

DĪPAṂKARA IN THE TANGUT CONTEXT:  
AN INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEMATIC NATURE  
OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM IN XIXIA

(PART 2)\*

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In the previous part of this paper attempt has been made to reconstruct the Tangut Buddhist context in which the works of Atiśa emerged in the Tangut State during the 12th and early 13th centuries. The following part is directly dealing with currently identified texts attributed to Dīpaṁkaraśrijñāna available in the Tangut versions.

*Key words:* Tangut Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Bka' brgyud, Bka' gdams, Atiśa, doctrinal Buddhism.

### Dīpaṁkaraśrijñāna in the Tangut Sources

Generally, in the Xixia texts known to me, either in Chinese or in Tangut, the name Atiśa appears only once, whereas the name Dīpaṁkara (閏綿蟒狸 ”*tshjiw pja kjaarjar*, i.e. \*Tshipakara) emerges often. In the following, I attempt to position Atiśa against the background of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut State as it was partially presented earlier.

The entry on Dīpaṁkara from “The Praise for the Eighty Five Mahāsiddhas” reads as follows:

善能了達五明理，  
常修自他無二行，  
名號底哪葛囉，  
上師尊處我敬禮

\* Continuation of Kirill Solonin's Dīpaṁkara in the Tangut Context: an Inquiry into the Systematic Nature of Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia (Part 1). *AOH* 68, No. 4, pp. 425–451.







Afterwards, among many of the Dharma gates of the Secret collection, which were explained in Tibet, many did not follow the teaching of Ma-hāyāna and were overly lax; thus Dīpaṁkara collected from the sacred instructions (i.e. āgamas) and tantras and composed this Upadeśa [known as] *The Forty Banners of Emptiness*. The lineage of teachers: Mother Deliverer (*gju džji ŋwe mja* 嶺類敵飛, i.e. Tārā), the second was Dīpaṁkara, the third was Lotsāwa “Precious Parasol (*lj ibju lu tśja wa* 嶺兜達翳, \*寶蓋譯師)”, the fourth was [master] “Emerging from the Conqueror” (*buu ŋwie to mjii?* 嶺剌綬釋, \*勝勢出施 = Rgyal ba ’Byung gnas), the fifth was dhāraṇī master Bero (*bərorsj itow / lhjij* 嶺綬頌/頌), the sixth was [master] Mano (*mjano* 嶺翳) and the seventh were lama Skye med (*ljamja weemji* 嶺翳葬翳) and Lotsāwa Sumpa (嶺絞).

The first holder of the teaching was Tārā (*gju džji ŋwe mja* 嶺類敵飛, \*救渡天母), Atiśa’s tutelary deity; the second was Dīpaṁkara himself. The third person who received the teaching was lotsāwa “Precious Parasol” who can be provisionally identified as lotsāwa Rin chen Bzang po (958–1055; *lj ibju lu tśja wa* 嶺兜達翳, \*寶蓋譯師, “Precious Parasol”, Rin chen gdugs), with whom Atiśa had a lengthy intercourse upon arriving to Tibet; the fourth was \*Dromton (’Brom ston, 1005–1064; *buu ŋwie to mjii?* 嶺剌綬釋, \*勝勢出施, “Emerging from the Conqueror” Rgyal ba’i ’byung gnas); the fifth was lama \*Berośri (\*Berosita/ Berosili; *bərorsj itow/ lhjij* 嶺綬頌/頌; the last character might be read semantically, together with 嶺, then the composite word translate as the “dhāraṇī master”),<sup>7</sup> the sixth was \*Mano (*mjano* 嶺翳, \*’Joyful in the East”); the seventh recipient includes the Lama “Unborn” (Skye med) (*lama weemji* 嶺翳葬翳, \*辣麻無生, Wusheng, whom we tend to identify with famous Tangut translator Dehui) and lotsāwa \*Sumpa 嶺絞 (possibly Lama Sumpa Sangs rgyas),<sup>8</sup> who probably is identical with lama Sumpa (松巴) from the Vajravā-rāhī lineage (part 1).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> One might be inclined to read the first two syllables as the transcription Bero (as in Berotsana/ Vairocana). However, the name of Berotsana in Tangut is written as *Bero* 嶺綬, which makes identification doubtful. See discussion above.

<sup>8</sup> Two Tangut characters used in the “Banners of Emptiness” and “Oral Transmission” represent different phonetic values: 嶺 is used to render “ba” whereas 絞 (occurs in “Forty Banners”) transmits “ph/ bo”, given the uncertainty of the Tangut rules of transcription, I temporarily believe them to represent close phonetic values.

<sup>9</sup> Among the five masters following Atiśa, only Rin chen Bzang po can be identified with a degree of certainty: Tangut 嶺 normally translates Chinese *bao* 寶, and is thus equivalent of the Tibetan “rin chen”. The second Tangut character reads as Chinese *fu* 覆 or *gai* 蓋 (“to cover”, “to be on top”) and thus can be rendered as a derivative from “bzang po” (“lovely”, “good”, “excellent”) etc. As for Dromton, my identification is purely hypothetical. The reasons are as follows: Tangut 嶺剌 can be rendered as Chinese “shengshi 勝勢” “victorious power” (such usage is attested in “Sizi kongxingmu jiwen” 四字空行母記文, where 勝勢 is epithet of Maitrīpa; however, “The Golden Garland of Mahāmudrā” uses “shengshi 勝勢” to translate *mi-pham*, “unsurpassable”) which can be taken as a partial synonym for “rgyal ba” (victorious), while 嶺綬 might be translated as “chushi 出施” (“to give away”). Provisionally I translate the name as “emerging from the

If correct, the final transmission of *Bka' gdams* teaching in Xixia occurred through the mediation of the similar people who transmitted both Mahāmudrā and Vajravārāhī teachings. The general context of the aforementioned compilations allows connecting Atiśa with the most important lineages of transmission of Tibetan esoteric Buddhism in the Tangut state, including Wusheng, Lhazhe and Lama Sumpa. It also brings together the systems of *Bka' gdams*, Mahāmudrā and Vajravārāhī as the core traditions of Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia, and actually makes Atiśa a crucial figure in the formation of the Tibetan Buddhist complex in the Tangut state.

## Dīpaṅkara Texts in the Khara-Khoto Collection

*Satyadvayāvātāra*. Although a substantial part of the Khara-Khoto collection remains uncatalogued, the entries listed in Kychanov's *Catalogue* allow an insight into the popularity of the works of Atiśa and texts associated with his teaching in the Tangut Empire. Kychanov lists the following texts whose titles or colophons imply a relationship with *Bka' gdams* Master: *Njii źj ir 'o śjij* 禪觀毘瑟羅 (入二諦論), Atiśa's famous *Satyadvayāvātāra*, *Bden ba gnyis la 'jug pa*. According to Kychanov, the entry Tang 197 contains the following inventory items: 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, and 869 which are scroll manuscripts, which Kychanov divides into parts 1, 2 and 3. Entry Tang 296 contains one item (inventory 2531) which is a butterfly (*hudie* 蝴蝶) type booklet (*Catalogue*, pp. 495–496; ## 405–408). While preparing this study I was only able to examine items #865, 866, 868, 869; 2531 was beyond my scrutiny.

Another fragment of Atiśa's work is found in a manuscript “convolume” containing several compositions, Tang 296 #2531, with the standard “butterfly binding”. The *Entry into the Two Truths* is the opening work in the collection; the text survives with an opening colophon that clearly indicates its title and authorship. The extant part is damaged, but luckily it preserves the initial part of Atiśa's opus which is not found in Tang 197. In Tang 296, Atiśa's work is found on pages one through eighteen in the modern pagination, and the following twenty-one pages contain a short doctrinal treatise identified as a topical exposition of the *Nyāyabinduṣaṅgāra*, opening lines, and title of a ritual manual on “offering food and water”. A preliminary study indicates that despite the overall similarity, the two versions of the *Satyadvayāvātāra* represent different versions of the text: the deviations between the two texts cannot be explained, only by the scribal errors.

The photographs available to me demonstrate that inventory entries 865 and 866 are in fact one and the same text, which for some reason is mentioned and catalogued twice. The available text begins with Tangut: “□□ *tśja bja thjuu lew mjij*,

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Conqueror”, one of the 'Brom ston names ('Brom ston Rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas) in the *Blue Annals*. (I refer to the Russian edition of the *Blue Annals*: Гой лощава Шоннупэл [’Gos lo ta ba gZhon nu dpal], *Голубые Анналы* [Blue annals], (St. Petersburg, Eurasia Press, 2001, p. 155.) The last Tangut character in the name is not clearly legible. As for the fifth and sixth masters, I cannot come up with a plausible identification. The fifth might be provisionally reconstructed as Vajrasila or Vajrasri.

*wj i lej mjij tsjiir phju mə ηwu*” □□ 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟, 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟 which corresponds to original Tibetan: “...*brjod du med pa bltar med pa/ 'gyur ba med pa 'dus ma byas*”. The concluding colophon to the Tangut translation mentions only the title of the text, but neither date of translation, nor the name of translator is provided. The available Tangut text is probably based on a standard version: during revision, the scribe realised that he omitted one line, and had to add it as a superscript. Apart from some inconsistency in the final part of the text, where Atiśa discusses the composition of his work in *Suvarnadvīpa*, the Tangut translation is loyal to the Tibetan original. Only few examples of deviation from the meaning of the original have been identified so far, and these can be explained as natural deviations in the process of translation, rather than lack of understanding.<sup>10</sup>

### Commentaries to the *Satyadvayāvātāra*

The following list is not exhaustive, since the new versions of commentaries to the *Entry into the Two Truths* continue to emerge with the growth of scholarly familiarity with the Tangut textual corpus. What follows below is a brief exposition of the texts which share definite subject matter affiliation with the Dīpaṁkara's treatise.

1. Item 868 is not the actual text of the Tangut translation of *Bden ba gnyis la 'jug pa* but a commentary to Atiśa's composition, titled *Njii źjir 'o śjij la phju?* 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟 (\*入二諦論記卷上, for which possible Tibetan might be \**Bden ba gnyis la 'jug pa'i bkral* or *bkral 'grel*). The preserved part of the text contains 179 lines, 20 characters per line, which makes it a lengthy composition. The colophon is concluded with an editorial remark: *njar lew* 𐰇𐰏𐰚, “revised, [the text is] correct”.

2. Item #869 bears no clearly identifiable title, but again is a commentary to *Bden ba gnyis la 'jugs pa* followed by a dhāraṇī text added by a different scribe. A portion of the text consisting of about 300 lines, each containing approximately 20 characters is available now.

3. Apart from the above, Kychanov's *Catalogue* mentions another text, Tang 498, #833, which is another commentary to *Bden ba gnyis la 'jugs pa*. The title of the text is “Explanation of the Meaning of the Treatise on the Entry into the Two Truths”, *Njii dzji xa o śjij mār mja jij wo phie la* 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟 (\*入二諦論順本母之義解記, \**Bden ba gnyis la 'jugs pa'i bstan bcos kyi don gsal*).<sup>11</sup> The author

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Liu Guowei 劉國威 from the National Palace Museum and I are currently involved in a thorough study of the Tangut translation of *Bden ba gnyis la 'jugs pa*, therefore, this text will be discussed here no further.

<sup>11</sup> The form in which Atiśa's work is mentioned in the title of the composition by Byang chub sengge is probably the correct version of the title: Tangut *mār mja* 𐰇𐰏𐰚 translates Sinitic *benmu* 本母, “śastra”. This term occurs frequently in the translation of the Chinese doctrinal writings: e.g. *tha śjij gju mār mja* 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟, Chinese: *Da Zhidu benmu* 大智度本母) or *Yogācāra-bhūmi* 瑜伽師地論 (*juu khja dzjij lj i mār mja* 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟, Chinese: *Yujia shidi benmu* 瑜伽師地本母), *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*tha u aphjithamo mār mja* 𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟, Chinese: *Dasheng Apidamo jilun* 大乘阿毘達磨集論). Tangut *śjij* 𐰇𐰏𐰚, as was demonstrated by Duan Yuquan (段玉泉),





the word “*awadjarjar* (avatara) is the word for “entrance”; [it would] then mean “Entry into the Two Truths”.”<sup>16</sup>

Apart from the interesting interpretation of the Sanskrit title, the colophon surely states that this is one of Rngog Lo’s commentaries on *Satyadvayāvatāra*. The exact title of the text has not survived, and more research into the text is necessary.<sup>17</sup> That is, currently, apart from the actual translation of *Satyadvayāvatāra*, the Tangut collection contains four commentaries to Atiśa’s famous work, which makes *Bka’gdams* literature an important factor in the agenda of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut State.

5. *Upadeśa of the Forty Banners of Emptiness* (*lj i’ir xa mə ŋa dźjow tshji ŋwuu* 頌發散彙發發彙; \*四十種空幢要門). The currently available text is preserved in full; it is a scroll containing 280 lines, about 20 characters per line. The text consists of forty smaller entries, some of them titled “upadeśa”, whereas others are introduced by numbers only. Some entries in the text are numbered in Chinese. Neither opening nor concluding colophon contains information on the person, date and time of translation.

### Origin of the Texts

The colophons of Atiśa’s works and texts associated with him are not informative, and generally mention only the title of the text. The one exception is “Explanation of the Meaning of the Treatise on the Entry into the Two Truths” by \*Byang chub seng ge. Although this is a popular name and there is no reason to doubt the reconstruction of its original Tibetan form, as of now I cannot come with a plausible identification of this person. The colophon of the text is preserved in full, and reads that “copying of the text was completed on the 15th day of the third month of the dog year of Heavenly Assistance (繡疏, 乾祐, 03. 04. 1178) reign period” (*Catalogue*, pp. 567–568, #619). The owner of the book is mentioned as *Tj i’ŋu Žj i’rswew* 劉靴麓 ( \*Ti ‘u Huizhao 慧照). Although the family name \*Ti ‘u is not attested in the available Tangut texts, the monastic name Huizhao emerges several times in the translations of both esoteric and exoteric texts.

1. “\*Laudation to *Abhisamayālamkāra elucidating the meaning of Prajñāpāramitopadeśa*” colophon mentions that one of the Tangut translators was “侏襍後藏繡襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍襍”, i.e.

<sup>16</sup> Kano in his list of Rngog lotsāwa’s works mentions only *Bden chung [gi] bsdus don* Kano (2008, p. 130). Kano provides no publication data on this text, so it remains unavailable to me.

<sup>17</sup> The reason for such an explanation of the title was that the translator directly reversed the word order of the Tibetan original: i.e. *bden gnyis* “truths two” in Tibetan. In Tangut numbers in standard combinations (“three worlds”, “five skandhas”) can be put before the noun, according to the Chinese pattern. The translator further assumed that the original Sanskrit order of words in Buddhist terms would be the same with Tangut and Chinese, while in this particular case it was similar to Tibetan. Thus the Tangut translator reversed Tibetan believing that he is thus reproducing original Sanskrit.

“The expounder of *sūtras*, *śāstras* and *vinaya*, expert in Bod (Tibetan) and Mi (Tangut) languages from The Monastery of Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms, *dge slong* Li Huizhao”.

2. *Ārya Vajracchedikānāmaprajñāpāramitāmahāyānasūtra* (多識 摩訶般若波羅蜜 多能斷金剛大乘經) (*Catalogue*, p. 484, #380, Tang 81, #2561, Beijing Bka' 'gyur #739). According to the colophon, the text was “collected” by “reverend \*Supia 孛發 孛發” and translated by Huizhao. At the moment it is intriguing to identify “reverend \*Supia 孛發 孛發” with *lotsāwa* \*Sumpa 孛發, mentioned as one of the holders of Atiśa’s teaching of the “Forty Banners of Emptiness” and the one mentioned in the Oral Transmission.

3. *Pratiśthāvidhi* (祈逐祇祇祇祇; 勝住令順法事, 善住儀軌, *Rab tu gnas pa'i choga*), composed by Sumatikīrti and translated into Tibetan by Prajñākīrti (*Catalogue*, p. 490, #391, Tang 97, #810).

4. “Precious Torch Elucidating the Bodhisattva study of Fruit as the Way of One-Practice” (孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發; \*菩提勇識所學道及果與一顯明寶炬), which was most probably composed by Gtsang po pa Dkon mchog sengge (?–1219), Dus gsum mkhyen pa’s disciple sent over to Xixia. Apart from this, Huizhao translated a text on attaining longevity and a group of texts associated with the Six Yogas of Nāropa. These texts include:

5. “Upadeśa commanding attainment of union between desire and joy” 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 (\*欲樂園融<sup>18</sup> 令順要門), transmitted by Nāropa and translated by Huizhao or copied probably in the 1220s in The Monastery of Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms (*Catalogue*, pp. 558–559, #594).<sup>19</sup> The available version of this text consists of several shorter verse treatises devoted to the Six Yogas subject matter, partially coinciding with the aforementioned collection of texts by Chos kyi seng ge.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> A lot of Tangut texts of Tibetan subject matter use the term equivalent of Sinitic “*yuanyong*” 圓融 in both titles and body text. As of now, I cannot think of Tibetan equivalent: terms otherwise translated as union such as “*kha sbyar*” or “*mnyam sbyor*” have their established equivalents in Tangut not traceable to “*yuanyong*”.

<sup>19</sup> Kychanov mentions the date of copying another copy of the text as 1223, but admits that the colophon is illegible. I was not able to examine this particular copy.

<sup>20</sup> The first text in the collection is 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 (\*欲樂園融令順要門), after which the whole collection is named; the second is 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 (\*拙火及大樂與圓融順要門; “Upadeśa for attaining unity of the Great Joy and Inner Heat”); this text includes indication of “*Raspa Lhazhe nj i djij*” 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發, meaning “*Raspa*, *Lhazhe* and other masters” (mentioned above); the third work is 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 孛發 (\*夢境及幻身與圓融順要門; “Upadeśa for attaining unity between the dream of objects and illusory bodies”); transmission lineage includes: Lawapa (*lja wa pja* 孛發 孛發), who “truly accomplished this upadeśa”, transmitted it to Tilopa, then to Nāropa, to Marpa, to \*Mitsongpo (*mjij tshcow po* 孛發 孛發, probably one of Marpa’s disciples Mes tson pa Bsod nams Rgyal mtshan, see *Blue Annals*, p. 228), who again “truly accomplished

6. “Upadeśa on the Essence of the Six Yogas” (終禪齋歸及苑;  
六法自體要門), transmitted by Nāropa and translated by Huizhao.
7. “Way of Attaining Unity of the Six Yogas” (終禪苑歸齋;  
六法圓融道次), “collected by Yarlungs pa”.

Strictly put, the identity between Li Huizhao and Huizhao the translator from *The Monastery of Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms* is definite, whereas the personality of Ti ‘u Huizhao remains obscure. However, while there is no evidence to the contrary, I suggest identifying these three persons. This identification further allows several observations on the nature of the transmission of Tibetan doctrinal literature, *Bka’ gdams* textual repertoire and Atiśa’s texts in particular: as the translator Huizhao was associated with *The Monastery of Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms*, where he was responsible for the transmission and translation of the texts belonging to both *Bka’ brgyud* textual corpus and the doctrinal and ritual literature, i.e. the texts belonging to the *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition and doctrinal compositions of Śāntideva. Apparently this textual category included the Tangut versions of the Tibetan Mādhyamaka texts, and the *Bka’ gdams* repertoire.

This allows the conclusion that *The Monastery of Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms* was a Buddhist centre which maintained a combination of *Bka’ gdams/ Bka’ rgyud* traditions; Huizhao was one of the representatives of this specific lineage. Thus, the discovery of the Tibetan versions of the *Bka’ gdams* order in the vicinity of Khara-Khoto as reported by Kano coincides with the overall dynamics of Buddhism in the area; this observation corroborates the indications of the high stature of *Bka’ gdams* monks in Xixia. The period when this tradition was dominating this area might be roughly determined as 1160s to 1220s, that is the final demise of the Tangut Empire. This makes Tangut sources very close to Atiśa’s period and simultaneous with the activities of the third generations of his disciples. The combination between *Bka’ rgyud* and *Bka’ gdams* is in tune with the mainstream of *Bka’ rgyud* development in Tibet proper: the doctrinal discourse of both Gampopa and his four disciples was informed and took shape under the influence of *Bka’ gdams* ideas (Davidson 2008, pp. 288–290).

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this upadeśa”. The fourth text in the collection is 振齋殿 務齋苑 歸齋苑 (\*覺醒及光明與圓融順要門; “Upadeśa on attainment of union between awakening and light”), attributed to Nāropa; the fifth and sixth texts do not have clearly identifiable titles, but should relate to ‘*pho ba grong*’ *jug* (transfer of consciousness) and *bardo* (intermediate existence) yogas respectively; however, more specific research is needed. The texts are defined as “collected” by Milarepa (*mji zji lja rjar sj i pja* 懶齋院 務齋苑; notably his name also occurs in the form of *mji lja rjar sj i pja* 懶齋院 務齋苑, i.e. direct transcription of “Milaraspa”). The last of the compilations preserves the lineage of transmission which reads as follows: Tilopa, Nāropa, Marpa, from him the teaching was transmitted to Nge 殿, “\*E,” i.e. Rngog Chos kyi rdo rje (1036–1102), one of the first generation of Marpa’s disciples (see *Blue Annals*, p. 227). From these two teachers the instructions were transmitted to “Mila The Hearer” (*mji lja mji dzu* 懶齋院, the last two graphs read “愛聞”, “[the] one who loves to hear”).

## Brief Introduction of Dīpaṅkara Texts in Tangut

What follows is a more detailed introduction to the commentaries to Atiśa's works which have been identified so far. I provide a brief summary of the texts without any profound discussion on their intellectual contents. Also, I will currently omit the work by Rngog lotsāwa, since the part of the text available is written in cursive script, the scroll has disintegrated and the sequence of parts needs to be reconstructed before any actual study becomes possible.

### Inventory 868

As mentioned above, this text is a fragment of a commentary to the text of *Bden ba gnyis la 'jug pa*; the title of the text is *Njii źjir 'o śjij la phju?* 禿罷罷誘齋菲齋齋 (\*入二諦論記卷上; Tibetan title might be provisionally reconstructed as *\*Bden ba gnyis la 'jug pa'i bkral* or *bkral 'grel*). The extant part of the text covers fragments of the first *juan* (implying that at least there should have been one more chapter; judging from the degree of meticulousness of the discussion in the text, my impression is that the text originally included no less than 10 chapters) and bears editorial mark, indicating that the text was checked against the original and the copy was accepted as correct. Although the text is written in cursive script, it is generally legible. The text is not exactly a line by line commentary, but presents a more generalised discussion interwoven with the questions and answers concerning the nature of the discussed topics, which qualifies for the Sinitic genre of “notes” (*ji* 記). The surviving text part begins fairly close to the opening lines of the Tibetan text:

Sangs rgyas rnam kyis chos bstan pa/ bden pa gnyis la yang dag brten/  
'Jig rten kun rdzob bden pa dang/ de bshin don dam bden pa'o<sup>21</sup>

The first two lines of the Tangut text are slightly damaged (they contain discussion on the distribution of the Four Noble Truths among the categories of the conventional and ultimate truths); the following line opens with Tangut: [...] “禿罷罷誘齋菲齋齋” 齋勁 [...] (\*二諦隨立教者言, “It is said the teaching was established on the basis of the two truths”), which is translation of the Tibetan line “bden pa gnyis la yang dag brten” from the first śloka of Atiśa's treatise. The rest of the text is devoted to the discussion of the relationship between the two truths in the form of questions and answers. What follows is a paraphrase of the extant part.

The text opens with the exposition of the relationship between the two truths and “five positions” (禿罷, *lam lnga*): the “stage of preparation” (Tangut 齋齋; 資糧位, *tshogs kyi lam*) and “stage of exhortation” (Tangut 齋齋; 加行, *sbyor ba'i lam*) are attained in the realm of the conventional truth, whereas the attainment of the “stage of no-learning” (Tangut: 齋齋; 無學, *mi slob pa'i lam*) is associated with the

<sup>21</sup> Tibetan transcription used here and below is based on the version prepared by Liu Guo-wei for the publication of the original of the Tangut translation of *Bden pa gnyis la 'jug pa*.

realm of the ultimate truth and the Noble Truth of cessation (the stages of “seeing the Path” (見道) and “following the Path” (修道) are missing). The names of the two truths are explained through their different applications: the one which covers the worldly affairs is “conventional”, whereas the “ultimate reality” is defined as the “ultimate truth”. The conventional truth is defined as such because it covers such aspects of reality as “birth and extinction”, “destruction”; it “covers” (conceals, *phoo* 翫, 蓋) the ultimate truth, etc. Further the text discusses the question of how then one should understand the worldly career of the Buddha who left his palace, engaged in ascetic practices and attained enlightenment at Vajrāsana; then transmitted the true Dharma at Varāṅāsī (*bjarjarnjasji* 辯禪禪護), and other places, and finally attained nirvāṇa. The answer is such that although the body of the Buddha is not subject to birth and extinction, he, as the guide of the sentient beings, has demonstrated the signs of birth and extinction of his “body of transformation”. Although the body of transformation is substantially no different from the “Dharma body”, and as such is not contained in the mundane world, it was revealed as subject to birth and death in order to guide sentient beings in the world of destruction and evil. This does not mean that after Buddha’s nirvāṇa, the truth of his teaching also became concealed by the world, since the Dharma which he left behind remains in the domain of the ultimate truth.

The text further explores the definitions and characteristics of the ultimate truth. The set of definitions is fourfold: the ultimate truth is “not born and does not come to extinction” (Tangut: 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 無生無滅; *skye ba med pa dang 'gag pa med pa*) and is not covered by “four characteristics” (顯𐰏; 四相, *nam pa bzhi*, “birth, growth, abiding and destruction”). The second set of characteristics is that the ultimate truth “does not come and go” (Tangut: 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 無往無來, *'ong ba med pa dang 'gro ba med pa*), and is not covered by “three time periods”. The third set of characteristics is the “absence of this and that” (Tangut: 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 無此無彼; *gzhan med dang bdag med*) and transcends the self-nature (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 自性離 *\*ngo bo nyid gyi spong ba*).<sup>22</sup> The fourth group of definitions indicates that the ultimate truth experiences no attainment and no loss (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 無得無失; *thob pa med dang rgud pa med*) and does not increase (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰏𐰣; 離補增). This particular set applies to the tīrthika who accept the existence of self, followers of Hīnayāna who accept reality of dharmas: both of these concepts “increase” the dharmatā which is erroneous. The text further engages in discussion of how “conventional” still can be called “truth”: the reason for that is seen in its transformation into a real object (𐰇𐰏𐰣, 實境), which follows “realisation” by a Sage; and thus applies for pedagogical purposes as well. Thus, the term “truth” is applicable to both concepts, whereas their “conventional” and “ultimate” nature is determined by their “characteristics” (𐰇𐰏𐰣, \*性氣, *mshan nyid*) and “substance”: i.e. “conventional” applies to what emerges and perishes, whereas “ultimate” applies to what is not born and does not come to extinction. However, this does not imply onto-

<sup>22</sup> As far as I can tell, this is a Sinitic term, attested in the Chan Buddhist compilation, e.g. in the Tangut translation of the *Recorded Sayings of Nanyang Huizhong*. This term means that oppositions, afflictions etc., are devoid of self-nature and therefore disappear by themselves. Explanation in the Tangut text seems to corroborate the above translation.

logical difference between the two, just as fire and water are different in substance; their self-nature is the same.

The relation between the two truths is further elucidated by the use of the so called “six phrases” (Tangut 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚, 六句, *tshig drug*): “not one and not different” (Tangut: 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; 非一非異; \**gcig med dang so so ba'i med pa*); “nature and characteristics” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; 性及相, \**ngo bo nyid dang mtshan nyid pa*); “demonstrating and demonstrated” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; 能顯所顯); “identity of substance and difference in names” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; 同體異名); “incorporating and incorporated” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; 能包所包); “\*following the truth and following the people” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣; \*依深依人). Each of these pairs of oppositions is explained through comparisons; while the conclusion is that through these pairs one can see mutual incorporation of the conventional and the ultimate.

The commentary further addresses the first line in the second śloka of Atiśa’s original text: *kun rdzob rnam pa gnyis su 'dod/ log pa dang ni yang dag go/*; for which Tangut is: 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣 (\*世俗諦者, 有二種; 即是顛倒以及真實; “as for the conventional truth, it is of two kinds: one is perverted and [the other one] which is correct”). The commentary continues explaining the difference between the correct understanding and misconception, and refers to the metaphor of “the moon in the water”, which appears in the next line of the source text. The question which follows the explanation refers to the two types of perverted “conventional truth”: i.e. “moon in the water” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣, *chu zla*) and the “evil views” (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣, 惡見, corresponds with “*ngan pa*” of the original; the following part of the commentary explains in more detail the classification of wrong views, i.e. altogether seven types of misconceptions) and the value of the correct application of the “conventional truth”. Failure to adequately appreciate and analyse the “conventional truth” is the reason why the followers of heretical teachings together with śrāvaka are unable to arrive at a correct understanding of the Middle Way.

The first part of the relevant passage is devoted to a detailed description and analysis of “the moon in the water” type of misconceptions; while the “evil views” are mentioned somewhat in passing. In the discussion the author of the commentary invokes the authority of several Mādhyamaka masters (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣, 中道師), among whom I was currently able to identify Kamalaśīla (740–795; *kja mja lja sji lja* 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣) and Śāntarakṣita (725–788; *śja tja rja kji tja* 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣). The discussion is lengthy and certainly invites further study; it is a very detailed exposition of Atiśa’s treatise: the extant part of the Tangut commentary covers only the first four ślokas of the original text.

The only example of a sūtra quotation in the text is marked as originating from the *Lotus sūtra* (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣, 華清, i.e. Tangut version of the Sinitic title *Lianhua* 蓮華), and *Avataṃsaka sūtra* (𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣, i.e. Tangut version of the Sinitic title *Huayan* 華嚴) and “other sūtras”. The quotation reads as follows: “𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣𐰚𐰏𐰣”: “Today this body of mine is permanent body, Dharma body, True Body” (我今此身是常身, 法身, 真身). This sentence originates neither from the *Avataṃsaka* nor from the *Lotus*, but is closely related to a quotation from *Nirvāṇa sūtra* discussed by Chengguan (澄觀, 737–838) in his commentary to the *Avataṃsaka*, which was widely circulating in



髡髮髡髮髡髮髡; \*master ācārya Bhavya, *slob dpon mkhas pa bha bya*) who appears in the following line.

In this manner, the commentary arrives at the śloka which discusses Nāgārjuna (髡髮, 龍樹, *klu sgrob*) and his student Candrakīrti (緇翫翫, 月名稱, *zla grags*). Here the commentary explicates various versions of Buddha's prophecy concerning Nāgārjuna restoring the true Dharma after Buddha's nirvāṇa; there are also quotations from unspecified sūtras concerning the decline of the Dharma. This is a lengthy paragraph, which warrants independent study; for the moment it will suffice to say that the Tangut version of Nāgārjuna's biography contains clear esoteric overtones, including the record of his interactions with dākiṅīs, visit to the Heavenly Palace etc. The text postulates that Candrakīrti received direct transmission of the teaching of the Middle Way from Nāgārjuna. In order to support the claim that the two truths are transmitted without interruption in the upadeśas of many masters, the Tangut commentary provides a list of transmission of the Madhyamaka teaching, which has to be discussed separately.<sup>24</sup>

After this lengthy biographical entry the commentary embarks onto the mainstream of Atīśa's work. The next paragraph in the commentary is devoted to the exposition of 貝麗頌頌頌頌頌頌 (八萬四千乃至宣說) corresponding with *chos gyi phung po brgyad khri dang/ bzhi stong gsungs ba thams cad ni* of the original text. The next śloka is divided into two parts: the discussion on understanding emptiness and its relation to other forms of practice are discussed separately. The commentary continues, strictly following the sequence of the currently available Tangut translation of *Satyadvayāvātara*. Proceeding in this manner, the commentary eventually arrives at the clause: “髡髮髡髮髡髮髡” (依隨龍樹師之法儀, “according to the Dharma instructions of Nāgārjuna”), which corresponds with the Tibetan *klu sgrub lugs kyi...* The author of the commentary further remarks, that the author of the śāstra (翫翫, 論主) implies that although his understanding is insufficient for the exposition of the two truths, he does so relying on the tradition of Nāgārjuna and upadeśas preached by other famous masters. The Tangut commentary remarks in this respect that there are three types of teachers: the first group are the “upadeśa masters” (髡髮髡髮 \*man

<sup>24</sup> The Tangut commentary presents the transmission of the truths in a form of a transmission of a tantric practice. The persons listed in the lineage are as follows: Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, master \*Gagadhara (*gjaa gjaa dja rja* 髡髮髡髮髡), or \*Gagadaraka 髡髮髡髮髡, \*Dorje (*dow dzjiij* 稱度), \*Raja raba (*rjiijr dzjaa rjar bjaa* 髡髮髡髮髡), and finally Atīśa (*ja tshi śja* 髡髮髡). Generally, the process of Atīśa's studies and scholarly achievements is well documented in both traditional sources and modern scholarship starting from the *Eighty Verses* composed by Nag tsho lotsāwa; accounts in the *Blue Annals*; account on Atīśa preserved in the 15th century *bKa' gdams* history *Myriad Rays of the Sun* by Lo dgon pa bsod nam lha'i dbang po (1423–1496; Bka' gdams chos 'byung rnam thar nyin mor byed pa'i 'od stong), studied and published by G. Venturi (2007); in *bKa' gdams chos 'byung rnam thar* also by Bsod nam lha'i dbang po etc. (see Elmer 1989, pp. 21–38) and other research on Atīśa by the same author. Although the “uninterrupted lineage of Madhyamaka masters” from Nāgārjuna to Atīśa is mentioned in the *Eighty Verses*, none of these names are identifiable in the list of Atīśa's teachers and masters as preserved in the text by Nag tsho or in the *Blue Annals*. \*Raja raba can probably be identified as Dharmakīrti, under whom Atīśa studied for a long time. See also Chattopadhyaya (1996). However, no names of the masters mentioned in these sources qualify as the originals for the Tangut transcriptions.





India with a lavish gift of gold to meet with the paṇḍita who was then the head of the monastic community (*mjii dzju* 纛翁, 眾主) in Vikramaśīla (*pji kja mja sji lja* 紇 纛翁纛翁).<sup>26</sup> The text further informs that at that time monastic regulations deemed drinking wine to be a serious offense. However, a certain mendicant śramaṇa violated this regulation; the other monks reported this to Dīpaṃkara who afterwards expelled the śramaṇa from the monastery, thus creating himself an “obstacle of speech”. However, when Atīśa came to the śramaṇa’s dwelling he found no wine, but only milk. Thus his nature of a great yogi was revealed; therefore Dīpaṃkara had to carry out a repentance ritual to relieve himself from the obstacles created by the unfair treatment. After a while, an ugly old beggar woman appeared while the monastic community was having a meal. After the meal, monks ascended on the pavilion, and threw down an object transcribed in the text as “*thew tsju*” 紇翁 (\**duchu*).<sup>27</sup> Nothing of that fell into other people’s hands, and the woman got it all. Atīśa watched the process from his door and recognised the old woman as a great yoginī.

Afterwards, Atīśa offered a maṇḍala to this yoginī, requesting upadeśas and instructions three times. Yoginī then admonished Atīśa, saying that he does not have karmic connections with this place and time; even if she instructs him, this will be to no avail. She further advised that in order to resolve the obstacles, he should leave; otherwise it will be impossible for him to obtain Mahāmudrā in the present life time. Other than that, great benefit will be generated for the sentient beings and a lot of great disciples will appear thereby. Finally, the yoginī recommended that Atīśa should go to the Madhaydeśa of the Bod people. At this moment Nag tsho lotsāwa arrived at Vikramaśīla and entered into the negotiation with Dīpaṃkara after he found out he is the most prominent out of five hundred paṇḍitas. After paying homage to Vaj rāsana and other places, Atīśa finally arrived in Tibet due to the efforts of Byang chub ’Od.

The body of the commentary opens with a kind of table of contents indicating six topics around which the discussion revolves. These six categories constitute the hermeneutical framework adopted in the *Commentary*: (1) “of the origin of many explanations of the two truths” (纛翁紇翁紇翁紇翁, \*二諦之多解所隨); (2) “many explanations of the two truths” (纛翁紇翁紇翁, \*二諦之多解); (3) “self-substance of the two truths” (纛翁紇翁紇翁, \*二諦之自體); (4) “specific natures of self-substance” (紇翁紇翁紇翁紇翁, \*自體之各自性許);<sup>28</sup> (5) “the principles of cognition (*rtog ge*) which make specific natures (i.e. cognition according to them) adequate” (紇翁紇翁紇翁紇翁, \*性許畢竟令具正理); (6) “acquisition of the principles which thus were ascer-

<sup>26</sup> Atīśa’s actual position in the Vikramaśīla monastic administration is subject for debate, summarised by Chattopadhyaya in his *Atīśa and Tibet*. The *Blue Annals* (pp. 146–147) mention him as the “steward of the monastic college”, whereas the Russian version mentions him as “financial controller”, while Atīśa speaks of himself as sthavira of the monastery. The Tangut texts mention that his position was that of the head of the monastic community.

<sup>27</sup> This paragraph is rather dubious, and my reading will require further clarification.

<sup>28</sup> This implies that although the substance of the two truths is identical, they have different implications in relationship to reality.

tained and the retribution for what has been cognised” (獲解解禮繆教鐵磁敵發敵  
 循從齋, \*令智受畢竟理順及所知之果報). Each of these rubrics is independently  
 discussed and defined, thus constituting the general structure of the text.

The range of topics discussed in this text reveals its proximity with inventory  
 contained in 869. The text further discusses the etymology of “saṁvṛtti” and “para-  
 mārtha”; the meanings of these terms in Sanskrit and in Tangut; the “identity” and  
 “difference” in the substance between the conventional and ultimate truths, etc. Gen-  
 erally, the exposition follows the structure of *Satyadvayāvatāra*, beginning from the  
 exposition of the two types of conventional truth (i.e. misconceptions and erroneous  
 perception), followed by the discussion of the ultimate truth which does not have  
 “dharma nature” (禪毗, 法性, *chos nyid*, dharmatā) and has no “subject” (禪瓠, 法持,  
*chos can*, dharmin); critique of the śrāvaka and tīrthika vehicles, adequacy of cognition  
 through pramāṇas etc.; attaining the highest understanding of the true emptiness; the  
 origin of the teaching in the doctrines and upadeśas of the illustrious masters of the  
 past; necessity of analysis combined with faith and finally the circumstances of com-  
 position of the treatise. The text does not seem to contain specific entries on Nāgārju-  
 na and Candrakīrti or any specific lineage of Madhyamaka transmission. However,  
 the text features a fragment of polemics concerning the validity of cognition through  
 inference and direct apprehension: the question is posed as to how one should under-  
 stand the words of uselessness of pramāṇa, while such great masters as Dharmakīrti  
 were very much in favour of cognition through pramāṇas.

Although the intellectual milieu of the text is intriguing in itself, there are some  
 historical observations to be made on its basis: the account above demonstrates that  
 the Tangut Buddhist circles were familiar with the Byang chub 'Od and Nag tsho lo-  
 tsāwa lore; however, the version of the circumstances around Atiśa's arrival in Tibet  
 known in Xixia did not deviate substantially from the Tibetan accounts: if I understand  
 the relevant paragraph correctly, for his the journey to the Land of Snow he had per-  
 sonal implications in terms of liberation from the karmic obstacles, which he gener-  
 ated while trying to discipline a great yogi, disguised as śramaṇa.<sup>29</sup> The story of Atiśa  
 expelling a great yogi from Vikramaśīla reemerges in the text which is discussed be-  
 low as well. Unlike Tibetan sources which indicate that the one expelled by Atiśa was  
 in fact Maitrīpa, the Tangut texts are silent about the identity of the expelled yogi,  
 they only preserve the indication on the story's connection with contemplation of Vaj-  
 ravārāhī.

<sup>29</sup> My knowledge of Atiśa's biography is based on the *Eighty Verses* by Nag tsho and the  
 account from the *Blue Annals*. H. Elmer's (1977) *Berichte über das Leben des Atiśa* (Dīpaṁkaraśri-  
 jñāna) has remained unavailable to me. The matter of expulsion of a yogi from the monastery is re-  
 current in the Tibetan sources concerning Atiśa's decision to go to Tibet (see Tāranātha 1983, pp.  
 10–11; M. Tatz 1988, p. 478); the implications of this anecdote are discussed by Chattopadhyaya  
 (1996, pp. 135–136 etc.). Various fragments concerning the matter of expulsion had been studied  
 by H. Elmer (1979) in *Rnam thar rgyas pa* 2 pts etc. According to the majority of the accounts the  
 one expelled from the monastery was Maitrīpa whose exact identity is, however, questionable.

## Inventory Tang 215, #871

*Upadeśa of the Forty Banners of Emptiness* (*lj i ir xa mə ɣa dźjow tshji ɣwuu* 顯設  
散設設設設; \*四十種空幢要門). Although the text with this title does not appear  
among known works of Atiśa, the colophon to the Tangut translation unequivocally  
attributes this work to his authorship. A Tibetan title for this work is relatively easy to  
reconstruct as \**stong nyid rgyal mtshan bzhi bcu 'i rnam pa 'i man ngag*; however, as  
of now I have not been able to identify the source version of this title. Contrary to  
other texts discussed above, this work is not a commentary to *Satyadvayāvātāra*, but  
an independent composition attributed to Dīpaṃkara himself.

The text opens with an exposition of causes and conditions which resulted in  
the composition of this work, which is another version of the story narrated in the  
opening section of the text of Commentary 833 presented in the previous entry. The  
text is not very transparent, I would paraphrase it as follows: The great Indian master  
Dīpaṃkara was once a head of a monastic community in the Indian country of Ma-  
gadha (*mja ɣwe tja* \*Magata 旃蔴菴). At this place was a monk who was practising  
ritual of Vajravārāhī (*Gju mja* 獬羆, 亥母) in an unconventional manner<sup>30</sup> during the  
night, and was successful. The head monk, i.e. Dīpaṃkara, admonished him that al-  
though the ritual was a successful one, and both he and the monk are aware of that,  
this practice goes against the rules of the community (禪院, 法儀, *chos lugs*), and  
therefore should be discontinued. The śramaṇa replied that he sees no problem with  
that, and if the community sees this practice as irregular, he can be expelled, which  
eventually happened. This situation was witnessed by an old woman; after the episode  
which generally repeats the one in the previous entry, Dīpaṃkara recognised her as a  
great yoginī, bowed to her feet and requested instructions. The woman refused by  
saying that she was only a stupid commoner; how could such a famous master pay her  
homage and imagine that she had upadeśas? However, Dīpaṃkara was persistent in  
his claim, and the woman finally revealed her true image of the goddess Tārā. Then  
Tārā continued instructing Dīpaṃkara in the manner similar with the one presented  
in the *Commentary* above, by saying that Dīpaṃkara, although he is famous for his  
scholarship, will not be able to achieve anything in his present life; because of the  
karmic obstacles he created by expelling the monk, he would land in the Diamond  
hell. Then Tārā continued by saying: “Since you have seen my face, you are not going  
to collapse into hell, but nonetheless you should go to Tibet, greatly develop dhāraṇī  
and repentance rituals; thus you will purify your karma and generate benefit to the  
sentient beings of Tibet.” After saying this, she was no longer seen. The text further  
continues with the lineage chart presented earlier in this paper, culminating in the fig-  
ures of lotsāwa Sumpa and Wusheng (Skye med, Dehui).

<sup>30</sup> The Tangut text uses expression *lha lhjwi* 發殺, out of which *lha* is probably used pho-  
netically to transcribe Tibetan *lha*, whereas the second, which occurs after a verbal prefix is used in  
its capacity of a verb “to take”, “to seize”, “to acquire”; thus the compound probably could mean-  
ing “obtaining the deity”. Another thing the monk was doing was *la kju tshwew* 凌羆, \*手供養,  
*phyag mchod*, a well attested general term for “prostration and worship”.

After this introduction, the body starts with the eulogy of “the mind of faith” (*dziej njij* 𐰇𐰏𐰍, *dad pa*) and explains the six deficiencies resulting from the absence of faith and six benefits of developing thereof. Further text consists of forty key phrases which are elucidated in a brief commentary written in transparent language as a basic introduction to Buddhism. Although I was not able to identify the source, below I present a translation of a paragraph on the benefits of “having faith” (which is the third “banner”) for a possible identification:

[...] 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍: 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍; 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍; 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍; 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍; 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍; 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 𐰇𐰏𐰍 [...]

[...] The six merits of having faith are explained [as follows]: to have faith is like to have a good field; to have faith is like to have Cintāmaṇi; faith is like the king [who] brings in order the laws of his country; faith is like a fortress which is able to protect; faith is like a bridge over great water; faith is like the great merchant-supervisor and leads on the road (the last clause is tentative).

Passages like this constitute the body of the text. For the moment, I suggest that the key phrases can be extracted from the body of the text and be arranged into a composition in forty ślokas, which will thus account for the “Forty Banners of Emptiness”. This text is by far the most interesting within the collection of Dīpaṁkara lore in Tangut, and deserves further study. In general, this paragraph might resemble the later *Bka’gdams* practices of teaching through parables and metaphors and is thus indicative of a broader accessibility of *Bka’gdams* teachings to the general public.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to contextualise Dīpaṁkara’s texts in the broader system of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut state. That is, the intention was to show that Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia was not a random collection of various esoteric practices and lineages. The Tangut version of Tibetan Buddhism emerged as a reproduction of the *Bka’rgyud/ Bka’gdams* intercourse, which was characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism during the 11th–12th centuries. The inquiry into the Tantric lineages preserved in the Tangut texts allowed identifying Mahāmudrā / Vajravārāhī / Six Yogas system as the major stems of Tibetan esoterism in Xixia. The holders of these traditions (Wusheng, Yarlungs pa, Sumpa, etc.) shaped the esoteric context of esoteric Buddhism in Xixia, and at the same time appeared in the capacity of the holders of Dīpaṁkara’s doctrinal heritage which was deemed indispensable for tantric progress. This especially concerns Wusheng (identified as the famous Tangut translator Dehui), lama translator Sumpa. Although no specific esoteric texts attributed to Atiśa have yet been discovered in Tangut translations, the Tangut esoteric master narrative # 2825 features Dīpaṁkara in the same context as the most prominent Tangut esoteric masters, together with Milarepa and Tilopa, and places him generally within the tantric transmission

lineage. Thus Dīpaṃkara becomes associated with the basic lineages of esoteric Buddhism in Xixia, which reflects an earlier view on his activities as an esoteric master. Considering the context in which Atiśa emerges in the Tangut texts, his association with *Bka'rgyud* denomination, at least among the Tangut Buddhists appears an established fact. This tendency resembles the major trend of combining *Bka'rgyud* esoteric systems with *Bka'gdams* discourse which was visible in Tibet in the works of Gampopa and his followers, as well as the absence of an opposition between esoteric and exoteric aspects of Buddhism in Xixia.

In the case of transmission of Dīpaṃkara's teachings, the Tangut texts reveal remarkable coherence of places and persons: that is, the translators and holders of Dīpaṃkara's teaching in Xixia were the same people who were also propagating both the Six Yogas and the Vajravārahī system. One of the centres of such activity was the *Samgharāma of the Manifestation of the Five Wisdoms*, and one of the major persons responsible for upholding the lineage was translator monk Huizhao who translated both esoteric and exoteric compositions, particularly the texts by Śāntideva. This observation confirms *Bka'rgyud* / *Bka'gdams* affiliation which once existed within the Tangut version of Tibetan Buddhism. This particular denomination formed one facet of Tangut Buddhism, but it probably was one of the most important dimensions of the Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia.

Atiśa's teaching in Xixia, from what it appears now, did not emerge as a simple replica of the Tibetan *Bka'gdams*: while the seminal *Bka'gdams* text of *Bodhipathapradīpa* yet remains to be unidentified within the Tangut holdings in St. Petersburg and elsewhere, Tangut versions of a variety of Prajñāpāramitā texts combined with the Tangut translations of the works of Śāntideva (especially *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣāsamuccaya*) indicate that there was an effort to create an integrated system of Buddhist doctrinal learning rather than translating and transmitting all the available teachings and texts. The foundation for that system of doctrinal learning was the teaching of two truths presented in *Satyadvayāvatāra*, which generated substantial commentarial literature, parts of which might be identified as original Tangut compilations, whereas other works belong to the circle of the second and third generations of Atiśa's disciples in Tibet; Tangut composition *Forty Banners of Emptiness* as well as some other commentaries described above can also be considered an original Tangut work. Popularity of the *Treatise of the Entry into the Two Truths* in the Tangut state is in sharp contrast with the later Tibetan *Bka'gdams* repertoire which does not seem to add any special attention to this work of Atiśa and certainly places it much lower than *Bodhipathapradīpa*. This observation allows inferring that the Tangut materials reflect an earlier stage of *Bka'gdams* development during which the *Entry into the Two Truths* remained an important text.

The time when Atiśa's teaching penetrated into Xixia cannot be established with certainty; however, the *terminus ante quem* is 1227, that is, the demise of the Tangut state; some indirect evidence allows determining the period when Atiśa's works were definitely known in Xixia as early as the mid-12th century. All things considered, the period from the 1170s to early-13th century seems to be the most plausible timeline for Atiśa's popularity in Xixia. Atiśa's influence in the Tangut state might be

seen as another indication of the tendency to combine esoteric and exoteric Buddhism into a sort of a “perfect teaching” which carefully balances doctrinal and practical elements.

The above allows one to observe that despite doctrinal differences, Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia developed in a manner similar to Sinitic Buddhism: just as Sinitic Buddhism reproduced doctrinal and practical agenda of the Liao Buddhism and Huayan teaching of Northern China, Tibetan Buddhism in Xixia was based on the idea of reproducing a systematic whole of teaching traditions and meditative practices based on *Bka'rgyud* / *Bka'gdams* conglomerate.

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