the Sarvāstivāda epistemological theory, the image arising in the sensory consciousness is not an *ākāra*—a mental construction by *prajñā*—but an image essentially belonging to the object, not the mind. And as Pu Guang says, it arises spontaneously like a reflection in a mirror: the reflection does not belong to the mirror, which is always clear by nature.

Pu Guang's discussion on the meaning of *sākāra* above refers to the Sarvāstivāda tenet that the conjoined *citta-caittas* are all *sākāra*—having the same *ākāra*, as discussed *supra*. In another context, all mental dharmas are also described as *sākāra*, "with an *ākāra*." But what this term means in this context becomes controversial. Vasubandhu raises the question in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* that since the *caitta prajñā* itself is *ākāra*, *sākāra* in this context would imply that *prajñā*, as a mental dharma, is conjoined with another *prajñā*, which is against the *Abhidharmika* tenet.⁵⁶ He proposes to avoid this apparent contradiction by defining *ākāra* as the "object-grasping-mode (*ālambana-grahaṇa-prakāra*) of all the *citta-caittas*."⁵⁷ In this way, *prajñā* too, as a *caitta*, can

be said to be “with an *ākāra*.” Yaśomitra states that this is a Sautrāntika definition. However, if the sense of compound means a mode of understanding in the perceptual process, and not an image, then it is essentially Sarvāstivāda rather than Sautrāntika. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Vasubandhu here does not contest the *Mahāvibhāṣā* statement that *ākāra* is *prajñā*, and in fact proceeds to conclude with the same threefold classification of dharmas (*ākāra*, *ākārayati*, *ākāryate*) as we have seen in the *Mahāvibhāṣā* passage quoted above. This is, however, not to say that Vasubandhu’s definition of *ākāra* is identical with that of the Sarvāstivāda. It is for this reason that Saṃghabhadra objects to it, demanding from Vasubandhu more articulation on his definition:

Herein, the Sūtrakāra affiliates himself with another school, and asserts thus: “What is called *ākāra* is the object-grasping-mode by the *citta-caittas*.” This does not necessarily conform to logic. It must be considered what is meant by the “object-grasping-mode.” If it refers to the different modes/species of the form of the object, then the notion that all [*citta-caittas*] can assume the image-form (能像) [of the object] cannot be established at all, for an object has various forms, skillful, permanent, etc. Or rather, the *rūpa-dharmas* are to be subsumed under *ākāra*, since *rūpa-dharmas* can also assume the images of the forms of others. If it refers to the ability to grasp the specific characteristic of the object, then *ākāra* ought not be possible for the five [sensory] consciousnesses, since they are not capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object—since only a discriminative (*sa-vikalpaka*) consciousness is capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object [in the form:] “It is blue, not green,” etc. However, this is not what is conceded [by his definition]. Hence [his definition] is logically invalid.⁵⁸

Saṃghabhadra’s objections confirm our surmise above that for the Sarvāstivāda, *ākāra* does not mean the specific form or image of the object. It refers to the operation of *prajñā* at the stage of mental consciousness and is not applicable in the case of a sensory perception. After criticizing Vasubandhu’s definition, Saṃghabhadra then proceeds to claim that the Sarvāstivāda explanation is the correct one: (1) The *prajñā* that operates investigatively with regard to the object is said to be the *ākāra*. (2) All *citta-caitta-dharmas*, including *prajñā*, are said to be “those which cognize with a form,” which is synonymous with “those which grasp objects”—*prajñā* investigates the object, *vedanā* feels it, *saṃjñā* grasps its appearance, *viññāna* becomes conscious of it, etc.⁵⁹ (3) All dharmas, real or unreal, are equally said to be “those

that are cognized with a form.” In other words, this explanation leads to the same threefold classification as given in *Mahāvibhāṣā* that Saṃghabhadra in fact spells out explicitly in his conclusion.⁶⁰ But although the Vaibhāṣika doctrine of sensory perception can legitimately be labelled as a form of *nirākāra-jñānavāda*, we have seen above that the *pratyakṣa* of the yogi is said to perceive *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*. This perspective is also discernible from the three types of *pratyakṣa* enumerated by Saṃghabhadra: (1) that which is dependent on the sense faculty (依根現量, *indriyāstra-pratyakṣa*), (2) that which is experience (領納現量, *anubhāva-pratyakṣa*), and (3) that which is discernment (覺了現量, **buddhi-pratyakṣa*). The first refers to the direct grasping (*pratyakṣam-√grah?*), supported by the five sense faculties, of the five types of external objects, *rūpa*, etc. The second refers to the coming into the present of the *citta-caitta-dharmas*, *vedanā*, *saṃjñā*, etc. The third refers to the direct realization (*sākṣāt-√kr*) of the specific or common characteristic (*sva-sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*)—accordingly as the cases may be—of dharmas.⁶¹ From this, it is clear that it is the visual consciousness, not the mere seeing by the eye, that is *indriya-pratyakṣa*. The second type of *pratyakṣa* is intrinsically linked up with the first in as much as these *caittas* become present at the first moment of the perceptual process together with visual consciousness, sensing and categorizing (albeit weakly), etc., on the very same object that is being grasped generically by visual consciousness. The third type is mental consciousness that follows immediately from the first moment. It can still be considered a type of immediate perception since it is a clear, vivid perception directly induced by the immediately preceding sensory perception.⁶² Saṃghabhadra’s articulation, that the **buddhi-pratyakṣa* is the direct realization of either *svalakṣaṇa* or *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* accordingly as the case may be, can be comprehended as follows: So long as the contribution from the co-nascent *caittas* are still weak, it too, like the preceding consciousness, can only apprehend the mere object, e.g., a blue color; it is therefore a grasping of *svalakṣaṇa*. But when the contribution is strong enough and it can apprehend, using name, “it is blue,” etc., it is apprehending universals—such as *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*.⁶³ This is then not a case of *pratyakṣa*. The mode of activity (*ākāra* = *prajñā*) that functions at this time can be erroneous. However, in the case of spiritual realization—“realization-knowledge” (證智, *pratyakṣa-buddhi*, **pratyakṣa-jñāna*, *adhigama-jñāna*)—the meditator apprehends directly, truly as they are, the universal characteristics of all dharmas. The modes of activity in

this case differ not the slightest from the true nature of the dharmas being examined. This is a case of direct seeing or immediate perception par excellence (真現量, *bhūta-pratyakṣa, *tattva-pratyakṣa)⁶⁴—without any conceptualization, even though *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* is involved. For this reason the Sarvāstivāda identifies the sixteen *ākāras* pertaining to the four noble truths with *prajñā*—operating as spiritual insight. *Mahāvibhāṣā* states that “outside the sixteen *ākāras*, there is no other outflow-free *prajñā*,” and “The *prajñās* not subsumed under the sixteen *ākāras* mostly discern *svalakṣaṇas*; the *prajñās* subsumed under sixteen *ākāras* discern only *sāmānya-lakṣaṇas*.”⁶⁵

Samghabhadra argues that simultaneous causality obtains in a sensory perception; the sensory faculty and the object as the causes and the sensory consciousness as the effect all arise in the same first moment. Moreover, *vedanā*, the instrumental force for *anubhāva*,⁶⁶ must be “conjoined (*saṃprayukta*) with” consciousness—which entails not only simultaneity, but also that both take the same object, etc.⁶⁷ In fact, a sensory consciousness necessarily has a present perceptual object, or it will not be possible for one to have the *pratyakṣa* experience. For, with regard to what is personally sensed, one experiences it and discerns it at different times. That is, the *anubhāva-pratyakṣa* and *buddhi-pratyakṣa* are not simultaneous. Discernment occurs at the state of recollection, taking the experience—the *vedanā*—that has just ceased as its object. Accordingly, “a sensation—pleasurable, etc.—must first be experienced by the *anubhāva-pratyakṣa* before a *pratyakṣa* discernment can arise having it as its perceptual object. Likewise, an external object must first be experienced by *indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa* before a *pratyakṣa* discernment can arise having it as the perceptual object, by virtue of the thrust of presentness.”⁶⁸ This is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda view that the *citta-caitta-dharmas* cannot discern themselves or those conjoined or coexist with them.⁶⁹ Samghabhadra argues that since the Sautrāntika maintains that on account of causation being successive, an external object in the preceding moment has not been experienced directly (*pratyakṣam*), there can be no possibility of a subsequent discernment that is of the nature of *pratyakṣa*⁷⁰—having the thrust of vividness and immediacy.

The Sautrāntika, on the other hand, argues that not mere recollection but rather the simultaneity of the experiencing (*anubhāva*) and the discerning (*buddhi*) must be admitted to account for such an experience.⁷¹ That is, unless one is self-aware of what one is presently

cognizing or knowing—that is, unless what is termed *sva-saṃvedana*⁷² in later Buddhist logical texts is a fact—one cannot in the subsequent moment recollect as a *pratyakṣa* understanding in the manner: “I have experienced such a pleasure or pain.”⁷³

CONCLUSION

The *abhidharma* texts shed considerable light on the perceptual theories of the Sarvāstivāda and the Sautrāntika—and even to some extent the Yogācāra. Already in *Mahāvibhāṣā*, we come across an articulated conception of *pratyakṣa*, even though no formal definition as such is found.⁷⁴ From **Nyāyānusāra*, we learn that its theory of simultaneous causality notwithstanding, the Sarvāstivāda school, as much as the Sautrāntika, holds that sensory perception as a *pratyakṣa* experience is fully accomplished only in the second moment on recollection. The reasoning is that the external object must first be experienced by the *indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa* before a *buddhi*—the *buddhi-pratyakṣa*—having that *pratyakṣa* as its *ālambana* can arise.

Both the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika seek to account for the sense of vividness and immediacy necessarily entailed in a *pratyakṣa* understanding, albeit via somewhat different mechanism. The former relies on the principle of simultaneous causality in the perceptual act and on the co-nascence of the sensory consciousness with *vedanā* and the other *mahā-bhūmika-citta-caittas*. The latter, while rejecting simultaneous causality, maintains that in the *pratyakṣa* act, the experiencing (*anubhāva*) and the discerning (*buddhi*) are necessarily simultaneous—the perceptual act is intrinsically self-aware. The result, though, is the same: its doctrine of successive causation notwithstanding, it equally arrives at the second moment as the time of the full achievement of the *pratyakṣa* experience.

The Sarvāstivāda school, in its various texts, consistently equates *ākāra* with *prajñā*, both being defined as the investigative operation with regard to the perceptual object. This is in contrast to the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra for whom *ākāra* connotes both an image/representation and a mental understanding arising in the mind—with the difference that the Sautrāntika would regard it as a correspondent to an external existent. To this extent, therefore, it is inappropriate to describe the Sarvāstivāda theory of sensory perception—said to be non-discriminative on account of the weak functioning of *prajñā*

therein—as *sākāra-jñānavāda*. On the other hand, we must note that the *pratyakṣa* of the yogi is said to perceive *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*. This perspective is also discernible from the explanation on *buddhi-pratyakṣa*. This is the case of *satyābhisamaya*, in which the outflow-free *ākāras* perceived by the yogi are not conceptual understanding. They correspond truly and exactly to the *sāmānya-lakṣaṇas* as universal principles pertaining to the absolute truth (*paramārtha*). This perception is therefore also a *pratyakṣa* experience, in fact *pratyakṣa* par excellence—and in as much as it involves *ākāras*, is describable as a form of *sākāra-jñāna*. *Prajñā* at this stage is truly non-discriminative/non-superimposing, though not in the *Vijñānavādin* sense of transcending the “subject-object” dichotomy. This *Sarvāstivāda* notion that a practitioner endowed with true spiritual insight perceives reality through *ākāras* might well have influenced those members among the latter-day *Yogācārins* who opt for the view that even for those who have acquired the non-discriminative insight (*nirvikalpaka-jñāna*) too, knowledge is *sākāra*.

NOTES

1. See *Nyāyānusāra 374b et seq. and 447b et seq. It should be noted that the Sautrāntika conception of consciousness being self-aware, though clearly visible, is nowhere termed in *Nyāyānusāra specifically as *sva-saṃvedana* as in the later Sautrāntika-Yogācāra logical texts.

2. 智縁非有, 亦二決定.

3. *Nyāyānusāra 628c.

4. P. S. Jaini, ed., *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāṣāprabhāṛtti* (Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1959), 47: “*dārṣṭāntikasya hi sarvam apratyakṣam*.”

5. Saṃghabhadra (*Nyāyānusāra 398b) regards this doctrine—and for that matter other doctrines, such as *vāsanā* or *aviprañāṣa-dharma* (of the Sāṃmitīya)—as just a version of the well known *bīja* theory of the Sautrāntika.

6. *Nyāyānusāra 440b.

7. Ibid. 442b.

8. This dualistic aspect of the *anudhātu* has provoked Saṃghabhadra’s objection:

Within one moment, there exist no subdivision within the single *citta* entity; how can there be the inducing of the fruits that are desirable, non-desirable, or neither? For the cause of determinate differentiation cannot be obtained [does not exist]. Moreover, at all times there ought to be the simultaneous arising of *cittas* which are skillful, unskillful, and neither. Yet, [such a situation] is not permissible, since these *cittas* are contradictory [in nature] among themselves. That is to say: at the stage when a skillful *citta* is manifesting, the unskillful and neutral (*avyākṛta*) *citta-dhātus* are always accompanying; and since they are not existing as entities distinct from the *citta*, on what logical basis can one assert that they do not manifest? The same objection applies to the cases when a *citta* of the other two natures [unskillful and neutral] is manifesting.

Moreover, he must explain why there arises subsequently only a *citta* of one [specific] species—given that within the one *citta*, *citta-dhātus* of diverse species are accompanying. . . . (*Nyāyānusāra 441c)

9. Mitomo Kenyō 三友健容 has already noted this similarity in his “舊隨界について” (“On **pūrvānudhātu*”), *Indogaku Bukkyogaku Kenkyū* 25, no. 1 (1976): 29. He, however, suggests there (on p. 28) that the term *anudhātu* signifies that within the one *citta*, many *dhātus* are perfumed. We would, however, rather believe that *dhātu* and *anudhātu* have essentially the same signification—both are synonyms of *bīja*. If there is any difference, it is only that *anudhātu* in some sense is more articulate in conveying the significance of *bīja*.

10. *Nyāyānusāra 442a.

11. Ibid., 359a.

12. In this perspective, both physical and mental dharmas can equally have *samanantara-pratyayas* (*Nyāyānusāra 445a)—in contrast to the Sarvāstivāda, which admits of this *pratyaya* only in the case of the *citta-caittas*.

13. The Yogācāra most likely had inherited the *bīja* doctrine of the Sautrāntika and differs importantly from the latter in upholding and emphasizing the *sahabhū* causality. Nevertheless, one cannot help noting here the similarity in the Yogācāra reference of *dhātu* to the *ālaya-vijñāna*. Consider the following stanza from the apparently rather ancient text, *Mahāyānābhidharma-sūtra, cited in Asaṅga's *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha (T. no. 1594, 133b, etc.), which refers to the *ālaya-vijñāna* as the *anādikālika-dhātu* (Tib. *thog ma med pa'i dus kyi dbyigs*):

anādikāliko dhātuḥ sarva-dharma-samāśrayaḥ |
tasmīn sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhiḡamo 'pi vā ||

This is quoted as a proof of the existence of the *ālaya-vijñāna*. It is to be noted in this context that the *dhātu*, which is the *āśraya* of all dharmas, is given in the singular. (It is also cited in Sthiramati's *Triṃśikā vijñapti bhāṣya* [hereafter *Triṃśikā*] as reproduced in *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi: Deux Traites de Vasubandhu*, ed. S. Lévi [Paris: Honore Champion, 1925], 37).

14. *Nyāyānusāra 447c.

15. Cf. Vācaspatimiśra's description of the Buddhist position in his *Nyāyakaṇikā*, quoted in Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, 2 vols., Indian ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), 2:353ff.

16. R. C. Pandeya, ed., *Pramāṇavārttikam of Ācārya Dharmakīrti, with the Commentaries Svopajñāvṛtti of the Author and Pramāṇavārttikavṛtti of Manorathanandin* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), 115, stanza 247:

bhinnakālaṃ katham grāhyam iti ced grāhyatām viduḥ |
hetutvam eva ca vyakter jñānākārpaṇa-kṣamam ||

This is cited in various logical texts—*Nyāya-vārtikā-tātparya-ṭikā* 101.14; *Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha*, ed. T. G. Mainkar (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1978), 36; Mokṣākaragupta's *Tarkabhāṣā*, ed. Embar Krishnamacharya (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1942), 8. Cf. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, 2:360; Satkari Mookerjee, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux*, reprint ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993), 338.

17. Cf. T. 31, 888b; *Triṃśikā* 16: *bāhyo hy arthaḥ svābhāsa-vijñāna-janakatvena vijñānasya ālambana-pratyaya iṣyate na kāraṇatva-mātreṇa*. . .

18. Krishnamacharya, *Tarkabhāṣā*, 7. Our text has *pramāṇami*, but Iyengar's version gives *pratyakṣam*; see Kajiyama Yuichi, *An Introduction to Buddhist Phi-*

losophy: An Annotated Translation of the *Tarkabhāṣā* of Mokṣākaragupta (Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetologie und Buddhistische Studien, 1998), 41 n. 71.

19. Krishnamacharya, *Tarkabhāṣā*, 7ff.: “*artha-svarūpa-sākṣātkāri hi jñānaṃ pratyakṣaṃ sarveṣāṃ sammatam | na ca kalpanāvibhramāv arthaṃ sākṣātkarttuṃ samarthau | tathā hi artha-grāhakaṃ jñānam arthasya kāryam | artho hi grāhyatvāt jñānasya kāraṇam.*”

20. *Ibid.*, 8.

21. *Ibid.*, 34: “*sautrāntikānāṃ matam | jñānam evedaṃ sarvaṃ nīlādy-ākāreṇa pratibhāt | na bāhyo ’rthaḥ | jaḍasya prakāśāyogāt | yathoktam | svākāra-buddhi-janakā dṛśyā nendriyagocarāḥ.*”

22. The difference between the way *pratyakṣa* makes known the external object that is spatio-temporally determined (*niyata*) through its *ākāra* and that in which *anumāna* makes known the object through the marks (*liṅga*) connected with it is explained by Dharmottara in *Nyāyabinduṭīkā*, Bibliotheca Buddhica 7, Indian repr. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), 3: “*yasmād yasminn arthe pratyakṣasya sākṣātkāritva-vyāpāro vikalpenānugamyate tasya pradarśakaṃ pratyakṣaṃ tasmād dṛṣṭatayā jñātaḥ pratyakṣa-darśitaḥ | anumānaṃ tu liṅga-darśanān niścinvatpravṛtti-viśayaṃ darśayati | tathā ca pratyakṣaṃ pratibhāsamānaṃ niyatam arthaṃ darśayati | anumānaṃ ca liṅgasaṃbaddhaṃ niyatam arthaṃ darśayati.*”

23. See Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, 2:358ff.

24. Krishnamacharya, *Tarkabhāṣā*, 11ff.: “*yadi punaḥ sākāraṃ jñānaṃ neṣyate tadā ’nākāratvena sarvatra viśaye tulyatvāt vibhāgena viśaya-vyavasthā na syād iti.*” Cf. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, 2:351ff.

25. Cf. *Nyāyabinduṭīkā*: “*arthasārūpyam asya pramāṇam ||20|| arthena saha yat sārūpyam asya jñānasya tat pramāṇam | iha yasmād viśayāj jñānam udeti tad viśaya-sadrśaṃ tad bhavati | yathā nīlād tpadyamānaṃ nīla-sadrśam | tac ca sādṛśyam ākāra ity ābhāsa ity api vyapadiśyate.*”

26. “*nīla-sadrśaṃ tv anubhūyamānaṃ nīlasya samvedanam avasthāpyate | na cātra janya-janaka-bhāva-nibandhanaḥ sādhyā-sādhana-bhāvo yenaikasmin vastuni virodhaḥ syāt | api tu vyavasthāpya-vyavasthāpaka-bhāvena | tata ekasya vastunaḥ kiṃcid rūpaṃ pramāṇaṃ kiṃcit pramāṇa-phalaṃ na virudhyate.*” Cf. Krishnamacharya, *Tarkabhāṣā*, 11: “*iha nīlāder arthāt jñānaṃ dvirūpam utpadyate | nīlākāraṃ nīlābodha-svarūpaṃ ca | tatrānīlākāra-vyāvṛtṭyā nīlākāraṃ jñānaṃ pramāṇam | anīla-bodha-vyāvṛtṭyā nīla-bodha-svarūpaṃ pramitiḥ | saiva phalam | yathoktam [quoting Dharmakīrti:] artha-sārūpyam asya pramāṇam arthādhigatiḥ pramāṇa-phalam iti | etac ca vikalpa-pratyayena bhinnam vyavasthāpyate | paramārtha-vastuno nāsty eva bhedaḥ | yathoktam [Dharmakīrti:] tad eva pratyakṣaṃ jñānaṃ pramāṇa-phalam iti.*”

27. Krishnamacharya, *Tarkabhāṣā*, 35: “*nanu yadi prakāśamānaṃ jñānam evedaṃ*

tadā 'sti bāhyo 'rtha iti kutaḥ | bāhyārtha-siddhiḥ syād vyatirekataḥ | na hi sarvatra sarvadā nilādaya ākārāḥ prakāśante | na caitad svopādānamātra-bala-bhāvitve sati yujyate | niyata-viśaye pravṛtṭiyogāt | tasmād asti kiñcid eṣāṃ samanantara-pratyaya-vyatiriktaṃ kārāṇāṃ yad-balena kvacit kadācicca bhavantīti śakyam avaśātum | sa eva bāhyo 'rtha iti."

28. Nyāyabinduṭīkā 16: "tasmād adhyavasāyaṃ kurvad eva pratyakṣaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati | akṛte tv adhyavasāye nila-bodha-rūpatvenāvyavasthāpitaṃ bhavati vijñānam."

29. Nyāyabinduṭīkā 16: "naitad evaṃ | yasmāt pratyakṣa-balotpannenādhyavasāyena dṛṣṭatvenārtho 'vaśiyate notprekṣitatvena | darśanaṃ cārtha-sākṣātkaraṇākhyāṃ pratyakṣa-vyāpāraḥ | utprekṣaṇaṃ tu vikalpa-vyāpāraḥ."

30. T. 29, 349a.

31. Cf. Nyāyabinduṭīkā 16: "sva-vyāpāraṃ tiraskṛtya pratyakṣa-vyāpāraṃ ādarśayati. . ."

32. T. 31, 889c: "又若自許不於識外緣其實事，應有有法自相違過。然法稱不許. . ."

33. T. 31, 888c. This treatise at the very outset (888b) groups the realists' views into two: (1) the atoms themselves as real substances (*dravya*) constitute the perceptual object; (2) a unified complex is the perceptual object (*Sautrāntika*). The first group is further elaborated as two: (1a) the individual atoms themselves; (1b) the agglomerated form generated by virtue of the mutual assistance of the atoms existing together (an interpretation of the *Vaiśiṣṭika* view). See also Dignāga's opinion (*pratyakṣa-pariccheda*) in Masaaki Hattori, *Dignāga, On Perception: Being the Pratyakṣapariccheda of Dignāga's Pramāṇasamuccaya from the Sanskrit Fragments and the Tibetan Versions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 33, and n. 2.17.

34. Translation (with slight adaptation) by Hattori, *Dignāga*, 26.

35. See *ibid.*, 25, and n. 26.

36. See the statement by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla in *Tattvasaṃgraha of Śāntarakṣita with the Commentary of Kamalaśīla*, ed. E. Krishnamacharya, 2 vols., Gaewad's Oriental Series 30–31 (Baroda: Central Library, 1926), stanzas 1239–1242, especially on p. 374; cf. Hattori, *Dignāga*, 83 n. 26, which also cites Mallavādin's *Dvādaśāra-nayacakra*, 59.2–60.1, where *kalpanā* is explained in terms of *nirūpaṇānusmaraṇa-vikalpanā*: "athā kā kalpanā | nāma-jāti-guṇa-kriyā-dravya-svarūpāpanna-vastv-antara-nirūpaṇānusmaraṇa-vikalpanā."

37. E.g., *Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha* 46 and 368–371, which classifies the Buddhist schools in terms of *ākāravāda*.

38. Cf. Pu Guang's commentary on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, T. 41, 27a; and Kuei Ji's commentary on the *Vijñapti mātratā siddhi* (成唯識論, T. no. 1585) in

T. 43, 269c, 318a.

39. H. Saddhatissa, ed., *The Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha of Bhadantācariya Anuruddha and the Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-ṭīkā of Bhadantācariya Sumaṅgalasāmi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 17.

40. *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T. 27, no. 1545), 408c–409a.

41. Cf. P. Pradhan, ed., *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu* (Patna: Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975), 54: “*matih prajñā dharma-pravicayaḥ*.” See also Jaini, *Abhidharmadīpa*, 70: “*dhiḥ prajñā dharma-saṃgrahādy-upalakṣaṇa-svabhāvā*.”

42. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 36a; **Nyāyānusāra* 623b.

43. **Nyāyānusāra* 741b. See also *infra*.

44. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 929a.

45. Cf. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 45c, which states explicitly that the *ākāra* of this form is *prajñā*. *Mahāvibhāṣā* (42c, 43a) explains that within two moments, one can come to acquire such a knowledge with regard to the totality of dharmas.

46. There are four *ākāras* for each truth: for example, *duḥkha-satya*: *duḥkhatā*, *sūnyatā*, *anityatā*, and *nairātmya*. See Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 343.

47. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 53a. Cf. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 108.

48. Cf. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 399: “*kāśmīṇaṃ tāvat nāmalah ṣoḍaśabhyo 'nya ākāraḥ nāsty anāsravākāraḥ ṣoḍaśākāra-nirmuktaḥ*.” For the *Vaiśiṣṭika* tenet that the sixteen *ākāras* are *prajñā*, see also *ibid.*, 401.

49. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 399c–400a.

50. **Nyāyānusāra* 735c. Saṃghabhadra argues against an opinion held by certain masters that *anvaya* (類) here means “comparison” (比類): the comparison of facts not directly perceived with those that are directly perceived. It receives the name “*anvaya-jñāna*” as it is subsumed under “inference” (*anumāna*). Yaśomitra (in *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharma-kośa-vyākhyā*, ed. U. Wogihara, 2 vols. [Tokyo: Publishing Association of Abhidharmakośavyākhyā, 1932–1936], 542) explains *tad-anvaya* as *tad-dhetuka*—having the *dharma-jñāna* as cause—thus dissenting from the *Vaiśiṣṭika* view. Harivarman (in **Satya-siddhi*, 藏要 edition [Nanking, 1930], 245) too rejects the Sarvāstivāda definition above and declares his adherence to the sutra when giving the same opinion thus: “The knowledge of the present dharma is named *dharma-jñāna*. As it is said in the sutra, the Buddha told Ānanda, ‘With regard to these dharmas, see thus, know thus, penetrate thus. Know the past and future [dharma] also thus. The knowledge of the remaining—i.e., the past and future—dharmas is named *anvaya-jñāna* . . . *dharma-jñāna* is *pratyakṣa-jñāna* (現智). Following this *dharma-jñāna* one deliberates and knows inferentially—this is called *anvaya-jñāna*.”

51. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 490c.

52. The Vaibhāṣika tenet is that *citta* and *caittas* co-arise necessarily. They are said to be conjoined (*saṃprayukta*).

53. T. 28, no. 1554, 987c. Tibetan version of *Abhidharmāvatāra*: “*shes pa bzhin du don gyi tshul gyi gnas lta bu’i rnam par rang gi don khong du chud par byed pa*”: “Just like *jñāna* which causes the understanding of *svārtha* (*svārtha-pratyāyana*) in the form of a representation of the *artha*.” Cf. Jaini, *Abhidharmadīpa*, 109: “*jñānavat | tadyathā jñānaṃ cakṣurādīn hetūnapekṣyārthaṃ vibhāvayati*”; and 111: “*jñānavat | tadyathā jñānaṃ cakṣurādīn hetūnapekṣyārthaṃ vibhāvayati*.”

54. Pu Guang seems to have gotten these two examples illustrating that consciousness simply arises with an image of the perceptual object from *Siddhi*(C) (成唯識論, T. no. 1585). Cf. *Siddhi*(C) 93c; and Kuei Ji’s commentary on *Siddhi*(C), T. 43, 493c–494a.

55. T. 41, 26b–c.

56. Cf. *Mahāvibhāṣā*, 79c.

57. Cf. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 401: “*prajñākāraḥ | evaṃ tarhi prajñā sākāra na bhaviṣyati | prajñāntarāsaṃ[pra]yogāt | evaṃ tu yuktaṃ syāt | sarveṣāṃ citta-caittānām ālambana-graḥaṇa-prakāra iti*.”

58. **Nyāyānusāra* 741b.

59. Saṃghabhadra does seem to acknowledge that *sākāra* in this context needs interpretation to avoid the difficulty pointed out by Vasubandhu, and he proposes a few of them (**Nyāyānusāra* 741a–b). Besides the one he gives in the conclusion here, another one given beforehand is that the *citta-caittas* are all said to be *sākāra* because they equally (i.e., simultaneously) with *ākāra* (= *prajñā*) operate on the object. This is compared to the term *sāsrava*: an object being equal to the *āsrava* is said to be “with *āsrava*” in the sense that it requires the same counteractive agent (*pratipakṣa*) as the *āsrava* itself.

60. Ibid.

61. T. 29, 736a.

62. Cf. Pu Guang’s explanation in T. 41, 135b.

63. Besides *prajñā*, *saṃjñā* also is a contributing factor for the *abhinirūpaṇā*. This is clear from the fact that its functioning is said to involve a synthetic comprehension of appearance (*nimitta*), name (*nāma*), and signification (*artha*). Thus, the *Avatāra* defines it as “that which understands, by combining conceptually (*saṃjñā*) the appearance, name and signification [of a dharma]. That is, with regard to matter like blue, yellow, long, and short [figures], etc. . . . dharmas like males and females, etc.: it understands them [in each case] by conceptually combining together (*eka-saṃjñā*) their appearances, names, and signification. It is the cause of *vitarka*” (T. no. 1554, 981c). Cf. Jaini, *Abhidharmadīpa*, 69: “*nimitta-nāmārthaikyajñā saṃjñā vitarkayoniḥ*.”

It is on account of the contribution from *saṃjñā* that mental consciousness is able to operate by means of name (= *adhivacana*), which is therefore said to be the additional perceptual object (*adhikam ālambanam*) of mental contact (*manah-saṃsparśa*) (Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 144). Saṃghabhadra comments that it is “additional” because mental consciousness takes both *nāma* and *artha* as its object, whereas the five sensory consciousnesses do not take *nāma* as their perceptual objects (*Nyāyānusāra 506c). The functional difference that results from this factor of name is explained in the *Vijñāna-kāyaśāstra* as follows: “The visual consciousness can only apprehend a blue color (*nīlam*), but not ‘it is blue’ (*no tu nīlam iti*). Mental consciousness can also apprehend a blue color. [But] so long as it is not yet able to apprehend its name, it cannot apprehend ‘it is blue.’ When it can apprehend its name, then it can also apprehend ‘it is blue’” (T. 26, 559b–559c; cf. *Nyāyānusāra 342a). This is in fact cited in part in Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 144, in this very connection: “*adhivacanam ucyate nāma | tat kilāsyādhikam ālambanam . . . | yathoktaṃ cakṣur-vijñānena nīlaṃ vijñānāti no tu nīlam [iti] | mano-vijñānena nīlaṃ vijñānāti nīlam iti ca vijñānātīti*.” The connection between *abhinirūpaṇā* and *saṃjñā* is also conspicuous in the Yogācāra definition of *saṃjñā* given by Sthiramati: “*Saṃjñā* is the grasping of the appearance of an object. The object is the perceptual object. [Its] appearance is its distinctiveness—the cause for establishing the perceptual object as a blue colour, a yellow colour, etc. The grasping of [this appearance] is the determination (*nirūpaṇā*) that ‘this is blue, not yellow’” (*Triṃśikā* 21).

64. Saṃghabhadra (*Nyāyānusāra 684a) speaks of the insight arising in *satyābhisamaya* as the 眞現量證智.

65. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 217a.

66. Cf. Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 229; one making present a feeling is said to experience it: “*saṃmukhīkurvaṃs tu tāṃ vedayata ity ucyate*.”

67. The two in conjunction satisfying the fivefold equality (*samatā*): *āśraya*, *ālambana*, *ākāra*, *kāla*, *dravya* (see Pradhan, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, 62). In this case of a sensory perception, of course, the *ākāra* does not function prominently.

68. *Nyāyānusāra 374c.

69. *Mahāvibhāṣā* 42c; *Nyāyānusāra 742a–b.

70. *Nyāyānusāra 374c–375a.

71. *Ibid.*, 374c.

72. Candrakīrti criticizes this as a Sautrāntika doctrine. See Louis de La Vallée-Poussin, “Madhyamakāvatāra, Introduction au Traité du milieu de l’Ācārya Candrakīrti, avec le commentaire de l’auteur, traduit d’après l’aversion tibétaine,” *Le Muséon* 11 (1910): 272–358.

73. *Nyāyānusāra 574c.

74. See K. L. Dhammajoti, “Logic in the *Abhidharma-mahā-vibhāṣā*,” *Journal of Buddhist Studies* 2 (Colombo; January 2004): 180ff.

Aparimitāyus: “Tantra” and “Pure Land” in Medieval Indian Buddhism?

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN I WAS A GRADUATE STUDENT, I spent late nights exploring the deeper recesses of the stacks at the University of California’s Doe Library. There I came across a wealth of instances of older literature on Buddhism, including a substantial number of German language publications. Searching through these holdings, I found the publications of Max Walleser, including his study and translation of a text from Nepal, the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* (an English translation of Walleser’s German is appended here).¹ Initially I was attracted to this text because it appeared to be simultaneously a Pure Land and a Vajrayana text, offering longevity and birth in Sukhāvatī through the recitation of a *dhāraṇī*. This struck me, those many years ago, as delightfully transgressive—it confounded the neat categories so familiar in the Buddhist studies of the 1970s, categories whose boundaries are overly-sharp, ahistorical, and either sectarian or ethnically defined. Since these boundaries continue to plague the field, the text continues to be a useful means of confounding these categories.

More recently, however, reflection on this literature has led me to three questions. The first has to do with the way in which the origins of East Asian Pure Land Buddhism in medieval India are studied. The second has to do with what it means to talk about “a buddha.” And, the third concerns the nature of *dhāraṇī* and the definition of tantra. The balance of this Introduction will discuss the literature associated with *Aparimitāyus* and the characteristics of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* itself.

The Tibetan Buddhist canon contains ten titles that include the name of this buddha in their title, two of which are also found in Chinese translation.² Given that this seems like a small body of literature, and that there is apparently no interest in *Aparimitāyus* among contemporary Buddhists and exceedingly little interest among contemporary Buddhist scholars, what is the import of this corpus?³ In addition to the linguistic interest identified by Walleser, the archeological record indicates that it was one of the most frequently copied sutras in Dunhuang, and apparently also enjoyed wide popularity in Nepal.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEXT

The *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* embodies a variety of the characteristics typical of late medieval Indian Mahayana, specifically what Gregory Schopen has called the cult of the book. *Sukhāvatī* as a general goal within Mahayana Buddhism and associations with the *caitya* are both aspects of the cult of the book found in this sutra.

Does the presence of a promise of birth in *Sukhāvatī* for those who copy out the text in itself establish that this text is part of or specifically influenced by the cult of *Amitābha*? In Schopen's analysis this is not the case. Rather, *Sukhāvatī* is a free-floating mytheme within late Indian Mahayana, or what Schopen calls "a generalized goal." He says,

The fact that rebirth in *Sukhāvatī* is promised as a reward in conjunction with the cult of the book, or the cult of a specific book, that is to say a cult form separate and independent from the cult of *Amitābha*, once again clearly indicates that *Sukhāvatī* here must have certainly been conceived of as a generalized religious goal in no way attached specifically to the cult of *Amitābha*.⁴

As a free-floating mytheme, *Sukhāvatī* is frequently used to support a practice associated with a different buddha.

According to Schopen, the cult of the book constituted a later innovation that put it in competition with the worship of *caitya*. He says that the cult of the book "did not develop in isolation. It had to contend at every step with the historical priority and the dominance of the *stūpa*/relic cult of early Buddhism in the milieu in which it was attempting to establish itself."⁵ Among other sources, Schopen notes that in the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* we find the following: "That country in

which they thus write the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, that country would become worthy of worship like a *caitya*.”⁶

We can see therefore that the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* has the characteristics typical of the period of medieval Indian Mahayana when cultic practices related to books were being asserted to be of equal value to those related to relics. Additionally, the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* offers birth in Sukhāvatī and other benefits to those who copy it out, justifications of its importance additional to equating the sutra’s value to that of a *caitya* as the object of cultic devotions.

In addition to the cultic emphasis on the book itself, the emphasis on a buddha whose name is so similar to the classically Pure Land buddha, Amitābha, as well as the centrality of a *dhāraṇī* create the anomaly alluded to above—should this text (together with its related texts) be considered part of the developing Pure Land Buddhist tradition or as a part of tantric Buddhism? Silk notes that this question has come up “a number of times in the scholarly literature. Is this a Pure Land text? Is it a Tantric text?”⁷ As will be discussed more fully below, the simple presence of a *dhāraṇī* may not be sufficient to characterize a text as tantric. In more detail, however, Silk points out that “even a broad and vague definition of Tantra” as including “concern with initiations, the role of a personal master or guru, the use of ‘ritual magic,’ however that might be understood, certain types of yogic practice, the use of oppositions or inversions, of maṇḍalas and mudrās and mantras, reference to transcendent tantric deities and the philosophic equation of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the fusion of *prajñā* and *upāya*, and so on” would fail to include the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.⁸ Silk notes, however, that Bu ston, the famed fourteenth-century Tibetan bibliographer, includes the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* in the category of *Kriyā* tantras. (Likewise, the *Taishō* editors considered the sutra to be an esoteric work, including two of the translations [nos. 936 & 937] in the second volume of the “Mikkyō” section [密教, T. vol. 19]).

How are we to assess Bu ston’s decision? Silk comments that “the existence of quite a number of *sādhana*s based on the *sūtra* is of great importance”⁹ when considering Bu ston’s classifications—and this provides us with an important guideline for considering the tantric character of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. Looking at the other *Aparimitāyus* literature found in the Tibetan canon, what we find is that there are several additional texts of a ritual nature that should be taken into account when considering the classification of this or other texts. The

nine other texts include the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-hṛdaya-nāma-dhāraṇī* (P 363 and P 475), the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-sādhana/Aparimitāyur-nāma-sādhana* (P 2990 and P 4886), the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-nāma-sādhana* (P 2992), the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-maṇḍala-vidhi-nāma* (P 2993), the *Aparimitāyur-homa-vidhi-nāma* (P 2994), the *Aparimitāyur-stotra* (P 3522), the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-sādhana* (P 3523), the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-vidhi-nāma* (P 3524), and the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-maṇḍala-vidhi-nāma* (P 4887). The existence of additional texts of this kind—and to my mind particularly the *homa*—point to Aparimitāyus being incorporated into tantric praxis. Silk’s suggestion seems to me to in fact be critical to our reflections here. It provides us with a more adequate way of thinking about how we categorize texts. This indicates that in at least some if not most cases, it is misleading to think of an individual text in isolation. In other words, we need to consider the context—not simply the social, historical, political, economic context that has become expected, but also the more literal “con-text” in the sense of other affiliated texts. At the same time, of course, such classifications must also be historically located. The fact that the unrecorded author of the Aparimitāyus *homa* would seem to have considered Aparimitāyus a tantric deity to the extent of evoking him in a *homa* ritual does not mean that earlier or later Buddhist practitioners would have had the same view. In other words, and perhaps obviously, bibliographic classifications—including “Pure Land” and “tantra”—are themselves historically conditioned. Such conditioning extends beyond bibliographic concerns to include the very formation of these two categories and the common presumption that they are somehow mutually exclusive.

THE ROLE OF APARIMITĀYUS IN THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF PURE LAND BUDDHISM

In relation to the first of the questions raised here, that is, the relation between the Aparimitāyus corpus and the Indian origins of Pure Land Buddhism, Schopen suggests that “there is no evidence, either internal or external . . . that would even vaguely suggest”¹⁰ a direct connection between the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* and the cult of Amitābha. Granting Schopen’s point regarding the relation between the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* and the cult of Amitābha, it would, however, be mistaken to conclude that the cult of Aparimitāyus and its literature should be ignored in the study of the medieval Indian origins of what eventually becomes Pure

Land Buddhism in East Asia considered more generally—this is, after all, a different question. The similarity between the names Amitāyus and Aparimitāyus, and the relation of both to the benefit of longevity, suggest that there is a relation that needs to be pursued more fully.

One of the basic considerations for such a program is establishing at least an approximate historical period for the rise of a cult of Aparimitāyus. This can be partially answered by reference to the known dates of translations of texts into Chinese, and will be discussed more fully below. As far as dating the institution of a cult of Aparimitāyus, distinct from Amitābha and Amitāyus in the history of Buddhism in India, there is an anonymous translation into Chinese from the Liang dynasty period (502–557) (T. vol. 12, no. 370, [K 443], ‡*Aparimitāyurjñān ahrdayadhārāṇī*,¹¹ 阿彌陀鼓音聲王陀羅尼經).¹² Employing the span of a century as a (very) rough approximation of the average delay between a text being completed in India and appearing in Chinese translation, we may estimate that this text was probably written sometime during the first half of the fifth century.¹³

It is also appropriate to ask, as Jan Nattier does of the *Inquiry of Ugra*, why has this Aparimitāyus corpus played no role in the academic study of Buddhism? In the case of the Aparimitāyus literature, this is particularly striking on two counts. First, given the archeological record, it seems to have been one of the most popular bodies of literature in Nepal, in Dunhuang, and elsewhere throughout the Buddhist cosmopolis.¹⁴ Second, it was one of the very first Mahayana texts translated into a Western language, Max Walleser's German translation appearing in 1916. Nattier has suggested three reasons that certain sutras have been selected as representative of the Mahayana. One is "the accident of their survival in Sanskrit," the second is "their importance in Japan," while the third is "their congeniality to contemporary western religious tastes."¹⁵

As the *Aparimatāyuh-sūtra* does survive in Sanskrit—Walleser's translation is of a Nepalese Sanskrit version¹⁶—we can look to the other two of Nattier's three reasons for an explanation of the literature's occlusion. Certainly, the Japanese context provides no hospitable setting for this material. Once Hōnen (1133–1212) had designated the larger and smaller *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtras* and the *Contemplation Sutra* as the "triple sutras of the Pure Land" (*sanbukyō*, 三部經), they came to be seen as defining Pure Land Buddhism—itself a sectarian identification created by Hōnen. Indeed the effect of sectarian historiography can

be seen in Fujita's assertion that "The primary sources for the study of early Pure Land Buddhism are the basic sutras," that is, the three designated as such by Hōnen.¹⁷ Such a retrospectivist view of historical research, that is, allowing what is important to us now to determine how we construct history back then, artificially restricts our range of inquiry and as a consequence distorts our understanding.

Working under the handicap of an artificial limitation of this kind would make it effectively impossible to ask such questions as the ones raised here: who is Aparimitāyus? What was his relation to the development of (proto-)Pure Land Buddhism in India? How widespread was his cult? Did cult practitioners consider him to be the same as or different from the more familiar figures, Amitābha and Amitāyus? Indeed, then, the marginalization of the Aparimitāyus corpus has been affected by contemporary Japanese preconceptions regarding the history of Buddhism, preconceptions that are themselves molded by sectarian ideologies rather than by historiographic methodologies.

The third consideration that Nattier raises—"congeniality to contemporary western religious tastes"—is already found in Walleser's introduction to his translation. Walleser notes that two manuscripts from Stein's Dunhuang findings are of particular linguistic interest because Hörnle has identified the texts as being in the "language of the Śakas," which Hörnle believed—mistakenly—is Khotanese,¹⁸ and that Sanskrit versions are also known of these two.¹⁹ The two sutras in question are the *Vajracchedikā* and the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. Walleser notes that while the *Vajracchedikā* has already been translated in 1881 by Max Müller, the *Aparimitāyuh* had as of his time received no such attention.

Walleser calls attention to the fact that in contrast with the *Vajracchedikā*, the *Aparimitāyuh* "does not measure up to the *Vajracchedikā* by a long way; it is after all definitely not a philosophic text, but rather 'a mystic mantra and the praise thereof as a means of promoting longevity,' a magical expression (*dhāraṇī*) the purpose of which is to produce a long life, the practical interest of which is at best that it shows to what extent superstition had taken hold of the roots of Buddhism during its late stages of development."²⁰ The final comment regarding the hold that superstition had taken on Buddhism in its late Indic period reflects a set of assumptions about the nature of institutional history that has plagued Buddhist studies. Originating with the Romantics, especially Hegel, the metaphor of organic life has been applied to religious and other social institutions.²¹ According to

this metaphor, social institutions such as Buddhism are born, mature, become senescent, decay, and finally die away. This fundamentally organic metaphor has entailed certain conclusions and judgments about the nature of late medieval Indian Buddhism that are not in fact the result of examining the historical record itself. The rhetoric of decadence, that is, the claim that later forms are necessarily decayed, inferior versions of earlier ones, has had a pervasive and misleading role in the representations of not only late Indian but also medieval Japanese Buddhism.²²

Regarding the contents of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, although Waller does not make this particular point, it is clear that it is the predilection of Western scholars to favor doctrinal contents and philosophic expositions that led to the early translation of the *Vajracchedikā* and its continuing role in the representation of Buddhism in the Western literature. This same predilection led to the almost total disregard of the *Aparimitāyuh* and its absence from any of the contemporary treatments of the origins of Pure Land or discussions of Indian Mahayana. One might further suggest that the tendency to take the Perfection of Wisdom literature as paradigmatic for Mahayana is the consequence of its *apparent* compatibility with the neo-Platonic religious conceptions central to modern Western religious culture. Key to this equation on the part of many scholars is the superficial similarity between what are treated by some Western scholars as the paradoxical thinking found in the Perfection of Wisdom literature and the neo-Platonic with its soteriology of paradox.

The privileging of doctrine and philosophy accords with the central role that theology has played in the study of religion from its founding as an academic enterprise into the second half of the twentieth century. Based on Protestant notions of the salvific role of proper belief (orthodoxy) and the correlative denigration of proper practice (orthopraxy), the study of religion in Europe and America focused on doctrine. This was further motivated by the goal of religious studies as it formed in the second half of the nineteenth century, at least in the United States, which was to facilitate the work of missionaries—familiarizing them with the *belief-systems* of non-Christian peoples in order to prepare them to be more effective in convincing these peoples of the falsehood of their beliefs and to convert.²³ This emphasis on doctrine is still reflected in contemporary textbooks in the study of religion, which tend to present what might be best called catechisms for each

of the “world’s major religions.”²⁴ Additionally, the philosophy of religion only further reifies the conception that the only important aspect of religion is its belief-system. All of this led to an almost total disregard of ceremony, pilgrimage, meditation, and ritual, while focusing attention on belief, doctrine, and philosophy as the basis of the field of study. More critically for our considerations here has been the privileging of Buddhist philosophy in the field of Buddhist studies.

Further influencing this marginalization are the ideas of cultural religious progress that structure much of modern scholarship, a narrative structure that is the inverse of the rhetoric of decadence, but which constitutes an equally influential narrative form. The notion of a cultural progress from magic to religion to science, based in the thought of Auguste Comte, was widely accepted in anthropological studies of religion. If my own educational experience is indicative, it was on the basis of these anthropological sources that more than one generation of religious studies scholars formed their conceptions of what constitutes religion as a respectable object of study, and magic as an unrespectable object of study. The association of *dhāraṇī* with magic, then, prevented scholarly attention from being paid to this particular text along with the vast majority of tantric texts for well over a century. Ironically, it seems largely through the association of Tibetan Buddhist scholastic philosophy with tantra that the latter came to be seen as a legitimate area of study for Western scholarship.

Thus, in addition to the context of Japanese Buddhist studies, the lack of “congeniality” between the Aparimitāyus corpus and “contemporary western religious tastes” has led to the text remaining outside the scope of even scholarly attention.²⁵ Historical inquiry, however, needs to self-critically avoid simply repeating the preconceptions of previous scholarship.

LOCATING THE TEXT TEMPORALLY

One of the issues that should complicate the study of the Indian origins of Pure Land Buddhism is the dating of the various texts. Of course, such dating remains difficult and in some cases dependent upon conjecture,²⁶ but reference to the known dates of translators gives us at least some baseline for analysis. In considering the question of the possible relation between the figures Aparimitāyus, Amitāyus,

and Amitābha, the dates of translations span the period from the first to the thirteenth centuries.

The earliest translation into Chinese is of the larger *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra* (T. 361, 無量清淨平等覺經), and although traditionally attributed to Lokakṣema, and thus dated between 147 and 186,²⁷ recent research by Paul Harrison strongly suggests that this is as it stands a revision of Lokakṣema's earlier work by Zhi Quan. The earliest translation of the shorter *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra* (also known as the *Amidakyō*, T. 366, 阿彌陀經) is attributed to Kumārajīva, and dates from approximately 402. The date given for the translation of the *Visualization Sutra* (also known as the *Kanmuryōjūkyō*, T. 365, 觀無量壽經) is sometime between 424 and 453, and although traditionally attributed to Kālayaśas is now considered to be a Chinese apochryphon.²⁸ While there is a two to three hundred year gap between the translation of the larger *Sukhāvatīvyūha* and the other two, there is only a fifty to one hundred year gap between these latter translations, and the date of the first translation of one of the *Aparimitāyus* texts. This is the anonymous translation of the *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-hṛdaya-dhāraṇī*, discussed above, which was made sometime between 502 and 557. The fact that this *Aparimitāyus* text was in circulation at a date so close to the shorter *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra* and *Visualization Sutra* suggests that it may well have been part of the same milieu in fifth-century India, which in turn suggests that focusing solely on the three canonic sutras serves only to systematically exclude other sources of information about the Indian origins of Pure Land Buddhism.

The character of the Indian Mahayana milieu in which the text was written is indicated by the closing exaltation of the six perfections (Skt. *ṣaṭpāramitā*; Jpn. *ropparamitsu*, 六波羅蜜). It might be tempting to conclude therefore that the text dates from a period after the relatively early formulation of the six perfections²⁹ as a descriptor for the bodhisattva path, but prior to the extension of the list of perfections from six to ten generally considered to be a later development.³⁰ While this may in the very broadest sense be true, to base even relative dating on this would be to create a distorted view of the history by forcing it into a strictly linear progression. The contemporary conception of this history is more one of multiple streams of thought and practice, flowing together and apart, but not a single stream with one line of movement—the appearance of a single stream, of uniformity of thought and practice, being constructed after the fact. It is entirely

possible, indeed probable, that at the same time that some authors or groups were concerned with six perfections, there were other authors or groups concerned with ten. In other words, it is feasible that the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* was written after, say, the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, in which the ten bodhisattva abodes are each identified with one of ten perfections. Therefore, the presence of the six perfections at the end of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* can only be taken to indicate the *milieu* as one in which the six perfections were prevalent, and not as a definitive indicator of relative dating.

WHAT DO WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY “A BUDDHA”?

The question that has been bothering me since I began working on this text is: what do we mean when we talk about a buddha? In East Asian Buddhism, particularly the Pure Land traditions, Amitābha and Amitāyus are treated as two epithets of the same buddha, Amitou or Amida.

So when we consider Aparimitāyus and read in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* that this is simply “another name for Amitāyu(s),”³¹ I find myself wondering what exactly this means, as well as self-reflexively wondering whether I have a significant question or if I am just simply-mindedly stuck on a self-created conundrum.³² One of my problems is that I am not sure that my question is a coherent one—that is, I am not sure what would constitute an answer. One way to approach the meta-question of whether or not the question of the identity of a buddha is a coherent question might be to ask whether there was a distinctive cult associated with some buddha. Another way of answering this question would be by examining the names given to buddhas. A third approach would be to consider the relation between a buddha and a buddha land.

CULT

The existence of a separate cult within the same religious milieu would clearly mean that for those practitioners, the two cult deities are distinct. This means, however, that any evidence regarding the existence of independent cults needs to be contextualized. For example, in contemporary Japanese Pure Land, Amitābha and Amitāyus are indistinguishably treated as simply two different Sanskrit names for the

Buddha Amida. According to this criteria, therefore, there is a single buddha who is the object of devotion, that is, there is only one cult. But this is not necessarily the case in other times and places.

If a separate, distinguishable cult is used as a criterion for a separate, distinguishable buddha, then what becomes of all of the groups of buddhas such as the thirty-five buddhas whose names are recited as part of the Chinese repentance rites,³³ the one thousand buddhas of the Bhadrakalpa³⁴ (each of whose names we know but for whom it seems rather unlikely that separate cults existed), as well as the unnamed and unnumbered “buddhas of the ten directions” and those “of the present.”³⁵ Conversely, what about those instances in which groups of buddhas treated simply as a group include buddhas for whom distinct cults did exist, such as Mañjusrī, Maitreya, and Kṣitigarbha?

NAMES

According to the recent work of Jan Nattier, the fact that the names Amitābha and Amitāyus are effectively indistinguishable in Chinese translations seems to have been a consequence of the process of translating Buddhist texts from Prakritic and Middle Indic forms into Chinese.³⁶ Given its relevance to the topic of this essay, it is worth quoting a concluding portion of her discussion at length.

The name *Amitāyus* does appear, of course, in some Indic-language texts . . . it seems likely that it originated as a variant of *Amitābha* in a Middle Indic form. But *Amitābha*, and not *Amitāyus*, remained by far the most common form of the name in India. This state of affairs is also reflected in Tibetan translations; indeed, it is striking that the name *Amitāyus* is not even registered in the traditional Sanskrit-Tibetan glossary, the *Mahāvīyutpatti*. In Chinese, by contrast, occurrences of *Wuliangshou* 無量壽 vastly outnumber those of *Wuliangguang* 無量光, *Wuliangguangming* 無量光明, or any other translation that can be equated with *Amitābha*. Even in cases where an extant Indian or Tibetan parallel points to the meaning of the name as “Measureless Light,” the corresponding Chinese text often reads *Wuliangshou*.

What we have here, in sum, is a clear example of cultural preferences at work, with the Indian sources, in the main, continuing a long-standing emphasis on luminosity, while Chinese audiences seized upon the alternative reading which emphasized Amida’s measureless life. The image of Amida was thus refracted through two quite different cultural lenses, yielding vastly different cultic and exegetical results.³⁷

While the ramifications of Nattier's work on the names Amitābha and Amitāyus for the figure of Aparimitāyus will require a separate inquiry, two points emerge as immediately relevant here. The Chinese cultural emphasis on longevity with the consequent preference for *Wuliangshou* helps us to understand why the Chinese titles of the two translations of the *Aparimitāyur[dhāraṇī]-sūtra* in the *Taishō* (nos. 936 & 937) use *Wuliangshou* as well. Also, when considering the nature of the benefits, the practitioner's motivation for personal longevity is probably not as strong in the Indo-Tibetan cultural milieu as it is in the Chinese. Nattier suggests that at this stage in the development of Mahayana thought, the longevity is that of the buddha, for whom as one who aids others,

it is vital that he remain in Sukhāvātī for a long time, thus to be available to those devotees who seek rebirth there. We do not, however, see Amida appearing in these texts as an eternal object of devotion, in whose presence believers can enjoy ongoing bliss. On the contrary, as a Buddha his role is to help living beings to pass beyond *samsara*—and by implication, to depart from his own presence—at the quickest possible pace.³⁸

In other words, in the milieu of Buddhist India in which these figures came into prominence, there was a single buddha—Amitābha—and not two different buddhas having distinct characteristics and hence separate names. Rather, the process of interpretation inherent in translation and scribal emendation led to a form in Chinese being created that meant “immeasurable life” and which then created the appearance of a second Sanskrit name, Amitāyus.

One of the important factors in the appearance of two different figures, “Immeasurable Light” (Amitābha) and “Immeasurable Life” (*Wuliangshou*: Amitāyus), result, according to Nattier, from two different cultural predilections. They are not, after all, “actually the same thing”—much more recent symbolic and doctrinal equations found in some strains of contemporary Pure Land exegesis to the contrary. We also need to take into account the cultural predilections of modern scholarship, which tends toward standardization of names and terms in “proper” Sanskrit, and which has an effectively aesthetic preference for neatness and clarity.

Turning back to the main concern of this paper, Aparimitāyus, consideration of his name would compound the linguistic complexities already examined by Nattier. His name can be read simply as an alternative form of Amitāyus, what might be in a non-technical sense

a “superlative” form, but definitely carrying the same significance of longevity as that associated with Amitāyus. While we are all familiar with Amitāyus as meaning “Immeasurable Life,” Aparimitāyus means something more like “Completely Immeasurable Life,” which is how Walleser renders it.

As we have seen, the Chinese translators tend to either transliterate “Amitābha” phonetically as Amitou (阿彌陀) or interpret the meaning as “Immeasurable Life,” that is as Wuliangshou (無量壽). The Tibetan translations also seem to generally move toward a single rendering, that is, as *tshe dpag med* རྩེདཔག་མེད (or *tshe dpag tu med pa*). There are, however, frequent occurrences of what appears to be a fuller name, Aparimitāyurjñāna, translated into Tibetan as *tshe dang ye shes dpag tu med pa* རྩེདཔག་མེད་ཤེས་པ་དཔག་མེད་པ་ and meaning “Unlimited Life and Wisdom.”³⁹ Based on the Sanskrit texts he has examined, Silk gives Aprimitāyur-jñānasuviniścitatejorāja.⁴⁰

BUDDHA LANDS

Looking into the sutra itself, however, we find that its author distinguishes both between Aparimitāyus and Amitābha, and between their lands, “Aparimita-guṇa-saṃcaya” (“immeasurable accumulation of virtue”) and Sukhāvatī. The sutra opens with the Buddha Śākyamuni explaining to Mañjuśrī that “There is, Mañjuśrī, situated at the zenith of the world, a world-realm with the name ‘Immeasurable Accumulation of Merit’ (Aparimita-guṇa-saṃcaya) and that there dwells there the Shining King, Aparimitāyurjñāna.”⁴¹ In contrast, among the many benefits of writing out the text of the sutra oneself or of having another write it out is that such a person will “be born in Sukhāvatī, the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Amitābha.”⁴²

While this does not indicate any clear distinction between Aparimitāyus and Amitāyus, it does indicate that at least for the author of this text, Aparimitāyus is not the same as Amitābha. Taking this another step, to the extent that Amitāyus is identified with Sukhāvatī as his buddha land, and that Aparimitāyus has a different buddha land, then Aparimitāyus is also to be distinguished from Amitāyus, as well as from Amitābha. The only alternative is to suggest, as Schopen does in an aside, that the two—Sukhāvatī and Aparimitā-guṇa-saṃcaya—are “no more than two forms—perhaps only two different names—of a single ideal place.”⁴³ Here again, however, it would seem appropriate

to ask in what sense there is such a single ideal place—from Schopen’s perspective? From the perspective of the author of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*? According to some abstracted Buddhist cosmology?

ON THE *DHĀRAṆĪ*

While some authors have taken *dhāraṇī* as indicative of a Vajrayana influence,⁴⁴ or as at least part of the magical elements found in Mahayana in order to respond “to the religious needs of the common people,”⁴⁵ such views no longer seem supportable. As mnemonic devices (or “mnemotechnics” as Willemsen has called them⁴⁶) *dhāraṇī* have a much longer history in Indian Buddhism and are found in distinctly non-Vajrayana settings. According to Willemsen, Lamotte and Demieville have noted that the Dharmaguptakas had in addition to their well-known *Vinaya* not only a *bodhisattvapīṭaka* but also a *dhāraṇīpīṭaka*. Similarly, Lamotte notes that the Mahāsāṃghikas also had a *dhāraṇīpīṭaka* as well.⁴⁷ As a consequence, simply the presence of *dhāraṇī* cannot be considered an indication of any particular Vajrayana identity. Otherwise, for example, the *Lotus Sutra* would have to be considered a Vajrayana text. The same point that Schopen makes in his own study of two *dhāraṇī* can be made of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. Instead of anything that can be distinctly identified as tantric, such as “an emphasis on the central function of the *guru* as religious preceptor; by sets—usually graded—of specific initiations; by esotericism of doctrine, language and organization; and by a strong emphasis on the realization of the goal through highly structured ritual and meditative techniques,” one finds instead a high continuity with previous Mahayana literature.⁴⁸

I would suggest, however, that we should no more consider all *dhāraṇī* under the category of mnemonic devices than we should consider them all to be Vajrayana.⁴⁹ Despite their apparent origin as mnemonic devices, this does not mean that they were only employed as such. The way in which the various *dhāraṇī* are presented in the *Aparimitāyus* literature is as invocations for longevity. The meaning is not explained in terms of any particular doctrinal formulation. Instead, one finds assurances that anyone who hears, remembers, recites, writes, or has written out the 108 syllables of the *dhāraṇī* will acquire longevity. This would appear to suggest a different intellectual milieu from that highlighted by Nattier. As she points out in her study of the names Amitābha and Amitāyus, it is the longevity of the Buddha

Amitābha in order that he continue to be available to practitioners that is of central concern in the formation of the cult of Amitābha. Here in the explanation of the value of the Aparimitāyus *dhāraṇī*, however, it is clearly the longevity of the practitioner that is the goal. Though in accord with her argument, neither indicates the goal of immortality.

Extending Hirakawa's considerations of the development of *dhāraṇī*,⁵⁰ we can suggest that rather than a blanket assertion about the function of all *dhāraṇī*, it is necessary to place them in their particular textual, doctrinal, historical, linguistic, cultural, and social location. Beginning as mnemonic devices, it seems that they were then considered to have the power to improve memory and understanding. And, once the formulae came to be thought of as having a power in themselves—rather than by reference to their didactic content—then other powers, such as longevity, could be attributed to them as well.

Not only do the powers attributed to *dhāraṇī* change across time and religious culture, but so too do the conceptions of the means by which they are effective. In the religious culture of India, it is generally the recitation of a *dhāraṇī* that makes it efficacious, that is, the vibrations, the sound of it. Paul Copp has shown that in East Asia, however, the efficacy of *dhāraṇī* came in at least some cases to be considered to reside in its physical manifestation as writing. This physicality extended to the ability of the *dhāraṇī* to be effective through casting shadows and the movement of air past it.⁵¹ Similarly, the healing and awakening power of the “clear light” mantra (*kōmyō shingon* 光明眞言) was thought to be conveyed by means of clean sand over which it had been recited.⁵² Thus, it is impossible to say “what a *dhāraṇī* is,” without considering where it is, and when it is.

DIFFERING VERSIONS OF THE APARIMITĀYUḤ DHĀRAṆĪ

Rolf Giebel has reconstructed the pronunciation of the Aparimitāyus *dhāraṇī* as found in the early sixth-century Chinese translation of the *Aparimitāyurjñānaḥṛdayadhāraṇī* (阿弥陀鼓音聲王陀羅尼經; T. 370). Giebel writes:

T.370 is also included in T.1336 (21: 598b–599a), and the *dhāraṇī* is virtually identical except for several scribal or typographical errors in the latter. The following reconstruction is purely provisional and is in parts little more than guesswork, and it also ignores possible alternative readings suggested by the Tibetan translation.⁵³

According to Giebel's reconstruction, the Sanskrit pronunciation of the *dhāraṇī* is probably

[12: 352c] tad yathā bale abale samabala ni[r]deśa nirjātane nirmutte nirmukhe j[v]araprasādhane sukhāvatīnirdeśa amitāyu bale amitāya garbhanirhāre amitāya prasādhane nirbuddhe ākāśanirbuddha ākāśanirdeśa ākāśanirjāte ākāśakuśale ākāśadaśani ākāśadhiṭṭhāne rūpanirdeśa rūpa [?] catvāri-dharmaprasādhane catvāri-āryasatya-prasādhane catvāri-mārgabhā[va]nāprasādhane balavīryaprasādhane dharmacintane kuśale kuśalanirdeśa kuśalapratīṭṭhāne buddhakuśale vibuddhaprabhāse dharmakaraṇe nirjāte nirbuddhe vimale viraja raja rase rasāgge rasāgrabale rasāgra-adhiṭṭhāne kuśale pratikuśale vikuśale ṭhate sudā[n]tacitte suprasā[n]tacitte supratīṭṭhite sule sumukhe dharme dhadhate lepa capale anuśapale buddhākāśanirguṇe buddhākāśaguṇe svāhā.

This is sharply different from the form found in the texts consulted by Silk and Walleser. Based on his study of the Sanskrit texts, Jonathan Silk renders the *dhāraṇī* as

Om namo bhagavate aparimitāyurjñānasuviniścitatejorājā ya tathāgatāyārhate samyaksambuddhāya || tad yathā || om puṇya puṇya mahāpuṇya aparimitapuṇya aparimitāyuh puṇyajñānasambhāropacite||om sarvasaṃskārapariśuddhadharmate gagaṇasamudgate svabhāvaviśuddhe mahānayaaparivāre svāhā ||⁵⁴

Other than the initial “om” this is identical to the form that Walleser gives based on his Nepalese Sanskrit text. Given the differences between the two *dhāraṇī*, that is, the one found in the early Chinese translation and the Sanskrit Nepalese texts, it appears clear that they were subject to change as well. Again, it is not the case that there is a neat association of one specific *dhāraṇī* with one particular buddha. What this variation in *dhāraṇī* may be able to help us establish, however, is textual families. Where the same *dhāraṇī* is found in two texts would evidence a close relation between them.

Recently, Richard McBride, Jr., has called into question the long-standing association between *dhāraṇī* and tantric Buddhism.⁵⁵ McBride has argued that *dhāraṇī* are not proto-tantric, but rather part of general Indian Mahayana Buddhism. This is true to the extent that *dhāraṇī* are not uniquely tantric in character. However, they were part of the Mahayana as it developed in mid- to late medieval India. So while they cannot be taken as a distinctive marker of tantric influence, they were part of the ongoing development of Buddhism in India, a development

in which language—especially extraordinary language such as *dhāraṇī* and mantra—was increasingly valorized as having a positive role in the practice of Buddhism, a central characteristic of tantric Buddhism.

In China, although the importation and translation of *dhāraṇī* sutras may simply have been part of the Indian Buddhism that was being imported, it seems overly analytic to separate that increasing valorization of language found in medieval Indian religious thought from the tantric character of some of the texts that include *dhāraṇī*, particularly as the distinction is ours and can hardly be one that the Chinese were making. At the same time, just because *dhāraṇī* are not uniquely tantric in character does not entail the conclusion that all *dhāraṇī* texts (i.e., texts such as this one that teach a particular *dhāraṇī*) can be automatically excluded from the category of tantric. Indeed, as we have seen, both Bu ston and the editors of the *Taishō* consider at least some of the *dhāraṇī* texts, such as those associated with Aparimitāyus, to be esoteric in character.

While *dhāraṇī* are not uniquely tantric, they do indicate the character of the religio-philosophic milieu in which both tantric and proto-Pure Land Buddhisms were developing. This milieu is one in which there was a positive valuation of the religious efficacy of language that stands in stark contrast to the Romantic presumptions that language is a hindrance. This latter forms a consistent part of contemporary Western religious culture and the modernist representations of Buddhism within that religious culture. Rather than a suspicion of language, medieval Indian religions, including Buddhism, are heir to the Vedic conceptions of language as metaphysically foundational and religiously central.

CONCLUSION

The examination of the literature associated with Aparimitāyus has contributed to three different sets of questions. First, it opens up the textual and historical basis for the study of the origins of Pure Land Buddhism in late medieval Indian Mahayana. Instead of focusing solely on the three texts selected by Hōnen, it is necessary to consider a wider range of texts and also figures. Second, a theoretical question has been raised, that is, how does contemporary Buddhist studies scholarship go about identifying what a buddha is? The closest thing to an answer to this question is that it is entirely contextual—whose conception are

we describing? Third, the character of *dhāraṇī* either as simply mnemonic devices or as indicative of a tantric affiliation is also a matter of context. Rather than saying that all *dhāraṇī* are one thing or another, it is necessary to consider the way in which specific *dhāraṇī* are used. *Dhāraṇī* are like so many of the various elements found in Mahayana and tantric ritual practice: they are deployed in support of a variety of competing goals.

The *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* points us away from an overly-reified conception of a singular, monolithic Pure Land tradition. This image of a Pure Land tradition has been that it originated in India with the three Pure Land sutras and continued in a unbroken and continuous line of ongoing development as it was transmitted to China and then further to Japan. Sectarian interpretations attribute the final climactic interpretations of the tradition either to Hōnen or Shinran, founders of authoritative traditions that continue into the present and which have spread to the West.

In place of this narrowly lineal conception, a different metaphor is perhaps much more appropriate. Instead of a single river, springing from a single, pure source, we can perhaps more accurately conceive of religious milieux as saturated solutions out of which various combinations of elements from time to time crystallize and fall out of solution. These crystalline forms are the texts that have come down to us. Thus, the generalized goal of birth in Sukhāvatī and the use of *dhāraṇī* are some of the elements in solution in the medieval Indian Buddhist milieu out of which the *Aparimitāyus* corpus was crystallized.

THE NOBLE MAHĀYĀNA-SŪTRA OF IMMEASURABLE LIFE AND WISDOM⁵⁶

Trans. by Max Walleiser from his own critical edition of the Sanskrit

Trans. from Walleiser's German by Richard K. Payne

*Prefatory Note: items in parentheses () are Walleiser's additions, see his note 4; items in braces { } are my additions. Numbers in backslashes // indicate the pagination used in Walleiser's critical edition of the text. Walleiser abbreviates the many repetitions found in the text, particularly of the *dhāraṇī*. Personally, I find such abbreviation aesthetically displeasing, and so have restored that which was deleted. The interested reader is also advised to consult Jonathan Silk's translation of Walleiser's Sanskrit under the title: "A Sūtra for Long Life."⁵⁷*

Reverence to the holy, noble Avalokiteśvara!
 OM! Reverence to all buddhas and bodhisattvas! /0/

Thus have I heard:

At one time, the Exalted One dwelt in Śrāvastī, in Jeta Grove, in the pleasure garden of Anāthapiṇḍada, together with a great multitude of mendicant monks, with 1,250 mendicant monks and fully as many bodhisattvas, *mahāsattvas*. Then the Exalted One spoke thus to Mañjuśrī, the Youthful⁵⁸ {*kumāra bhūtam*}:

“There is, Mañjuśrī, situated at the zenith a world,⁵⁹ a world-realm with the name ‘Immeasurable Accumulation of Virtue’ {*aparimita-guṇa-saṃcaya*}.⁶⁰ There dwells the ‘Shining King Fully Immeasurable Longevity and Excellent Wisdom’ called the Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Perfectly Awakened [established on a basis⁶¹ of wisdom, a Sujata, a World-knower {*lokavid*}, an unexcelled guide of the training-followers, a teacher of gods and men, the illuminator, the exalted];⁶² he finds himself there [from beginning to end⁶³] and teaches living beings the law (dharma).

“Listen Mañjuśrī, the Youthful! These people of Jambudvīpa have short lives, living only one hundred years, and untimely deaths often befall them. However, Mañjuśrī, living beings who write out the text called *Treasury of the Virtues and Excellences of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyuh*, or have it written out, or have only heard the name [or have kept, or published it⁶⁴], or also, having obtained a copy of the book, keep it in a house, venerating it with flowers, incense, perfumes, garlands, when their life has lapsed will gain another one hundred years. Further, Mañjuśrī, living beings who hear, remember, [proclaim] the 108 syllables⁶⁵ {of the *dhāraṇī*} of this Tathāgata, Arhat, the Fully Awakened, of Unlimited Life and Wisdom, the excellent Shining King, will also lengthen their lifetimes. Thus, then, Mañjuśrī, when a son or daughter of a good family, wishing for a long life, will write out or have written out the 108 names {syllables?} of this Tathāgata Aparimitāyuh, they will then have these virtues and merits.”⁶⁶ /1/

OM! Veneration to the eminent, Shining King of Unlimited Life and Wisdom, the Tathāgata, Holy, World-honored One! So then, OM! Holy, holy, supremely holy, immeasurably holy, perpetually holy, accumulation of complete wisdom!⁶⁷ OM! Oh you from all *saṃskāras* (workings) cleansed condition of the dharma, that you from heaven (*gagaṇa*) have come forth, free

of independent existence {svabhāva⁶⁸}, fully established in the great method {mahānaya parivāre⁶⁹}! Svāhā!

“Mañjuśrī, whoever writes out the 108 syllables of the Tathāgata, or has them written out, then has this gathered into a book, kept in a house, to preserve and proclaim it, will, when their life is at the point of passing away, have a hundred years added to it. And when this is past, he will be born in the buddha realm of the Tathāgata Aparimitāyuh, and he will (himself) live without end (aparimitāyuh), dwelling in the world “Immeasurable Accumulation of Virtue.” /2/

*om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.*⁷⁰

At this time ninety-nine koṭis⁷¹ of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this Aparimitāyuh-sūtra.⁷² /3/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time eighty-four koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this Aparimitāyuh-sūtra.

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time seventy-seven koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this Aparimitāyuh-sūtra.

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time sixty-five koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time fifty-five koṭis of buddhas with one mind and one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time forty-five koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time thirty-six koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time twenty-five koṭis of buddhas with one mind and with one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*.

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

At this time ten koṭis of buddhas, equal in number to the grains of sand of the Ganges, with one mind and with one voice spoke this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. /4/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever hears this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, writes it, has it written, when his life is coming to an end, he will have his life lengthened by another hundred years. /5/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will never be born in hell, nor will ever be born in an animal incarnation, nor be born in the world of Yama. Wherever he is born, in each birth he will remember all previous births. /6/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will thereby establish as many as 84,000 dharma-groups.⁷³ /7/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhatē samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever will write out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or have it written out, will thereby differentiate and establish eighty-four thousand groups of dharmas.⁷⁴ /8/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, becomes thereby completely free from the five actions with immediate effects.⁷⁵ /9/

*oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.*⁷⁶

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will not be caused death or injury by the god of death (Māra) or those gods belonging to the clan of death, the *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas*, at any inopportune moment.⁷⁷ /10/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, at the time of death ninety-nine koṭis of buddhas will appear to him and a thousand buddhas will stretch out their hands to him; he will wander from buddha land to buddha land. He will not experience doubt, ignorance, nor ambiguous speech. /11/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will follow the four great kings, being protected, defended, guarded.⁷⁸ /11a/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will be born in the world *Sukhāvatī*, in the buddha-field of the *Tathāgata Amitābha*. /12/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

In whatever place on earth this precious *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* is written out, or caused to be written out, this place on earth becomes a *caitya*,⁷⁹ greeted with reverence, [venerated by passing on the right⁸⁰]. Those who have entered into⁸¹ an animal life, birds and *pretas*,⁸² when they come to this place,⁸³ it is entirely inevitable⁸⁴ that they shall be awakened to unexcelled enlightenment. /13/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will never again be born as a woman.⁸⁵ /14/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, om sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will never again live in poverty.⁸⁶ /15/

om namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyār hate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, om puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-

saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, whoever gives only a *kārṣāpaṇa*⁸⁷ for the sake of this guide book, it is thereby as if he fills the three thousand, many thousand world-systems⁸⁸ with the seven precious substances and presents them as a donation. /16/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever at any time makes veneration to this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*,⁸⁹ venerates all good dharmas.⁹⁰ /17/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Although it may be possible to measure the extent of the merits of giving one of the seven precious substances each to the Tathāgatas Vipāśyin, Śikhin, Viśvabhū, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa, and Śākyasiṃha, it is not possible to measure the extent of the merits of this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. /18/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Although the merit of giving precious substances equal in extent to the king of mountains, Sumeru, can be measured, one cannot measure the merits of this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. /19/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhate samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Although it may be possible to count each and every drop of the water that fills the four great oceans,⁹¹ it is not possible to measure the merits of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*. /20/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhave samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Whoever writes out this *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, or has it written out, will be well-received, venerated, being greeted and venerated by all of the tathāgatas in all of the buddha-lands in the ten directions. /21/

oṃ namo bhagavate aparimitāyur-jñāna-suviniścita-tejo-rājāya, tathāgatāyārhave samyak-saṃbuddhāya, tadyathā, oṃ puṇya-puṇya-mahā-puṇya-aparimita-puṇya-aparimitayuh-puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāropacite, oṃ sarva-saṃskāra-pariśuddha-dharmate gagaṇa-samudgate svabhāva-viśuddhe mahānaya-parivāre svāhā.

Then, at this time, the Exalted One spoke these verses:

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of giving (*dāna*),
By the power of giving is this lion of men known.
One hears the sound of the power of giving
When one enters the city of compassion. /22/

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of discipline (*śīla*),
By the power of discipline is this lion of men known.
One hears the sound of the power of discipline
When one enters the city of compassion.

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of patience (*kṣānti*),
By the power of patience is this lion of men known.
One hears the sound of the power of patience
When one enters the city of compassion.

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of effort (*vīrya*),
By the power of effort is this lion of men known.
One hears the sound of the power of effort
When one enters the city of compassion.

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of meditation (*dhyāna*),
By the power of meditation is this lion of men known.
One hears the sound of the power of meditation

When one enters the city of compassion.

The Buddha is unexcelled at the power of wisdom (*prajñā*),

By the power of wisdom is this lion of men known.

One hears the sound of the power of wisdom

When one enters the city of compassion.

Thus spoke the Exalted One joyfully, and the *bhikṣus*, the *bodhisattvas-mahāsattvas*, and the vast assembly, and the worlds of gods, men, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *gandharvas*, found pleasure in what the Exalted One had spoken. /23/

Thus ends the Mahayana sutra, *Immeasurable Life*.

NOTES

1. This essay is based on an earlier version published under the title “The Cult of Ārya Aparimitāyus: Proto-Pure Land Buddhism in the Context of Indian Mahāyāna,” *The Pure Land*, n.s., 13–14 (1997): 19–36. I would like to thank Leslie Kawamura for providing me the opportunity to revise, correct, and expand on that earlier work.
2. For complete bibliographic information, see Payne, “The Cult of Ārya Aparimitāyus.”
3. Jonathan Silk has drawn attention to this text, noting its value in relation to the issue contextualizing questions of “importance.” He notes that if instead of our own philosophic or sectarian interests, we consider whether people followed the instructions of a sutra, then since it was copied countless times the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* was certainly important—by that measure. Additionally, the study of Pure Land Buddhism in Tibet has begun to draw scholarly attention, including Matthew Kapstein, “Pure Land Buddhism in Tibet? From Sukhāvātī to the Field of Great Bliss,” in *Approaching the Land of Bliss: Religious Praxis in the Cult of Amitābha*, ed. Richard K. Payne and Kenneth K. Tanaka (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 16–51; and Georgios Halkias, “Transferring to the Land of Bliss: Among Sukhāvātī Texts and Practices in Tibet” (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 2006).
4. Gregory Schopen, “Sukhāvātī as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 19, nos. 3–4 (1977): 188.
5. Gregory Schopen, “The Phrase ‘sa prthivīpradeśas caityabhūto bhavet’ in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna,” *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17, nos. 3–4 (1975), reprinted in Gregory Schopen, *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India: More Collected Papers* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2005), 43.
6. Schopen, “The Phrase ‘sa prthivīpradeśas caityabhūto bhavet,’” 35.
7. Silk, “The Most Important Buddhist Scripture?” (paper presented at the 12th Conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Université of Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland, August 27, 1999), 9. I wish to thank Prof. Silk for his willingness to share a copy of his paper with me.
8. *Ibid.*, 11.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Schopen, “Sukhāvātī,” 200.
11. #: Title restored from the Tibetan.
12. This predates by several centuries the translations by Facheng (法成; Skt. Dharmasiddhi; Tib. Chos grub), who is placed as having been active in the first

half of the ninth century (T. vol. 19, no. 936) and Fatian (法天; Skt. Dharmadeva [?]), who was active end of the tenth to beginning of the eleventh centuries (T. vol. 19, no. 937). See Paul Demieville, Hubert Durt, and Anna Seidel, eds., *Répertoire du Canon Bouddhique Sino-Japonais* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, Adrient Maisonneuve, and Tokyo: Maison Franco-Japonaise, 1978), sv. "Hōjō" 255, and "Hōten" 257. Unfortunately, there seem to be no attributions for the Tibetan translations of this text.

13. This is, of course, a very rough "rule of thumb." There is nothing that would prevent a text from being immediately transported and translated, or, on the other hand, lingering for centuries in India until its eventual transmission and translation.

14. For a discussion of the vast quantity of copies of the *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra* in Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and other languages, see Silk, "The Most Important Buddhist Scripture?," 6.

15. Jan Nattier, *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path according to the Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)*, Studies in the Buddhist Traditions (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), 7.

16. On the basis of an admittedly "preliminary and limited search" Silk "has located more than 130 manuscript copies of the Sanskrit *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*, both as an independent text and included in collections of dhāraṇī-sūtras" ("The Most Important Buddhist Scripture?," 6).

17. Kōtatsu Fujita, "Pure Land Buddhism in India," trans. Taitetsu Unno, in *The Pure Land Tradition: History and Development*, ed. James Foard, Richard Solomon, and Richard K. Payne, Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 3 (Berkeley: Berkeley Buddhist Studies, 1996), 6.

18. Jan Nattier, personal communication, May 2, 2004. According to her analysis the term Śaka is a mistaken Sanskritization of the ethnonym Saka.

19. Max Walleser, *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtram: Nach einer nepalesischen Sanskrit-Handschrift mit der tibetischen und chinesischen Version*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften 12 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1916), 5.

20. Ibid., 6. Internal quotation is from Rajendralala Mitra, *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* (1882; repr., Calcutta: Sanskrit Pustak Bhandar, 1971), 41.

21. See Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life: Science and Philosophy in the Age of Goethe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); and Frederick Beiser, *Hegel* (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), chap. 4, "The Organic Worldview," 80–109.

22. See Richard K. Payne, "Introduction," in *Tantric Buddhism in East Asia*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2006); and Richard K. Payne,

“Traditionalist Representations of Buddhism,” in press, *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, third series, no. 10 (2008).

23. For this history, see Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion: A History*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth Publishers, 1986).

24. One singularly memorable instance of this was a textbook in which the only discussion of ritual was relegated to an introductory chapter on “primitive religions.” The implications of such an authorial decision are obvious. This textbook is still in print, and now in its sixth edition.

25. Such factors in the formation of the contemporary understanding of Buddhist history is an instance of the more generally recognized phenomenon of the role of interests in theory formation, as studied for example in the sociology of knowledge. See, for example, David Bloor, *Knowledge and Social Imagery*, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 170–173. Such interests can perhaps best be understood to include both intellectual and personal/social/political/economic interests. This is evidenced, for example, by my own intellectual interest in exploring that which transgresses categories, and my professional interests as a graduate student in laying claim to some field of inquiry as my own academic specialization.

26. See Nattier’s cogent discussion of the problems of intra-textual analysis, *A Few Good Men*, 48–51.

27. The dates are those of Lokakṣema’s earliest arrival in Loyang (variants being 167, 168, and 176), where he was active until 186 (Demiéville, et al., *Répertoire du Canon Bouddhique*, s.v. “Shi Rakusen,” 277). This is not the version most widely referred to, which would be the *Wuliangshou jing* (T. 360, 無量壽經, *Muryōjūkyō*), selected by Hōnen as one of the “three Pure Land sutras.”

28. Jan Nattier, “The Names of Amitābha/Amitāyus in Early Chinese Buddhist Translations (1),” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University* 9 (March 2006): 183.

29. The six perfections are found in texts such as the *Ṣaṭpāramitā-sūtra* (T. vol. 17, no. 778, 菩薩內習六波羅蜜經), which was translated into Chinese at a rather early date. This translation is attributed to Buddhadeva (嚴佛調), active ca. 180s. Hobogirin, s.v. “Gombucchō” 252. Regarding other sutras identifying six perfections, see Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism: A Survey with Bibliographic Notes* (1980; repr., Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), 219.

30. See Robert E. Buswell, *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, s.v. “Bodhisattva(s)” (New York: Macmillan, 2004).

31. G.P. Malalasekera, ed., *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (Colombo, Sri Lanka: Government of Ceylon, 1964–2004), vol. II, fasc. 1, s.v. “Aparimitāyu.”

32. We should note that it has been suggested that both Amitābha and

Amitāyus are “back-translations” into Sanskrit of the same Gandhari Prakṛt name. Charles Willemen, “Esoteric Buddhism in China” (lecture, Institute of Buddhist Studies, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, April 28, 2004).

33. Bruce Williams, “*Mea Maxima Vikalpa*: Repentance, Meditation, and the Dynamics of Liberation in Medieval Chinese Buddhism, 500–650 CE” (PhD diss., University of California, 2002), 32–33.

34. Dharma Publishing Staff, trans., *The Fortunate Aeon: How the Thousand Buddhas Become Enlightened*, 4 vols. (Berkeley, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1986).

35. Paul Harrison, *The Samādhi of Direct Encounter with the Buddhas of the Present*, Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series 5 (Tokyo: The International Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1990).

36. Jan Nattier, “The Names of Amitābha/Amitāyus in Early Chinese Buddhist Translations (1),” 183–199; and Jan Nattier, “The Names of Amitābha/Amitāyus in Early Chinese Buddhist Translations (2),” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University* 9 (March 2007): 359–394.

37. Nattier, “The Names of Amitābha/Amitāyus in Early Chinese Buddhist Translations (2),” 389–390.

38. *Ibid.*, 387–388. (Tangentially, we may note that this effectively negates any attempt to equate Sukhāvatī and the Christian Heaven.)

39. The titles of P nos. 361/362/474, 363/475, 2990, 2993, 3523, and 3524 use the longer epithet, while P nos. 2994, 3522, and 4886 use the shorter. What remains unclear to me is how Ratna Handurukande and Kōyū Tamura in the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* articles (beginning with “Aparimitāyu(h)–stotra,” vol. 2, fasc. 1, 16 through to “Aparimitāyus–sūtrapadeśa,” vol. 2, fasc. 1, 21) claim to reconstruct Aparimitāyus rather than Amitāyus or Amitābha from Tibetan and Chinese titles, which do not to me at least appear to make this explicit. I can understand if there is a Khotanese or Nepali version, but in many of these cases there doesn’t seem to be—only a Tibetan text, for example. The *Hobogirin* catalogue notes that such reconstructions are doubtful; see, for example, T. nos. 360, 361, 362, 363.

40. Silk, “The Most Important Buddhist Scripture?,” 3.

41. My translation of Max Walleser, *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtram Nach einer Nepalesischen Sanskrit-Handschrift mit der tibetischen und chinesischen Version*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophische-historische Klasse, vol. 7 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter’s Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1916), 30.

42. My translation of *ibid.*, 34.

43. Schopen, “Sukhāvatī,” 181.

44. See for example, Hisao Inagaki, *The Anantamukharnirhāra-Dhāraṇī and Jñānagarbha's Commentary: A Study and the Tibetan Text* (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, 1987), 100.
45. Akira Hirakawa, *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, trans. Paul Groner, Asian Studies at Hawaii 36 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 3, 294.
46. Walleser, *Aparimitāyur-sūtram*.
47. Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Śaka Era*, trans. Sara Webb-Boin, Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 36 (Louvain-le-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, Université Catholique de Louvain, 1988), 286.
48. Gregory Schopen, "The Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa and Vimaloṣṇīṣa Dhāraṇīs in Indian Inscriptions: Two Sources for the Practice of Buddhism in Medieval India," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens und Archiv für Indische Philosophie* 29 (1985): 147.
49. For a valuable discussion of various emic understandings of *dhāraṇī*, including the mnemonic interpretation, see chap. 3 of Paul Copp, "Voice, Dust, Shadow, Stone: The Making of Spells in Medieval Chinese Buddhism" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005), 113–170.
50. Hirakawa, *A History of Indian Buddhism*, 301.
51. Copp, "Voice, Dust, Shadow, Stone," esp. chap. 6, 237–299.
52. Mark Unno, *Shingon Refractions: Myōe and the Mantra of Light* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2004).
53. Rolf Giebel, personal communication, September 9, 2005.
54. Silk, "The Most Important Buddhist Scripture?," 4; Jonathan Silk, "A Sūtra for Long Life," in *Buddhist Scriptures*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 425.
55. Richard McBride, II, "Is there really 'esoteric' Buddhism?," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27, no. 2 (2004): 329–356. See also McBride, "Dhāraṇī and Spells in Medieval Sinitic Buddhism," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 85–114.
56. {RKP: Walleser's notes are rendered as given. Where it has been possible to add bibliographic or other information, these appear in braces. More recent relevant publications are also noted as "Cf."}
57. {RKP: Jonathan Silk, "A Sūtra for Long Life," in *Buddhist Scriptures*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 423–429.}
58. {RKP: Silk gives "Crown Prince."}
59. *upariṣṭād-diśi*. See the parallel textual locations in the *Lalita-vistara*, ed.

Rāj. Mitra, p. 368, l. 5, and Śata-sāhasrikā-prajña-pāramitā ed. Bibl. Ind. p. 50, l. 18. {RKP: Rajendralāla Mitra, *The Lalita-Vistara, or Memoirs of the Early Life of Śākya Siṅha* (Calcutta, 1881); Pratāpacandra Ghoṣa, ed., *Çatasāhasrikā-Prajñā-Pāramitā: A Theological and Philosophical Discourse of Buddha with His Disciples (in a Hundred-Thousand Stanzas)*, Biblioteca Indica, work no. 153 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1902).} The reading of the Calcutta manuscript, also employed by Hörnle and Leumann, is corrected by this. {RKP: re. R. Hörnle, probably “The unknown languages of E. Turkestan,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1910): 384ff. Re. E. Leumann, probably *Zur nordarischen Sprache und Literatur* (Strassburg, 1912). See also perhaps, Ernst Leumann, *Buddhistische literatur nordarisch und deutsch*, Abhandlung für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. 15, no. 2 (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1920).}

60. Taking into account the frequency with which *dhātu* is treated as a feminine in Buddhist texts (e.g. the *Lalita vistara*), I retain the reading of *sañcayā* in my manuscript.

61. The bracketed passage [. . .] is absent in all versions, including the Calcutta ms., and it therefore appears to be a scribal emendation of my {Nepali} manuscript.

62. The legitimacy of this rendering from the Sanskrit *caraṇa* is provided by the Chinese, among others. See de Harlez, *Voc. bouddh.* p. 5, n. 5. {RKP: Charles de Harlez, *Vocabulaire bouddhique sanscrit-chinois . . . Precis de doctrine bouddhique* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1897).}

63. Following the Tibetan version, the phrase *ājāti-paryantaṃ* has been added.

64. The presentation of this {phrase: “or have kept, or published it”}, left out at this point from the Tibetan, is familiar to us from the *Prajña-pāramitā*. See, for example, Aṣṭasāh. Prjñ. ed. Bibl. Ind. p. 49ff. {RKP: *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*. Cf. Edward Conze, trans., *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary* (frequent reprints; Bolinas, CA: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973).}

65. {RKP: Walleaser uses “names,” but this is perhaps a mistaken presumption that we are dealing here with something similar to the idea of the “one hundred names of God.” This is clearly, however, a reference to the 108 syllables of the *dhāraṇī* itself. In Walleaser’s rendering, adhered to here, there would appear to be 110 syllables. There are, however, two instances of what might be called double *a*’s, *puṇya-aparimita*, and these would no doubt have been counted as a single long *a* (*ā*) by the author, thus giving 108 rather than 110.}

66. Skt. *ānuśaṃsā*, Tib. *lesg par hgyur ba*; cf. Speyer Av. śat. II. 220, *Divyāvadāna*, Index, s.v.; Pāli *ānisaṃso*. {RKP: Re. third item: cf. J. S. Speyer, ed., *Avadānaçataka: A Century of Edifying Tales Belonging to the Hīnayāna*, Bibliotheca buddhica, 3 (St. Petersburg: Commisionnaires de l’Academie Impériale des Sciences, 1906–1909); and J. S. Speyer, “Critical Remarks on the Text of the

Divyavadana,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 16. Cf. Andy Rotman, trans., *Divine Stories: Divyavadana Part 1* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008).}

67. In this situation °*upacite* can have three different meanings, depending upon whether one regards it as dative, singular, masculine for °*cit* (suffixless stem as *nomen agentis*), or as vocative, singular, feminine for °*cite* (passive particle, attributive to *dharmate*), or as it is understood here, as vocative, singular, feminine for °*citi* (*nomen agentis*).

68. {RKP: Any attempt to translate a *dhāraṇī* is complex and difficult, its difficulty perhaps only exceeded by attempting to translate a mantra. There is indeed a reasonable argument to be made for not attempting to translate either, particularly as once they moved into Tibetan and Chinese, both *dhāraṇī* and mantra were with apparently only a very few exceptions simply rendered phonetically. Here Walleser renders *svabhāva* as *Eigensein*, which correlates with the English “own-being,” which is not only cacophonous, but unenlightening. What I have come to understand by *svabhāva* is “independent existence” (cf. Latin *sui generis*), as opposed to “interdependence.” The meaning here, then, would seem to be that the Buddha is free of the illusion of independent existence.}

69. {RKP: Walleser renders *mahānaya parivāre* as *Beweisfahren*. My rendering here is based on the Sanskrit, which means that while “great method” for *mahānaya* is fairly straightforward, “fully established in” for *parivāre* is rather tentative. Unfortunately, in the critical edition of the Tibetan that Walleser provides, he has simply given the same Sanskrit, apparently indicating that the Tibetan for the *dhāraṇī* is a phonetic transcription and not a translation.}

70. {RKP: This is the *dhāraṇī* as given by Walleser on p. 22 of his critical edition of the Sanskrit. Max Walleser, *Aparimitāyur-jñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtram Nach einer nepalesischen Sanskrit-Handschrift mit der tibetischen und chinesischen Version* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter’s Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1916). See also, Silk, “A Sūtra for Long Life,” 425.}

71. One *koṭi* = ten million.

72. Here following the Tibetan; however, the Chinese translation has “with one meaning and many voices” which would point back to the Skt. *ekamatenāneka-savreṇa*.

73. [...] missing from the Tibetan.

74. The manuscript has *dharmarājikā*. We are reading it here in accord with the Tibetan translation, which gives *dharmaskandha*.

75. Regarding the five *ānanataryāṇi karmāṇi* (matricide, patricide, killing an arhant, harming a buddha, causing a division in the community) see *Dharmasaṅgraha* (Anecd. Ox I.5), pp. 13, 48. {RKP: F. Max Müller and H. Wen-

zel, eds., *The Dharma-samgraha: An Ancient Collection of Buddhist Technical Terms*, Anecdota oxoniensia, Aryan series, vol. 1, pt. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885). Cf. Tashi Zangmo and Dechen Chime, trans., *Dharmasaṃgrahaḥ: Excellent Collection of Doctrines of Ācārya Nāgārjuna* (Sarnath, Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1993).}

76. {Following the *dhāraṇī*} the Tibetan version adds the following sentence at this point: “Whoever . . . written out, the transgressions that they have accumulated, even though as vast as Meru, will be eradicated.”

77. Tibetan: “Also, even if they have the opportunity, they will not seize the opportunity.”

78. This sentence is missing in the manuscript, and we have inserted it following the Tibetan version. The existence of a parallel passage in the Chinese assures that it is original.

79. A grave mound for interring relics, or more generally, a monument or cenotaph.

80. [. . .] missing from the Tibetan.

81. Following the Tibetan translation *mṛga* is added to the manuscript version.

82. As per the Tibetan amplification (*yi dvags*).

83. See *Śikṣāsamuccaya* p. 174, l. 17: “yeṣāṃ tasya nāmadheyaṃ nipatet karṇe,” cited from the *Gharīṣajya-guru-vaidūrya-prabhā-rāja-sūtra*; see also *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha*, ed. Calc., p. 25, l. 17. {RKP: Re. first: Śāntideva, *Cikshasamuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhist Teaching*, Bibliotheca Buddhica, vol. 1 (repr., ’s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1957; orig. pub., St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1897–1902). Re. second, cf. Lokesh Chandra, *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha-sūtra, or, The Supernal Virtues of Avalokiteśvara* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture and Aditya Prakashan, 1999).}

84. Amplified with “on the path to awakening.”

85. See *Śikṣāsamuccaya* p. 176, l. 2: “tasya strī-bhāvo na bhaviṣyati” (cited from the *Mañjuśrī-buddha-kṣetra-guṇa-vyūhalaṅkāra-sūtra*).

86. This sentence is missing from the Tibetan translation, and it is easy to see the amendment to the manuscript.

87. A small coin.

88. “élément du troisième grand millénaire” (de Harlez, Voc. bouddh., p. 37, T’oung-Pao vol. VII, 4; VIII, 2). {RKP: See Rupert Gethin, “Cosmology,” in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, ed. Robert J. Buswell Jr., 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004).}

89. Tibetan: “these *dharma-paryāya*.”

90. Following the Tibetan, the reading is something like “sakala-sad-dharmāḥ pūjitā bhaviṣyanti.”

91. See *Kāraṇḍa-vyūha* p. 40, l. 11: “śakyam mayā mahā-samudrasyaikam (*sic!*) udaka-vinduṃ gaṇayituṃ na tu. . .” Similarly, *ibid.*, 19, l. 15.

BOOK REVIEWS

Iron Eyes: The Life and Teachings of Zen Master Tetsugen Dōkō. By Helen J. Baroni. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006. 259 pages. Paperback, \$25.95.

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Helen J. Baroni's pioneering efforts at introducing Ōbaku Zen to English readers continues in her latest work, *Iron Eyes*, a study of the well-known Ōbaku monk Tetsugen Dōkō (鉄眼道光, 1630–1682). Tetsugen, as Baroni explains, is the most well-known Ōbaku monk both inside and outside of Japan due to his legendary social welfare activities. Within Japan, Tetsugen is also well known for completing the first wood block copy of the Chinese Buddhist canon, for being both a model Buddhist and Japanese citizen, and for his dharma teachings. In *Iron Eyes* Baroni critically evaluates all of these understandings of Tetsugen, and in addition she provides translations of Tetsugen's teachings and three biographies.

Baroni begins with a brief introduction that provides an overview of Buddhism during the Tokugawa era and the establishment of the Ōbaku school in Japan. Following this, Baroni turns her attention to Tetsugen's life, work, and teachings. Chapter 1 explores Tetsugen's life. In this chapter, Baroni explores Tetsugen's ordination as a Shin Buddhist priest, his decision to leave the Shin Buddhist priesthood, and his entry into and life as a monk in the Ōbaku school. While Baroni is clear in acknowledging that there is uncertainty regarding the exact reasons why Tetsugen left Shin Buddhism, she does review a number of relevant works that explore possible reasons why he abandoned the Shin tradition for the Ōbaku school. Baroni begins by considering how

the events of the *Jōō no kyōgi ronsō* (承応の協議論争, the Jōō incident) in which Saigin (西吟, 1605–1663), a former Zen monk and Tetsugen's teacher at the Hongwanji-ha Gakuryō (本願寺派学寮), was accused of mixing Zen teachings with Shin Buddhist teachings. The doctrinal controversy became so intense that Shin Buddhist officials asked the government to become involved, resulting in the closing of the Gakuryō in 1654 and Saigin leaving Kyoto and returning to his hometown. Baroni speculates that perhaps Tetsugen's interest in Zen was a result of his encounters with Saigin. This interest in Zen, coupled with Tetsugen's recurrent teachings on the necessity that both laypeople and monastics keep the precepts, something Shin Buddhism does not expect, may help to explain why Tetsugen chose to become a student of Yinyuan Longqi (隱元隆琦, 1592–1673), the Chinese Zen master credited with founding the Ōbaku school in Japan.

In chapter 2, Baroni explores Tetsugen's undertaking of efforts to complete the carving of a woodblock edition of the Wanli edition of the Chinese Buddhist scriptures brought from China by Yinyuan. Baroni draws upon a number of sources to describe the possible influences that provided the impetus for the project, the support and the difficulties he faced, and Tetsugen's undying resolve to see the project through to completion.

The focus of chapter 3 is on Tetsugen's teachings. Baroni begins by noting that while Tetsugen is usually thought of in association with the carving of the scriptures, during his own life he was also highly regarded as a teacher of laypeople. In this chapter Baroni focuses not only on the themes of Tetsugen's teaching but also his methodology. Baroni is thus able to highlight the role that the Buddhist scriptures played within the Zen tradition, offering another corrective to the popular view that Zen shuns the written word. Tetsugen's teachings often took the form of him quoting a text in Chinese or classical Japanese and then expounding on its meaning for laypeople. Baroni's analysis leads her to conclude that Tetsugen's skill in teaching was "not in elucidating new ideas for the tradition, but in translating and presenting the existing tradition for believers of his own generation" (p. 76).

The fourth chapter explores what Baroni calls "the myth of Tetsugen." Drawing on both religious and secular works, she explores the hagiography of Tetsugen in the pre-modern and modern eras. In addition, Baroni briefly explores how the myth of Tetsugen has been used by Western Buddhists in order to promote a more socially active form

of Buddhism. Unfortunately, while Baroni refers to certain “negative biographies” that sought “to discredit Tetsugen” (p. 79), she does not consider them along with the traditional hagiographies. Neither in the body of the work nor in the notes does she state what texts she is referring to, a serious limitation as these works would no doubt help to explain why Tetsugen left the teachings of Jōdo Shinshū and the larger social context in which Tetsugen lived and worked.

The second half of the work presents translations of a number of Tetsugen’s writings. These highly readable translations help the reader to understand the variety of roles that Tetsugen filled throughout his life. The majority of these are translations of his teachings. Also included are translations of Tetsugen’s poetry, a number of letters, and progress reports related to the carving of the scriptures. This section, like chapter 4, reinforces the role of Buddhist scriptures in Tetsugen’s teachings as well as providing a firsthand account of how the tremendous task of producing a complete wood block edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon was completed.

Although *Iron Eyes* as a whole is a solid work, there are some problematic aspects to this study. Baroni’s conventions for translating proper names are not explained. This problem is compounded by the fact that there is no character list, nor is transliteration from Japanese consistently provided. Readers are thus expected to know that the Jōō Incident is Baroni’s somewhat interpretive translation of the *Jōō no kyōgi ronsō*, literally the “Jōō era doctrinal debates.” Furthermore, the author at times fails to provide adequate citations. Baroni’s discussion of the *Jōō no kyōgi ronsō* contains no reference to either primary or secondary sources. These are, however, small detractions from a well-written book.

In conclusion, the overall contribution of this book is substantial. *Iron Eyes* adds to the increasing number of scholarly understandings of Tokugawa era Buddhism, reinforces the importance of the written word within Zen Buddhism, and provides translations and analysis of Tetsugen’s written work.

Inventing Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch: Hagiography and Biography in Early Ch'an. By John Jørgensen. *Sinica Leidensia* Vol. 68. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2005. 862 pages. Hardcover, \$299.

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Whether one chooses to see Huineng (638–713), the purported Sixth Patriarch of Chinese Chan Buddhism, as a purely hagiographical construct, as a leading historical figure of the Tang (618–906), or as a combination of both, the persona of Huineng stands centrally in the history and formation of Chinese Chan. In fact, the many-faceted Huineng-figure is pivotal to the Chan tradition, whether seen from a sectarian or a hermeneutical perspective, or from a historical perspective based on modern, analytical scholarship. Since the publication in 1967 of Phillip Yampolsky's ground-breaking and annotated translation of the Dunhuang version of *Huineng's Platform Scripture* (*Liuzu tan jing*), there has been a growing interest among scholars in the West in the history of early Chan to which Huineng belonged. This interest culminated during the second half of the 1980s with a series of high-quality publications, mainly by American researchers following the lead of a number of Japanese scholars, in particular Yanagida Seizan (1922–2006), the distinguished doyen of Chan studies in Japan.¹ The 1990s saw a general decline of interest in Chan Buddhism under the Tang among Western scholars in the field, with focus shifting to the following Song dynasty (960–1279). Moreover, this change also heralded a shift away from Chan as the sole focus of attention to encompass other denominations of Chinese Buddhism. This development was in many ways a natural reaction to the previous great interest that had been invested in Tang Chan, but also a result of the growing recognition that most of the primary sources on Chinese Chan had in fact been produced during the Song. As a consequence of this it had gradually dawned on the concerned scholars that it was the Song vision of Tang Chan that had dominated their own understanding of the developments of that tradition.

Despite this, the extant, primary material on Tang-dynasty Chan is really rather extensive, and there are many areas and topoi that still need to be looked at. Indeed, in the light of what we know today, in particular as Dunhuang studies have progressed rapidly during the

past two decades, quite a few areas in the study of early Chan are in need of being redressed in a more critical light, Huineng and his *Platform Scripture* being one of them. Jørgensen's new work is in fact the fruits of more than twenty years of research on the Chan tradition of the Tang, and as such can be seen as having had its roots in the scholarly interest in early Chan that peaked during the 1980s as mentioned above. Jørgensen's interest in and fascination with Tang-dynasty Chan to a large extent can be traced back to the influence of Yanagida, with whom he was closely associated. Jørgensen's deep interest in the early Chan tradition did wane, however, and he continued doggedly in his investigation of the primary and secondary sources, especially those connected with the name Huineng. Hence, the present study is not only an attempt at setting things right in the sense of elucidating the complex and multifaceted Huineng persona, it is also an update of previous scholarship on this important monk as well as a critical review of studies on Tang Chan in the past four decades, and more. Therefore, *Inventing Hui-neng* is a most welcome addition to the fairly extensive number of studies on Huineng and the history of early Chan Buddhism available to us today in several languages.

Jørgensen's bulky study consists of seven chapters divided into two major parts as well as two lengthy appendices. In addition there is an introduction, a conclusion, and the standard bibliography and topic index. The contents of the book is as follows.

Introduction. Here, Jørgensen sketches the book's scope. This includes the figure of the Chan master Huineng, the cult of relics and the cult of the book, ideas about inventing or fabricating history, characteristics of medieval history, historiography and biography, hagiography, etc.

Part I: The Hagiographical Image and Relic Worship. This section comprises four chapters. Chapter 1 contains an analysis of Huineng's hagiography. This includes a discussion of Confucian ancestral concerns, the cultural background for the rise of Chan during the early eighth century, and a comparison of Huineng's hagiography to the hagiographies of the figures of Confucius, Buddha, and Bodhidharma. In chapter 2 Jørgensen focuses on the role of Huineng as relic, including discussions of the Huineng "mummy"; the after-life of relics, portraits, reliquaries, and *stūpas*; and so on. Chapter 3, "Secondary Relics, Ancestor Worship and Lineage Legitimation," includes a discussion of the patriarch's robe and bowl, ancestor worship, and lineage legitimation.

In short, it is an investigation of the political dimension of Huineng's relics. Chapter 4, "The Furtum Sacrum," is devoted to a comparative discussion of relic theft in relation to the extended hagiography of Huineng—in particular, the so-called "skull-relic," which modern Korean Buddhists believe is kept at Ssangye Temple in Mt. Chiri.² Jørgensen show that this "relic" is a fabrication, the history of which only dates back to the late nineteenth century.

Part II: The Writing of the Hagiography. Part 2 of Jørgensen's work is divided into two sections. Section A, "Place and Authority in the Life of Hui-neng," deals with both the socio-political and geographical background of the Huineng hagiography. Section B, "The Chan Hagiographies: Authors and Places," attempts to trace the evolution and authorship of Huineng hagiographies and the *Platform Scripture*.

Chapter 5 deals with the socio-political background and the intellectual milieus in relation to the rise of Chan Buddhism. The author also touches upon literary concerns, in particular the connection between the *guwen* movement and Buddhism. He also tries to pinpoint the identity of the author(s) of the *Platform Scripture* and the *Baolin zhuan*, and in this process he investigates the possible author/compiler roles played by the Chan monks Jiaoran (ca. 734–791?), Fahai (fl. eighth century), Lingche (746–816), and Dayi (746–818).

In chapter 6, "Place Authority, Regional Images and the Evolution of Chan Hagiography," Jørgensen deals with the role of location, what he terms "religious geography" in relation to the development of the various Chan Buddhist centers that rose in the various parts of China during the Tang. Included is a discussion of the North–South dichotomy, the importance of metropol vs. province, as well as a description of a number of regional centers including the areas around Yizhou (Sichuan), Jiangnan (Hunan, Jiangxi), and Lingnan (Guangzhou, Shaozhou, and Xinzhou).

Chapter 7, "Evolution of the Huineng Hagiographies," begins Section of B of Part II. Here, Jørgensen seeks to identify the various authors of the Huineng hagiographies and to place them within their respective religious and cultural settings. The bulk of this chapter is devoted to a comparative analysis of the *Caoqi dashi zhuan*, the *Platform Scripture*, and finally the *Baolin zhuan* in descending order. As to who the author of the *Platform Scripture* was, Jørgensen concludes that it was in all likelihood a monk associated with both the Mazu Daoyi and Shenhui lineages, who the author believes may have composed the scripture

or part of it, probably built up around an actual sermon attributed to Huineng (pp. 592, 626–627). Three possible candidates are held up as the authors, one being Chengguang (717–798), his disciple Zhenshu (d. ca. 820), and Dayi, the latter of whom we have already encountered. Literary concerns are also dealt with here, including a discussion of what constitutes biography and autobiography in the context of contemporary Tang literature as well as a review of the developments that preceded the composition of the hagiography of Huineng. Jørgensen then provides a conclusion to his analysis in which he sums up his earlier findings.

Appendix 1: The Translations. Jørgensen presents (a) three translations of Huineng biographies/hagiographies, including that of the *Caoqi dashi zhuan*; (b) the stele of the Korean Sŏn master Hyeso/Chingam; (c) the text of the inscription of the Hair Stūpa in Guangxiao Temple in Guangzhou; and (d) a discussion of the bibliographical issues concerning the above three translations.

Appendix 2: Korea and the Compilation of the Tsu-t'ang chi. In this appendix the author endeavors to come to terms with the textual and historical problems of the *Zutang ji* (Collection of the Patriarchs' Halls) from 952 CE, also known under its Korean name *Chodang chip*, a Chan collection consisting mainly of material related to the so-called “recorded sayings” (yulu; Kor. ŏrok) type of Chan literature. Jørgensen provides an outline of previous scholarship on this important Chan/Sŏn classic, while attempting to solve the many questions concerning the supposed different versions of the *Zutang ji*.

As we proceed to a critical review of *Inventing Hui-neng*, let me begin by saying that I find Jørgensen's work a monumental achievement. First of all, he demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of essentially all the relevant primary sources down to the smallest detail. Moreover, the extent to which he is able to contextualize the history of early Chan on the basis of the available secondary historical sources is nothing short of impressive. Virtually all the relevant characters and persons who figure in Jørgensen's account are provided with detailed biographical data lifted from the primary sources. Not only has the author here made an in-depth study of one of the central figures in the history of Chinese Chan, but he has also included a synopsis of all the relevant scholarly writings on Huineng in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Western languages from the past fifty years and more. This alone makes his study a highly useful and important resource for everyone

interested in the history of Chinese Chan Buddhism. In addition to this, the author's deep and extensive knowledge of both Chinese and Korean Buddhism and their respective sources is noteworthy. As there is actually only a very limited number of Western scholars in the field today who are equally well versed in both traditions, this makes Jørgensen's achievement so much more relevant and useful. It may be no exaggeration to consider this study the single most important work to have appeared in the field of Chan Buddhist studies for the past two decades.

Inventing Hui-neng is much more than a book about the Sixth Patriarch and his rise to prominence as the founder of Chinese Chan Buddhism. In fact, Jørgensen's study is both an account of the rise and formation of what later became orthodox Chan as well as its subsequent developments throughout the Tang dynasty and into the Five Dynasties period. More than any previous study on Huineng, this work goes into detail with a great variety of aspects concerned with Chan Buddhism, including its textual history; Tang culture, in particular that of the literati class; geography; local history; as well as the various economic aspects. Not only does this make Jørgensen's study much richer and more multi-faceted than what has been presented in earlier scholarship, but it also reflects the ease with which the author utilizes and navigates through the staggering amount of primary and secondary sources on Chan in the Tang dynasty that is available to us today. Jørgensen "weaves" with much skill all these diverse and discrete pieces of information into a detailed and fascinatingly fine-meshed historical "fabric." Among the highlights is the way he uncovers and links together the various Chan masters he discusses with the political leaders—metropolitan as well as local—and the educated elite in general. As an example of this, mention can be made of Jørgensen's eminent discussion of several of the important Tang literati whose involvement with Chan helped shape its future development and success as a religious movement. In this connection, the author's treatment of the figure of Liu Zongyuan (773–819), the celebrated Confucian literatus whose Buddhist involvement is laid out in great detail as part of the background information on Huineng (Liu authored one of the later stele inscriptions on the master's life), is a balanced and wonderfully detailed account that by far out-classes earlier discussions of Liu's lifelong involvement with Buddhism.

One of the special features of Jørgensen's study is the manner in which he treats the Huineng biography/hagiography as a distinct genre within classical Chinese literature. Indeed his interest in the construction of the Huineng hagiography constitutes a central part of the book (pp. 76–190). Already several years ago Jørgensen proposed that the construction of the Southern school of Chan and the role played by Huineng as its central figure should be “read” in accordance with the cultural terms of Confucian ancestral worship and secular lineage construction in traditional China.³ In *Inventing Hui-neng* the author takes this “reading” a step further when he compares the way the Huineng biography/hagiography has been constructed in comparative light of the traditional biographies of Śākyamuni, Confucius, and Bodhidharma respectively, the latter taken by the mid-Tang Chan tradition as its founding patriarch. On the basis of this approach Jørgensen concludes that the Huineng hagiography borrowed more or less directly from those other biographies in terms of style, structure, and content. He makes it clear that the Huineng biography was written over a historically well-seasoned template. Moreover, while the Huineng story was obviously couched in Buddhist trappings, Confucian ideology and concepts such as filial piety and ancestral lineage are overriding concerns throughout the Huineng biography.

When it comes to detail and background discussion in *Inventing Hui-neng*, one may well argue that the author often takes his reader far afield in lieu of the overall topic of Huineng. However, these “excursions” into the wider field of Tang history and culture is what make Jørgensen's study so interesting and significant. Even though it is clear that one of the aims of his study is to deconstruct the traditional image(s) of Huineng and through this process to show it as a product of certain historical, religious, and political forces, the Huineng persona, together with the many associated topics, becomes larger than life in Jørgensen's account.

As already noted, the author also demonstrates extensive knowledge of early Sōn Buddhism, the Korean pendant to Chan. This asset gives added import and significance to his arguments and shows at the same time how closely intertwined the two traditions were in terms of shared history, practices, beliefs, and literature.

It is of course both alluring and reasonable to see Jørgensen's book as a continuation and supplement to the earlier studies of early Chinese Chan such as those by Bernard Faure and John R. McRae, especial-

ly the former's *Le bouddhisme ch'an en mal d'histoire*⁴ and its companion volume, *La volonté d'orthodoxie dans le bouddhisme chinois*, as well as the latter's acclaimed study on the school(s) of Northern Chan.⁵ However, their respective interests and foci are in many ways quite different from what Jørgensen has set out to do here. Where Faure is a postmodern deconstructionist at heart (something that is actually not too evident in his early works referred to above) and McRae a more classical historian of religions in the formal sense, Jørgensen's approach is more text-analytical with a penchant for historical details and context. This does not mean that he has an overwhelmingly positivistic and/or essentialist approach per se, although one may well argue that his work evidences a strong leaning towards formal historical writing and a preoccupation with the text-critical approach. Rather, Jørgensen's reaches his conclusions by exploring different avenues of possibility on the basis of his reading of the data yielded by his sources. In practice this amounts to collateral, investigative—almost detective-like—approaches in which he tests the various hypotheses he brings to the fore, others as well as his own, against information carefully gathered from his analysis of the primary sources.

Probably due to the many still unresolved problems with the history of Tang Chan—including the issue of denomination, sect, or school; hermeneutical and practical interaction between Chan and the other Buddhist schools; the seminal question of Chan language as a special pedagogical tool, including Chan poetics; and the use of symbolic charts, just to mention a few areas that even the extensive and long-lasting Japanese scholarship in the field has been unable to deal with in a satisfying manner—Jørgensen can be seen to vacillate here and there in his work as regards the datings of the historical texts of the Chan traditions. This is not really a serious mistake, as the material is in many ways difficult to date precisely. Hence it makes sense to assign a fairly liberal and open-ended dating for several of the works in question, which he also does. The overall arguments concerning the creation of the biographies (actually hagiographies) of Huineng, and the eventual making of the *Platform Scripture*, are all placed within a logical and historically verifiable time-frame based on a careful reading of the primary sources.

It is self-evident that one of the important questions as regards Huineng and the *Platform Scripture* concerns the identification of its author(s) or at the very least its author-milieu. Many theories have

been forwarded to this end, but unfortunately very few of them, if any at all, have been really convincing. Were we to take seriously all the various views that concerned scholarship has put forth in the past half a century concerning the authorship of the *Platform Scripture*, we would end up with a highly fragmented and bifurcated result, to the effect that the book would be a sort of “textual patchwork.” Furthermore, based on this type of reading, it would convey the idea that nobody as such wrote the text, but that it was nevertheless made up by virtually everybody who played a role in Chinese Chan during the eighth century! Jørgensen also gets stuck in the authorship question, although it must be said in his defense that he strives bravely to overcome the problematics of this central issue. In the end he subscribes to a sort of hypothetical compromise and offers various alternative solutions. However, the fact that he essentially ends up without a final answer to this central question shows the depth of the problem of providing a viable solution to the authorship of the *Platform Scripture*.

It may very well be that the Dunhuang *Platform Scripture*, the oldest extant version of the text, has many layers, even contradicting ones, and that it reflects a wide variety of religio-political and ideological concerns going beyond the narrow interests of one single sectarian discourse. However, I am uncomfortable with the “fragmented” solution presented by Jørgensen, and believe that we might be able to narrow down the field of possibilities for finding a likely author, or rather author-context. Let me review some of the relevant issues, so that we may be able to at least narrow down the field for possible authors or, perhaps more properly, author-milieus.

According to Jørgensen’s final findings, Wuzhen (816–895), the celebrated monk-leader at Shazhou (Dunhuang),⁶ might be counted be among the candidates for the authorship of the *Platform Scripture*. The reason for this is that the text includes a monk with this name among the disciples of Huineng, actually a disciple of Fahai if we follow Jørgensen (p. 518). Somehow I find this identification unlikely. First of all, the Wuzhen from Dunhuang did not belong to any of the Chan traditions current during the first half of the ninth century, but was a scholar-monk with a special interest in the teachings of the Faxiang school and in particular that of the *Yogācārabhūmi śāstra*. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, had he been involved with the creation of the *Platform Scripture*, we would have to assign its date to some time between 840 to 895 CE given the dates of Wuzhen. This is much too

late given what we otherwise know about the book, the history of Chinese Chan, and Chinese Chan literature. Thirdly, there is the problem with the location. Shazhou was an outpost of the Tang dynasty that had recently fallen to the Tibetans and remained under their control ca. 786–848 CE when the Returning Righteous Army regained control of the area on behalf of the Tang throne. The implications of this are that Shazhou and the Buddhist communities at the Mogao Caves were more or less cut off from contact with the central provinces of Tang China for more than half a century, a period that roughly corresponds with the life of Wuzhen. Had Wuzhen been working with the *Platform Scripture*, he must have done so on the basis of data available to him prior to the Tibetan occupation of the area. However, Wuzhen was clearly not in a historical position to put together the *Platform Scripture* and should therefore neither be considered its author nor its compiler. At best he may have added his name to one of the copies produced in Dunhuang, but its author he certainly could not have been. Moreover, given that it is most likely Wuzhen from Dunhuang, whose name is on the Dunhuang manuscript of the *Platform Scripture*, it seems to me that the text actually was in Dunhuang prior to the Tibetan takeover in the late 780s. Moreover, Jørgensen dates the Dunhuang version to ca. 781 (p. 577). If we reject that the *Platform Scripture* was produced in Dunhuang, something I consider more than likely, it means that the scripture already existed in a similar form to the one we know today prior to its arrival in Dunhuang. This, then, would indicate that it was already in circulation among Buddhist centers in the central provinces of Tang China for at least a full decade or so before it was brought to Dunhuang. If this scenario holds true, then we should date the version from which the Dunhuang version was copied to around 870 CE at the very latest (it actually may have been composed as early as around 750 CE), in which case neither the *Caoqi dashi zhuan*, the *Lidai fabao ji*, nor the *Baolin zhuan* could have served as its direct inspiration. Rather, it was, in my view, this earlier version of the *Platform Scripture* that—directly or indirectly—gave rise to their respective discourses on Huineng.

This leads us to reviewing the question of the so-called “ur-version” of the *Platform Scripture*. Given that excerpts and passages from what appears to have been an earlier version of what later became the Dunhuang *Platform Scripture* have been identified in Chan material dating to after the death of Shenhui and before the ca. 775 CE dating for the compilation of the *Lidai fabao ji*, it is highly likely that an early ver-

sion of the scripture in question did indeed exist. Jørgensen appears to believe that it was Shenhui and his followers who fabricated the first version of the *Platform Scripture* as part of their campaign at bolstering Southern Chan. In this sense the author follows the view previously held by Yanagida and Yampolsky, who again were following the lead of the Chinese scholar Hu Shi (1891–1962).⁷ However, I am not so sure that this was the case. As repeatedly stated, the earliest extant version of the *Platform Scripture* is represented by the Dunhuang manuscript. It features material that is not overwhelming positive towards Shenhui, although the fact that he does figure there indicates an acknowledgment of sorts. Actually the *Platform Scripture* is critical of Shenhui, and more than once. Nevertheless, he plays a minor role in the overall narrative of the scripture, and even if we postulate that he or his followers added his name to the text, it does not really add up. For a sectarian founder, politically active figure, and important person such as Shenhui to go to the length of fabricating an entire scripture without at the same time assigning himself a leading role in it, as is not at all the case with the *Platform Scripture*, seems to me rather unlikely. This problem was first pointed out by Morten Schlütter more than two decades ago in his comparative study of the stemma of the various editions of the *Platform Scripture*.⁸ It is of course possible that Shenhui or his followers tampered with an early version of the *Platform Scripture* that had arrived in the central provinces from the south, that is, from Caoqi, and that they either inserted the name of their master into the text or otherwise tampered with it. However, if so, such a version of the scripture is no longer extant, and if it existed it hardly looked anything like the Dunhuang version we now have as it is bound to have left more telling evidence of itself (and of Shenhui). Is it not more likely that the text as we have it now was actually composed by descendants of Huineng, possibly descendants who were at the periphery of the contest for patriarchal supremacy, but who nevertheless had a vested interest in bolstering Huineng as the Sixth Patriarch of Chan? The famous Fahai character, who the *Platform Scripture* makes a direct disciple of Huineng, but who nobody for some reason is able to identify, might very well have been a historical person associated with Caoqi and the old temple of Huineng in Shaozhou. If he is a pure fabrication and/or a character without significance, why does his name appear in the scripture? Why mention him and not instead give a more convenient name that would have fitted more closely with the agenda of whoever

fabricated the *Platform Scripture*? Jørgensen does look in this direction, but eventually abandons it for what he eventually considers a more plausible stance.

If the author of the *Platform Scripture* was a member of the Niutou school, as Yanagida once believed, it does strike one as odd that the text does not contain any references to this tradition of Chan, which, after all, was rather important during the second half of the eighth century in southeastern China. Hence, I find it downright unlikely that a monk with Niutou affiliation should have composed such a central and important, doctrinal *cum* polemical tract without mentioning his own spiritual ancestry with as much as a single word. After all, this is what the *Platform Scripture* was meant to do. The fact that there are doctrinal passages in the *Platform Scripture* that reflect teachings and expressions similar to statements in the Niutou material is not sufficient to establish a historical connection between the two.

The view that we should look for a monk of Southern Chan persuasion as the author of the *Platform Scripture* also has problems, even though I admit that Jørgensen argues his case well. However, this scenario is complicated by Huineng's testament at the end of the scripture (unless, of course, one dismisses it as a later addition). But as already argued, why propose a lineage of transmission different from one's own if the whole rationale behind a Chan book such as the *Platform Scripture* was to cement and construe a connection between oneself and the patriarchal transmission?

Jørgensen is in my view correct in focusing his attention on the site of Baolin. It is certainly no coincidence that Caoqi and Baolin are singled out for attention in the *Platform Scripture*. Not only is Baolin an important holy site associated with Huineng, but it is also associated with a lineage said to comprise the Patriarch's ten major disciples, including the enigmatic Fahai. Hence, we shall have to ask ourselves why the list of Huineng's ten disciples looks the way it does, as well as why it does not include mention of any of the other disciples, such as Huichong (d. 776), Jiangu (fl. eighth century) Huairang (677–744), and Xingsi (d. 740), who the later Chan history has made the Patriarch's primary successors. The view that the *Platform Scripture*'s author/compiler should be a monk affiliated with the Hongzhou branch of Southern Chan, such as Jørgensen advocates, is in my view only possible if his own lineage is mentioned or some sort of clear-cut link is provided in the text. Such is, however, not the case. Given the strong sectarian

slant and political import of the *Platform Scripture*, we cannot afford to ignore an analysis of its political discourse. As the text ends with a sort of testament, a statement as to who inherited Huineng's legacy, I am inclined to accept that these were in fact the very persons, known and unknown, who transmitted the *Platform Scripture*. Moreover, there should be a limit to the view that accepts that the scripture solely came about due to a continuous process of cut and paste, at least in the form we know it. Would it not have been easier to compose an alternative book with the same title presenting Huineng and his legacy according to one's particular doctrinal and historical requirements rather than constantly amending a book that was not too close to one's purpose? After all, this is exactly what the Chan tradition did with its competing sectarian histories of the Five Dynasties period and the early Northern Song. It simply created pious revisions of existing hagiographical grids to serve its own purposes.

Since most of Jørgensen's study is devoted to a dismantling of the traditional image(s) of Huineng, I feel obliged to point to a simple fact that Jørgensen gives little credit to beyond mentioning it in passing. The fact is that the name of Huineng does crop up among the Fifth Patriarch Hongren's disciples in the *Lengqie shizi ji* (Record of Successive Masters of the Laṅkāvatāra), a sectarian work with a clear-cut political agenda to serve the sect-political pretensions of mainstream Northern Chan. This appearance is in my view more significant than Jørgensen and others tend to credit it. Despite the fact that the Huineng persona we encounter in the *Platform Scripture* as well as the other sources written during the late eighth century is by and large the product of hagiographical construction, the reference to him in this important, early historical work of Northern Chan provenance would seem to signal that a monk by this name actually did exist and was sufficiently well known even to the Chan communities in Northern China. It even mentions him as living in Shaozhou! Otherwise, why did Jingjue (683–ca. 750), the author of the *Lengqie shizi ji*, take the trouble to mention him at all? Moreover, from where did he get the date and name of Huineng? While it is possible that Shenhui during the 730s picked up Huineng's name from among Hongren's disciples without actually having met him and subsequently built a hagiography and context around the name in order to serve his own religio-political ends—such as many scholars think he did—it would appear that Huineng, or at least his legacy, was well known and respected by the time the *Lengqie shizi ji* was compiled

at the beginning of the Kaiyuan period (713–741).⁹ Furthermore, it is most likely that this legacy was being promoted by his own disciples, just like the cases with most of Hongren's major disciples including Faru, Huian, and of course Shenxiu (ca. 606–712). Despite the fact that historically reliable data on Huineng is wanting, there can be in my view little doubt that he was a historical figure of some importance in his own day. Now the question is, how much fire may we deduce from the smoke behind the proverbial hedge?

The *Caoqi dashi chuan* (History of Great Master Caoqi) is an interesting work, to which Jørgensen provides a detailed discussion, including a full-length, annotated translation (pp. 677–705). Jørgensen dates this relatively short work, in my view a bit conservatively, to 781 CE (p. 577; later he actually gives 765 CE as a possible date, p. 583), a dating that in his view makes it the first attempt at a full-length Huineng biography outside the *Platform Scripture*. This is really a work of propaganda meant to bolster Shenhui and his claim of succession to the authentic Chan patriarchal lineage, for which reason I am reluctant to accept it as dating much later than the end of the 760s CE. In fact the famous episode found in all Huineng hagiographies, namely the transmission of the mind dharma (*xinfa*) from Hongren to Huineng, is replicated in the *Caoqi dashi chuan* when Huineng bestows the transmission on Shenhui. As no other among Huineng's disciples are given serious mention, beyond of course Shenhui, it can be taken as a clear indication that this text was part of the drive to bolster him and the lineage he claimed for himself. As is well known, Shenhui's lineage did not continue long after his death, for which reason assigning a late eighth-century dating to this text makes little sense. At that time there were no Shenhui followers of importance who could benefit from writing a tract meant to inflate their own position in the history of Chan. Despite the fact that the *Caoqi dashi chuan* gives much attention to Huineng's relics, that is, the robe and the mummified body of the patriarch, no one but Shenhui, or someone close to him, could have benefitted from the way its discourse unfolds. Therefore the data provided by the *Caoqi dashi chuan* must be older than Jørgensen thinks.

One of the few real weaknesses of *Inventing Hui-neng* has to do with one of the aspects of the author's methodology. In his penchant for reviewing the entire scholarly tradition's writings on Huineng, something he admittedly does in a most brilliant manner, Jørgensen faithfully summarizes the various views and findings of a succession

of scholars in the field. However, he often tends to leave out his own understanding and evaluation of what they have written on a given subject. This is in my view a weakness, since we as readers would very much like to know what he actually thinks of the previous research on Huineng, what still holds water and what in his view has by now become outmoded. Instead we are left with a staggering amount of referent information, but too often without sufficiently qualifying argumentation on Jørgensen's side. It is of course not the case that he does not relate to this material, he certainly does, but he very often forgets to tell us how and why he evaluates a given piece of information as he does. Given Jørgensen's extensive knowledge in the field of Chinese Chan Buddhism, he ought to have let his readers benefit more from his own insights than from those of others. Probably he has felt that he could not criticize his Western and Japanese peers too openly. However, if we do not address previous errors and mistaken views as we see them, and of course in an open and fair manner, how are we to progress along the road to a better and more precise understanding? And is progress in this sense not what proper scientific development and scholarly analysis dictate?

Jørgensen steps lightly over the important issues of Chan practice and to some extent Chan doctrine as well, since these in his own admission are not central to his research into the construction of the Huineng myth. From one perspective I can sympathize with such a view. It really would have been overkill to try to address these rather significant questions within the same tome presently under review. On the other hand, a good understanding of both Chan practice(s) and doctrine(s), in the historical and cultural context of the Tang, are critical to an overall understanding of both the Huineng persona and of the type of Chan with which the later tradition has credited him. As already stated, I do not think that it would have been realistic or practical for the author to encompass the issues of Chan doctrine and practice fully in his study, but some degree of perspective on these issues may have given him more solid evidence for dating the *Platform Scripture*. Perhaps this added angle even could have made it easier to pin down a possible author or author-context?

There are other issues in the book, some more significant than others, with which this reviewer has problems. One example is the manner in which Jørgensen treats the important, and indeed for his own argumentation, central Chan history, the *Zutangji* (Collection from the

Patriarchal Halls) or *Chodang chip*, compiled in or around 952 CE. Although this Chan history has been the subject of literally hundreds of academic articles, no one, as far as I am aware, has been able to solve the basic historical problems concerning the history of the *Zutang ji*, and neither does Jørgensen (although it must be said to his credit that he does devote a full appendix to this work alone). None of the various theories that have been forwarded in the past three decades involving the supposed versions of the *Zutang ji* in one, ten, and twenty chapters are in my opinion creditable (pp. 738–740). Given that this Chan history contains an unusually large amount of material pertaining to early Korean Sŏn Buddhism, material which is unlikely to have been available in China at the time of the book's first compilation, we need more research into the Korean side of the *Zutang ji* before making too firm conclusions based on the data it yields. Let us begin by acknowledging that the Korean Sŏn material that we find in the *Zutang ji* is somewhat awkward. And as Jørgensen himself notes, it is different in both style as well as character when compared with most of the Chinese material that makes up the bulk of its text. It may very well be that most, if not all, of the Korean material was inserted into the book later as many believe it was. But when? And if so, how does it relate to the overall format of the *Zutang ji*? If we look closer at the Korean material we cannot help but realize that it is peculiar in more ways than one. As Jørgensen notes, much of it appears to have been lifted from stele inscriptions—not really copied, but rather in re-worked form. Secondly, it is highly selective in nature, that is, it does not reflect the full range of data on early Sŏn Buddhism that we know was available in Korea at the time the wood blocks for the twenty-chapter *Zutang ji* version we have today were being prepared and carved during the mid-thirteenth century. Thirdly, the text excerpts of Korean origin found in the *Zutang ji* are in many cases corrupt or otherwise written in a strange, somewhat countrified style that does not match very well with most of the Korean Sŏn Buddhist material we have from the mid-Koryŏ. Here it should be remembered that some of the Korean passages from the *Zutang ji* do actually occur in more polished form in the *Sŏnmun pojang nok* (Records from the Precious Treasury of the Sŏn Tradition), a compendium compiled during the late thirteenth century.¹⁰ All in all these questions indicate that the Korean material in the *Zutang ji* was not inserted into the book at a very late stage in its history as commonly held. In any case, it could hardly have been done as late as the time of its printing in

1252 CE. Most probably the Korean Sŏn material had been incorporated at a much earlier stage, maybe even as early as shortly after the book itself had been brought to the Korean Peninsula during the mid-tenth century. Finally, I should add that although the *Zutang ji* appendix is useful for our understanding of the development of the hagiographies of Huineng, it is not of primary significance. It would have been better if Jørgensen had published it as a separate study than as part of *Inventing Hui-neng*.

As a last point of criticism I cannot help noting the absurdity of producing a study of such extensive size and not including a list of Chinese characters for the names and terms that otherwise crowd the book. Is this a simple (but grievous) omission on the part of the author and/or editor, or has it been done on purpose? If it is the latter, I must admit that I remain dumbfounded. A list of characters would have enhanced this work greatly and made it so much easier for us as readers to navigate the maze of Chan history and Chan studies as presented by Jørgensen. This omission is truly a shame!

These lesser points of criticism apart, *Inventing Hui-neng* is an impressive and praiseworthy accomplishment. As far as our understanding of the persona of Huineng and the associated literature go, Jørgensen's book is destined to remain *the* authoritative study on this topic in the next several decades to come. This study is actually a sort of encyclopedia on the study of Huineng and Chinese Chan, and any scholarly undertaking involving Huineng and his legacy that chooses to ignore Jørgensen's work will be doomed to failure. Let me end this review by saying that *Inventing Hui-neng* is not for use in the classroom. It is a specialist's handbook, a research tool of the highest order, and an extremely valuable addition to the ongoing research worldwide on the history and development of Chan Buddhism during the Tang and beyond.

TABLE OF CHARACTERS

Baolin 寶林	<i>Baolin zhuan</i> 寶林傳
Caoqi 曹溪	<i>Caoqi dashi zhuan</i> 曹溪大師傳
<i>chan / sŏn</i> 禪	Chengguang 乘廣
Chiri-san 智理山	Dayi 大一
Dunhuang 敦煌	Fahai 法海
Faxiang-zong 法相宗	<i>Han'guk pulgyo chŏnsŏ</i> 韓國佛教全書
Hongren 宏忍	Hongzhou 洪州
Huairang 懷讓	Huizhong 慧忠
Huineng 慧能	Hu Shi 胡適
Hyeso / Chingam 慧昭 / 真鑑	Jiangnan 江南
Jiangu 堅固	Jiaoran 皎然
Jingjue 淨覺	Koryŏ 高麗
<i>Lengqie shizi ji</i> 楞伽師資記	<i>Lidai fabao ji</i> 歷代法寶記
Lingche 靈徹	Lingnan 嶺南
Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元	<i>Liuzu tan jing</i> 六祖壇經
Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一	Mogao-ku 莫高窟
Niutou 牛頭	Shazhou 沙州
Shaozhou 紹州	Shenhui 神會
Shenxiu 神秀	<i>Sŏnmun pojang nok</i> 禪門寶藏錄
Ssangye-sa 雙溪寺	Wuzhen 悟真
<i>xinfa</i> 心法	Xingsi 行思
Yanagida Seizan 柳田聖山	Yizhou 益州
yulu / ōrok 語錄	Zhenshu 甄叔
<i>Zutang ji / Chodang chip</i> 祖堂集	

NOTES

1. The number of monographs and articles on early Chinese Chan written in English during the 1980s is staggering. For a comprehensive list, the interested reader may consult the extensive bibliography at the back of *Inventing Hui-neng*. The majority of the important Japanese studies on Chan Buddhism from the past five decades can be found listed in the *Zengaku kenkyū nyūmon* (Entrance to Zen Studies), comp. Tanaka Ryōshō (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1994).
2. This relic has also been discussed by Bernard Faure in his *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 160–164. But whereas Jørgensen places the relic in a historical and textual context, Faure is chiefly concerned with dissecting and deconstructing the myths surrounding the relic.
3. See John Jørgensen, “The ‘Imperial’ Lineage of Ch’an Buddhism: The Role of Confucian Ritual and Ancestor Worship in Ch’an’s Search for Legitimation in the mid-T’ang dynasty,” *Papers on Far Eastern History* 35 (1987): 89–133.
4. Bernard Faure, *Le bouddhisme ch’an en mal d’histoire* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1988); and *La volonté d’orthodoxie dans le bouddhisme chinois*, Publications de l’Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient Vol. 158 (Paris: EFEO, 1989).
5. John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early of Ch’an Buddhism*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 3 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986).
6. The hero of the important study by Chen Tsu-lung, *La vie et les oeuvres de Wou-tchen (816–895)*, Publications de l’EFEO, vol. 60 (Paris: EFEO, 1966).
7. Later Yanagida modified this view and came to believe that the *Platform Scripture* was a product of the Niutou school and that its probable author was Fahai (fl. second half of the eighth century), a disciple of Xuansu (d. ca. 766). For this, see John McRae, “The Ox-head School of Chinese Ch’an Buddhism: From Early Ch’an to the Golden Age,” in *Studies in Ch’an and Hua-yen*, ed. Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, Studies in East Asian Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983), 183–185.
8. Cf. Morten Schlütter, “A Study in the Genealogy of the *Platform Sūtra*,” *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions* 2 (1989): 53–114.
9. McRae believes that Huineng was considered an important master of Chan on par with Hongren’s other major disciples prior to the middle of the eighth century when the implications of the north/south dichotomy manifested as a political reality in earnest. Cf. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch’an Buddhism*, 38–39.
10. *Han’guk pulgyo chōnsō*, 6:469c–484a; see esp. 473b–474b and 478c–479a.

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The *Pacific World*—Its History

Throughout my life, I have sincerely believed that Buddhism is a religion of peace and compassion, a teaching which will bring spiritual tranquillity to the individual, and contribute to the promotion of harmony and peace in society. My efforts to spread the Buddha's teachings began in 1925, while I was a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. This beginning took the form of publishing the *Pacific World*, on a bi-monthly basis in 1925 and 1926, and then on a monthly basis in 1927 and 1928. Articles in the early issues concerned not only Buddhism, but also other cultural subjects such as art, poetry, and education, and then by 1928, the articles became primarily Buddhistic. Included in the mailing list of the early issues were such addressees as the Cabinet members of the U.S. Government, Chambers of Commerce, political leaders, libraries, publishing houses, labor unions, and foreign cultural institutions.

After four years, we had to cease publication, primarily due to lack of funds. It was then that I vowed to become independently wealthy so that socially beneficial projects could be undertaken without financial dependence on others. After founding the privately held company, Mitutoyo Corporation, I was able to continue my lifelong commitment to disseminate the teachings of Buddha through various means.

As one of the vehicles, the *Pacific World* was again reactivated, this time in 1982, as the annual journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies. For the opportunity to be able to contribute to the propagation of Buddhism and the betterment of humankind, I am eternally grateful. I also wish to thank the staff of the Institute of Buddhist Studies for helping me to advance my dream to spread the spirit of compassion among the peoples of the world through the publication of the *Pacific World*.

Yehan Numata
Founder, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai

In Remembrance

In May of 1994, my father, Yehan Numata, aged 97 years, returned to the Pure Land after earnestly serving Buddhism throughout his lifetime. I pay homage to the fact that the *Pacific World* is again being printed and published, for in my father's youth, it was the passion to which he was wholeheartedly devoted.

I, too, share my father's dream of world peace and happiness for all peoples. It is my heartfelt desire that the *Pacific World* helps to promote spiritual culture throughout all humanity, and that the publication of the *Pacific World* be continued.

Toshihide Numata
Chairman, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai