

On the “Paracanonical” Tradition of the Tibetan Version of Nāgārjuna’s Ratnāvalī*

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For the past twelve years Nāgārjuna’s Ratnāvalī or “Necklace of Jewels” has received renewed and intensified attention. This is actually not a surprise, the only surprise is on the contrary, that one of the major genuine works of the great Buddhist philosopher has been unduly neglected for such a long period of time. However, there are, as usual, reasons for such neglect. When Nāgārjuna’s works became known to Western Buddhologists, it was mainly through his *opus magnum*, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās*, and for decades virtually all the energy of scholars was absorbed by the analysis of this monumental work and its most ancient and important commentaries. There is a second work the authorship of which is attributed to Nāgārjuna and which has attracted the attention of students of Buddhist philosophy both in the East and in the West: the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* (or *Daichidoron*). This work was also regarded as one of the major sources for the understanding of the Madhyamaka doctrine and was intensively studied by great scholars such as the late Etienne LAMOTTE, HIKATA Ryūshō and SAIGUSA Mitsuyoshi. By its sheer length this work is more than one human being can reasonably hope to be able to deal with. As all of you know doubts have been expressed concerning Nāgārjuna’s authorship of this work.

Compared to the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās* and the *Ta-chih-tu-lun*, most of the other works attributed to Nāgārjuna seem to be minor in size or in content. This, however, depends on one’s specific point of view. One who is exclusively interested in abstract philosophical theorems will possibly find collections of hymns like the *Catuḥstava*, an epistle like the “Letter to a Friend” (*Suḥr̥llekha*) or a politico-ethical treatise like the “Necklace of Jewels” (*Ratnāvalī*) less inspiring or enlightening. However, anyone who attempts to obtain a comprehensive and balanced view of Buddhist literature as a whole, in all its varieties and forms of expression, will certainly judge these so-called minor works of Nāgārjuna in a

*This lecture was held at the Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute of Otani University, March 24, 1987

94 On the “Paracanonical” Tradition of the Tibetan Version of Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnāvalī* different way. From the point of view of literary forms one might even venture to say that they are extremely important works because they seem to be something like a mould or an archetype for a whole series of later works. The truth of such an assertion can easily be proved in the case of the *lekha* literature of which numerous imitations of the model apparently created by Nāgārjuna have survived.

To come back to the *Ratnāvalī*: two scholarly studies have been devoted to its contents. In 1942 and 1953 the Japanese scholar Hideo WADA published two papers on the content of the *Ratnāvalī*, the first of which appeared in a journal of your university, the *Ōtani Gakuhō*. It is entitled *Hōmanron (Ratnāvalī) no naiyō gaikan* or “An analysis of the content of the *Ratnāvalī*.” In 1953 Hideo WADA published his second paper, *Bukkyō-no seidōron – toku-ni Ratnāvalī-ni okeru ōdō* or “A Buddhist treatise on administration – the rule of a king with special regard to the *Ratnāvalī*”. Only a few years ago, in 1983, the American scholar Robert A. F. THURMAN wrote his very sympathetic analysis of the *Ratnāvalī* in the light of modern political science. His paper “Guidelines for Buddhist Social Activism Based on Nāgārjuna’s *Jewel Garland of Royal Counsels*”, which appeared in *The Eastern Buddhist* (again a journal published by your university), is particularly noteworthy as it very aptly demonstrates the applicability to modern industrialized countries of Nāgārjuna’s ideas, which were developed almost two thousand years ago. As an example I would like to quote two stanzas in which Nāgārjuna advises the king how to treat prisoners:

pratyahaṃ pañcarātraṃ vā baddhān kṣiṇān vimocaya |
śeṣān api yathāyogaṃ mā kāmś cin naiḥva mocaya || 4.33

“Every day or every five days set free prisoners
 who are becoming weak [by the imprisonment];
 set free all the others also according to the proper course;
 let nobody remain in prison.” (TUCCI)

yāvaca na vimucyeraṃś tāvat syuḥ sukhabandhanāḥ |
nāpītanānapānānabhaiṣajyavasānānvitāḥ || 4.35

“As long as (prisoners) are not freed
 they should be comfortably kept in prison,
 supplied with barbers, baths, food,
 drink, medicine and clothing.”

The world would certainly be better off if these basic demands were followed strictly everywhere.

However, interesting as it may be, the content of the *Ratnāvalī* is not the topic of the present lecture. On this occasion I would like to deal once again with the text of the *Ratnāvalī* in its original Sanskrit and its two ancient translations, the Chinese and the Tibetan versions. You might ask: Why this persistent focussing on the wording of the *Ratnāvalī*, is it not far more important to analyse the content and structure of this work and to trace the sources of Nāgārjuna's ideas, as far as this is possible? I certainly do not deny the importance of these tasks, but I strongly recommend taking them up only on the basis of well-established and fully documented texts. I would like to demonstrate what can happen even to good scholars when this basic principle is neglected. My example will take us immediately to the central point of my lecture.

Stanza 4.33 of the *Ratnāvalī* is translated by the distinguished American Tibetologist and Buddhologist HOPKINS in the following way:

“Free the weaker prisoners
After a day or five days,
Do not think the others
Are never to be freed.”

When you compare HOPKINS' English rendering with TUCCI's given above you will immediately notice that the second half of the stanza is not correctly translated. You might now turn to the Tibetan text in order to find out whether it accounts for HOPKINS' blunder. I quote the Tibetan text from my edition:

| *ñin gcig bzin nam žag lña bar* |
| *ñams chuñ btson rnams gtoñ bar mdzod* |
| *lhag ma rnams kyañ ci rigs mdzod* |
| *'ga' yañ mi dgrol min par mdzod* | 4.33 |

A literal translation of this stanza would run:

“Once a day or within five days
set free the imprisoned who are weak;
set (free) also the others as it is appropriate;
do not leave anybody (at least temporarily) unreleased.”

This is exactly what the Sanskrit text says, so what is the reason for HOPKINS' different rendering? From the colophon at the end of the Tibetan text we learn that HOPKINS did not use the canonical Tibetan translation of the *Ratnāvalī* as preserved in the Tanjur but a different edition. As the colophon will become important for us in another connection a little later, I quote in full length

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its English rendering by HOPKINS:

“Here ends the *Precious Garland of Advice for the King* by the great teacher, the Superior, Nāgārjuna. It was [first] translated by the Indian Abbot Vidyākaraprabhā [!] and the Tibetan translator monk Pel-tsek (dPal-brtsēgs). Consulting the three Sanskrit editions, the Indian abbot Śīkanakavarma [!] and the Tibetan monk Pa-tsap-nyi-ma-drak (Pa-tshab-nyi-ma-grags) corrected mistranslations and other points which did not accord with the particular thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his ‘son’ [Āryadeva]. It was printed at the great publishing house below [the Potala in Lhasa].”

Only the last sentence informs us that the edition used by HOPKINS is the one printed in the Po-ta-la’i zol spar-khañ which was first mentioned in Prof. LOKESH CHANDRA’s paper “Tibetan works printed by the Shoparkhang of the Potala” (in: *Jñānamuktāvalī, Festschrift Nobel*, New Delhi 1959, p. 124, no. 14). In this edition the Tibetan text of stanza 4.33 is at variance with the canonical translation. I quote its full text, marking deviations from the canonical rendering by bold face:

| *ñin gcig bzin nam zag lha **zin** |*
 | **ñam** chuñ btson rnams **btan** bar mdzod |
 | *lhag ma rnams kyañ ci rings **par** |*
 | *’ga’ yañ mi dgrol **med** par mdzod | 4.33 |*

I would like to discuss these variants in detail, although at first sight they seem to be of minor importance. *zin* in *zag lha zin* has nothing to do with the so-called “continuative” or “gerundial” particle *cin* and its allophones *zin* and *sin*. It is specifically used in connection with expressions of time as a kind of adverb marker creating something like a modal abverb. On the paradigmatic level it is obviously identical in function with *bzin du* as can be demonstrated by the following two passages:

| *ñams pa med kyañ mi dga’ ba’i tshig de dan de rnams kyiñ ñi ma re re zin de la gnod par gyur te |*

“Although (the Bodhisattva) did not do (them) any harm (they) hurt him daily by various unpleasant words.”

(Source: Haribhaṭṭa’s *Jātakamālā* 21, *Dardara*, 3 +)

rgyu mtshan med par sdañ ba nes par ’brel pa bdag la ñi ma re re bzin du sin tu rtsub pa’i tshig mñon par brjod pa la bdag ñid chen po ’di ñuñ ba yañ sems la rtsub pa ma yin pa ...

“This noble character has not shown even the slightest harshness towards me who, imbued with hatred without reason, daily uttered very harsh words (towards him).”

(Source: Haribhaṭṭa’s *Jātakamālā* 21, *Dardara*, 25 +)

These two quotations prove without any doubt that *xiñ* is nothing but a slight variation of *bzin* as used in the expression *ñin gcig bzin* in the beginning of the same line.

ñam is only an orthographical variation of *ñams*, and the latter is also the reading of the blockprints from Chone, Derge, and Peking in the canonical edition of the *Ratnāvalī*. I had adopted the reading *ñams* only because of the antiquity of the edition of Narthang and the support rendered to this reading by the wording of Rgyal-tshab-rje’s commentary on the Tibetan *Ratnāvalī*. As for the meaning there is no difference. In the case of the next variant reading, *btan bar mdzod* instead of *gton bar mdzod*, *gton* seems to be preferable in the light of parallel constructions like *rjes su gzun bar mdzod* (4.30d) where *mdzod* is used with either the future stem or the present stem but never with the perfect stem.

As for the next variant reading, *ci rigs par* instead of *ci rigs mdzod*, there is a most interesting dichotomy: *ci rigs par* is the more literal rendering of the Sanskrit original *yathāyogaṃ*, which quite clearly preserves the adverbial character of this expression whereas *ci rigs mdzod* omits the adverb marker *par* and adds the main part of the predicate (*gtañ bar mdzod* (= *vimocaya*) which has to be supplied from line b. Without this the Tibetan text becomes so ambiguous that only a knowledge of the Sanskrit would enable us to understand it correctly, that is as *lhag ma rnams kyañ ci rigs par (gtañ bar mdzod la) ’ga’ yañ mi dgrol min par mdzod (cig)*. HOPKINS ignored both the Sanskrit original and TUCCI’s correct translation and consequently arrived at his wrong interpretation.

As for the last variant reading in this stanza, *mi dgrol med par* instead of *mi dgrol min par*, the extant Sanskrit original does not offer any clue which one is to be preferred. In my opinion *min* is much better from the point of view of style and logic. With this reading the Tibetan text has to be translated as “Do not treat anybody as some who is not to be released” whereas the usage of *med* rather suggests the following translation “Do not treat anybody as someone for whom release is not available”, which seems to be too complicated.

From this discussion you might have gathered that even apparently minor variants between the canonical Tibetan translation and the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition, for which I coined the term “paracanonical tradition of the Tibetan *Ratnā-*

98 On the “Paracanonical” Tradition of the Tibetan Version of Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnāvalī*, may entail a long discussion, not to speak of the different interpretations they allow.

Now we have to focus on the following questions:

- 1) What is meant by the term “paracanonical tradition”?
- 2) What is the actual difference between the two traditions?
- 3) What is their genetic relationship?

As stated in the introduction to my edition of the Sanskrit and Tibetan *Ratnāvalī*, the first textual evidence of the non-canonical Tibetan *Ratnāvalī* reached me only after the completion of the critical edition of the two texts. Moreover what I received through the kindness of the Swiss scholar Dr. Martin KALFF was not a copy of the Źol-spar-khañ edition itself but of a modern lithographed print based on it. It was absolutely out of the question to mix up my edition of the canonical version of the *Ratnāvalī* based on the original blockprints with the secondary evidence of a different tradition. All I could do at that time was to illustrate that this divergent tradition is distinguished by very interesting variant readings neither to be found in the canonical blockprints nor to be derived from them, which sometimes correspond more closely with the Sanskrit original than the latter. Here I will repeat only the second of the illustrations given there:

In 5.28b the Sanskrit term *utkañṭhā* “pining” is rendered by *phrag dog* “jealousy” in the canonical version whereas the Źol-spar-khañ edition reads *phrad ’dod*. From the Tibetan version of Haribhaṭṭa’s *Jātakamālā* we know that *phrad ’dod* is used as equivalent of Sanskrit *utkañṭhita* (HJM V 7) and *utsuka* (HJM XI 47), both words meaning “longing, pining”. Hence there can be little doubt that *phrad ’dod* is correct and *phrag dog* is most likely nothing but a corruption of the former reading. Since in this and other cases the canonical editions unequivocally had a wrong reading in contrast with an edition to be found outside the canon and obviously not based on it directly, I drew the following conclusions. A mistake like *phrag dog* for *phrad ’dod* cannot go back to the translators of the *Ratnāvalī*. It can have occurred only in the course of the transmission of the Tibetan text. The uniform readings of the four Tanjur editions suggest that it might have arisen before the compilation of the Tibetan canon at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

As the correct reading in the non-canonical edition cannot be derived from the canonical reading, it seems to go back to a manuscript tradition that is older than the canon itself. From the colophon of the canonical version we know that the *Ratnāvalī* was first translated into Tibetan at the beginning of the ninth cen-

ture by Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal-mtshan, and later on, in the middle of the eleventh century, it was revised by Kanakavarman and Pa-tshab Ñi-ma-grags. So the *Ratnāvalī* existed in Tibet for at least five centuries before it became part of the Tibetan canon. During this time it must have been circulated in Tibet in a number of copies. Some of these copies, certainly not all the existing ones, later became the basis of the canonical edition. Despite all the efforts of the editors of the first Tanjur for an immaculate Tibetan text the manuscripts used by them might have already been spoiled by some mistakes which they were unable to emend, for example a reading like *phrag dog* “jealousy” instead of *phrad 'dod* “pinning”. As “jealousy” also makes sense in the context of the stanza in question it did not arouse the suspicion of the editors of the canon, and the Sanskrit original was obviously not consulted. Other manuscripts which were not consulted for the edition of the first Tanjur might have preserved the correct reading *phrad 'dod*. Now it was my idea that these manuscripts continued to be circulated and somehow eventually became the basis for editions like the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition. Because I believed that these manuscripts existed beside the canonical tradition I coined the term “paracanonical tradition” for the blockprint edition(s) representing them.

At the end of 1984 I eventually received a xerox copy of an original blockprint of the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition through the kind assistance of Professor Samdhong RINPOCHE, director of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi. This enabled me for the first time to make a full comparison of the two traditions, thereby determining the scope of their variation. And this scope is rather impressive, at least as far as quantity is concerned, as there are more than 600 deviations from the text as established in my critical edition. However, as mere quantity does not mean much, it is more important to assess the quality of these more than 600 variant readings. The best way to give you an authentic impression would certainly be to reproduce the whole list, but this cannot be done on this occasion because the whole list covers 24 pages in manuscript form. Hence I will have to classify these variants according to suitable categories.

1) Copying or carving mistakes

e. g. 1.34b: *don thob nas* instead of *don thos nas* (*°arthaśravaṇād* in Sanskrit); this mistake may have been caused by the *thob* occurring in line c: *chos la mig thob = dharmacakṣur avāptavān*).

This type of variant can, of course, be ignored.

2) Orthographic variations

e. g. 1.27ac: *skye rgu* instead of *skye dgu*

These variants also have no bearing upon the meaning of the text.

3) Peculiar “Sandhi” forms

e. g. 1.1a: *grol ciñ* instead of *grol źiñ* or

1.15a: *brdzun tu* instead of *brdzun du*

Provided they are not mere writing or carving mistakes, such forms are interesting from the point of view of historical orthography and/or grammar as they may reflect a lost *da drag*. But again they are hardly of paramount importance for the discrimination of different recensions.

4) Variations in the use of particles and verb forms

e. g. 1.1c: *gcig pu* instead of *gcig tu*

1.37a: *gñi ga* instead of *gñis ka*

1.31c: *yañ dag ñid du ni* instead of *yañ dag ñid du na*

1.40d: *ci ste* instead of *ji ste*

1.14c: *brku ba* instead of *rku ba*

2.18d: *log par ’gyur* instead of *log par gyur*

2.7b: *’byon ’gyur ba* instead of *byon gyur pa* etc.

These forms mark the transitional stage from variations which simply reflect a particular habit of writing to those which may point to an elaborate system of grammar in one recension. Such a strict observance of grammatical rules in the formation of verb nouns (present stem versus future stem), in the formation of compound verbal constructions (which stems are used with the perfect, future or imperative stem as final member), the strict discrimination between relative and interrogative stems and expressions (*ji* versus *ci*) etc. usually point rather to a deliberate grammatical and stylistical revision of an imperfect original than to a creeping in of an increasing number of careless mistakes on the part of the scribes in the less polished recension although this latter possibility cannot be excluded in principle.

I m p o r t a n t v a r i a n t r e a d i n g s

5) Different grammatical particles (including additions)

e. g. 2.20a: *bzuñ na* instead of *bzuñ nas*

2.37b: *byed par* instead of *byed pa*

2.40b: *sñiñ rjes* instead of *sñiñ rje*

2.16: *snañ ba 'aṅ* instead of *snañ ba*

As a rule, these variants have an effect upon the construction of the stanza and hence also its overall meaning.

The following two types of variant readings necessarily cause substantial differences in the meaning of the respective stanzas.

6) Different words (mono- and polysyllabic)

e. g. 2.17c: *'jug (par 'gyur)* instead of *'char (bar 'gyur)*

2.8d *shon mtha'* instead of *phyin chad*

7) Different expressions, lines and whole stanzas

e. g. 2.63cd:

| *dus gsum 'das bdag 'jig rten ni* |
 | *de 'dra don du ci yod dam* | instead of
 | *de ltar dus gsum 'das pa'i bdag* |
 | *'jig rten don du ci yod dam* |

The corresponding Sanskrit text runs:

traikālyavyativṛttātmā loka evaṃ kuto 'rithataḥ | |

Or, to quote one of the most heavily edited stanzas, 1.89: here the block-prints of Narthang and Peking have the following text:

| *gal te so sor rañ med kyi* |
 | *gañ na gcig der lhag ma rnam* |
 | *so so rañ gi yod ce na* |
 | *ma 'dres pa rnam gcig gnas med* |
 | *'dres pa so sor rañ yod min* | 1.89 |

Chone and Derge read as follows:

| *so so rañ gi yod ce na* |
 | *gal te so so rañ med kyi* |

cd) = NP de)

And the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition (henceforth Z) has:

| *gal te so sor rañ med kyi* |
 | *so so rañ gi yod ce na* |

cd) = NP de)

The Chinese *Ratnāvalī* has the following interpretation:

“If one claims that the great elements exist individually although they are not separated from each other this is not correct; for if they do not mix they are not united and if they mix then they are not independent.”

Apparently Z is in perfect agreement with the Chinese version. Therefore it

is very likely that *Z* represents the original correct Tibetan translation which became marred in the course of transmission. In the case of line c and d in the editions of Narthang and Peking we can even trace its origin. It was obviously extracted from the Tibetan version of Ajitamitra’s *Ratnāvalīṭīkā* (RĀṬ) which starts as follows:

| gal te ñes pa der ’gyur du ’on zes te | **gañ na** ’byuñ ba **gcig yod pa de na**
lhag ma rnam yod do zes bya bar khas len na ... |

It seems as if somebody had copied into the main text of RĀT the boldface portions of the commentary as a kind of explanatory note or gloss and the next copyist understood them as an integral part of the Tibetan version of this stanza although he should have become suspicious about the unusual length of the stanza, which as a result came to contain five instead of four lines. The editors of the Derge Tanjur, in turn, tried to restore what they correctly assumed to be the original number of lines, and they decided, most likely on the basis of RĀṬ, to reject line c of NP, but for some strange reason the order of lines was inverted.

So far I have given you only a formal classification of the variant readings contained in *Z* and refrained from a discussion of the possible impact on the meaning of certain lines or stanzas of the *Ratnāvalī*. This is a very time and space consuming task, so that all I can do here is to give you a few selected examples like 4.33 and 1.89 discussed above. For a comprehensive analysis of the variant readings of *Z* we have to compare them not only with RĀT (the canonical Tibetan translation of the *Ratnāvalī*) and the readings given in the critical apparatus of RĀT but also with RĀṬ (Ajitamitra’s *Ratnāvalīṭīkā*) and GT (Rgyal-tshab-rje’s Tibetan commentary on the *Ratnāvalī*), with the Sanskrit original (RĀ) if still available and with Paramārtha’s Chinese translation (RĀC).

Only since the end of 1985 have we been in a position to deal with this task in a scientific yet convenient manner. At this time Mr. Yukihiro OKADA, a graduate of Tōdai, completed his two studies of Ajitamitra’s *Ratnāvalīṭīkā* and Paramārtha’s Chinese translation of the *Ratnāvalī*. Thanks to this excellent work, which was submitted to the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Bonn as Ph. D. thesis, we have at our disposal a sound philological basis for such a comparison. Below I shall report about my conclusion from these materials, but first I would like to mention another study which has as its main topic the transmission of Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnāvalī* in Tibet. It is the paper “Notes on the Transmission of Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnāvalī* in Tibet” by Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, published in “The Tibet Journal”.

Van der Kuijp starts his study with stanza 1.79 of the *Ratnāvalī* and its quotations in indigenous Tibetan works. He particularly analyses the commentary written by Rgyal-tshab-rje and its relationship to Ajitamitra's *Ratnāvalīṭkā*. Van der Kuijp draws our attention to the fact that Rgyal-tshab-rje makes no mention of the *Ratnāvalīṭkā* and he refers to the Tibetan translation done by Vidyākaraprabha and [s]Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs. Combining this piece of information with the colophons of the canonical and the paracanonical Tibetan translations, he says:

“In sum, we therefore have to date three different translations of the RAT:

1. RAT – translators: Vidyākaraprabha and [s]Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs.
2. RAT – translators: Vidyākaraprabha and [s]Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs, editors: Kanakavarman and [s]Pa-tshab Nyi-ma-grags.
3. RAT – translators: Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal-mtshan, editors: Kanakavarman and [s]Pa-tshab Nyi-ma-grags.

However, there are indications that the RAT text used in the SNYING-GSAL [that is, Rgyal-tshab-rje's commentary, M. H.] could simply be the RAT that lies embedded in Ajitamitra's commentary.”

Then van der Kuijp provides us with extremely important bibliographical information:

“There is nonetheless evidence available that would tend to support the independent existence of a subsequently unedited translation of the RAT by Vidyākaraprabha and [s]Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs. Such a translation is namely listed in the catalogue (*dkar-chag*) of a manuscript Bstan-'gyur housed at the Bkra-shis lhun-gyis grub-pa'i gling monastery in Glo-bo smon-thang (present day Mustang, Nepal) that was written by Ngorchen Kun-dga' bzang-po (1382–1456) in 1447. Other catalogues, such as the one prepared by Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (1290–1364) of the Bstan-'gyur at Zhwa-lu, fail to list this text.”

The importance of van der Kuijp's reference to two Tibetan *Ratnāvalī* translations in an old hand-written Tanjur lies in the fact that it mentions a predecessor, perhaps even the source, of the text as contained in the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition. We have to be grateful to Dr. van der Kuijp for his hint, and there is even a faint possibility that the handwritten Tanjur from Mustang might become accessible through the work of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project, if it is still available there.

When I saw van der Kuijp’s list of the three Tibetan translations of the *Ratnāvalī*, the first of which represents the text allegedly used by Rgyal-tshab-rje while writing his commentary, the second of which is the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition, and the third one the canonical version, I was surprised that van der Kuijp obviously did not find any difficulty in imagining the following situation: two revisers of the eleventh century, Kanakavarman and [s]Pa-tshab *Ñi-ma-grags*, come across two manuscripts containing two different Tibetan translations of the *Ratnāvalī*, one done by Vidyākara-prabha and [s]Ka-ba Dpal-brtsegs and the other done by *Jñānagarbha* and *Klu’i rgyal-mtshan*. They have also at hand three Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Ratnāvalī*, and with their help they set out to revise the two Tibetan translations, each of them individually. By such a procedure they are supposed to have created two texts which are basically identical with the exception of some 500 variant readings--- readings which sometimes produce entirely divergent meanings for the two recensions. Why should they have done something which would have left the readers of their two revised texts with quite a few ambiguous passages in the Tibetan *Ratnāvalī* instead of concocting the ultimate Tibetan text of the *Ratnāvalī* out of their two Tibetan manuscripts and the Sanskrit source materials?

The answer to this question lies in a comparison of the reading of the *Žol-spar-khañ* edition with those of the Tibetan *Ratnāvalīṭīkā*. In actual fact there is no absolutely uniform and consistent tendency but in the majority of the cases where a passage containing a divergence between RĀT and Z is commented upon in RĀṬ we find much more and moreover more specific agreement between Z and RĀṬ than between RĀT and RĀT. Take for example 2.7cd, where RĀT reads

| *sems can mtha’ ni dus gsum skyes* |
| *bye ba de dag las ’dod cin* |

whereas Z has

| *sems can rnams ni bye bar ’gyur* |
| *de las dus gsum gnas pa dgoñs* |

Compare this with RĀṬ as edited by Yukihiro OKADA:

| *skyes nas ’jig pa’am ro myañ ba’i dños po de dan* | *de dag la chags pas na*
sems can rnams so |
| ***bye bar gyur ces bya ba la*** | ***gyur ces bya ba ni lhag pa’o*** | ... | ***de dag***
las dus gsum du gnas pa dgoñs śin bzed de | *chos thams cad bdag med pa*
yin pas ’dod pa la brten pa med do sñam du dgoñs pa yin no |

The boldface portions correspond exactly with the text of Z. These two lines require some explanation because I think so far they have not been understood correctly. The whole stanza runs as follows in the original Sanskrit:

asamkhyeyā gatā buddhās tathaisyanty atha sāmpratāḥ |
koṭyagraśās ca sattvāntas tebhyas traikālyajo mataḥ | |

These are the translations known to me:

“Many Buddhas have gone, will come, or do appear in this very moment. The notion of limit as regards living beings in their innumerable series is said by them to be born from the threefold temporal relation.” (Note: The reason of the appearance of Buddhas in this world is their desire to lead human creatures towards *nirvāṇa*. If their preaching is really efficacious, this implies that numberless creatures have been saved, are saved and will be saved by them.) [TUCCI, 1936: 241]

“Innumerable Buddhas have come, will come and are Here at present; there are tens of millions of sentient Beings, but the Buddhas will abide In the past, the present and the future.”

[HOPKINS, p. 1975: 33; this is based on Z]

仏陀の「不答」

無数の仏がすでに過ぎ去り、未来にあらわれ、また現に存在しています。そこで劫初から、生きとし生けるものの有限なることが、それら諸仏によって（過去・未来・現在の）三時にわたって生じている、といわれています。 (七)

[URYŪZU, 1975, p. 241]

“*Modpart*: Utallige Buddhaer har der været Utallige er og vil der være. De mener at Verdens ende lige fra dens begyndelse Hidrører fra inddelingen i tre perioder.”

[LINDTNER, 1980, p. 33]

[*Objection*: Innumerable Buddhas have existed, exist and will exist. They think that the end of the world right from the beginning depends on the division into the three periods of time.]

The Chinese *Ratnāvalī* has:

“The Buddhas of the past are countless. The Buddhas of the present and the future go beyond number. The uncountable end of the living beings is made visible by the Buddhas in the three periods of time.”

I think that the second half of the stanza is to be understood in a much sim-

pler way. The first half of the stanza states that the Buddhas of the three times are countless. As Buddhas are quite rare among human beings the number of human beings has to be countless too, but countless in a much higher degree than the Buddhas. This “infiniteness of a higher order” is expressed by the comparative term *koṭyagraśaḥ* “more than ten million times”. Hence we have to translate the latter half of the stanza simply by

“The ‘end’ (i. e. the total number) of human beings born in the three periods of time is said to be more than ten million times (the total number of Buddhas appearing in the three periods of time).”

This translation is neither in accordance with Z nor RĀṬ. I suspect that both Z and RĀṬ are based on a slightly different reading, namely **sattvās tu* (... °*kālyajā mataḥ*) instead of **sattvāntas* (... °*kālyajo mataḥ*). However, °*anta* is confirmed by RĀC and RĀT and moreover *ca* and *tu* would hardly go very well with each other within one line, so *sattvāntas* is to be kept.

Here Z does not correspond with the extant Sanskrit, yet there are many cases where Z has a decidedly better reading in comparison with RĀṬ. A few examples may suffice:

Line	Sanskrit	RĀṬ	Z
2.8d	<i>pūrvānto</i>	<i>phyin chad</i>	<i>śnon mtha’</i>
2.31d	<i>bahūny ātmaiva</i> <i>vañcyate</i>	<i>bdag ñid kho na</i> <i>bslus par ’gyur</i>	<i>mañ por bdag ñid</i> <i>bslus par ’gyur</i>
2.35b	⟨...⟩ <i>vodbhavam</i>	<i>sems pas bsgyur ba</i>	<i>bsam pa las byuñ</i>

In the first part of his dissertation, Mr. Yukihiro OKADA has devoted a whole chapter to improvements of the text of RĀṬ which are possible with the help of his critical edition of Ajitamitra’s *Ratnāvālīṭkā*. In addition to those 19 emendations which I had already suggested in the footnotes to my critical edition of RĀṬ, OKADA mentions 23 more passages where an improvement of the text of RĀṬ can be made. Hence in at least 42 cases the text arrived at with the help of RĀṬ is definitely superior to the one contained in the canonical editions.

And in 32 of these 42 passages the better reading of the Tibetan text of RĀṬ is in agreement with Z!

This agreement between Z and RĀṬ against the text of the canonical edition has to be explained. The only convincing explanation I am able to offer is the following one: Z represents the old unrevised translation of the *Ratnāvālī*

which was done simultaneously with the Tibetan translation of RĀṬ. According to the colophon of the RĀṬ this translation was prepared by Vidyākara-prabha and Dpal-brtsegs, the same team which was also responsible for the translation of Z. It is only logical that the translations of the basic text and the commentary were done at the same time and by the same translators. Two centuries later this translation was revised by Kanakavarman and Pa-tshab Ñi-ma-grags. The colophon of Z informs us about their procedure: “Consulting three Sanskrit manuscripts, the Indian Abbot Śrīkanakavarman and the Tibetan translator and monk Dpal brtsegs corrected mistranslations and other points which did not accord with the particular thought of the Superior [Nāgārjuna] and his ‘son’ [Āryadeva].” From this wording it becomes clear that the revisers did not confine their task to the correction of obviously wrong or ambiguous translations (cf. our example 4.33 discussed above) but occasionally also changed the original text for other reasons. In the latter cases it may have happened that they replaced a correct Tibetan translation by another one which they thought to be more elegant in style or more logical from the point of view of content. This practice most likely accounts for the fact that sometimes Z, sometimes RĀṬ has the better rendering of the Sanskrit text. We have also to take into account that both recensions are accessible to us only in comparatively late editions which may be marred by several mistakes that crept in during the course of transmission that were not in the original translated or revised texts.

In the light of this explanation it also becomes understandable why the Tanjur contains only RĀṬ and not, like the handwritten Tanjur of Mustang, also Z. RĀṬ was considered to be the more modern and up-to-date rendering of the *Ratnāvalī* and hence it was no longer necessary to preserve what for the editors of the Tibetan canon must have seemed to be the old and imperfect first translation.

When in the eleventh century the Tibetan text of the *Ratnāvalī* was revised by Kanakavarman and Pa-tshab Ñi-ma-grags, they confined themselves only to the basic text and left the Tibetan version of Ajitamitra’s commentary untouched. Therefore the RĀṬ tends to preserve the reading of the first, unrevised translation of the *Ratnāvalī* whenever there is a difference in the wording. This assumption conveniently explains the agreement between Z and RĀṬ.

Even if my hypothesis is correct (and there is lot of evidence supporting it) there remain two questions.

1) Why does the colophon of Z claim that it is a revision of the old transla-

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tion when it is, in fact, the unrevised text? I suppose this portion of the colophon was simply copied from the colophon of the revised edition in order to give more weight to this recension and so justify its preservation.

2) What is the rôle of Jñānagarbha and Klu'i rgyal-mtshan in the Tibetan translation of the *Ratnāvalī*? For this question I do not have any convincing answer. However, I would like to suggest the following procedure for the solution of this question. Vidyākara-prabha and Dpal-brtsegs translated and/or revised quite a few Sanskrit works, among them very important works like the *Abhisamayālamkāra* and the *Mahārājakaṅkalekha*. As far as I can see they have a very peculiar style and vocabulary, and from a comparative study of all their translations it might be possible to attribute to them the first and original translation of the *Ratnāvalī* even more safely.

I would like to conclude my lecture with the good news that the palmleaf manuscript of the Sanskrit text of the *Ratnāvalī* has turned up again among the collections of the National Archives, Kathmandu. There is no doubt that this is the same manuscript which 50 years ago belonged to the family of the Maharaja Yoodha Sham Shere Rana and on the transcript and photostat copy of which TUCCI's *editio princeps* of major portions of the *Ratnāvalī* is based. This valuable manuscript was microfilmed by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project on reel No. B 23/23. A detailed analysis of the manuscript yielded almost 30 better readings of the Sanskrit text as edited by me five years ago, including cases where the manuscript confirms previous conjectural readings. My analysis of the palmleaf manuscript of the *Ratnāvalī* will be published in the *Festschrift für Wilhelm Rau*, Hamburg 1987.

*)I am very grateful to my friend Prof. Dr. R. E. Emmerick, University of Hamburg, for his revision of the English text of this lecture.