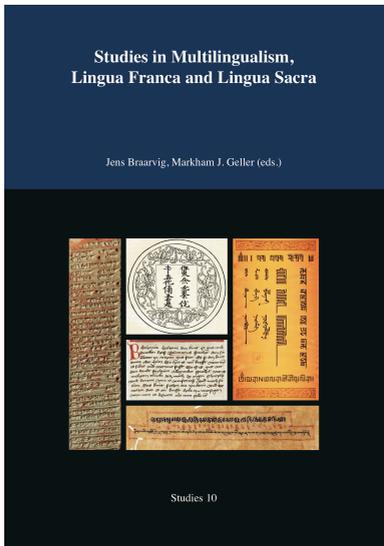


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## Studies 10

*Jens Braarvig:*

The Imprint of Buddhist Sanskrit on Chinese and Tibetan: Some Lexical  
Ontologies and Translation Strategies in the Tang Dynasty



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## Chapter 16

### The Imprint of Buddhist Sanskrit on Chinese and Tibetan: Some Lexical Ontologies and Translation Strategies in the Tang Dynasty

*Jens Braarvig*

When Buddhism was imported into China, it met a complex culture with a rich terminology. Therefore the translation of the sacred scriptures of Buddhism would employ Chinese expressions with already ample religious and philosophical connotations.<sup>1</sup> In the Tibetan case, however, the receiving culture maintained a comparatively simple language, with fairly uncomplicated semantic contents. The terminology coined to receive the rich Buddhist systems of knowledge in Tibet were created without such preexisting semantics, and, as we shall see, the import of Buddhist culture into Tibet took place in a more systematic way than that of the Chinese case.<sup>2</sup>

In illustrating this movement from one lingua franca to another, namely, from Sanskrit to Chinese, and from a lingua franca to what we may call a national, or local language, namely Tibetan, we focus mostly upon the time of the early Tang period in China, and the same period in Tibetan, because this period shows a highly developed intellectual activity in both countries connected with the transfer and translation of Buddhism, the religion adopted and adapted by similar, but not identical processes by the two countries. The introduction of Buddhism to Tibet began in the seventh century CE, while in the case of China this process started, according to tradition, already in the first century CE.

When systems of knowledge migrate by translation from one language to another, from one culture to another, this may happen in more ordered and systematic ways, or by more arbitrary and individually centered initiatives. Further, the translations may be more verbatim, more in the *verbo ad verbum* fashion or, on the other side, free translations which try to accommodate the translated text to the receiving culture, or even just retelling the contents of the original text in a free way. Into this picture comes the frequent use of loanwords, balanced with the number of loan translations appearing as neologisms in the receiving language. So our concern is trying to understand the Chinese and the Tibetan case of translation of Buddhist texts in this perspective.

In general it can be said that the Chinese history of Buddhist translating was a more person-centered endeavor, which of course had the blessing of the ruling authorities at the time. The introduction of Buddhism to Tibet was, according to our sources, a strictly controlled process, and Tibetan royal power was the controlling agent and organizing entity in the beginning of the process. Later, with the routines created, the import of everything Buddhist into Tibet followed in general the premises laid down in the initial phase, though further developed and refined. We will start by describing the Tibetan case, because of its relative simplicity, and how the Tibetan *chos skad* was established—*chos skad* being a di-

<sup>1</sup>The classic on the topic, still relevant, of the Chinese reception of Buddhism, is Zürcher (1959).

<sup>2</sup>On the spread of Buddhism as a system of knowledge, see Braarvig (2012).

rect equivalent of *lingua sacra*, as the Tibetan word *chos* corresponds to Sanskrit *dharma* and *skad* denoting language, *bhāṣā* in Sanskrit. Next, in a comparative perspective, we will look at the dynamics of Chinese translation activities with some representative examples.

First of all, however, we should shortly touch upon how *systematically* a translation project is carried through. A translation may be undertaken by an individual, who creates much of his translated terminology in an arbitrary way, in accordance with his general understanding of the two languages involved; on one side there is the original and on the other side the receiver language, in which the translator does his best to portray the meaning of the original *Vorlage* by means of loan concepts, loan translations and loanwords. With the development of translation traditions and general dictionaries with equivalents, the translations become less arbitrary. The least arbitrary type of translation is where standardization of terminologies is normatively established by comparative grammars and lexica and technical terms have strict equivalents to be employed in the receiving language.

During the long Chinese tradition of translating Buddhist texts—more than a thousand years—we have several phases. In the beginning the terminologies were naturally established by the first translators, but soon a more systematic use of equivalents to Sanskrit words developed, and a certain standardization of terminologies took place. There were, however, no formalized lexica for guiding the translators in the early periods, but earlier translated texts served as guides. This created a situation in the Chinese Buddhist language in which there is sometimes a fairly great number of Chinese equivalents for each Sanskrit term. In the beginning, then, translation techniques were more arbitrary than later, with a stronger established translation tradition, but each translator still had the tendency to develop a personal translation style in the absence of equivalence standards in systematic lexica and word lists. Only in the seventh century do we find lexica for Sanskrit and Chinese, but even these did not establish fixed standards to be followed: the translations remained over all created in the style of the individual translator.

So while we can characterize the Chinese reception of Buddhist thinking and its pertaining conceptual system as moving from an arbitrary process into a situation with more generally accepted translation conventions, the Tibetan endeavor to import Buddhism from India in all its aspects was a much more systematic process, in that a grammar<sup>3</sup> and a lexicon for the standardized *chos skad*, or *lingua sacra*, were established under royal patronage and authority. In fact, the ordered and planned way that Buddhism was imported into Tibet, with all its disciplines and systems of knowledge, is quite remarkable, if not unique, in linguistic and translation history.

In the seventh century the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo (Sroñ-btsan sGam-po, reigned 618–649 CE) decided that Tibet—an inaccessible country, growing in military and political power—should be Buddhist. He chose to supplant the Central Asian Shamanistic type of religion with the Buddhism of the high cultures that surrounded the Tibet.<sup>4</sup> The Tibetan king considered sharing the religious culture of the Chinese empire in the East, but was also impressed by the Buddhist religion in India, so much that in the end it was decided to import the sacred teachings from the South rather than from the East. The king even married a Chinese princess, Wencheng, and a Nepalese one, for the purpose of good relations to possible contributors to the import of Buddhism to Tibet. Thus, during the reign of Songtsen Gampo a Tibetan scriptural system was created on the basis of the India Brāhmī script—an alphabet

<sup>3</sup>At least according to tradition, see below.

<sup>4</sup>See Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 266–67), with references, on the (probable lack of) historicity of this tradition.

with fewer letters than the Indian, but adopted to Tibetan. It is not surprising that Tibet at the time chose the Brāhmī writing system, since in fact the letters were already employed west and north of Tibet in the language cultures along the Silk Road. However, an additional reason for Tibet to use this system was the general tendency to lean on Indian Buddhism rather than Chinese tradition in the implementation of Buddhist regimes of knowledge in Tibet. The creation of the alphabet is attributed to Thonmi Sambhoṭa, who, according to tradition, was appointed by the king to construct both the alphabet and the necessary Tibetan grammar to facilitate the Buddhist mission to Tibet.<sup>5</sup>

This historical fact that Tibet made the choice to implement Indian Buddhist systems of knowledge based on Sanskrit tradition is also borne out by the so-called Samye debate, or Lhasa Council in the 790s.<sup>6</sup> Here the Chinese Chan-master Hva-shang Moheyan discussed with the Indian renowned scholar Kamalaśīla whether awakening was attained in an instant or by a gradual path of development, and again the Tibetans favored the Indian side; Kamalaśīla and his party won the debate. This took place on the initiative of the Tibetan king Thrisong Detsen (Khri-sroṅ Lde-btsan, reigned 755–797 CE), who, after adopting Buddhism in 772, brought Tibetan power to its pinnacle by conquering Dunhuang in the 780s, and even the Tang capital Changan already in 762<sup>7</sup>—being chased away only by an alliance of the Chinese and Orkhon Uighurs.

In the period between Songtsen Gampo and 800 CE quite a number of translations from Sanskrit into Tibetan were made, and this earliest phase of translation is amply documented by the Tibetan contents of the Dunhuang library, which came to light again in the beginning of the early twentieth century, discovered by various Western scholars and explorers. However, the now learned Tibetan scholars noticed that the earlier translations were not uniform in style, and that the then existing Tibetan Buddhist terminology should be revised. To the extent it was possible, it should more accurately represent the semantics of the original Indic texts. Under the successors of Thrisong Detsen, and most of all under Thride Songtsen (Khri-lde Sroṅ-btsan, also called Senalegs, Sad-na Legs, who reigned 799–715), such a revision was decided upon, and a committee of scholars was ordered by the king to develop an equivalence lexicon of Sanskrit and Tibetan terms, to be used as a non-deviable norm for the translation work ahead in revising the previous translations and producing new and correct ones. The context of the situation in which these negotiations took place is described by Christina Scherrer-Schaub as follows:

Unauthorized, personal and unbridled initiative, as well as lack of source material, compelled the high authorities to take specific decisions. A chancery procedure, flanked with an increasingly important bureaucracy and deliberative body, was instituted. (Scherrer-Schaub 2002, 314)

Thus, in the year 814, at the time when the Tibetan kingdom reached its greatest extent, king Thride Songtsen issued the following decree, having as its aim to create a bilingual lexicon based on discussions of etymology as developed by Indian linguistic theory and Buddhist commentaries:

<sup>5</sup>On the earliest Tibetan grammar *Sum cu pa*, see Bacot (1928), Schubert (1937), and cf. Simonsson (1982), and on its historicity, Miller (1976, 2ff.) and Verhagen (1994, 207).

<sup>6</sup>Demiéville (1952), Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 267).

<sup>7</sup>Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 76–77 and notes 46–49), with ample references.

1. In the year of the horse the ruler (btsan po) Khri lde sroñ btsan was staying in the palace 'On cañ do in sKyi. The old warlords of Higher and Lower Tibet, as well as the “robbers” (i.e., the Uighurs) were vanquished, and he received obeisance from Gar log through an envoy. The great ministers Źañ khri Zur ram Śag and Mañ rje lHa lod, these and others brought tribute from the territories. Camels, horses and oxen in huge numbers were offered to the King, and each and every man was recompensed with gifts from the main (žañ) minister and downwards.
2. The King requested the preceptors from the west (i.e., Indian) Ācārya Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, Śīlendrabodhi, Dānaśīla, Bodhimitra, and the Tibetan preceptors Ratnarakṣita, Dharmatāśīla, as well as the learned translators Jñānasena, Jayarakṣita, Mañjuśrīvarman, Ratnendraśīla and others to translate from Indic languages into Tibetan the terminologies of the Great and the Small Vehicles (two “ways” of Buddhism), to define the terms and make a written word list.
3. The decree was issued that “One shall never deviate from this list and make it suitable for everybody to learn.”
4. Earlier, in the time of Father [king Khri lde sroñ btsan] of the Divine Son [namely, the present monarch, Khri lde sroñ btsan], Ācārya Bodhisattva, Ye śes dBañ po, Źañ rgyal ñen Źa bzañ, Blon khri gzer Sañ śi, the translator Jñānadevakoṣa, lCe khyi 'Brug, and the brāhmaṇa Ananta and others, since the Dharma-language was not known in Tibet, coined many terms; some of these were not in accordance with the Dharma-texts and the principles of grammatical theory (*vyākaraṇa*), and for this reason [it is now prescribed that] the improper [terms] not [well] formed were to be revised.
5. So analyzing which were deemed the most important terms of the [Dharma-] language, they augmented [the Tibetan vocabulary] and brought the terms into agreement with how they occur in the texts of the Great and the Small Vehicle, how they are explained by the masters of old like Nāgārjuna and Vasubandhu, and how they accord with the principles in the works on grammatical theory. As for the difficult cases, they analyzed the words into their individual parts, provided reasoned explanations, and finally wrote [the results of their efforts] down as an authoritative document.
6. On the one hand, simple words that need no explanation and that are appropriate to be translated literally (*sgra bzhin du*) have been fixed taking the literal expression as the main criterion.
7. Whereas on the other hand, [in the case of] certain words, which are most appropriately fixed in accordance with the meaning, the [equivalent] term has been fixed taking the meaning as the main criterion.
8. Then, the great scholar dPal gyi Yon tan, the great scholar Tiñ ne 'dzin and all the others assembled before His Majesty, and after they had respectfully addressed the assembly of Lords and Ministers, they codified the methods of translating the Dharma, as well as the fixed terms in the Tibetan language in reference to the Indian language. Then the following decree was pronounced:
9. “Regarding the way of translating the True Dharma, do not contradict the meaning, and adhere to good Tibetan usage.
10. Regarding the translation of the Dharma, when a translation into Tibetan that does not deviate from the word order of the Indian original [retains] the connection between the meaning and words and is good usage, one should translate without deviating.”

11. If one has to deviate [from the original word order] to produce good usage and intelligibility, one can deviate and translate in a pleasing manner, but only within a single stanza. As far as the meter is concerned, it should consist of four lines, or six if required.
12. In prose, as long as one arrives at the required meaning, one may deviate [from the original word order] for the sake of good usage while taking both the words and meaning into consideration, and one should translate [accordingly].
13. When it is possible to interpret one [equivocal] word [in Indian] with many [Tibetan] words, one should strive, in the definition, to make [the translation] agree with the [context, namely the words which come] before and after.
14. As in the word *gautamya*, from the sound *gau* one attains a number of entities: “speech,” “geographic area,” “earth,” “light,” “vajra,” “bull,” “heaven,” etc.; and when one interprets a word like *kausika* sound-wise as “having to do with kuśa-grass,” “learned,” “liking lotuses,” “owl,” “equipped with a treasure,” and so on, in the process of translating you attain a multiple list [of Tibetan words].
15. As it is not possible to unite that multiple list [of meanings] into one [Tibetan word]-form in the process of translation, one has to decide for one [equivalent].
16. But if there is no major reason [to choose any of the possible Tibetan equivalents], one may leave the Indian [term] untranslated, and use the Indian word.
17. But wherever there is a [Tibetan] expression with a suitable [equivocal] interpretation, you should render it in accordance with its general [and equivocal sense], and not translate [with a generally employed Tibetan expression], deciding for only one direction [of meaning].
18. If one translates names of countries, living beings, flowers, trees, and so on, and the possible translations are counter-intuitive, not good usage, imprecise, and as such the object of doubt: “Should they really be like this or not,”—which should be avoided—then one may keep the Indian term and preface it with a single Tibetan word “country” or “flower” and so on as applicable to that [case as a classifier]—whatever [class of things] the word [in question] refers to.
19. When it concerns numbers, if one translates according to the Indian language, one will have “Monk-hundreds, thirteen less a half [hundred = 1250],” but if one translates in accordance with the ordinary Tibetan language “thousand two-hundred and fifty,” it is not in disaccord with the meaning, and it is also in accordance with good Tibetan usage—thus suitable summing numbers should be established in accordance with the principles of the Tibetan language.
20. If one translates the prefixes *pari*, *sam*, *upa* and the others, which also may have the function of ornaments, the method should be to construe them in accordance with the meaning and translate them in accordance with its [Indian] word, [so as to produce in Tibetan] *yoñs su*, *yañ dag pa* and *ñe ba*. If no additional meaning is attained, it is not necessary to multiply the construction [of the translated term], one should establish the word in accordance with the meaning.
21. As for words that belong to a list [of related term or synonyms], if the word in question is not closely related, one should establish an [equivalent] term which is a general word in Tibetan and in accordance with good usage. If it is closely related [as a synonym of other terms in the list] one should employ the [one Tibetan] term which designate each [of the Indian synonyms].

22. Concerning the degrees of respectful expressions, and expressions relating to a particular status, as concerned with the Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas or the Śrāvakas: One should translate [employing] the respectful expressions as related to the Buddha,
23. while in other cases, when concerned with the middle and lower forms [of respectful expressions], one should translate in accordance with the principles codified by the translations of the Dharma [scriptures] of the *Ratnamegha* and the *Lankāvatāra* as made earlier by the learned scholars and analysts assembled before the Father of the Divine Son [that is, the now ruling monarch].
24. Thus it is not granted to anybody individually to construct and after that establish new words which are differing from the principles of language as decreed in this way. However, if there is a need to construct and establish new words in individual schools, then, in the individual schools, one may construct words without establishing them, and state the causes of their origin in accordance with the dharma-books and the principles of word-[formation], and one should investigate how to establish them in accordance with the dharma. Then one should offer them to assembly in charge of the traditions of the Lord in the Palace and to the school of the great revisers of the dharma-translations, make a proper request, and if accepted it is to be added to the word-list [of the *Mahā-vyutpatti*].
25. The Tantras with their mantras are to be kept secret in accordance with the scriptures themselves, and it is not proper that they are explained and taught to those not worthy. However, in the meantime they have been translated and given for practice, but their concealed meanings were not the subject of an oral explanation, thus [the words] were understood literally—and false practices have originated. While it is an established fact that selections from among the Mantra-Tantras and translations into Tibetan do exist, henceforth, with regard to *dhāraṇīmantras* and the Tantras, it has been decreed that unless permission is granted to translate [a specific such scripture], it is not allowed to collect or translate the Mantra-Tantras and the words of the mantras.
26. The terms of the [Tibetan] language were not codified before, so since the terms were not fixed in the lexicon, one has adhered to what is derived from the books of the Great and the Small Way as well as books on language when explaining. Now the first part is ended.”

Thride Songtsen’s decree serves as the introduction to the work *sGra sbyor*,<sup>8</sup> the etymological treatment of Sanskrit terms to be translated by fixed equivalents into Tibetan. The Tibetan terminology generated on the basis of the discussions in the *sGra sbyor* fills the standard Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon named *Mahā-vyutpatti*, “The Great Etymology.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup>\**Śabdayukti*, “The construction of words.” The term *yukti*, which is a probable Sanskrit equivalent of Tibetan *sbyor*, means originally “joining,” but also logical “consistency.” Therefore we have ventured the translation “construction of words,” since this is the subject of the *sGra sbyor*, but *yukti* can also mean syntax, thus “the construction of sentences, or language” in general. For *sGra sbyor*, see Ishikawa (1990-1993); and further the internet version with English translation in Bibliotheca Polyglotta: <https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=volume&vid=263>, accessed July 7, 2017.

<sup>9</sup>Both works are available in a number of modern versions, and the introductory *sGra sbyor* is translated into English in two seminars in Berkeley and Marburg 2011–12, see the internet publication of this work in Bibliotheca Polyglotta, texts and translations in Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese and English. The latest and best critical edition of the original text is found in Ishikawa (1990–1993). The second volume has ample references to the Indian “etymologies” employed by the *sGra sbyor*. The classic of the study of Tibetan translology is Nils Simonsson

Usually several alternatives were discussed in the *sGra sbyor* before the final decision when the standardized Tibetan term was agreed upon, probably reflecting real scholarly discussions on the mentioned occasion, as well as previous considerations. The term chosen should first of all represent the original meaning of Sanskrit, but there was still an ideal not to deviate from good Tibetan usage. As we see, there are also rules proposed for when to employ loanwords, though calques or loan translations are preferred to loanwords when there is no question of *mantras* and sacred formulas. It should also be noted how there is a conscious translation policy on prefixes, that they should be translated only if they contribute an additional meaning, and are not only an “ornament.” However, prefixes in Sanskrit are in most cases faithfully replicated in Tibetan, even though it is quite doubtful whether they contribute with additional semiosis. Unlike the Chinese policy of often not translating titles and names of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Śrāvakas, the Tibetans always translate these semantically into Tibetan.

Probably the intention was to create a *sGra sbyor* article for every lemma in the *Mahāvvyutpatti*, but given the great number of terms, this was probably given up. The *Mahāvvyutpatti* was evidently also revised along with revisions of the Kanjur and Tenjur into the thirteenth century.<sup>10</sup> We will translate into English the first articles from the *sGra sbyor*, and refer the interested reader to further reading on the mentioned internet site. The English translations correspond to the Tibetan parts of each article. The first chapter is naturally about the Buddha and his titles and appositions, here we quote the four first ones as examples:

### 1. *buddha*, Tibetan *sañs rgyas*, “The Awakened”

When we interpret the word *buddha*, one aspect is *mohanidrāprabuddhatvāt prabuddhapuruṣavat*, as it is said [in the Sanskrit Buddhist scholarly literature], “because he has awakened from the sleep of delusion he is like a man who has awakened,” and by that we obtain the element “awakened” (*sañs*). Also one aspect is: *buddher vikāśanād buddha vibuddhapadmavat*, “Intelligence unfolds widely, and thus the Buddha is just like a lotus opening its mouth and spreads out,” thus we say “Awakened and Flowered” (*sañs rgyas*). The meaning of the word is in general “having understood all moments of existence and being absolutely awakened.” (buddhaḥ zes bya ba’i sgra las drañs (2) na gcig tu na | mohanidrāprabuddhatvāt prabuddhapuruṣavat ces bya ste | gti mug gi gñid sañs pas na mi gñid sañs ba bzin te | sañs pa la sñegs | yañ rnam pa gcig tu na | buddher vikāśanād buddha vibuddhapadmavat | blo bye žiñ rgyas bas na padma kha bye žiñ rgyas pa dañ ’dra bar yañ bśad de sañs rgyas zes (3) bya’o | tshig gi don spyir na chos thams cad thugs su chuñ ciñ ma lus par byañ chub pa la bya |)

### 2. *bhagavān*, Tibetan *bcom ldan ’das*, “The One Having Victory and Transcending,” usually translated into English as “The Lord”

Of the word *bhagavān* one aspect is *bhagnamāracatuṣṭayatvād bhagavān*, as it is said, “because he has vanquished the Four Evil Ones he is called Victorious

(1957), which contains a partial translation of the *sGra sbyor* into German beside the discussions. See also Verhagen (1994, 9–45).

<sup>10</sup>See Braarvig (1995).

(*bcom*)." And another aspect: *bhaga* means "the good lot" and is a general word for these six qualities: beauty, fame, power, grace, wisdom and valiance; *vān* denotes "having (*ldan*)," and thus we interpret *bhagavān* as "his is the good lot." By this analysis we indicate a well-known earlier translation, but in the sūtras the Lord has among his qualities the quality of transcending the world, and if we make that our basis, we should add the word "transcending" (*'das*), and we fix the translation "The One Having Victory and Transcending" (*bcom ldan 'das*), while when we talk about the worldly *bhagavān*, as in worldly books, we do not call him Victorious (*bcom*), but still we describe him as having a good lot, and thus we fix the term "having a good lot" (*legs ldan*) for the worldly *bhagavān*. (bhagavān źes bya ba gcig tu na | bhagnamāracatuṣṭayatvādh bhagavān | źes bya ste bdud bźi bcom pas na bcom pa la bya | yañ rnam pa gcig tu na bhaga ni legs pa rnam pa drug gi miñ ste | gzugs dañ | (4) grags pa dañ | dbañ phyug dañ | dpal dañ | źes rab dañ | brtson pa ste 'di drug gi spyi la bya | vān źes 'byuñ ba ni bhago syāstīti bhagavān źes ldan par bśad de | de rnam grañs 'di skad du bya ba las sñar bsgyur ba'i tshig grags pa btsan par bya ste | bcom ldan 'das źes bya ba ni mdo sde dag las (5) sañs rgyas kyi yon tan la mtshan 'jig rten las 'das pa'o || źes kyañ 'byuñ bas na | 'jig rten pa'i bhagavān las khyad bar du 'das źes bla thabs su bsnan te | bcom ldan 'das źes btags | 'jig rten pa'i bhagavān źes bya ba ni 'jig rten ba'i gźuñ ñid las kyañ bcom par mi 'chad de | legs (6) pa dañ ldan pa źes 'chad bas 'jig rten pa'i bhagavān ni legs ldan źes gdags |)

### 3. *tathāgata*, Tibetan *de bźin gśegs pa*, "The Thus Come"

As for the word *tathāgata*, *tathā* means "thus" (*de bźin*), and *gata* means either "come" (*gśegs pa*), "departed," "having understood" or "explained." The general meaning of the word is connected to how the previous Buddhas came and went, but also how they understood the suchness (*de bźin ñid* = Skt. *tathatā*) of the essence of all moments of existence just as it is, and explained that. However, we fix the well-known previous translation of "Thus Come" (*de bźin gśegs pa*). (*tathāgata źes bya ba tathā ni de bźin gata ni gśegs pa'am byon pa'am mkhyen pa'am gsuñs pa la bya ste | tshig gi don spyir na sñon gyi sañs rgyas rnam ji ltar gśegs śiñ phyin pa dañ | chos thams cad gyi rañ (7) bźin de bźin ñid ji lta ba mkhyen źiñ gsuñs pa la bya mod kyi | sñar grags pa bźin de bźin de bźin gśegs pa źes gdags |)*

### 4. *arhan*, Tibetan *dgra bcom pa*, "The One who has Eliminated the Enemy"

Of the word *arhat* one aspect is *pūjam arhatīti arhan*, as it is said, "he is the one Worthy of Veneration, as he is worthy of veneration by gods and men and so on." And another aspect: *kleśārihatavān arhan*, as it is said, "he has eliminated (*bcom*) the enemy (*ari*) of vices (*kleśa*)." By means of this aspect we wish to strengthen the intent (*artha*) of the word we fix the translation "The One who has Eliminated the Enemy." (*arhan źes bya ba gcig tu na | pūjam arhatīti arhan źes bya ste | lha dañ mi la sogs pa kun gyis mchod par 'os pas na mchod 'os źes kyañ bya | yañ gcig tu na | kleśārihatavān arhan źes bya ste | ñon moñs pa'i dgra*

bcom pa źes kyañ bya ste | nram pa 'di las 'dir ni don btsan par bya ste dgra  
bcom pa źes btags |)

The items of the Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon proper, the *Mahā-vyutpatti*, following the introduction and analysis, were ordered according to importance, with the Buddha-names first, the Buddha-qualities, then the disciples of the Buddha, the bodhisattvas with names and qualities, and the way of spiritual development in Mahāyāna Buddhism. After that come various technical terms, names of animals, plants and geographical names, and so on. Thus the lexicon is clearly a Buddhist undertaking, giving priority to the terms according to their importance. In the various editions of the *Mahā-vyutpatti* the Tibetan script is employed—suiting perfectly for the task, being generated from the Brāhmī alphabet, however, in some editions the *siddham*-script, as treated below, is used for the Sanskrit quotations of the work.

All the words constructed on the basis of Indic Buddhist terms were undoubtedly quite foreign and strange for the average Tibetan at the time they were created as a mass of neologisms, when compared to the general spoken language. However, over the centuries the terms representing Sanskrit technical terms in Buddhist teachings sifted into general language, written and spoken. The *chos skad* as thus created still has remained to a great extent a literary style and to a great extent also a *lingua poetica*, *administrativa*, and so on. This is most clearly demonstrated by the fact that the verbal system of Tibetan spoken dialects, even today, is quite different from the periphrastic verbal forms created by early Tibetan translators to represent the Sanskrit *tempora* and *modi*. These translators, as grammarians, employed the Indian Pāṇinian traditions, as taken up by Buddhist scholars, when they described, normatively, what the Buddhist language of Tibet *should* be. Thus the modern language situation in Tibet spans from the traditional learned Buddhist language to a mixed written language, based on the spoken language, to the spoken language probably preserving much of the old Tibetan language not that much influenced by the *chos skad*. However, the case system, also described by Tibetan grammarians with the help of Pāṇinian theories, retains much of the presumably old features of Tibetan, and the case endings of Sanskrit are effectively replaced by Tibetan particles—not as formal equivalents of Sanskrit cases, but semantically treated through Pāṇini theory, well described with its concept of the interplay between *kāraṅkas* as the grammatical functions and the eight formal cases. However, one trait of the older language fully shared with the *chos skad* is the ergative structure of Tibetan, placing the logical subject in the instrumental case, replacing the nominative of Sanskrit in the active mode. As we see, the translation language developed to accommodate the complex Buddhist systems of knowledge in a Tibetan form may have differed greatly from the original Tibetan language, but as a created language it enjoyed considerable success, lasting for more than 1200 years. It completely transformed Tibetan culture from a simple warrior culture into a highly sophisticated religious and philosophical culture by import of a rich and complex system of knowledge. When looking at the modern situation of the Tibetan language, there is of course a huge influence of Chinese, loanwords, loan-translations and syllabic calques (both languages being basically bisyllabic), loan concepts and syntax—not to mention the massive influence of Chinese regimes of knowledge.

The historical facts connected with the edict, usually dated to 814, as indicated above, are not uncontroversial. The decree of the king is a political and official document, and follows the rules of bureaucratic language of the time, but the context and the historical events connected with the documents are not completely clear. As has been argued by Christina

Scherrer-Schaub (1999, 2002), on the basis of Panglung's work on another version of the *sGra sbyor*,<sup>11</sup> the edict as quoted above is only a *third* version of three consecutive initiatives of Tibetan kings to form a unified and formalized translation language to implement their Buddhist policies.<sup>12</sup>

However that may be, it is clear that there was a strong royal and political interest in producing standards for the “correct” implementation of Buddhist disciplines in Tibet, that is, by education, scholarly activities and religious practices, on the whole an import of the Buddhist conceptual world into a culture and language where this was maybe not quite unknown, but at the time very foreign and strange to the ordinary Tibetan. However, with time Buddhist ways of thinking and Tibetan institutions were created by the implementation of this system of concepts, and Buddhist regimes of knowledge would completely diffuse Tibetan society in respect to religious life, education, cultural life and political institutions. One can admire the systematic procedures that brought these changes about, as expressed in the edicts of the *sGra sbyor*, which scarcely is paralleled in pre-modern history. The initiative was probably from the scholars, but consistent sponsorship of the king ensured the standardization and high level of organization of the initiative to make Tibet a Buddhist state. The initiative was backed by Indian scholars, Śāntaraṅkṣita and others, as mirrored in the Indian linguistic methods employed. However, the linguistic theories in Indian traditions never cared about translation—Sanskrit, and to some extent some of its dialects, being the only languages of interest. Thus synonym lists existed in Sanskrit from far back in history, as well as the kind of etymology employed in the *sGra sbyor*, but there was no translation theory as such. But translational themes were discussed in China, which had a tradition of translating Buddhist texts from Indic languages as far back as the second half of the second century CE. Discussion on how to translate thus crystallized into lexicographical works as well as theoretical notes on how to translate, and a scholarly literature followed the translations as prefaces. With time also Chinese synonym lists for producing good Chinese style in the translated texts, as well as Sanskrit-Chinese lexica, were produced. This literature seems to have gained momentum particularly in the early Tang dynasty, indeed the period when the Tibetan works on the subject were produced in the form of royal decrees. There were also sūtras translated first from their Chinese versions into Tibetan—for probably political reasons the *Ratnamegha* (see below)—even though this practice was disrupted with the strong Indian initiatives, as mentioned, and the decision to import the Buddhists systems of knowledge from India. But surely Chinese Buddhism played a part on several levels in the Tibetan processes described, and the Chinese translatology described in the works of 義淨 Yijing, 玄奘 Xuánzàng and others must have influenced the beginnings of the Tibetan scholarly traditions. Tibetans were at war with the Tang dynasty, but the then fairly international mix of cultures in the Tang capital Changan, the main eastern end of the Silk Road, also harbored peaceful and scholarly communication between Chinese, Tokharian, Tibetan, Uighur, Khotanese, Sogdian and other Silk Road cultures. Such communication is witnessed also by the literatures found in Dunhuang and Turfan and the culture of translation existing at the time on the Silk Road. Translations were undertaken for the sake of trade, where Sogdian was the the main lingua franca, but also translations of Buddhist texts, as well as

<sup>11</sup> Panglung (1989), see the summary of Panglung's arguments in Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 270–271), and summary of the events as seen by Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 315–17).

<sup>12</sup> Historical revisions did not end with this, as can be gleaned by historical textual criticism, cf. Braarvig (1995, 8, note 22).

Christian such, where Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, Persian and Syriac texts were *Vorlagen* of translation.<sup>13</sup>

There is all reason, then, not to look at the beginnings of Tibetan bilingual lexicography as an isolated phenomenon. Though we have seen that it builds on Indian monolingual linguistic traditions, grammar and semantic theories, the Tibetan practices seem also inspired by Chinese bilingual lexicography, archive methods and theories of translation. We will thus go on to give some examples of the latter. First of all we will give some comparisons to the *sGra sbyor* treatment in the Chinese sources.<sup>14</sup>

The first Sanskrit-Chinese lexicon known, the *Fānfānyǔ* “The Translation of Sanskrit” 翻梵語, (T. 2130), dated 517, has the same arrangement as the later Tibetan lexicon, in accordance with the importance of the terms in a Buddhist context priority, first come the names and qualities of the Buddha, then the bodhisattvas, and their qualities and practices, further the names of monks and nuns and other persons representing the Buddhist roles, and then officials and laymen, families, animals, vegetation and geographical names (of the Buddhist world view!), winds and fire—a complete exposition of the words related to Buddhist culture as a whole. As such it also builds on various Buddhist literatures of all genres, sūtras and śāstras from all the Buddhist traditions as part of the canonical scriptures of the Chinese. It starts out with the very important scholastic work of Buddhism, the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* (Mppś), now only extant in Chinese translation by Kumārajīva (344–409 CE), but ascribed to the famous Indian scholar Nāgārjuna of the second century CE. This voluminous manual of Buddhist teachings, being a commentary on a *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtra,<sup>15</sup> is a fairly complete exposition of Mahāyāna Buddhism, and evidently a natural starting point for the *Fānfānyǔ*, but the lexicon quotes the numerous texts found in Buddhist canon as having been translated at the time, like the *Avataṃsaka*, the *Mahāsannipāta*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, and the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*, as well as the *Āgamas* and the host of Buddhist texts translated into Chinese, with references to the volume (卷 juàn) of the work quoted throughout. The *Fānfānyǔ* testifies to the prestige of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*, translated by Kumārajīva (344–409), which seems to have remained an authoritative work for translators for a long time, upon which they modeled their technical terminology.

<sup>13</sup>On the complex landscape of Silk Road culture, see Whitfield (2004); Hansen (2012). The Uighurs translated Buddhist texts from Chinese, for example from Xuánzàng’s translations of Indic texts, but they also translated from Sanskrit, and used Indian semantics to coin their Buddhist technical terms in Old Turkish. It is worth noting the founder of the Tang dynasty was half Götürk. Many other languages translated Buddhism, mostly from Sanskrit and its dialects. On Khotanese literature, including numerous Buddhist titles, see Emmerick (1992); there is also an example of a Sanskrit-Khotanese bilingual made for the purpose of learning Sanskrit, Emmerick (1992, 47–48). Sogdian Buddhist texts are mostly found in Dunhuang; one surmises that Sogdians emigrating to the East became Buddhist, see Yutaka (2015). In the earlier periods, all non-Chinese languages, including Sanskrit and the Central-Asian ones, were lumped together as 胡語 húyǔ “barbaric languages,” only later the expression 梵語 fānyǔ “Brahmā language” came into use, see Cheung (2006, 6–7). On the multilingualism of Dunhuang, see Takata (2000).

<sup>14</sup>The Chinese lexica we have commented on are all Tang except the *Fānfānyǔ*. The four Tang lexica are edited and commented on in detail by Bagchi (1929–1937), see also van Gulik’s comments (1974 [1956], 31ff. Van Gulik disagrees, correctly so, with Bagchi that T. 2133 was made for Indians wishing to learn Chinese, which is born out by the introduction as read by Bagchi—it is rather the other way around. Van Gulik thinks that the lexicon was made to help traveling traders, rather than students of Buddhism, and that the author cannot be 義淨 Yijing because of stylistic reasons (pp. 32–33 and 35), but van Gulik’s argument is not convincing in this respect given the lack of day-to-day language terminology.

<sup>15</sup>The *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, “Perfection of Wisdom in 25000 verses” was translated into Chinese four times, see Lamotte (1949–1980, vol. I, p. VII ff.), T. no. 1509: 摩訶般若波羅蜜經釋論.

Being a list of Sanskrit words in the often ambiguous Chinese transliteration with sounds not well fitting to Sanskrit phonology, the *Fānfānyǔ* must have been quite difficult to use, but it is part of the endeavor to establish Sanskrit loanwords in Chinese, in Chinese writing. The loanwords are usually those with a particularly *lingua sacra* valeur, as *arhat*, *buddha*, and so on.<sup>16</sup> We recognize the Indian style of etymological analysis employed in the *sGra sbyor* as quoted above, *Fānfānyǔ* explains loanwords in Chinese on the basis of Indian etymologies, but the author of the lexicon does not seem interested in using the explanations of the words in constructing such loan translations as the Tibetans systematically did. Though not always, in most of the cases the *Fānfānyǔ* provides Chinese equivalents to the transliterated words. To compare, we quote the corresponding *Fānfānyǔ* entries to those of the *sGra sbyor*:

**tathāgata**: duōtuóuāqiétuó—can also be expressed as duōsāājié or dāsāājié; and the commentary says: ‘He has accordingly (*tathā*) understood (*gata*) all characteristics of the dharma, and he comes (*āgata*) on the peaceful way of all buddhas, but will thus not go (*agata*) to further existences.’ 多陀阿伽陀—亦云多薩阿竭, 亦云怛薩阿竭; 論曰如法相解諸佛安隱道來不去也。 (T. 981b02)

The transliterations are modern pinyin, and seem very far from the Sanskrit word *tathāgata*, however, the phonetic values of the Chinese characters were historically closer to the Sanskrit sounds. The calque of the word into Chinese, 如來 *rúlái*, “thus come” is not given, even though it is much more frequent in translation than the transliteration. The Sanskrit root *gam-* means “to go (to),” perfect participle *gata*, but it also means “to understand.” *tathā* means “thus,” “accordingly.” English is “The Thus Come.”

Pourquoi est-il nommé *To t'o a k'ie t'o* (*tathāgata*)? 1. Il prêche les caractères des Dharma (*dharmalakṣaṇa*) de la façon (*tathā*) dont il les a compris (*gata*). 2. De la façon dont les Buddha [antérieurs] s'en sont allés par le chemin de la sécurité (*yogaṣemamārga*), ainsi (*tathā*) le Buddha [actuels] s'en est allé (*gata*) et n'ira plus à de nouvelles existences (*punarbhava*). C'est pourquoi il est nommé Tathāgata. (Lamotte 1949–1980, vol. I, 126) 復有異名。名多陀阿伽陀等。云何名多陀阿伽陀。如法相解如法相說。如諸佛安隱道來。佛亦如是來更不去後有中。是故名多陀阿伽陀。 (T. 71b16–19)

The quotations in *Fānfānyǔ* are abridged. For further references to the Indian “etymologies,” see Lamotte *in loco*, also in the examples below, such as are also the sources of *sGra sbyor*.

**arhat**: āluóhē—can also be expressed as ālīhē; ālī means “thief,” hē means “to kill”; but it also means “to be honoured.” 阿羅呵亦云阿梨訶 論曰阿羅名賊呵名為殺亦云應供。 (T. 981b4)

Skt. *ari* rather means “enemy” than “thief,” cf. the corresponding entry in *sGra sbyor*. Skt. *han-* perfect participle *hata*, means to “kill.” 阿羅漢 (*ā*)*luóhàn*, the loan-word, is the most frequent for *arhat* in Chinese. In English often “saint,” or, the loanword, “arhat.”

<sup>16</sup>See below on Xuánzàng’s principles for employing loanwords or loan translations.

Le Buddha est encore nommé *A lo ho* (*Arhat*). Pourquoi est-il nommé Arhat? 1. *Ara* signifie ennemi (*ari*) et *hat* veut dire tuer (han). L'expression signifie donc «tuer d'ennemis.» [...] 3. Enfin, *Arhat* signifie digne (*arhat*) de recevoir en culte (*pūjā*). Chez le Buddha les entraves (*samyojana*) sont coupées, il a obtenu l'omniscience (*sarvajñatā*); donc il mérite de recevoir le culte (*pūjā*) de tous les êtres du ciel et de la terre. C'est pourquoi le Buddha est nommé Arhat. (Lamotte 1949–1980, vol. I, 127) 復名阿羅呵。云何名阿羅呵。阿羅名賊。呵名殺。是名殺賊。[...] 復次阿羅呵名應受供養。佛諸結使除盡得一切智慧故。 (T. 71b19–20)

**buddha**: fōtuó—the commentary says: “He is the one who knows, and is awakened.” 佛陀論曰知者亦云覺者 (T. 981b12)

The Skt. root *budh-* means “to wake up.” 佛 *fó* is most frequent in Chinese, an abridged form of the loanword 佛陀 *fó tuó*.

Il est nommé *Fo t'o* (*buddha*) [en langue des Ts'in, savant]. Quels Dharma connaît-il? [...] C'est sous l'arbre de l'illumination (*bodhivṛkṣa*) qu'il les a connus parfaitement, C'est pourquoi il est nommé Buddha. (Lamotte 1949–1980, vol. I, 137) 復名佛陀。秦言知者知何等法。菩提樹下了了覺知故。名為佛陀。 (T. 73a2–5)

**bhagavat**: pógāpó—the commentary says: “pógā” means “virtue” and pó means “to have,” so translated it means “having great virtue,” or, “having crushed the vices.” 婆伽婆論曰婆伽言德婆言有譯曰大德亦破煩惱。 (T. 983a7–8)

The nominative is *bhagavān*, the strong stem *bhagavant*, and the weak *bhagavat*; usually translated into English as “Lord.” The two explanations build on two interpretations of Skt. *bhaga*, *bhāga* meaning “part” or “good lot.” Cf. also *sGra sbyor* above on the word, and the Tibetan construction. The transliteration 婆伽婆 *pógāpó* is used quite often in translations, but the equivalent 世尊 *shì zūn* “venerated through the ages” is more frequent, but not quoted in the *Fānfānyǔ*.

1. Dans le mot *bhagavat*, *bhāga* signifie qualité (*guṇa*) et *vat* marque la possession: «Celui qui possède des qualités». [...] 4. En outre, *bhāga* signifie briser (*bhaṅga*) et *vat* marque le pouvoir. L'homme qui peut briser le désir (*rāga*), la haine (*dveṣa*) et la sottise (*moha*) et nommé Bhagavat. (Lamotte 1949–1980, vol. I, 116) 婆伽言德。婆言有。是名有德。[...] 復次婆伽名破。婆名能。是人能破姪怒癡故。稱為婆伽婆。 (T. 70b15–c3)

Again the *Fānfānyǔ* is abridged. A number of entries of less “important” words, however, are given in the format of 1) Chinese transliteration of Sanskrit and 2) equivalent Chinese translation, without explanations and more useful for a translator, or for one trying to learn Sanskrit words. Some examples are the following, quoted from section 6, “Names of various things” (雜法名第六):

**gati**: jiāndī—the translation is “sequence.” 捷抵譯曰次第 (T. 986a15).

*gati* rather means “going” and all the metaphors from that, root *gam-*.

**mahā:** móhē—the translation is “great,” “victory” or “many.” 摩訶譯曰大亦云勝亦云多 (T. 986a16)

**dānapati:** tányuè—the translation is “giver of gifts.” 檀越譯曰施主 (T. 986a17).

*pati* basically means “lord,” but also “owner,” one “having control of,” 主 zhǔ corresponds semantically to *pati*, and thus 施主 shīzhǔ is a loan translation.

**vyākaraṇa:** pógāluónà also expressed as ligāluónà—the translation is “receiving an explanation.” 婆伽羅那亦云利伽羅那譯曰受記 (T. 984b19).

*vyākaraṇa* in general Sanskrit usage means explanation, but in the context, frequent in Buddhist sūtras, the explanation of future lives given by the Buddha, that is, “prophecy.”

The second lexical item of *vyākaraṇa* is under the heading of “Names of Dharmas of Non-Buddhist sects” (外道法名):

**vyākaraṇa:** bijiālànà—the explanation says jiāyuánà means “ear” (*karṇa*). 敲迦蘭那譯曰迦園那者耳也 (T. 985b10).

*vyākaraṇa* here probably refers to the exegetical practices of the Vedas, where the general meaning of *vyākaraṇa* is specialized as “grammatical explanations” being also regarded as a “sect,” or in the Indian idiom “a way to liberation.” The fanciful etymologization of *karṇa* as *karṇa* (“ear”) is probably built on the fact that explanations are something one hears. In this example we note that the transliterations are not standardized, and seem to a great extent to build arbitrarily on usage of individual translators. Probably the Chinese would read the various transliterated words as unique words, and the understanding of words of many syllables was not the Chinese habit—one would rather read the whole word as a “unit.” In the quoted example *vyākaraṇa* has two distinct meanings.

Clearly the same intentions were behind the *Fānfānyū*, the *Mahāvvyutpatti* and its commentaries: helping the translator and producing adequate terminologies. But it is not quite clear whether the *Fānfānyū* is conceived originally as a *normative* list or not—definitely the *Mahāvvyutpatti* has a normative focus. The *Fānfānyū* is a very rich word list, containing almost 3000 terms, however, one could argue that a lexicon appearing some time after, had a completely new standard in giving the equivalents of the Chinese character lemmas in Brāhmī writing rather than transliteration in Chinese characters, and thus would appear more useful in reading and translating the Indic originals. This lexicon was produced by the famed Tang dynasty monk 義淨 Yijing (635–713), however with exerted effort, and after a long study. Yijing traveled for 25 years—though not the same route as his predecessor, 玄奘 Xuánzàng (602–664), whom Yijing is said to have admired greatly. While Xuánzàng traveled the northern Silk Road route to the Western World, that is, India, as described in his travel diary 大唐西域記 *Dàtáng Xīyùjì*,<sup>17</sup> Yijing chose the southern route, and approached India from the kingdoms of South East Asia, among them the Śrīvijaya, which he vividly

<sup>17</sup>The latest translation is Li (1995).

describes in his travel reports.<sup>18</sup> Sanskrit was used in that region not only as a *lingua sacra*, but also as a *lingua administrativa, nobilitatis*, etc., as the region was influenced in every way by Indian culture, both politically and religiously. As he describes, Yijìng learnt Sanskrit language already there before approaching the great institutions of Buddhist learning in India. Such travels, as undertaken by Xuánzàng and Yijìng are of course crucial for establishing the communication of cultures, not to speak of the systematic exchange of systems of knowledge, and it is of course something undertaken in all such events—scholars from the receiving culture travel to the donor culture to get educated and to receive the manuscripts and written materials needed for the translation processes. Yijìng, though, was not the first to introduce the Sanskrit alphabet to China. Indeed, Brāhmī writing had been employed for hundreds of years for writing the numerous languages into which Buddhism was received. But at roughly at the same time as Yijìng's work we find a systematic treatment of the Brāhmī sound system with the corresponding Chinese sounds expressed with Chinese characters, *namely*, the 悉曇字記, *Explanation of the siddham syllables*, based on an Indian work, but rendered into Chinese by a Tang monk 智廣 Zhìguǎng.<sup>19</sup> There is one other work extant probably by the same Zhìguǎng, *namely* one on mantras for use in Tantric practices, the 密咒圓因往生集, T. 1956. Thus the author was naturally interested in the topic of writing systems, since mantras were to be recited in Sanskrit and naturally written with Brāhmī, also as decorations in temples, as well as being appreciated by Tang calligraphists. This work contains explanations of the consonants, vowel systems and ligatures in the traditional order of the Brāhmī alphabet, a proper manual for teaching Chinese students to read Sanskrit, using Chinese terminology for explaining ligatures, length of vowels, and so on.<sup>20</sup>

On coming home from his long study tour in 695, Yijìng was received by the Empress Wū Zētiān 武則天 (624–705),<sup>21</sup> who, though a woman, had attained absolute imperial power in the Tang dynasty by not always moral means, even though building her authority on Buddhist scriptures, in particular the *Mahāmeghasūtra*<sup>22</sup> and the *Ratnameghasūtra*,<sup>23</sup> with freshly composed commentaries, to legitimate her unique ambition to become a female Emperor, in which she succeeded. This literature depicts a lady later becoming a universal ruler as an incarnation of Maitreya.<sup>24</sup> She invited a great number of Indian scholars and made several of them officials in connections with making Buddhism the state religion. It is even told about her that she had some linguistic interests, in introducing new characters to the written language (Whitfield 2004, 74), very much in line with the interests of Yijìng and his endeavor on behalf of Buddhist translation. So with his now very broad background in Indian and Buddhist civilization, and with the support of the Empress, Yijìng translated a number of important classics of Buddhism, among them the enormous collection of delightful stories connected with the Buddha's life, also containing the monastic rules of the Buddhist Saṃgha, *namely* the *Mūlasarvastivādinaya*, seemingly the most prestigious collection in North India at the time. This work was also the one to be translated into Tibetan

<sup>18</sup>Takakusu (1896). See Cheung (2006, 167–8) on his other works.

<sup>19</sup>T. 2132, 1186a5 南天竺般若菩提悉曇, 大唐山陰沙門智廣撰.

<sup>20</sup>On the *siddham* alphabet, see van Gulik (1974 [1956]) and Wang Bangwei (1999).

<sup>21</sup>On Wū Zētiān's remarkable life, see Sen (2016, 93ff.).

<sup>22</sup>There are numerous translations and versions into Chinese, from the early fifth century to Amoghvajra's Tang translation in the mid-eighth century: T. 387, 991, 992, 993, 950; Tibetan in Derge mdo sde wa 113a–214b, 250b–263a.

<sup>23</sup>Chinese translations in T. 489, 658, 660, Tibetan in Derge mdo sde wa 1b–112b.

<sup>24</sup>Sen (2016).

as the source of narrative and monastic rules. In general it can be said that Yijing's style of translation abridges the often overflowing sentences of the Sanskrit original into a more terse Chinese style. Yijing produced the most efficient tool for conveying Indian terminology into Chinese, namely his Sanskrit-Chinese lexicon, the 梵語千字文 *Fànyǔ qiānziwén*, "A Thousand Characters from the Sanskrit Language" (梵語千字文并序, 三藏法師義淨撰, T. 2133A.). This work employs the Brāhmī, or *siddham*, writing for the entry in the lexicon, but Yijing chose a traditional Chinese order of lemmata based on the Chinese view of the universe instead of the previously described priority of Buddhist terms in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* and the *Fānfānyǔ*. His template and the order of the words is similar to that of the 千字文 *Qiānziwén*, a manual to teach children to write and read from the sixth century. The composition of this work is ascribed to 周興嗣 Zhōu Xingsi (470–521) of the 梁朝 Liáng dynasty (502–587), and it starts as follows:

The sky was black and earth yellow; space and time vast, limitless. Sun high or low, moon full or parsed; with stars and lodges spread in place. Cold arrives then heat once more; Autumn's harvest, Winter's store. Extra days round out the years; scale in tune with sun and spheres.<sup>25</sup>

It was used widely as a manual of learning, also in Korea, even until today, and Japan, in the Uighur Qocho kingdom, and it was transcribed into Manchu letters to ease communication with the Han. It was also used for a period to order written materials, thus the order of the characters it contains functioned in the same way as the alphabet. Evidently Yijing did not want Buddhism to be something foreign, and he wished to integrate it into the traditions Chinese culture—where everybody from the educated classes would know the *Qiānziwén*—even though he also would keep the more efficient Brāhmī system for writing Sanskrit, at least in his lexicon. However, in his short introduction, he states the purpose is to help Chinese who wish to go to India to study Indian Buddhist scholarship, with the aim of being able to translate Buddhist texts into Chinese:

For the people who intend to go to the Western Kingdom, I will make a character-learning template. So, as previously [in the original *Qiānziwén*], for each entry I place a Sanskrit word under each Han Chinese character. If there is no [corresponding Han] character, I establish [the Chinese equivalent] with a sound transliteration. With these essential and necessary characters, once you master the [template], then you will also gain a thorough understanding of other words. It is, however, different from the traditional *Qiānziwén*. So if you read Sanskrit texts with the *siddham* script, you will be able to translate them within one or two years.

為欲向西國人。作學語樣。仍各註中。梵音下題漢字。其無字者。以音正之。並是當途要字。但學得此則餘語皆通。不同舊千字文。若兼悉墨章讀梵本。一兩年間即堪翻譯矣 (T. 2133a, 1190a8–21).

The work is also called "The Sanskrit-Tang Thousand Characters" 或名梵唐千字文.<sup>26</sup> Clearly, as said in the introductions, the purpose of the lexicon is for classically educated

<sup>25</sup>天地玄黃宇宙洪荒日月盈辰宿列張寒來暑往秋收冬藏閏餘成歲律召調陽, tr. Nathan Sturman.

<sup>26</sup>I thank Jianrong Shi for helping me to understand this introduction.

Chinese learners well versed in the classical characters to learn Sanskrit. Thus there are, with few exceptions, only one character for each entry in the Classical Chinese way, not like the typical Buddhist bisyllabic or polysyllabic word. The few Buddhist technical terms are interspersed among the approximately thousand entries, some of them loosely grouped. There are also none of the typical loan-translations such as 如來 *rúlái*, *tathāgata*, and so on, and no transliterations, notwithstanding what it said in the introduction. The first entries are as follows:

स्वर्ग, पृथिवी, सूर्य, चंद्र, कल्प, शतपुत्र

天 地 日 月 陰 陽

परिपूरण, शतपुत्र, देवता, रत्न

圓 矩 晝 夜

शुद्धि, शतपुत्र, स्वर्ग, शतपुत्र, शतपुत्र

明 闇 雷 電

व्युत्पन्न, वृष्टि, शतपुत्र, शतपुत्र, शतपुत्र

風 雨 星 流 雲 散

...

पूर्व, पश्चिम, दक्षिण, उत्तर, उपर

東 西 南 北 上

*tiān* - *svarga* (heaven); *dì* - *pṛthivī* (earth); *rì* - *sūrya* (sun); *yuè* - *candra* (moon);  
*yīn* - *cchāya* - (shadow); *yàng* - *ātapa* (heat);

*yuán* - *paripūrṇa* (full); *jǔ* - *ādeśa* (order, standard rule); *zhòu* - *divasa* (day);  
*yè* - *ratri* - (night);

*míng* - *āloka* - (light); *àn* - *andhakara* (darkness); *léi* - *devagarjita* (thunder);  
*diàn* - *vidyu(t)* (lightning);

*fēng* - *vāyu* (wind); *yǔ* - *varṣa* (rain); *xīng* - *tāraka* (star); *liú* - *srota(s)* (flowing  
water); *yún* - *megha* (cloud); *sàn* - *vihanita* (dispersed);

...

dōng - pūrva (east); xī - paścima (west); nán - dakṣiṇa (south); běi - uttara (north); shàng - uttara (up). (T.1190a22–b04)

However, a version of the above, with “translatory notes”<sup>27</sup> is also extant, reproducing Yijing’s *Thousand Character* text, but with Chinese character transliterations, employing phonological terminology as in the above-mentioned *Explanation of the siddham syllables* by Zhiguāng. Among his successors there were several developments of the Sanskrit lexical ontology as established by Yijing.<sup>28</sup> Later in the Tang period the Indian script seems to be abandoned for the Chinese transliterations, as in Huilín: “Word and meanings in all the sūtras.”<sup>29</sup> In the Song dynasty the Buddhist cleric Fǎyún 法雲 also reverted to the traditional Buddhist ontology with the Buddha-names as introduction to the otherwise rich lexicon, “A collection of nouns and meanings translated,” finished 1151.<sup>30</sup>

We find then, that during the Tang dynasty (618–907) lexicographical projects were undertaken both in Tibet and in China in accordance with the same principles, and indeed Tibet was bordering on the Tang territories, where both friendly and inimical contacts were made in the period. So we have all reason to believe that scholarly communication took place, even though, as mentioned, Tibet consciously chose to import Buddhism from India after the debate at Samye, and for political reasons chose not to cooperate with Chinese scholars and probably downplayed political contacts. In going to the original source of Buddhism in Indian language and in the country of its origin, the Tibetans would preserve autonomy in creating the form of Buddhism they wanted for their country.<sup>31</sup> Before the end of the seventh century, there were contacts between Tang scholars and Tibetan such, as some sūtras were translated into Tibetan from Chinese, as the *Lankāvātāra*, and the *Ratnamegha*, favorite text of Empress Wú.<sup>32</sup> In the beginning the Tibetans must have regarded this sūtra as an important one, as tradition says that it was the first text Thonmi Sambhoṭa translated into Tibetan (Rinpoche 1994, 342, 441). The revision of this text must in a political perspective have been symbolically very significant. The translator and lexicographer Yijing is also said to be “the first to transmit the precepts of Tibetan Buddhism.”<sup>33</sup> The sources are somewhat meager, but it is probable that the Tibetans were inspired by Tang culture in their appropriation of Buddhism, and also by the Tang methods of translation. Both cultures were of course dependent on Indian linguistic theory and monolingual lexicography, as can be

<sup>27</sup> 梵語千字文譯注. T. 2133b.

<sup>28</sup> 全真: 唐梵文字, T. 2134, no Chinese character transliteration; T. 2135, 梵語雜名 “Various Sanskrit words,” collected by Lǐyán 禮言, with Chinese transliteration, but another order of single Chinese characters as lemmata; and 唐梵兩語雙對集 (T. 2136) starting out with the parts of the body, but having only Chinese transliterations apart from a small Brāhmī quotation in the end.

<sup>29</sup> 慧琳: 一切經音義, between 788 and 810.

<sup>30</sup> T. 2131, 翻譯名義集, see Cheung (2006, 199–200) for his interesting reflections on translation.

<sup>31</sup> A very similar case of the introduction of Buddhism is that of the Armenian choice to translate Greek classical literature as well as Christian texts directly from Greek in the fifth century CE, not basing themselves on Syriac Christian texts which were dominant among the Armenians before that, since Syriac influence was tolerated by the Persians, who constantly sought to dominate Armenia. Thus the creation of an alphabet and various linguistic tools to have direct access to the source of the dominating Greek culture, was a partly, if not mostly, nationalistic project, just as in Tibet at the time of the Tang dynasty. The Armenians, like the Tibetans, did also not have an alphabet before they embarked on the project of gaining cultural autonomy through access to a world culture of learning, in the cases Greek and Sanskrit based. See Muradyan (2012) on the massive influence of Grecisms on Armenian, similar to the Sanskritisms in Tibetan as a result of these important political decisions.

<sup>32</sup> Further in Scherrer-Schaub (2002, 298–304).

<sup>33</sup> Cheung 2006, 166, unfortunately the source for this information is not given.

seen in the Indian synonym lexicon *Amarakoṣa*, in which the lexical patterns follow principles not connected with religion, mentioning firstly expressions connected with the vault of the sky, then secondly the earth with places, men and animals, and as the third part “general terms” (*svargādikhāṇḍa*, *bhūvargādikhāṇḍa*, *sāmānyādi-khāṇḍa*).

The scholars of the Tang dynasty had already a tradition of five hundred years translating Buddhist texts from Sanskrit before them, and according to tradition this activity was initiated already at the height of the Han dynasty in 67 CE, when a delegation of monks visited the Han emperor, who had an anthology of Buddhist teachings translated into Chinese by a certain monk Kāśyapa-Mātaṅga as “The Sūtra in Forty Two Sections.”<sup>34</sup> But in the end of the second century, translation activities gain momentum with the Persian 安世高 Ān Shigāo, who arrived in Luoyang in 147 CE, and the contemporaneous “Indo-Scyte”<sup>35</sup> Lokakṣema (fl. 168–89 CE) and in his tradition 支謙 Zhīqiān (fl. 233–253 CE).<sup>36</sup> Their terminologies are mostly terms from classical Chinese equivocated with the Buddhist terms, but with the prolific Indian scholar Dharmarakṣa (230–316 CE, see Boucher 1996), resident in Luoyang and Changan, a more consistent standardization of Chinese equivalents of Sanskrit terms took place. However, there is another scholar of Indian extraction, Kumārajīva (344–409 CE), who is credited with creating most of the standards of Chinese Buddhist literature, not the least because of his influential translations, like that of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*, quoted above as a source of the *Fānfānyǔ* from the sixth century. Kumārajīva did not, however, write any theoretical works on translation theory or any linguistic works apart from that found in his translations. Other Indians were also very important translators and creators of new Chinese terminology, like Paramārtha (499–569 CE).

Translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese are ascribed to single responsible personalities, but most often the translations were produced as team work, where tasks were well defined and in accordance with Chinese sense of order. The participants had particular titles corresponding to their obligations in the production of the Chinese versions, by rank:

1. Translator in Charge
2. Holder of the Brush (writing the oral translation down in Chinese)
3. The Interpreter or translator
4. Examiner of the Sanskrit sources, with several assistants, then
5. Polisher of Writing, expert on style
6. Examiner of Meaning, (whose number in the case of the *Abhidharmakośa* is given as 300!)
7. Reciter of Verses
8. The Collation Officer, and
9. The Superintendent.<sup>37</sup>

Xuánzàng (600–664 CE), though, is praised for managing the whole process himself,<sup>38</sup> but other sources mentions him as having an assembly for the purpose, with a superintendent. Though translation and producing texts is a laborious process, the great number of officials

<sup>34</sup> 四十二章經. The language seems more modern, either the texts is revised, or is later construction. There is no exact Sanskrit counterpart.

<sup>35</sup> 月支, on the role of the yuezhi as translators in pre-buddhist environments, see article of Bolzmann in this volume.

<sup>36</sup> See further in Cheung (2006), and Nattier (2008).

<sup>37</sup> As described by Zanning (919–1001), in Cheung (2006, 188–190). See also Fuchs (1930, 84–103); van Gulik (1974 [1956], 29–30); Sen, Tansen, (2016, 97).

<sup>38</sup> Cheung (2006, 167).

needed is probably only an ideal, and a way to share the prestigious work—even an emperor is once reported to be Holder of the Brush. But it is clear that translation was a very costly undertaking in including great numbers of scholars and officials. One might suspect that the great number of participants did not necessarily contribute to an accurate translation.

Xuánzàng was concerned with a normative description on *how* translation should be carried out in terms of loanwords or translation. He is reported to have set down principles for when not to translate terms and use loanwords instead:

Firstly, if a term is part of the esoteric teachings, it is not translated, e.g., 陀羅尼 tuólóuóní (Skt. *dhāraṇī* “mantra,” “incantation,” same as *sGra sbyor* §25).

Secondly, if a term has multiple meanings, it is not translated. An example is 薄伽梵 bójiāfàn. In Sanskrit this term has six meanings. (Skt. *bhagavat*, “Lord.” See the entries of *bhagavat* above in the *Sgra sbyor* and the *Fānfànyǔ*. Tibetans translate the word).

Thirdly, if the object represented by the term does not exist in this part of the world, that term is not translated. An example is 閻浮樹 yánfúshù. In actual fact no such tree exists in our land. (yánfú—Skt. *jambu*, 樹 shù is tree in Chinese. See *Sgra sbyor* §18).

Fourthly, if a past rendering of a term has become established and accepted, the term is not translated. An example is 阿耨菩提 ānòupútí (Skt. *anubodhi*). The term is not untranslatable, but ever since the time of Kāśyapa-Mātāṅga the Sanskrit form has been kept.

Fifthly, if a term elicits positive associations it is not translated. An example is 般若 bōrě (Skt. *prajñā*, “wisdom”) which carries a sense of authority and has weight. But when the term is semantically translated into 智慧 zhihui, its meaning becomes lighter and shallower. [...] 釋迦牟尼 shìjiāmóuni is translated as 能仁 néngrén “able and benevolent,” but such a name is inferior in status to the Duke of Zhou and Confucius (Skt. Śākyamuni, name of the Buddha, prestige of Buddhism as compared with the two great Chinese traditions counts.) Also, 阿耨菩提 ānòupútí (Skt. *anubodhi*) can be translated as 正遍知 “correct all-encompassing knowledge,” but this makes its meaning indistinguishable from the teachings of Laozi 老子.<sup>39</sup>

We see that the discussion is similar to that of the *sGra sbyor*, though sometimes with other conclusions. The Tibetans did also not have the problem of relating to earlier terminologies and spiritual authorities other than the Indian scholars who took part in the Tibetan translation project.<sup>40</sup>

In early Tang there was not only religious tolerance where both Buddhism and Daoism were respected, even by imperial decree,<sup>41</sup> but also a remarkable openness to other cultures and willingness to accept other systems of knowledge, including religious thinking from

<sup>39</sup>The translation is by Diana Yue, Cheung (2006, 157–8), though abbreviated and with some modifications.

<sup>40</sup>See further Cheung (2006, 159) on Xuánzàng stressing that Buddhism and Daoism are separate religions, and that Buddhism should not be linked up with Daoist meanings. This, however, naturally was an important discussion in attempts to reconcile the traditions or to suppress the foreign influence.

<sup>41</sup>See Cheung (2006, 169) on Empress Wu’s decree that Buddhist and Daoist priest should pay respect to their respective sacred spaces.

both the West through Persia, and from India. One of the reason may be that the during the Tang there was a true international milieu in China, due to the Silk Road, but probably also because of the various peripheral state formations, like the Old Turks, and the Tibetans, pressing the Chinese center both militarily and culturally. The Götürk and Orchon with their military prowess, at times also allied with the Han, and the other states in the periphery competing for power did not seem to be ideologically stale: they were rather interested in Christianity and Manicheism arriving in Syriac, Persian and Sogdian garb, as well as the Buddhist Culture from the South West. Early Tang was a fruit of such cultural intermingling with the Chinese traditional culture, and indeed Buddhism, flowing in again and again in new waves from India over many centuries. At some point, however, when the Tang dynasty had become rulers of an established culture, Chinese traditionalism would again triumph over the barbaric influences. Later Tang, in particular in the middle of the ninth century, was full of persecution of foreign culture, most of all aiming at eradicating Buddhism—not however succeeding, as Buddhism remained a major influence on Chinese thinking, and, as we suggest, on Chinese language.

In any language learning project, to learn, translate and employ technical terms is certainly an important and difficult practice, in that it is crucial in importing a set or system of concepts into another language than in which they were created. In our case the terms are created in Sanskrit, discussed by scholars of translation in terms of origin and semantic etymologies for the sake of recreating them in Chinese and Tibetan. In this process, it is a bit surprising that the study of grammar was not given more priority. For the period we are treating, there are not many references, and no comprehensible extant systematical works on syntax and inflexion of Sanskrit in Chinese.<sup>42</sup> This, however, does not mean that Sanskrit grammar did not spill over into Buddhist Chinese in the way of inflexion and syntax in the actual translations. In China, one evidently did not see the need for such manual in perfecting the translations of Buddhist texts, and this aspect of the translation activity must have existed in the oral expertise and the oral procedures of translation. And, indeed, as described above, the translation process involved a huge number of translation officials and oral communication in the process, making it maybe less accurate, as van Gulik likes to point out. But morphological analyses were not completely absent in Chinese language, as is documented by a commentary to the *Avataṃsakasūtra* by the Sogdian translator 法藏 Fǎzàng (643–712 CE), evidently knowing Sanskrit well.<sup>43</sup> The paragraph reflects Pāṇinean categories of nominal inflexion:

The cases refer to the (grammatical) rules of Western (Indian!) countries. If one wants to examine and read the sacred and secular books one has to know the rules for the eightfold declension. If one does not understand these, one cannot know the meaning and arrangement of the text.

1. *puruṣaḥ*, the case of direct indication; for instance, in the sentence ‘The man cut down the tree,’ this case points directly to that man [nominative].
2. *puruṣam*, the case indicating that to which something happens. As in the sentence ‘The tree that is cut’ [accusative].

<sup>42</sup>But cf. below, on *Chos-grub*, and van Gulik on this problem, the latter, who, in describing the *Siddham* system of writing, cannot hide his depreciation of Chinese intellectual culture that greatly appreciated Indian calligraphy, but not at all Sanskrit grammar, throughout their tradition.

<sup>43</sup>T. 1733, van Gulik’s (1974 [1956], 19–20) translation with some moderations.

3. *puruṣeṇa*, the case indicating the instrument with which something is done. As in the sentence ‘to cut a tree with an axe’ [instrumental].
4. *puruṣāya*, the case indicating for whom something is done. As in ‘to cut a tree for a man’ [dative].
5. *puruṣāt*, the case indicating a causal relation. As in ‘to build a house on behalf of a man’ [ablative].
6. *puruṣasya*, the case indicating possession, as in ‘the slave belongs to the master’ [genitive].
7. *puruṣe*, the case indicating staying where. As in ‘the guest stays where the host is’ [locative].<sup>44</sup>

Though lexical exercises are mostly emphasized, grammatical manuals still appear also in the Tibetan tradition with time. As says Pieter C. Verhagen:

There are no Tibetan translations of Sanskrit grammatical treatises known to us that can be dated to the first period of translation activities. [...] Nevertheless, we must assume that the Tibetan translators and linguists occupied themselves with Sanskrit grammar to a certain extent in this earliest period of translation. Evidence of this can be found in the Tibetan canon; for instance, in treatises on certain aspects of Sanskrit grammar attributed to Lce-khyi-'brug, an eighth or ninth-century Tibetan translator, [...].<sup>45</sup>

However, if the historicity of Thonmi Sambhoṭa is accepted, grammatical works built on Sanskrit grammatical theory were produced for Tibetan translators in the beginning of the import of Buddhism to Tibet, concerning not only lexicography, but also phonetics—in the sense of syllabaries ordered according to Indian principles—as well as the eightfold Pāṇinian system represented by Tibetan syntactical particles. In the Dunhuang materials, another grammatical work from the early ninth century, a bilingual Tibetan-Chinese treatment of the mentioned eight categories, namely, the '*Jug pa'i sgra brgyad bstan pa tshig le'ur byas pa*' appeared about the time of the *sGra sbyor*. Probably the Tibetan version was based on a Chinese version, and was translated or authored by the Tibetan scholar Chos-grub, also 'Gos Chos-grub, carrying even the Chinese version of his name, 法成 Fǎchéng—indeed indicating Tibetan-Chinese contacts.<sup>46</sup> Analyses of verbs did not attract that much attention in the early period, though, at least for Tibetan, there was a good understanding of Sanskrit

<sup>44</sup>In the following, Fāzāng's grammatical note explains vocative as the eight category, and then gender and number. T. 1733 T. 1733 149a28–b16: 第十八聲者依西國法。若欲尋讀內外典籍。要解聲論八轉聲法。若不明知必不能知文義分齊。一補盧沙此是直指陳聲。如畫像人斫樹指說其人。二補盧私是所作業聲。如所作斫樹。三補盧崽擊是能作具聲。如由斧斫。四補盧沙耶是所為聲。如為人斫。五補盧沙頰是所因聲。如因人造舍等。六補盧殺娑是所屬聲。如奴屬主。七補盧鐵是所依聲。如客依主。瑜伽第二。名上七種為七例句。以是起解大例故。聲論八轉更加補盧沙。是呼召之聲。然此八聲復各三。謂一聲。二女聲。三非男非女聲。此上畫像且約男聲說之。以梵語名丈夫為補盧沙故。又此八聲復各三。謂一聲。二聲身。三多聲身。則為二十四聲。如喚丈夫有二十四女及非男女聲亦各有二十四。總有七十二種聲。以目諸法可以准知。然此方多無此例。

<sup>45</sup>Verhagen (1997, 22, references to sources in note 5, 32–33). See further Verhagen (1994, 47ff. and 2001, 5ff.) for a more detailed treatment of Lce-khyi-'brug. He is mentioned as a translator in *sGra sbyor* §4, see above.

<sup>46</sup>See Verhagen (2001, 29ff.) on this work, bibliography,<sup>47</sup> and another Dunhuang grammatical manuscript without title. Further on “The Formation of Bilingual Tibeto-Chinese Communities [in Dunhuang]” in Takata (2000, 62ff.), with a list of “Tibeto-Chinese Bilingual texts,” Takata (2000, 64–65), though produced probably as late as the tenth century.

tempora and the appertaining verbal inflexion to be reproduced in Tibetan. We also find that in Chinese translations particles would modify the theme characters to represent Sanskrit tempora and modi in a fairly systematic way.

Style and elegance are to some extent topics in the Tibetan tradition, as in the *sGra sbyor*, but for the Chinese translation activities they are very important topics, as they are for the evaluation of the various translators,<sup>48</sup> though the semantics of the created terms are, at least in principle judged as the most important. When to employ loanwords or loan translations is discussed both in the Chinese and the Tibetan traditions, and they are discussed in terms of both semantics and style and usage in the receiving language. We have seen in the *sGra sbyor* how these matters were discussed in creating the Tibetan *chos skad*, their lingua sacra, on the one side, and on the other, the considerations connected with importing Indian concepts into the Chinese language. Thus we find similar discussions in the two traditions, with the Tibetan exercises probably inspired by the Chinese ones—the Chinese had after all been translating Buddhist texts for about 500 years at the time. The processes and discussions are quite similar, though with one major difference. When Buddhism was imported into Chinese, the receiving language was already a great cultural language, carrying great sets of meanings as befitting for a rich literary tradition, while the *chos skad* of Tibet was created more or less from scratch—Tibetan being at the time a much simpler and younger culture than the Chinese. This had the implication that the Tibetans could form their clerical language much as they wanted, as the words employed did not already have such broad fields of meaning as the already existing Chinese vocabulary of religion, science and philosophy. The discussions on how to create technical terms included a discussion on the connotations of words in Chinese already in place, while this was not a topic in the Tibetan discussions, even though good usage was also discussed there.

In conclusion, one may propose that the Chinese attempted to a certain extent to establish standards for their 1000-year-long translation project, but it remained mostly based on individual initiatives, notwithstanding the attempts made by the mentioned authors. The Tibetans were much more successful in systematically standardizing their imported Buddhist terminology. Even though the terminology underwent changes, implemented on a broader scale, it carried authority in the more homogenous Buddhist culture of Tibet. The cases may serve as models of translation projects to understand to what extent they are a systematic undertaking with support of strong organizational and scholarly authorities, or, if they are the result of individual and more arbitrary initiatives. In both cases the translation processes were connected with important political events, and these were mirrored in the linguistic changes which the initiatives entailed. In our argument we have not taken a stand on which is the “best” way of moving a set of concepts into another language culture, and implementing it as a knowledge regime. However, the creation of standards and translation equivalents is a controlled process that serves any political project, while the freedom of translation, where standardization is “immanent” and not collectively and consciously agreed upon by a politically backed process, may better serve cultural communication, being more dependent on the imagination and creativity of the individual translator. Such individual translation is characteristic of modern translation practices, where the sum of translators’ arbitrariness creates a multiplicity of the vocabulary—notwithstanding a national language standard—that enriches languages more than standardized procedures.

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<sup>48</sup>See Cheung (2006: *passim*).

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