On the Tibetan translation of Dharmakīrti’s Pramāṇaviniścaya—Attempting to retrieve rNgoṅ Blıо ldan shes rab’s original translation*

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Introduction

The contribution of rNgoṅ Blıо ldan shes rab (1059—1109) (hereafter: rNgoṅ Lo) to the developments of Buddhist scholarship in general at the beginning of the Later Diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet (phyi dar) is a highly significant one. In the field of epistemology in particular rNgoṅ Lo’s translations and commentarial works constituted the corner stones for the emergence of a leading tradition of Tibetan tshad ma at the monastery of gSang phu Nevu thog.1

Tibetan epistemologists in rNgoṅ Lo’s time and the generations that followed up to the thirteenth century used the Pramāṇaviniścaya (PVin) by Dharmakīrti (7th c. or 6th c. according to Krasser 2012) as their main source.2 The translation of this text preserved in the Tibetan canon was carried out by rNgoṅ Lo, Parahitabhadra and anonymous “others” while rNgoṅ Lo was residing in Kashmir between 1076 and 1093. The same team also translated the Pramāṇaviniścayaṭṭhāṇa by Dharmottara (8th c.) (PVinṬ).3 A concurrent translation of the PVin existed of which we find traces in the citations of the PVin in
Jñānaśrībhadra’s commentary, which dates from the 11th c. The way the PVīṇ is translated in these citations is very different from the canonical translation. According to a source this translation was, like the translation of Jñānaśrībhadra’s own commentary, the deed of Jñānaśrībhadra himself together with Khyung po Chos kyi brtson vgros. More research will be necessary to ascertain whether it had any impact.

rNgoṅ Lo’s Tibetan translation of the PVīṇ and PVīṇT became the original by proxy for most Tibetan thinkers who did not rely on the Sanskrit version of the text. Modern scholars, for lack of another way, also relied on this Tibetan translation for the study of this fundamental source until the fortunate surfacing of Sanskrit manuscripts of these texts. The availability of the Sanskrit version of the PVīṇ and PVīṇT now enables a detailed comparison with the Tibetan translation. While this comparison confirms the high quality of rNgoṅ Lo’s translation, it also discloses a number of differences. In a sequel to this paper, I discuss the factors responsible for these differences, highlighting among other things the significant input of the translator as an interpreter. The present paper focuses on preliminary methodological issues pertaining to the comparison of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions. We must indeed first clearly determine what we are comparing before we can draw any conclusion on the work of the translator. In the first part of this paper, I review the extant material and show that the “ideal comparands” are not available to us. In the second part, I attempt to retrieve some of rNgoṅ Lo’s original translation by relying on newly recovered Tibetan commentaries on the PVīṇ.

Although this discussion concentrates on rNgoṅ Lo’s translation of the PVīṇ and PVīṇT, I trust that the questions raised in both parts of the paper are similarly applicable to a broader corpus and can contribute to our understanding of commentarial techniques and issues linked with text transmission on a larger scale.

1. What are we comparing?

Ideally, a comparison of the original Sanskrit text and the Tibetan translation aimed at assessing the translator’s contribution should take as comparands (1) the Sanskrit text in the version as it was known to the translator and (2) the Tibetan text as it was established by the translator. In the present case (as for most texts in the context considered) this turns out to be problematic.

(i) The Sanskrit text

PVīṇ

The Sanskrit material of the PVīṇ currently at our disposal consists of two complete and three incomplete manuscripts, plus a folio from a sixth manuscript. Features of this material such as recognizable typical scribal mistakes, notably eye-skip errors, indicate that none of these manuscripts qualify as what I call a first-generation manuscript, that is, either an autograph by Dharmakīrti himself, or an exemplar of the work written down under Dharmakīrti’s dictation. The absence of a first-generation manuscript is not excessively problematic for our purpose. Indeed, it is likely that rNgoṅ Lo, who lived
several centuries after Dharmakirti, did not have such material at his disposal either but, like us, had access to a later copy. Which version of the text did he rely on? How similar was it to the Sanskrit versions available to us?

The manuscripts of the PVin at our disposal suggest that the text was well preserved. Once scribal mistakes have been excluded, most of the remaining variants between them do not involve a significant change of meaning – the available Tibetan translation can in these cases indifferently reflect either one or the other Sanskrit reading.

At the risk of anticipating our conclusions pertaining to the suitable comparand for the Tibetan version, we can observe an overall correspondence of the Tibetan translation preserved in the canon with the Sanskrit version of the text in these manuscripts. This indicates that rNgog Lo’s Sanskrit source was not exceedingly different. There are no notable additions, lacks or changes in the location of extended portions of text. The variations (to be investigated in my forthcoming paper) are all local, usually restricted to a single word.

Could rNgog Lo’s source have been one of the manuscripts available to us? The Tibetan translation preserved in the canon does not side unilaterally with any of our five later-generation manuscripts taken individually. And among the variants, there are separative readings that hint at the translator’s reliance on a version of the text that is different from these five.

But we cannot simply assume that the Sanskrit comparand, rNgog Lo’s source, is a later-generation copy different from ours. Indeed, we lack information not only on the sources, but also on the actual process of translation involved. We do not know whether rNgog Lo and his team relied on one or several versions of the text, nor whether their source was written or memorized, or a combination of both. Further, we do not know what their “editorial policy” was: how did they proceed in the event of illegible portions, scribal or mnemonic corruptions, variants, etc.? What amount of emendations did they apply before proceeding to translate? Assuming that Parahitabhadra and rNgog Lo were accomplished thinkers, a likely hypothesis would be that they made informed choices and corrected whatever material was at their disposal when they felt it was necessary. From this angle, even part of the separative readings mentioned above may be viewed as the product of expert editorial work based on faulty manuscripts.

PVinT

If we look for an ideal comparand for the PVinT, we meet with the same issues but this time on two levels:

First, we lack information about Dharmottara’s source and editorial policy when he composed his commentary. A single (incomplete) manuscript of the PVinT is currently available, which bears the mark of being a copy (numerous scribal mistakes of all kinds attest to this). Comparing this version with the extant manuscripts of the PVin, we can see that Dharmottara includes words and expressions from the PVin in three different ways: (i) explicit quotations with a lexical mark (followed by iti); (ii) explicit quotations without a
lexical mark (when explaining a word by giving a synonym; in such a case, the Tibetan has the mark te/ste/de); (iii) embedding words in his explanation.

The first type amounts to a verbatim citation of the source text. The same is true for the second type but only the root of the word is representative of the source text because it is often part of an expression or compound that is being explained. The third type is only recognizable when one refers to the source text. In this regard the Tibetan might be misleading due to its lack of certain nuances; thus an identical expression in the source text and in the commentary in Tibetan does not necessarily indicate that the Sanskrit versions of the PVin and PVinT have matching expressions.

Example:

Source text: PVinSkt 1,2-3 (prose passage on PVin 3.1ab); PVinT D18747–b1; P285a7–813

| yathaiva hi svayam trirāpāl īṅgāl īṅgini jīrāṇam utpannam, tathā paratra īṅgijātiņotpāpādyaiśaya trirāpalingākhyāṇam parārtham anumāṇam | ji ltar rang nyid tshul gsum pavi rtags las rtags can la (P las) shes pa skyes pa kha na ltar gzhan la rtags can gyi shes pa bskyed pa vdod pas tshul gsum pavi rtags (P rtags) ston par byed pa ni gzhan gyi don gyi rjes su dpag pa ste /

Dharmottara's commentary: PVinTSkt 1b4–6 (reading of the manuscript); PVinT D2a1–3; P2br–3

I use the following marking:

**Explicit quotations with a mark**

**Explicit quotations without a mark**

**Embedded words from the PVin**

| yathaiva jītṛ / | ji ltar rang nyid ces smos te /
|---|---|
| yathaiva yenaivārthakrameṇa trirāpāt vr̥ti rtāpāṇi yasya tasml īṅgini parokṣe 'rthe ātmano jīrāṇam utpannam tathā tenaivārthakrameṇa paratra parasantitē īṅgino 'rthasya ya jīrāṇam tasyotpāpādyaiśaya trirāpalingāya yat ākhyāṇam prakāśanam tat parārtham anumāṇam | jīltar te don gyi tshul44 gang gis tshul gsum pa ste / tshul gsum gang la yod pavi rtags de las rtags can lko tu gyur pa'i don la bdag nyid shes pa bsckeyd pa de kha na ltar te / don gyi rim pa de nyid khis gzhan la ste rgyud gzhan dag la rtags can gyi don gyi shes pa gang yin pa de bsckeyd par vdod pas tshul gsum pavi rtags ston par byed pa ste / gsal bar byed pa gang yin pa de ni gzhan gyi don gyi rjes su dpag pa yin no /

The examination of explicit quotations for the third chapter did not reveal significant differences with the text of the PVin based on our manuscripts. When the two complete manuscripts showed divergent readings, our manuscript of Dharmottara's text supported each of them against the other in equivalent proportions. Dharmottara's source thus did not appear to have sided unilaterally with one of the versions of the PVin at our disposal. It may be that Dharmottara had access to another version, or that he relied on several versions and chose from the variants on a case-to-case basis.

On the second level, we meet again with the question of the translators' source when
translating the PVinT. If rNgog Lo’s team relied on a single manuscript, it was probably not the one at our disposal. Indeed we can point out several separative cases that are more conclusive than in the case of the PVin. Notably, the canonical versions of the PVinT (so far D and P have been consulted) lack a translation for phrases present in our Sanskrit exemplar. Since these phrases are sometimes quite long and such lacks are not rare, I would exclude the possibility that all these omissions are the result of scribal oversights. Conversely, there are sentences in Tibetan where our Sanskrit exemplar does not have any equivalent. Further study of the PVinT will show whether some of them could be glosses by rNgog Lo himself or by a revisor, or notes by a reader included by a copyist. But there are cases that hint to the existence of an alternative Sanskrit source where these sentences are present. Other cases suggest another manuscript with a variant reading. But as in the case of the translation of the PVin, it is possible that the translators used several sources and chose from one or the other or adopted an emended version on a case-to-case basis. An additional question concerns their editorial policy when their version(s) of the PVinT presented a variant with their version(s) of the PVin.

(2) The Tibetan text

When modern scholars speak of rNgog Lo’s Tibetan translation of the PVin or the PVinT, they usually refer to the version of these texts that was preserved in the canonical bsTan vgyur collections of sNar thang, sDe dge, Co ne or Peking, or the compilation (dpe sdur ma) of these four recently published in Beijing (1994–2008: krung govi bod rig pa’i dpe skrun khang). Paul Harrison summarizes the constitution of the bsTan vgyur collections as follows:

“The transmission of the bsTan vgyur which was also compiled at the beginning of the fourteenth century at sNar thang has been considerably less complicated. To the best of my knowledge, there are five complete editions in existence, all of which apparently go back to Bu ston’s substantial revision of the Old sNar thang bsTan vgyur at Zha lu in 1334. The woodblock prints made in Peking (1724) and sNar thang (1741–1742) are both based on the second enlarged copy of Bu ston’s edition made in 1688 at vPhying ba sTag rtse by the regent Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho. This consisted of 224 volumes, and included over 200 texts translated or discovered since Bu ston’s time [...]. There is also a Golden Manuscript bsTan vgyur, recently published in Beijing, which is possibly an offspring of the 1724 Peking print. On the other hand, the sDe dge woodblock edition of the bsTan vgyur (1737–1744) was compiled using a number of manuscripts, some if not all of which were derived from the Zha lu edition […], but it preserves an earlier stage in the development of the tradition: even though it was subsequently enlarged from 209 to 214 volumes, it contains far fewer texts than the Peking or sNar thang prints. The Co ne edition (1753–1773) was based on the sDe dge; complete in 209 volumes, it lacks the later additions. To these must be added the two incomplete editions made at Urga or Ulan Bator (1937) and Wa ra (ca. 1945), both of which are also based on sDe dge.”

All the canonical versions are the result of a complex process of text transmission,
On the Tibetan translation of Dharmakirti’s Pramāñaviniścaya—Attempting to retrieve...

compile and editorial work, and the earliest canonical collection was completed two and a half centuries after rNgog Lo’s translation. The canonical versions of the PVin and PVinT are thus not representative of a “first-generation translation”, that is, the Tibetan text as it was established by rNgog Lo in Kashmir, or even of the text established by rNgog Lo after subsequent revision of the initial translation.

Old individual manuscripts of the text might bring us a step closer to the original translation. But if they are copies, one must reckon with scribal mistakes, such as omissions or substitution of terms, mistakes that are not automatically identifiable as corruptions of the text being copied (in the way typos and dittos are). In addition, whether their colophon says so or not, these old versions may involve some editorial input and are thus not necessarily mere copies of the original translation.

To summarize, our ideal Sanskrit comparand, the translator’s source, might not be a unique manuscript — and if it is, it is not available to us at present — but a kind of “critical edition” to which we do not have direct access. And our ideal Tibetan comparand is also not available to us; we only have access to later-generation material that does not result from a vertical transmission by way of successive copies of the first-generation translation. However there may be some hope of getting closer to rNgog Lo’s original version.

2. Attempting to retrieve the first-generation translation of the PVin

The surfacing of rNgog Lo’s commentarial work on the PVin, the dKav gnas, appears to offer a promising way to palliate, at least to a certain point, the lack of an integral first-generation exemplar of the translation. Indeed, as can be expected in a commentary, rNgog Lo frequently quotes words from the PVin in this work. It makes sense to surmise that he is citing the Tibetan version according to the translation that he himself produced. Other Tibetan commentaries on the PVin by authors linked to the monastery of gSang phu (of which rNgog Lo was the second abbot) are also of interest in this regard, because it is quite likely that their authors knew rNgog Lo’s translation.

In order to assess the contribution this newly recovered material can make to retrieving rNgog Lo’s first-generation translation, I have collected all the explicit quotations of words from PVin 3 in rNgog Lo’s dKav gnas (a selective commentary on the PVin), Phya pa’s vOd zer (an extensive commentary on the PVin) and bsDus don (a synoptic table of the PVin), and gTsang nag pa’s bsDus pa (an extensive commentary on the PVin). I have then confronted them with the reading found in the D and P bsTan vgyur.

2.1 Words cited as “markers”

A first observation is that the majority of the explicit quotations from PVin 3 in these works have the specific function of being a “marker”. Namely, they point to a specific sentence or paragraph in the source text by way of indicating its first (sometimes also last) words. For example, this would amount to referring to §2 of the present paper by saying “[In the paragraph starting with the words] ‘The surfacing.’” If not indicated explicitly, the
end of the passage that is pointed to can be understood implicitly in view of the content of the explanation or can be inferred by the quotation of the next marker, especially when the commentary bears on the totality of the source text. In the dKav gnas, only parts of the PVin are explained. But Phya pa's bsDus don carries out a full hierarchical organization of the PVin: the text is divided into more than 1200 portions (sometimes of the length of one sentence or less), and each of them is referred to by such a marker.21

The use of quotations as markers has a negative and a positive consequence for our purpose:

The negative aspect is that the words cited in this way provide us with an extremely partial access to the original translation (only one word per subdivision). Further, the words cited in this aim instantiate parts of the text that are in most cases far from being crucial. Indeed, countless paragraphs start with “then”, “therefore”, or “in this regard” (de nas, devi phyir, de la...).

On a more optimistic note, these markers imply the existence of a specific version of the translation shared by the author of the commentary and his intended readership. Otherwise indeed a reader would not be able to figure out which division of the text is being explained — it would be like trying to locate a chapter in a book by referring to the page numbers in the table of contents of this book in a different edition. It is thus also likely that the author was careful to accurately reproduce the words cited. While the difference between “here” (vdi la) and “there” (de la) might not matter much for the understanding of a passage, such a difference does matter when the expression is cited as a marker. This remark, however, holds true only for the very first word cited. In the (less frequent) case of longer expressions used as markers, the author of the commentary could afford to be less careful with the subsequent words because they are no longer decisive for identifying the passage being discussed.

A variation of markers given in different commentaries that discuss the same topic can be explained in various ways: commentators may have divided the root text in different ways; they may have adopted the same divisions of the root text but relied on translations in which these particular words only vary; or they may have relied on completely different translations. Yet another possibility, which as we will see below is frequently met with, is that the variation may have been caused by a careless copyist.

### 2.2 Classification of variants

My comparative analysis of all the markers collected from the texts mentioned above has not revealed cases that indicate the use of a substantially dissimilar translation in which the whole syntax of the sentence would be different. There is an overall correspondence also in the way these authors divide the root text. The variants of markers and other citations of words of the PVin due to the translation can be classified in the following categories:

#### 2.2.1 Variants due to corruption

Most variants can be identified as the result of a corrupt transmission of the text.
Such mistakes are well known by scholars who rely on the canonical versions. The other texts considered here are all extant as single manuscripts with the exception of the dKav gnas, for which there are two manuscripts and a modern edition based on one of them. All these texts bear the stigmata of the copying process. Copying mistakes also affect citations, including markers. For the latter I am more prone to attribute these mistakes to scribes and copyists than to postulate carelessness on the part of the author for the reason indicated in 2.1.

The devil’s advocate may ask how, apart from grammatically or orthographically incorrect Tibetan expressions, one may safely classify a variant as a copying mistake and not as the result of a translation based on a different Sanskrit version. The hypothesis that the Sanskrit text of the PVin was well preserved in the course of its transmission, confidence in the competence of the translator together with a dose of good judgment and editorial expertise allows one to make such a decision with a safe degree of certainty in the majority of cases. Here are some examples:

(a) Faulty readings in the dKav gnas

There are numerous cases where a copying mistake affects only one of the two manuscripts while the other retains a correct reading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dKav gnas 380,4–5; Ms A 93a6</th>
<th>rgyu las vbras bu btags pavi phyir ro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas Ms B 104a3</td>
<td>rgyu la vbras bu btags pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reading of Ms B is supported by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 1,3–4</td>
<td>kāraṇe kāryopacārāt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 143b7</td>
<td>rgyu la vbras bu btags pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D187b1; P285a8</td>
<td>rgyu la vbras bu btags (P brtags) pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The confusion of la and las is a frequent scribal mistake.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dKav gnas 437,12; Ms A 106b3</th>
<th>don rnam par dgag par mi nus pavi phyir ro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas Ms B 118b3</td>
<td>don rnam la dgag par mi nus pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reading of Ms B is supported by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 35,5</td>
<td>'rtheśv aśakyapratiśedhatvād</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 171a1</td>
<td>don rnam la dgag par mi nus pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D198b4; P296b2</td>
<td>don rnam la dgag par mi nus pavi phyir ro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mistake can be explained by a resemblance of the characters involved in cursive script.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The modern edition itself is not exempt of copying mistakes. For instance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dKav gnas 401,6</th>
<th>de ni ji ltar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas Ms A 98a5</td>
<td>da ni ji ltar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reading of Ms A is supported by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 12,1</td>
<td>katham idānīm aśrāyamānah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas Ms B 108b7</td>
<td>da ni ji ltar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Faulty readings in the vOd zer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 154a2</td>
<td>da ni ji ltar ma thos na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D190b4; P288b3</td>
<td>da ni ji ltar ma thos na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 187b1</td>
<td>de ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 82,10</td>
<td>tatra hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 491,13; bsDus pa 198a5; PVinT D213a4; P319b7</td>
<td>de la ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission of la, or copying mistake of der.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 186a7</td>
<td>vdi gang zhig mi mthun phyogs su gtogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 78,1</td>
<td>kam punar atra bhavān vipakṣaṁ prayeti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bsDus pa 197b5</td>
<td>vdir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D211b7; P309b2</td>
<td>vdir gang zhig mi mthun pavi phyogs su gtogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying mistake of vdir</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (c) Faulty readings in the bsDus don |  |
| bsDus don 12a4 | de ci |
| but |  |
| PVinSkt 102,6 | tat kim idāntīṁ pakṣo 'pi vipakṣaḥ |
| vOd zer 191a5 | de ci da ni phyogs kyang |
| PVinT D218b4; P316b5 | de ci da ni phyogs kyang |
| Omission of da |  |
| bsDus don 12a4 | gang la skyon |
| but |  |
| PVinSkt 102,8–9 | na ca hetoh sambandhopadarśanakāle pakṣādivikalpo 'sti, yato 'yam dosah syāt |
| vOd zer 191a8 | gang las skyon vdir vgyur ba |
| bsDus pa 202a8 | gang las |
| PVinT D218b7; P316b6 | gang las skyon vdir vgyur ga gan tshigs kyi vbrel pa ston pavi dus na phyogs la sogs pavi rnam par bzhag pa yod pa ma yin no |
| Confusion of la and las. |  |

| (d) Faulty readings in the bsDus pa |  |
| bsDus pa 206a4 | dang ni |
| but |  |
| PVinSkt 123,11 | kim idāntīṁ nairāmyād |
On the Tibetan translation of Dharmakirti’s Pramāṇaviniścaya—Attempting to retrieve...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PVinT D225b5; P332b4</th>
<th>da ni bdag med pa las</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possibly confusion of a tsheg for a final -ng.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bsDus pa 166b1</td>
<td>yid pavi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 3,8</td>
<td>san khalv apy arthah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D188a2; P286a2</td>
<td>yod pavi don ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here the scribal mistake can be explained by the occurrence of the expression blo yid spyod las earlier in the sentence in the bsDus pa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bsDus pa 201a2</td>
<td>de rang yang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 92,10</td>
<td>tatrāpi hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D215b7; P313b3</td>
<td>der yang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mistake can possibly be explained by a confusion of a tsheg with ra or -ng and the proximity of the expression gzhan dag.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e) Faulty readings in the canon

The availability of these earlier texts, together with that of the Sanskrit version, offers strong support to correcting faulty readings in the canon.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PVinT D193a2; P291a2</th>
<th>devi phyir chos vgav zhig kho na</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 18,9</td>
<td>tasmāt kevala eva dharma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 480,21–481,1</td>
<td>rnam nges vdi nyid / devi phyir chos vbav zhig kho na...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D209a3; P306b5</td>
<td>don de ni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 68,8</td>
<td>na ca sa evārthah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 474,19</td>
<td>don de nyid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bsDus don</td>
<td>don de nyid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.2 Minor variations

A number of other variations do not count as significant variants: they consist of fluctuations of orthography and the alternative use of the abbreviated or full form of some expressions, for instance rjes dpag/rjes su dpag pa, gnod bya/gnod par bya ba, bsgrub bya/bsgrub par bya ba, etc. The variant rtog pa/rtogs pa is a borderline case. Indeed, in twelfth-century manuscripts the orthography for the Tibetan word that corresponds to vikalpa or kalpanā is also rtogs pa, whereas classical Tibetan distinguishes between rtog pa (equivalent to vikalpa, kalpanā, etc., negatively con noted as mistaken) and rtogs pa (pratipatti, adhigama, etc., positively con noted as a correct understanding).
2.2.3 Variants indicative of revisions

The overall correspondence of divisions of the source text, of the markers and other types of citations of the PVin in the various commentaries considered supports the hypothesis that their authors relied on the Tibetan translation prepared by rNgog Lo (or on a version deriving from it) and followed to a large extent also rNgog Lo’s analysis of the source text.

There is, however, a third category of variants that indicates that rNgog Lo’s translation was modified over time and that these revisions, which remained isolated, occurred at an early stage. Below I list some cases that illustrate this process. Note that the line is often difficult to draw between intentional revision and corruption made by a scribe or even the author himself. Indeed we have no certitude that the authors concerned relied on a written version of the translation and consulted it whenever they cited the source text. If they did not proceed in such a way, the variants considered here can also be explained as the result of an inexact memory of the wording of the translation, to which the authors creatively palliated. In all the examples considered below, there is no reason to postulate that the variation is consecutive to access to a Sanskrit source containing a variant reading.

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[1]</th>
<th>PVinSkt 9.5 (PVin 3.5) paksoktih</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 378,21; Ms A 93a2; Ms B 103b6 (citation of PVin 3.4–5)</td>
<td>phyogs kyi ngag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 151a9</td>
<td>phyogs tshig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to be emended to phyogs kyi tshig for the sake of metrics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| PVinT D190a2; P288a1 | phyogs kyi tshig |
| PVinTT D14a5; P16b6 (Skt. 13a4 paksoktih) | phyogs kyi tshig |

The translation phyogs kyi tshig appears to be influenced by the translation of paksavacana as phyogs kyi tshig in the preceding sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[2]</th>
<th>PVinSkt 70.3 avadhatte</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 475,2; Ms A 115a2; Ms B 129a1</td>
<td>lhur len pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D209b3; P307a5</td>
<td>lhur gnyer ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinTT D99b1; P117b5 (no Skt. available)</td>
<td>lhur gnyer ba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[3]</th>
<th>PVinSkt 18.10 samudāyasya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dKav gnas 481,2; Ms A 116a7; Ms B 130b5</td>
<td>tshogs pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vOd zer 157a6</td>
<td>spyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinT D193a2; P291a2</td>
<td>spyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVinTT D25b4; P29b1 (PVinTSkt 24a1 samudāyayah)</td>
<td>spyi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the sentence that precedes the translation spyi for samudāya (in this context, the combination of subject and property to be proven) is also attested in the canon and in vOd zer 156b8 and in PVinTT D25b2; P29a7 (PVinTSkt 23b5).

The translation de nyid la appears to be inspired by Dharmottara’s interpretation of tattve as padarthatatvasya (90b4), translated dngos po de nyid la (PVinTT D94b1; P112a1).

The choice of the ablative may have been influenced by the translation of the similar verse PV 1.7. This verse reads hetunā samagrena instead of hetunā samarthena but the Sanskrit instrumental is also translated with the ablative rgyu tshogs pa las. In the preceding prose sentence samarthena hetuna is translated as rgyu nus pas in the canon, but as rgyu nus pa las in vOd zer 187a2 and in the citation of the words of the PVin in PVinTT D113a7; P133a5 (PVinTSkt 104b8–105a1).

Purely stylistic variation.

I postulated at the beginning of §2 that rNgog Lo was citing his own translation of the PVin in the dKav gnas. We may wonder, however, whether he did not revise some of
this translation while composing the dKav gnas. This is entirely possible.23 In view of the
use of citations as a marker, one should in this case postulate that from this point onward
the revised translation was circulating among his students. But did it fully replace a prior
translation? Did rNgog Lo revise his translation even after composing the dKav gnas?
rNgog Lo’s direct successors (whose works are not available to us) may have relied on the
Kashmirian translation (either because it was the only one or because they chose to ignore
the revisions) or on a revised translation that may be the one attested in the dKav gnas, or
not. The question is even more complicated where later generations of commentators are
concerned. Namely, we cannot establish which version of the translation they knew, but
only which version of the translation they chose.

We can however draw some conclusions from the examples above. The readings
of the citations of the PVin (with the exception of readings corrupted in the course of
the transmission of the text), whether they are identical with the translation produced
in Kashmir or a slightly modified version of the latter, are witnesses to rNgog Lo’s first-
generation translation. On the other hand, readings found in other early commentaries
that postdate rNgog Lo and in the canonical translation, unless confirmed by their
occurrence in the dKav gnas, cannot be assumed to match the first-generation translation (even though they probably do in most cases). Revisions or involuntary modifications
of the first-generation translation indeed took place in the course of the transmission of the
PVin. Examples [1] and [3] suggest revisions that took place before or in Phya pa’s time,
examples [4], [5] and [6] suggest revisions postdating Phya pa. The nature and apparent
reasons for these changes vary: they can be purely stylistic ([6]), terminological ([1], [2] and
[3]) or reflect a different understanding of the sentence ([7]).24

2.3. The translation of the PVinT

The PVin and the PVinT were translated by the same team, and their translation
appears to have been carried out more or less simultaneously. The translation of the PVinT
presupposes an established translation of the PVin. This can be observed in particular in
the translation of passages of the PVinT in which Dharmottara cites words from the PVin
as markers. In such cases, rNgog Lo does not translate the cited words themselves, but
presents the first words of the relevant section in the Tibetan translation of the PVin.

For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source text</th>
<th>PVinT P286a5; D188a5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PVinSkt 4,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yas tu paraparikalpitaiḥ</td>
<td>g赞同 gyis kun btags (P btags) pas thal ba bsgrub pa... gang yin pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prasangah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dharmottara’s commentary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PVinSkt 5b7</th>
<th>PVinTT P76b2; D6b1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yas tv iti...</td>
<td>g赞同 gyis zhes smos so //</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conversely, the translation of the PVin relies on an understanding of the text
influenced by the PVinT, and its translation reflects the translation of the PVinT. A
pertinent instance of this influence can be found when difficult terms of the PVin are rendered in the translation with a Tibetan word that actually corresponds to the translation of the synonym for the difficult term presented in the PVin (I develop this aspect in Hugon forthcoming).

This joint translation ensures a noticeable regularity in the respective Tibetan versions. Notably, words of the PVin quoted by Dharmottara (either as explicit or implicit quotations) and words embedded in his commentary are usually translated in the same way as they are in the translation of the PVin found in the canon (see, for example, the passage in §1 (i) PVinT, and examples [i] and [j] in §2.2.3).

Unfortunately, it is not possible to retrieve parts of the original translation of the PVinT in the way indicated for the PVin. Indeed, there are no early Tibetan commentaries on the PVinT itself, nor synaptic tables akin to Phya pa's bsDus don on the PVin. rNgog Lo himself more frequently resorts to paraphrase than citation when referring to Dharmottara's interpretation in the dKav gnas. This prevents us from clarifying what happened in the text transmission of the translation of the PVinT. It is likely that it underwent revisions and modifications as well. But, in the case of citation of the PVin in the PVinT, were these carried out simultaneously when the translation of the PVin was modified? This question remains in suspense for now: Cases where the canonical reading of the PVinT concords with the canonical reading of the PVin but differs from earlier readings of the PVin (such as [i] and [j]) could suggest a simultaneous revision. But an alternative scenario could be that the first-generation translations of the PVinT had for some reason a different translation than in the PVin, and that the revision of the PVin consisted in adopting the translation found in the PVinT. But there are also cases where the translation of the PVinT agrees with citations of the PVin in early commentaries but differs from the canonical translation of the PVin (for instance [6] and the remark in [5]). This would indicate that both translations were initially identical and only the PVin was revised.25

**Conclusion**

Following our inquiry into the available materials, we can establish a methodology for a pertinent comparison of the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the PVin aiming at highlighting rNgog Lo's technique and style of translation. Since only a very small percentage of the first-generation translation of the PVin can be retrieved from the dKav gnas, we must rely on the canonical reading for the remaining part. Since the translation varies in the different canonical versions, this implies adopting a critical reading based on this material. In doing so, we must keep in mind that the canonical translations are not necessarily representative of the first-generation translation; alternative readings in other early Tibetan commentaries may be closer to the original translation but may also be the product of yet an earlier revision. This situation is not an obstacle to proceed with the comparison in view of the large percentage of matching translations between the dKav
gnas and the canonical version. Still, implicit or explicit caution is in order when adopting (an edited version of) the canonical translation as a comparand.

There is not much we can do about the absence of an ideal Sanskrit comparand. Our comparison will thus be based on the reading of the available Sanskrit manuscripts. For each case where the Tibetan translation diverges from the Sanskrit or which presents an unexpected translation, this will raise the question of whether an alternative Sanskrit reading must be postulated as rNgog Lo’s source.

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Jñ


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PVin 3, PVinSkt


PVinT


PVinSkt

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PVinTT


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dKav gnas


bKav gdamgs gsung vbum


bsDus don

Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge, Tshad ma rnam par nges pavi bs dus don, in bKav gdamgs gsung vbum, vol. 8, 3-23.

bsDus pa

gTsang nag pa bsTson vgrus seng ge, Tshad ma rnam par nges pavi ti ka legs bshad bs dus pa. Kyoto, 1980: Rinsen Book Co (Otani University Tibetan Works Series, Volume II).

vOd zer

Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge, Tshad ma rnam par nges pavi vgrel bshad yi ge dang rigs pavi gnad la vjug pavi shes rab kyi vod zer. bKav gdamgs gsung vbum, vol. 8, 35-427.
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Harrison 1996

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Pascale Hugon, “On the Sanskrit and Tibetan Versions of the Pramāṇaviniścaya. A look into the translator’s workshop of rNgog Blo ldan shes rab,” in the Proceedings of the Panel on Sanskrit manuscripts held at the 5th Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies, China Tibetology Research Center, Beijing, China (August 1-5, 2012).

Kramer 2007

Krasser 2012

Steinkellner 1988

Tillemans 2000

van der Kuijp 1989

van der Kuijp 1993
Leonard van der Kuijp, “Two Mongol Xylographs (Hor Par Ma) of the Tibetan Text of Sa skya Paṇḍita’s Work on Buddhist Logic and Epistemology,” Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 16.2, 279-298.

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Leonard van der Kuijp, “A Treatise on Buddhist Epistemology and Logic Attributed to Klong chen Rab 'byams pa (1308–1364) and Its Place in Indo-Tibetan Intellectual History,” Journal of Indian Philosophy 31, 381–437.

Notes:

1. * The work on this paper has been generously supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) in the context of the FWF-Project P23422-GI5 “Early bKav gdams pa scholasticism”. This paper elaborates on the results presented at the Panel on Sanskrit Manuscripts at the Fifth Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies held at the China Tibetology Research Center, Beijing, China, from August 1-5, 2013. I am grateful to the participants of the panel for their useful feedback. Thank you also to Katharine Apostle for reviewing my English.

On rNgog Lo’s life and works see Kramer 2007.


3. This attribution is made in the colophon of the canonical versions (cf. Kramer 2007: 63 and 66). rNgog Lo’s biography by Gro lung pa confirms this information (ibid., p. 103–104). The colophon groups the “others” with Parahitabhadra (paññita gzhban la phan pa bzang po la sogs pa dang / bod kyi lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab), suggesting that they were members of the Kashmirian part of the translating team rather than Tibetan scholars or students. With no intention of downplaying the role Parahitabhadra and the anonymous “others” had in this task, I refer for simplicity’s sake to this translation as “rNgog Lo’s translation” throughout the rest of the paper.

4. Van der Kuijp 1989: 19 gives this information based on the Myang yul stod smad bar gsam gyi ngo mtshar gtan gyi legs bshad mkhas pavi ‘jug ngogs, a work questionably attributed to Tāranātha.

5. In this regard I examined in particular the commentary on the PVin by Chu mig pa, who was an abbot of gSang phu in the 13th c. First referred to in van der Kuijp 1993: 295–296, this text has now been published in the bKav gdams gsung vbum, vol. 87, 5–307. Chu mig pa indicates in the colophon of this work that he knew Jñānaśrībhadra’s commentary. My examination of Chu mig pa’s citations of the PVin is yet far from being exhaustive, but the passages I considered hint in the direction of rNgog Lo’s translation rather than that used by Jñānaśrī.


7. On this material see Steinkellner’s introduction to the edition of PVin 1 and 2 and the introduction to the edition of PVin 3 by Hugon and Tomabechi.

8. See Steinkellner’s introduction to PVin 1&2: xxxix and Tomabechi and Hugon’s introduction to PVin 3: xxxiv–xxxvi. Steinkellner (PVin 1&2: xxxix) notably mentions (i) a case in the first chapter where manuscripts ABC share the mistaken reading viṣeṣayajñāna-viṣeṣā (probably due to an eye-skip error), whereas the Tibetan (khyad par gyi shes pa dang khyad par can gyi shes pa khyad par med pa’i phyir) supports the correct reading viṣeṣajñāna-viṣeṣā, and (ii) the presence in the Tibetan of the phrase de dang bral bavo, which cannot be interpreted as a gloss, whereas all the available manuscripts omit *taya rahitam. Steinkellner’s discussion assumes the pertinence of the canonical version of the Tibetan translation as a comparand.

9. In the colophon of some translations revised by rNgog Lo one finds mention of the use of exemplars of the text. For instance, the colophon of the Aṣṭahāṣṭrikā Prajñāpāramitā specifies that rNgog Lo used exemplars of the text from Kashmir and Magadha that were ‘collected’ (bsags) (or maybe one should understand it as ‘collated’) (kha chevi dpe dang yul dbus kyi dpe dum bsag nas gtan la phabs pa) (Kramer 2007: 53–54). The Nyāyabindudātī was revised based on an exemplar from Magadha (ibid., p. 66–67).
On the Tibetan translation of Dharmakirti’s Pramāṇaviniścaya—Attempting to retrieve...

10. In particular Steinkellner’s (i) (see note 8) and possibly the one mentioned by Hugon and Tomabechi (to be discussed in Hugon forthcoming). It is less likely in the case of Steinkellner’s (ii) that the translators would have emended the text without relying on an alternative Sanskrit version.

11. On this topic, see Freschi (forthcoming), where the example of Dharmanottara is discussed as an illustration of a problem that affects the broader context of commentarial literature.

12. In this regard Steinkellner (1988: 106–107) points out the lack of precision that can follow from working with texts exclusively available in Tibetan.

13. “Inference for others is the statement of the triply characterized reason by [a proponent] wishing to generate in [the mind of] another, on the basis of a triply characterized reason, an understanding of that which possesses the reason, [an understanding] just like the understanding of that which possesses the reason which arose in his own [mind] on the basis of the triply characterized reason.” (Adapted from the translation of PSV in Tillemans 2000: 3–4)

14. Note the difference of translation: here don gyi tshul renders arthakrama but in the correlating one finds don gyi rim pa for arthakrama.

15. See the introduction to the edition of PVin 3, p. xxxvii.

16. For example: etad uktam bhavati na vayaṃ brūma ekaṭavyānekatvam avaśyam evan tu brūmo nekaṭavyāptasya sambhave vāyapakasambhava evatayo vāyapakābhāvole <vā> vāyāpabhāva iti (PVinTSkt 8a3-4); so rtas tatsāmārthiyena vāyaptas (PVinTSkt 17b2); dvayoṣ ca bhοjanīyatavātiṣeṣayοḥ pratiṣedhe (PVinTSkt 19a6); asparśatvasya ha anavyo vya(til)ekasahāyab (PVinTSkt 103a3); the expressions gamayan and nāṇyatheti in the Tibetan translation of the sentence hetur vipaśśavāyātīṁ gamayano prakṛtasya sādhasya gamako bhavati nāṇyatheti sēṣaiḥ paksadharmmair ayaṃ arthaḥ kathyaṃ (PVinTSkt 71b5; PVinTT D75b4-5). P89a6-7: phyogs kyi chos vdi rmams kyi ni mi mthun pavi phyogs las ldog pa dang ldan pavi gtan tshigs ni skabs su bab pavi bsgrub bya go bar byed pa yin no zhes bya bya bavi don vdi brjod pa yin no //

17. For instance, the phrase de ltar vgyur gyi zhes bya ba ni grub vgrub gyi/vo // (PVinTT D22a7; P25b7), which refers to evam syāt in PVinSkt 17,4; gcig nram par gcad pa nyid gnas pa yin pavi phyr(ī) mnyan bya nyid go byed du vgyur ro // (PVinTT D71a3).

18. For instance, the translation gal te de ltar yin na zhes bya ba ni the tshom med pavi phyr ro // (PVinTT D10a2; P11b7) for yadi evam iti sandehabhavād iti (PVinSkt 9a6), which suggests that the translator read *sandehabhavād.


20. Van der Kuijp (1994: 1-3) describes, for instance, a 110-folio manuscript of the PVin in cursive script (dbu med) preserved at the Tibetan Library of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing (catalogue no. 004780[1]). A postscript written below the colophon of this manuscript specifies that the text at hand is an edited version of rNgoṅ Lo’s translation. Van der Kuijp identifies the editor—who is referred to as “sTag sde pa” in an interlinear note—as the thirteenth-century sTag sde pa Seng ge rgyal mtshan (1212–1294).


22. On this topic see Hugon 2009a: 6ff.

23. Franco (1997: 287) notably interprets the variations between citations of verses of the PV in Sa skya Paṇḍita’s Rigs gter and in the translation preserved in the canon (for which Sa paṇ is traditionally held responsible) by arguing that “while composing the Rigs gTer he [i.e., Sa paṇ] was not only reading his own translation, but also consulting Dharmakirti’s original again.”

24. This line of inquiry could be extended by looking at other recently surfaced early commentaries on the PVin, such as the early-thirteenth-century commentary by Dar ma dkon mchog (cf. van der Kuijp 2003) and that by Chu mig pa (cf. n. 5 above).

25. There remains the possibility that both were revised in different ways, with the result that the revised translation of the PVinT corresponds to the original translation of the PVin. But I find this scenario unlikely.
# CONTENTS

## China Tibetology

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### The practice and exploration of reform and opening-up in Tibet

**Zhu Xiaoming** / 1

### A Sustainable Mechanism for Wildlife Protection and Consumptive Wildlife Utilization in the Chang Tang Region of Tibet

**Dawa Tsering** / 9

### A Study of the Impact of tourism Development on Women's Status—— a Case Study of Namtso Township

**Tsering Yangzom** / 19

### The Bkav brgyud Sect

**Wang Sen** / 25

### On the Tibetan translation of Dharmakirti’s Pramapradipti’s—Attempting to retrieve rNgog Blo Idan shes rab’s original translation

**Pascale Hugon** / 68

### Notes on the Rūpa Section of the Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā

**Jowita Kramer** / 86

### Comprising of Traditional Medicine in Four Countries of Latin America and Tibetan Medicine in China within the Framework of Traditional Medical Systems

**Kunchok Gyaltsen** / 100