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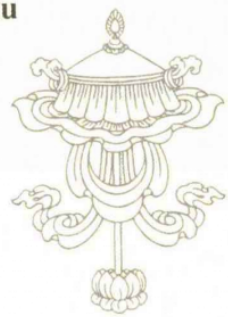
By Raymond E. Robertson



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Editors' Preface

The geographical terms "Northern Buddhism" and "Southern Buddhism" are used to refer to the Buddhist traditions transmitted outside of India. "Northern Buddhism" refers primarily to Buddhism practiced in China, Korea, Japan, Tibet and Mongolia, where the Mahāyāna tradition is followed. "Southern Buddhism" is practiced in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, and follows the Theravāda tradition. Chinese Buddhism, being one of the two main branches of "Northern Buddhism," is a result of the encounter between Buddhism in Central Asia and the Chinese civilization during the first century C.E. This highly evolved form of Buddhist practice was later transmitted to Japan and Korea, where it is known to Western academics as "East Asian Buddhism."

The other main branch of "Northern Buddhism" was transmitted from India to Tibet in the seventh century and again in the tenth century. These are known as the first dissemination (*snga dar*) and the second dissemination (*phyi dar*) respectively. Because of the close relationship of the practice of Buddhism in India and Tibet, the study of Tibetan Buddhism has often been linked to Indian Buddhism. This has given rise to the academic practice known as Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies, which has become one of the most well-developed and successful areas in modern academic Buddhist studies.

There are many reasons that contribute to the success of this discipline. Buddhism originates in India and, needless to say, the

study of Indian Buddhism is the foundation of understanding Buddhism. However, the majority of the Sanskrit Mahāyāna scriptures are not preserved in India because after the thirteenth century, Buddhism became extinct on Indian soil.

The understanding of Indian Buddhism and its history is reliant to a large extent on the Tibetan Canon and other related Tibetan texts which deal with Buddhist doctrines and history. There are 4,569 Buddhist texts found in the Tibetan Canon, including a major portion of the Indian Buddhist works, most particularly the translation of late Mahāyāna scriptures.

The Tibetans developed a literary language that evolved into a tool for precisely translating Buddhist Sanskrit texts. Reflecting the motivation for which this language was developed, this literary language has clear echoes of Sanskrit in terms of grammar and syntax. As early as the ninth century, the Tibetan kings had ordered the monks who were translating Buddhist texts into Tibetan to compile dictionaries and glossaries such as the *sGra sbyor bam gnyis* and the *Bye brag tu rtogs par byed pa chen po*, in order to systematize the translation of Buddhist texts and ensure the accuracy of the translation. Many Indian Buddhist monks also collaborated in these translations when they fled from the Muslim invasions. This further contributes to the quality of the Tibetan translation. As a result, Tibetan has become an essential language for the scholars specializing in Indian Buddhism. Using this language the scholars have attempted to reconstruct the original Sanskrit and helped to interpret the philosophical meaning of the texts. Throughout the history of Tibet, an impressive number of scholars have been produced, such as rNgog lo tsā ba Blo ldan shes rab (1059-1109), Sa skya paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182-1251), Bu ston Rin chen grub (1290-1364), Klong chen

rab 'byams pa (1308-1363), and Tsong kha pa Blo bzang grags pa (1357-1419). Their interpretations of Buddhism exhibit original insights, and the study of their works also helps us in approaching the Indian Buddhist works with fresh vision.

In addition to the rich and profound doctrinal views, a further characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism is the style of tantric practice. The reception, continuity and development of Indian tantrism in Tibetan Buddhism grant the Tibetan culture and society an image of "shamanism" as understood by anthropologists. As well, the tantric practice has also become a landmark of Tibetan Buddhism. Some scholars even suggest that tantric practice is the greatest contribution which the dedicated Tibetan people have given to world civilization. All these qualities provide a firm basis for the need and development of the unique discipline of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist studies in the West. In Western Academe, especially the Oriental Studies in Europe, Tibetan studies was initially treated as a minor area related to Indology and Buddhist studies. Even today, when Tibetan studies has been gradually accepted as an independent discipline, in Europe, America or even in Japan, the majority of Tibetan studies are still considered within the framework of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist studies.

To study Indian Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism as a whole is without doubt an important approach to Buddhist studies. Indo-Tibetan Buddhist studies enjoys a long, vital interest to generations of Buddhist scholars, and it is an area of study that still has the potential for many great discoveries. Having said that, however, the strengths and engrossing findings in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist studies have also overshadowed an equally important area of study — Sino-Tibetan Buddhist studies. Both China and Tibet have a long history of cultural exchange. The origin of Tibetan Buddhism is not limited to Indian Buddhism.

Chinese Buddhism has also cast a tremendous influence on the development of Tibetan Buddhism.

According to Tibet's own historical tradition, Buddhism was transmitted to Tibet when King Srong brtsan sgam po married two Buddhist wives, a princess from China, and another from Nepal. During the period when the Chinese princess resided in Tibet, Chinese monks went to India for their Buddhist training by-passing Tibet. The Chinese missionary monks who went to Tibet also helped with the translation of Buddhist texts. The latter half of the eigth century was the golden age of the united Tibetan kingdom, as well as a golden age for the exchange of Sino-Tibetan Buddhism. A number of Chinese Buddhist texts were translated into Tibetan, and Tibetan texts were also translated into Chinese. There were translators such as Chos grub who excelled in both Chinese and Tibetan. Most importantly, Chan Buddhism also reached Tibet at that time, and was well-received by the Tibetan practitioners; as a result, almost all important early Chinese Chan texts have been translated into Tibetan. Unfortunately, the interaction and dialogue between Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism were virtually halted following the "bSam yas debate" in the late eighth century, and the persecution of Buddhism by King Glang dar ma in the ninth century, coupled with the reconstructing and remaking of the historical tradition of the "bSam yas debate" by historians of the second dissemination; indeed, the shadow of the Chinese "he-shang" (monk) has never entirely disappeared from Tibetan Buddhism. No matter whether it is the rNying ma pa's "Great Perfection" (*rdzogs chen*) or the bKa' brgyud pa's "Great Seal" (*phyag chen*), one cannot completely deny the influence of the Chinese Chan tradition.

Since the early eleventh century, Tibetan Buddhism has been

transmitted to the Chinese community in the Central Eurasian Tangut and Uighur. During the reign of the Yuan dynasty when the Mongols ruled China, Tibetan Buddhism reached China Proper. There were instances when the high-ranking monks of both the Chinese and Tibetan traditions collaborated in the project that launched a comparative study of the translations of Buddhist scriptures. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the emperors were mostly interested in Tibetan Buddhism. Since then until now, to the Chinese people Tibetan Buddhism is still a distinguished tradition foreign to indigenous Chinese Buddhism.

There are complex and intriguing relationships between the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist traditions, and their study cannot really be separated. Yet, modern studies of "East Asian Buddhism" have seldom paid attention to these relationships. Most scholars specializing in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies do not know Chinese, resulting in the situation that Sino-Tibetan Buddhist studies has become a neglected area of research. It should be noted that during the latter half of the last century Sino-Tibetan Buddhism was for a period quite actively studied. This was due to the discovery of the ancient classical Chinese and Tibetan texts of the Dunhuang cave, especially the Chan texts. Paul Demiéville's 1952 work, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, has been praised by academics both in the East and the West as a work that inspires the study of the transmission of Chan Buddhism to Tibet. During the 1970s and 1980s, a number of Japanese scholars, notably Ueyama Daishun, have conducted careful and detailed comparative studies of a great many Chan texts, written in ancient classical Tibetan, among the Dunhuang manuscripts, giving us a clear picture of the history of the transmission of Chan Buddhism in Tibet. Tibetologists and Buddhologists such as Giuseppi Tucci, David Seyfort Ruegg and Samten G. Karmay, *et al.*, have also paid special attention and

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done remarkable studies on the historicity of the "bSam yas debate" and the elements of Chan Buddhism in Tibetan Buddhism. However, this area of study has not received the same degree of interest since the 1990s, and the studies of Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism have again been seen as isolated disciplines.

Indeed, the study of Dunhuang documents concerning Chinese Chan tradition in Tibet is still at its initial stages. Many ancient Chinese texts and Tibetan Chan texts still have not received the attention and systematic study that they deserve. Furthermore, discoveries of ancient Tibetan texts outside the Dunhuang area are equally important, meriting further examination and scholarly treatment. For example, scholars from different parts of the world are united in their studies of the ancient Tibetan texts found in Tabo. Among these texts are more complete manuscripts of Tibetan Chan texts that are similar to their Dunhuang counterparts. Important ancient Tibetan texts, like the *bSam gtan mig sgron* which systematically outlines the view, meditation, conduct, and fruit of the Gradual School, Instantaneous School, Mahāyoga, and Atiyoga, are also awaiting further research by scholars. Not only that, the study of the history of the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism in Central Eurasia and China has not really begun to be researched seriously. The Khara Khoto collection has only recently become publicly available. In this collection we find many Tibetan tantric texts which are crucial for the reconstruction of the history of the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism in Central Eurasia and China during the eleventh to fourteenth centuries. In short, Sino-Tibetan Buddhist studies has only just begun. The rich content makes this discipline potentially as important as Indo-Tibetan Buddhist studies.

Needless to say, the contribution of Sino-Tibetan Buddhist studies does not lie simply in the historical studies of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism. One of the other primary areas of focus is the comparative study of the Chinese Canon and the Tibetan Canon. Many Buddhist texts are extant today because their Chinese and Tibetan translations were collected in these two Canons. Although the numbers of Buddhist scriptures found in the Chinese Canon, 2,920 with some texts translated more than once, are far fewer than the texts found in the Tibetan Canon, mutual benefit is to be gained by studying the two Canons together. For example, the Chinese Canon contains more early Buddhist material, whereas the Tibetan Canon contains more latter texts. As a result, the study of their similarities and differences can help us further understand what is lacking in one or the other tradition.

In addition, the quality of translation found in the Chinese and Tibetan traditions differs greatly. A comparative study of the Chinese and Tibetan translations of Buddhist texts can also help us correct the errors found in the Chinese translation. Compared with the Tibetan translations, the Chinese translations of Buddhist texts are often replete with mistakes. Although there are great translators like Kumārajīva and Xuanzang in the history of Chinese Buddhism, there are also many prominent translators whose translations are of inferior quality. Because of the syntax and grammatical differences between Sanskrit and Chinese, even the translations of Xuanzang, when compared with the Sanskrit originals, sometimes deviate greatly from the original writing. It is also true of those other translators whose works are inferior to Xuanzang's.

The mistakes and incorrectness of these Chinese translations have greatly influenced the way Chinese Buddhists understand

Buddhism, leading throughout the history of Chinese Buddhism to many doctrinal controversies. Moreover, the doctrine of the *tathāgatagarbha* fundamental to many Buddhist traditions, including Chinese Buddhist traditions such as Tiantai, Huayen, Chan and Pure Land as well as Tibetan schools like rNying ma, bKa' brgyud, Sa skya, and Jo nang, has frequently been distorted and criticized because of the misreading of the doctrine in the Chinese translation. What is being criticized, however, is not the doctrine as it is expressed in the Indian texts, but the commentators' own interpretations of the doctrine, as "*dhātuvādā*" or "topical philosophy," based on Chinese terms such as "original enlightenment" and "Buddha-nature." The original face of the doctrine of the *tathāgatagarbha* can only be found amidst the resistant and critical voices through the concerted efforts of scholars engaging themselves in comparative studies of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist texts.

Because of the reasons stated, we advocate and encourage the removal of the invisible boundaries between the study of Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism. What must be emphasized is the equal importance of Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies and Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies. Therefore, the School of Chinese Classics at the Renmin University of China and the Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies Association in North America (Toronto) present this *Monograph Series in Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Studies*, to provide a forum for scholars in the East and the West to help revitalize the study of Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism.

Shen Weirong and Henry C.H. Shiu, *Series Editors*

October 1, 2006

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In acknowledgment and in memory it is necessary to say that the work of preparing these translations would never have been possible had not Hiroshi Sonami, Ngor Thar rtse mKhan Rin po che (1933-1987), taught some Buddhism and Tibetan to the translator in the decade before his passing. Among other texts, we read together Mi pham's commentaries to the *Madhyāntavibhāga* and the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* as well as the *bSam gtan mig sgron* of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes and the *sDe gsum snying po'i don 'grel gnas lugs rin po che'i mdzod ces bya ba'i grel pa* of Klong chen rab 'byams pa. Also grateful thanks are due to Prof. John Makransky, Dr. John Pettit, Dr. Peter Schwieger, Master Tam Shek-wing (rDo rje 'jigs 'bral), Prof. Wing-cheuk Chan, and others for many very helpful suggestions, and to Dr. Henry Shiu for skilful coordination and great patience in bringing all of this together and for undertaking the task of preparing the index. Any expression of indebtedness and gratitude no matter how incomplete as necessitated by bounds of time and space nevertheless must mention the unfailing support and great patience of my wife Incila without which, despite all of the above, this work could never have been completed.

Preface

With this volume, the second of a four volume series on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, we begin the three volumes exclusively dedicated to that work and commentaries to it. The first volume was primarily devoted to the study and translation of the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*.This is because I realized only after a great deal of work on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* that the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*, a work mentioned by Mi pham as the source of some teaching found in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, was in fact the work quoted by the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* in its unique citation of an unnamed *sūtra*. Since the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* is certainly the source of some teaching of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, it appears to be a precursor for Maitreyan Yogācāra, and is interesting in its own right, particularly when considered with its excellent commentary of Kamalaśīla, as a document bearing on the debate concerning sudden and gradual enlightenment in which Kamalaśīla was supposedly a participant advocating the gradualist position.[1] Moreover, Kamalaśīla's commentary is

[1] This famous Indian scholar came to Tibet, and official sources claim he did so to uphold the Indian side of gradual enlightenment against the Chinese side of sudden enlightenment in the famous bSam yas debate held before the Tibetan king. On the important controversy between advocates of sudden and gradual enlightenment, the bSam yas debate, and the role of Kamalaśīla in both the general controversy and the famous debate see in volume one of this work the introduction to the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* where these topics are presented in detail. It seems likely that Kamalaśīla wrote the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭīkā* in the context of the gradual-sudden controversy; indeed, he probably wrote it in Tibet after he wrote the threefold *Bhāvanākrama* that deals with the necessity of a gradual approach and the impossibility of a sudden approach and that cites the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*.

extremely important for the light it sheds on his Madhyamaka position, which perhaps represents the pentacle of the Indian Madhyamaka tradition. I decided, therefore, to translate the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*, with some annotation from Kamalaśīla's commentary, the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭīkā*, as well as some important sections of the latter.

That is why there is included in this work, which is otherwise devoted to the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*, a great deal of material concerning the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*. The original plan was to publish my work on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* accumulated since the late 1970s when I completed a translation of Mi pham's commentary to that work. This was closely followed by a translation of Vasubandhu's commentary. More recently having become aware of Rong ston's commentary, and noting that it had served as the model for Mi pham, I decided to translate it and continue work on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*. I then discovered the commentary by Blo bzang rta dbyangs, which explicitly states that it was written following Rong ston's commentary but according to the teachings of Tsong kha pa and his immediate disciples, and decided to translate it also because then this work on the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga* and its commentaries would contain the original text of Maitreya, the classical commentary of Vasubandhu, the commentary by the Sa skya pa Rong ston, the commentary by the rNying ma pa Mi pham, and the commentary by the dGe lugs pa Blo bzang rta dbyangs, thus giving a good look at the contrast between different approaches to the same text. At that point I had not yet discovered that the *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇī* was the *sūtra* quoted in the *Dharmadharmatāvibhaṅga*. Following Mi pham's identification of the quoted source as the *Kāśyapaparivartanānāmamahāyānasātra*, I had located the

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